

MIGRATION STATISTICS: PRESENT AND FUTURE

United States Census Bureau

In accordance with the U.S. Census Bureau's strategic objective to provide accurate, timely, and relevant population estimates, the Census Bureau intends to provide statistics and methodologies on the size, characteristics, and impact of international migration to (and from) the United States for use in policy-making decisions and in demographic and economic research.

A. SIZE

The first major area of study centers on estimating the number of international migrants in the United States by migrant status.

The goals of this area are to: 1) improve population estimates used for the allocation of more than \$200 billion in annual federal funding; 2) increase the validity of survey results through better population controls; and 3) reduce (or eliminate) the discrepancy between the eventual results from the 2010 census and population estimates.

To meet these goals, the Census Bureau has begun work to: 1) improve estimates of net international migration; 2) construct algorithms to estimate migrant statuses of the foreign-born population; 3) produce estimates of international migrants by migrant status (legal, temporary, quasi-legal, and unauthorized migrants, and emigrants); 4) evaluate international migration data collected by the Census Bureau and other U.S. federal agencies; and 5) explore alternative methodologies and data sources of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) (formerly collected by the Immigration & Naturalization Service, INS) and other U.S. and international agencies.

B. CHARACTERISTICS

The second major area of study focuses on developing profiles of the foreign-born population over time.

The goals of this area are to: 1) highlight the characteristics of the foreign born in the United States; 2) compare international migrants across statuses; 3) compare international migrants with the U.S. native population; and 4) document changes in the demographic, social, economic, geographic, and housing characteristics of international migrants over time.

To accomplish these goals, the Census Bureau has begun work to: 1) produce annual descriptive socioeconomic reports of the foreign born; 2) produce table packages of socioeconomic characteristics for the foreign born; 3) prepare demographic profiles of the foreign born by U.S. citizenship status, period of entry into the United States, and for individual countries of birth; 4) produce triennial, detailed socioeconomic profiles of the foreign born over time; and 5) produce a descriptive Census 2000-based report on the foreign born.

C. IMPACT

The third major area of study focuses on the effects of international migration on the United States.

The goals of this area are to: 1) highlight the demographic, social, economic, geographic, housing, environmental, and cultural impacts of migration; and 2) provide policy-relevant information on the effects of international migration at the national, state, and local levels.

To meet these goals, the Census Bureau will produce reports on topics such as economic integration and residential living patterns that can be used as background information by policy-makers.

D. OTHER PROJECTS

In addition to the three major areas of study, the Census Bureau will undertake several special projects. These projects support the Bureau's overall mission and provide additional insight into the development and improvement of international migration statistics not only in the U.S., but worldwide.

These special projects include: (1) an evaluation of the effectiveness (reliability, validity, and utility) of current questions on international migration (the Migrant Life History Project, MLHP); (2) preparation for the 2004 overseas census test; (3) an evaluation of the effect of international migration on identity patterns (e.g., racial/ethnic, linguistic) in the United States; (4) ongoing participation in joint statistical activities with federal agencies in Canada, Mexico, and the United States (the North American Migration Working Group, NAMWG); and (5) preparation of tabulations and other activities with the United Nations Statistics Division, the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).