

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Nonimmigrants in the United States: Flow Data and Stock Estimates for 2005

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Each year, millions of nonimmigrants, including tourists, business travelers, students, and diplomats, enter the United States. In 2004¹, there were an estimated 179 million nonimmigrant admissions.

Defining “Nonimmigrant”

A nonimmigrant is a foreign national seeking to enter the United States temporarily for a specific purpose. Nonimmigrants are admitted for a temporary period of time and, once in the country, are restricted to the activity or reason for which their visa was issued. They may have more than one type of nonimmigrant visa but are admitted in only one status.

In general, foreign nationals seeking temporary admission to the United States must first apply for a visa at the American Embassy or Consulate with jurisdiction over their place of permanent residence. The type of nonimmigrant visa required is defined by immigration law and relates to the purpose of travel. Visa applicants must also: be admissible or have obtained a waiver for any ground of inadmissibility; be in possession of a valid passport; maintain a foreign residency, in most instances; show proof of financial support for their stay, if required; abide by the terms and conditions of admission; and agree to depart at the end of their authorized stay or extension of stay.

Sources of Nonimmigrant Data

Nonimmigrant Information System. NIIS is the primary source of data on nonimmigrant admissions into the United States. NIIS compiles and maintains information collected from nonimmigrants by DHS Form I-94, also known as the Arrival-Departure Record, which asks for dates of arrival and departure as well as limited demographic information, such as name, sex, nationality, and date of birth. Each time a nonimmigrant enters the United States, the arrival portion of the I-94 Form is collected and the information is entered into the data system. Conversely, each time a nonimmigrant leaves the United States, the departure portion is collected and the additional information is entered into NIIS. The arrival and departure records are then electronically matched, producing a single record that includes both the arrival and departure date.

Nonimmigrants arriving by air, land, or sea are required to complete Form I-94 with two important exceptions. Canadians who travel to the United States as tourists or on business generally do not need the I-94 Form. Also, certain Mexicans who have a nonresident alien Border Crossing Card, commonly known as a laser visa, may not require the I-94

¹ This extended abstract will show previously released data (where possible) but will be updated with 2005 data before presentation.

Form for entry. These exceptions are significant because Canadian and Mexican citizens make up the vast majority of all nonimmigrant admissions. While NIIS excludes the majority of short-term admissions from Canada and Mexico, it does capture short-term admissions, including tourists, business travelers, and transit aliens, from all other countries. NIIS also captures temporary residents, such as students and high-skilled workers, long-term residents, such as fiancés(ées) of U.S. citizens, and diplomats, such as ambassadors and consular officers, from all countries, including Canada and Mexico. In 2004, NIIS recorded 30.8 million nonimmigrant arrivals.

Performance Analysis System. PAS is the principal data entry and retrieval system for the G-22/23 Report of Field Operations. The G-22/23 report includes a variety of immigration-related operational workload measures, such as port-of-entry arrival inspections, immigrant status adjudications, and naturalizations. At the end of each month, field offices from across the country and overseas consolidate their workload statistics and enter them into PAS. Monthly, quarterly, and annual summary statistics can then be retrieved using PAS. For this report, the G-22.1 Inspections Report was used to estimate the total number of nonimmigrant admissions as well as the proportion of those admissions that occurred at either the northern or southern land border. In 2004, there were an estimated 178.6 million nonimmigrant admissions recorded by PAS. Of these, an estimated 152.5 million were Canadian and Mexican citizens, including 147.8 million land border crossers not required to complete the I-94 Form. Of those 147.8 million, approximately 29 percent crossed the northern border and 71 percent crossed the southern border.

Categories of Admission

This paper uses six broad categories of admission to present the results of the analysis, including 1) land border crossers, 2) transit aliens, 3) short-term visitors, 4) students and temporary workers, 5) diplomats and other representatives, and 6) expected long-term residents. These six categories group admissions based on both type and authorized/initial period of stay.

Land border crossers refer to nonresident aliens entering the United States across the Canadian and Mexican borders for short periods of time. Canadian citizens crossing the border for business or pleasure can remain in the United States without a visa for up to six months. Mexican citizens who cross the border frequently for business or pleasure can obtain a Border Crossing Card (BCC), which allows visits of less than 30 days and within close proximity to the southern border. Although land border crossers from Canada and Mexico are permitted to stay for long periods, most remain for only one or two days per visit.

Transit aliens, who are foreign nationals in immediate and continuous transit through the United States to foreign destinations, are included in the transit aliens category. Tourists and business travelers, who typically remain in the United States for a few days to a few weeks, are included in the short-term visitors category. Nonimmigrants who come to the United States to study or work and who usually remain in the country for several months

to several years are included in the students and temporary workers category. Diplomats and representatives of international organizations, who typically remain in the United States for the duration of their service, are included in the diplomats and other representatives category. The expected long-term residents category includes those who arrived on nonimmigrant visas but are likely to become permanent residents, such as certain spouses and fiancés(ées) of U.S. citizens.

Number and Characteristics of Temporary Admissions of Nonimmigrants

In 2004, the majority (83 percent) of all nonimmigrant admissions into the United States were border crossers, including ## percent from Canada and ## from Mexico (see Table 1). An additional 15 percent were short-term visitors, including tourists and business travelers. Students and temporary workers made up less than 2 percent of all admissions.

The countries of origin with the largest number of admissions include Mexico (## million), followed by Canada (## million), the United Kingdom (5.0 million), Japan (4.3 million), Germany (1.6 million) and France (1.2 million) (see Table 2).

The Size of the Nonimmigrant Population in 2005

This section will discuss the “person year” methodology employed by the Office of Immigration Statistics to generate stock estimates based on both NIIS and PAS flow data.

It will then present the results of this analysis using the 2005 data. Population estimates for the total nonimmigrant population as well as by category (e.g., land border crosser, students and temporary workers, diplomats and other representatives, etc.) and class of admission (J-1, H1-B, A-1, etc.) will be presented. Nonimmigrant population estimates by region and country of origin will also be presented. Trends in the size of the nonimmigrant population between 2000 and 2005 will also be discussed.

Note the 2004 nonimmigrant population estimates will be presented in a forthcoming Office of Immigration *Population Estimates* report.

Table 1.
Nonimmigrant Admissions by Number of Arrivals: Fiscal Year 2004

Category	Admissions	
	Number	Percent
Total ¹	178,557,425	100.0
Border crossers.....	147,822,253	82.8
Border crossers from Canada	##	##
Border crossers from Mexico.....	##	##
All other nonimmigrants.....	30,735,172	17.2
Transit aliens.....	338,058	0.2
Short-term visitors.....	27,394,691	15.3
Students and temporary workers.....	2,533,551	1.4
Diplomats and other representatives	276,670	0.2
Expected long-term residents.....	105,265	0.1
Unknown.....	86,937	0.0

¹Note that the 178.6 million nonimmigrant admissions for fiscal year 2004 excludes sea and air crew admissions (D-1 and D-2 visas).
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival File, FY2004 and the Performance Analysis System (PAS).

Table 2.
**Nonimmigrant Admissions by Country of Citizenship:
Fiscal Year 2004**

Category	Admissions	
	Number	Percent
Total ¹	178,557,425	100.0
Mexico	##	##
Canada	##	##
United Kingdom	4,996,211	2.8
Japan	4,335,975	2.4
Germany	1,630,247	0.9
France	1,241,511	0.7
Korea	829,031	0.5
Italy	759,895	0.4
China	687,148	0.4
Australia	645,234	0.4
All other countries, including unknown	##	##

¹Note that the 178.6 million nonimmigrant admissions for fiscal year 2004 excludes sea and air crew admissions (D-1 and D-2 visas).
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival File, FY2004 and the Performance Analysis System (PAS).