

# Estimates of the Nonimmigrant Population in the United States: 2004

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This Office of Immigration Statistics Population Estimates report presents estimates of the nonimmigrant population in the United States in 2004<sup>1</sup>. (For a definition of the term “nonimmigrant,” see Box 1.) The estimates were based primarily on data from the Department of Homeland Security’s Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS)<sup>2</sup>. Stock estimates for the total nonimmigrant population by category of admission and country of citizenship were generated using this administrative flow data and a “person year” methodology.<sup>3</sup>

The results of this analysis suggest that, on a typical day in 2004, there were an estimated 3.8 million nonimmigrants in the United States, including 2.3 million tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors, 704,000 temporary workers, 640,000 students and exchange visitors, and 68,000 diplomats and other representatives. Approximately 841,000 were land border crossers from Canada and Mexico. The countries with the highest number of nonimmigrants were Mexico (889,000) and Canada (572,000), followed by India (303,000), the United Kingdom (228,000), and Japan (196,000).

## ESTIMATING THE SIZE OF THE NONIMMIGRANT POPULATION

On any day of the year, the nonimmigrant population, including tourists, diplomats, students, and temporary workers, represents a significant portion of the foreign-born population present in the United States. Estimates of the size of the total foreign-born population are available from the decennial census and other federal surveys, such as the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Current Population Survey (CPS). However, estimates of the nonimmigrant population cannot be obtained directly from census, ACS, or CPS data, primarily because federal surveys do not include a question on the legal status of foreign-born non-citizens. Also, because the universe for many federal surveys, including the decennial census and the ACS, is the resident population,

### Box 1.

#### 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.

they likely capture many nonimmigrants who reside in the United States for extended periods but fail to enumerate the majority of nonimmigrants, such as tourists and business travelers, who remain in the country for short periods of time.

Because of the limitations associated with the available census and survey data, this paper uses administrative flow data and a “person year” methodology to estimate the size of the nonimmigrant population. In general, the person year population estimate is calculated by multiplying the number of nonimmigrant admissions

<sup>1</sup> In this report, years refer to fiscal years (the 12 month period ending September 30 of the year designated).  
<sup>2</sup> During the first quarter of fiscal year 2005, NIIS was incorporated into Customs and Border Protection’s Treasury Enforcement Communications System (TECS) and is no longer operated as an independent system.  
<sup>3</sup> The person year methodology used in this report is based on previous work by Michael Hoefler (personal communication).



in a given year by the mean length of visit (i.e., the average number of days spent per trip by a nonimmigrant admitted to the United States). The person year estimate accounts for the portion of the year that, on average, each nonimmigrant admitted remained in the country. For example, if six nonimmigrants arrived and remained on average for two months, then their visits, when combined, would make one person year of continued presence. This single person year, representing six admissions, would count as one person in the population estimates. Multiplying the total number of admissions that occurred within a given year by the mean length of visit produces an estimate of the total number of days spent in the country by all nonimmigrants. Dividing this product by 365 results in a per day estimate, which is interpreted as the size of the nonimmigrant population in the country on a typical day of the year.

**Interpreting the Person Year Estimates.** The nonimmigrant population estimates calculated using the person year methodology represent the size of the population on a typical day of the year. Because the estimates are a composite measure based on data from an entire year, they do not represent the size of the population on a specific reference day (e.g., the beginning, middle, or end of the year), but rather the average population size for all days throughout the year. The person year methodology produces estimates – not actual counts – of the size of the nonimmigrant population present in the United States.

## Data

**Nonimmigrant Information System.** The primary source of data on nonimmigrant admissions into the United States is the Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS). NIIS compiles and maintains information collected from nonimmigrants on DHS Form I-94, also known as the Arrival-Departure Record, which asks for dates of arrival and departures as well as limited demographic information, such as name, sex, nationality, and date of birth. 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.<sup>4</sup> Also, certain Mexicans who have a nonresident alien Border Crossing Card, commonly known as a laser visa, may not require the I-94 Form for entry.<sup>5</sup> 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

<sup>4</sup> Canadian citizens crossing the border for business or pleasure can remain in the United States without a visa for up to one year.

<sup>5</sup> Mexican citizens entering the United States as tourists or business travelers require either a 1) Border Crossing Card (BCC) or 2) B-1 business or B-2 tourist nonimmigrant visa and a passport. Mexican citizens who have obtained a BCC and who wish to enter the United States and remain within 25 miles of the border (or within 75 miles of the border of Arizona) for 30 days or less are not required to complete an I-94 Form. Mexican citizens with a nonimmigrant visa and passport who wish to enter and remain within 25 miles of the border for 72 hours or less are also not required to complete an I-94 Form. Mexican citizens with either a BCC or a nonimmigrant visa and passport who wish to stay longer or go farther than these limits would be required to complete an I-94 Form. All I-94 Forms issued at land borders are for multiple entries unless specifically annotated for a limited number of entries.

as fiancés(ées) of U.S. citizens, and diplomats, such as ambassadors and consular officers, from all countries, including Canada and Mexico.

**Performance Analysis System.** A second administrative source, the Performance Analysis System (PAS), was used to estimate the number of nonimmigrants admitted from Canada and Mexico who were not required to complete Form I-94. 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. Unlike NIIS, however, PAS does not include the nonimmigrants' class of admission, date of arrival and departure, or any demographic characteristics. For this report, the G-22.1 Inspection Report was used to estimate the total (i.e., aggregate) number of nonimmigrant admissions as well as the proportion of those admissions that occurred at either the northern or southern land border.

## Assumptions and Limitations

The person year methodology assumes that the arrival data accurately capture the number of nonimmigrants who come to the United States and the departure data capture the length of time they spend in each class of admission. These assumptions are most likely violated for those nonimmigrant classes that commonly change status while in the country, either to another nonimmigrant or legal permanent resident status, since changes in status are not captured by the arrival-departure record. Because temporary workers, students and exchange visitors, and especially expected long-term residents commonly change status while in the United States, the population estimates generated by the person year methodology for these categories of admission are likely understated. The impact of change of status on the estimates of the temporary resident population will be further investigated by OIS.

## RESULTS

### Data Presentation

This report uses five broad categories of admission to present the results of the analysis, including 1) tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors, 2) students and exchange visitors, 3) temporary workers, 4) diplomats and other representatives, and 5) expected long-term residents. These five categories group admissions based on both type and authorized/initial period of stay.

Tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors include nonimmigrants who remain in the United States for short periods, typically for a few days to a few weeks.<sup>6</sup> Students and exchange visitors, including researchers, usually remain in the country for several months to several years. Nonimmigrants who come to the United States to work for a few months to several years are included in the temporary workers category. Diplomats and representatives of international organizations typically remain in the United States for the duration of their service. The expected long-term residents category includes those who arrived on nonimmigrant visas but

<sup>6</sup> Tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors also include transit aliens – foreign nationals in immediate and continuous transit through the United States to foreign destinations and to and from the United Nations headquarters district in New York City.

**Table 1.****Nonimmigrant Admissions to the United States:  
Fiscal Year 2004** (in thousands)

| Category  | Admissions |         |
|---|------------|---------|
|   | Number     | Percent |
| Total <sup>1</sup> . . . . .                      | 180,187    | 100.0   |
| Admissions issued an I-94 Form at entry . . . . . | 30,781     | 17.1    |
| All other admissions <sup>2</sup> . . . . .       | 149,406    | 82.9    |

<sup>1</sup> The 180.2 million nonimmigrant admissions for fiscal year 2004 exclude sea and air crew admissions (D-1 and D-2 visas).

<sup>2</sup> Includes an indeterminate number of second and subsequent entries by nonimmigrants who were admitted using a multiple-entry I-94 Form at a land border crossing.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival File, FY 2004 and the Performance Analysis System (PAS).

**Table 2.****Nonimmigrant Admissions to the United States by Category of Admission: Fiscal Year 2004** (in thousands)

| Category of admission  | Admissions |         |
|--|------------|---------|
|  | Number     | Percent |
| Total <sup>1</sup> . . . . .   | 180,187    | 100.0   |
| Tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors <sup>2</sup> . . . . . | 177,140    | 98.3    |
| Students and exchange visitors . . . . .   | 1,017      | 0.6     |
| Temporary workers . . . . .  | 1,517      | 0.8     |
| Diplomats and other representatives . . . . .                                      | 277        | 0.2     |
| Expected long-term residents . . . . .   | 105        | 0.1     |
| Unknown . . . . .  | 131        | 0.1     |

<sup>1</sup> The 180.2 million nonimmigrant admissions for fiscal year 2004 excludes sea and air crew admissions (D-1 and D-2 visas).

<sup>2</sup> Includes transit aliens. Also includes an indeterminate number of second and subsequent entries by nonimmigrants who were admitted using a multiple-entry I-94 Form at a land border crossing.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival File, FY 2004 and the Performance Analysis System (PAS).

**Table 3.****Nonimmigrant Admissions to the United States by Country of Origin: Fiscal Year 2004** (in thousands)

| Country of origin                           | Admissions |         |
|---|------------|---------|
|   | Number     | Percent |
| Total . . . . .                             | 180,187    | 100.0   |
| Mexico . . . . .                            | 111,231    | 61.7    |
| Land border crossers <sup>1</sup> . . . . . | 109,253    | 60.6    |
| Other. . . . .                              | 1,978      | 1.1     |
| Canada . . . . .                            | 42,867     | 23.8    |
| Land border crossers <sup>2</sup> . . . . . | 37,183     | 20.6    |
| Other. . . . .                              | 5,685      | 3.2     |
| United Kingdom . . . . .                    | 4,996      | 2.8     |
| Japan . . . . .                             | 4,336      | 2.4     |
| Germany . . . . .                           | 1,630      | 0.9     |
| France . . . . .                            | 1,242      | 0.7     |
| Korea . . . . .                             | 829        | 0.5     |
| Italy . . . . .                             | 760        | 0.4     |
| Australia . . . . .                         | 645        | 0.4     |
| India . . . . .                             | 611        | 0.3     |
| All other countries . . . . .               | 11,039     | 6.1     |

<sup>1</sup> Includes an indeterminate number of second and subsequent entries by nonimmigrants from countries other than Mexico who were admitted using a multiple-entry I-94 Form at a land border crossing.

<sup>2</sup> Includes an indeterminate number of second and subsequent entries by nonimmigrants from countries other than Canada who were admitted using a multiple-entry I-94 Form at a land border crossing.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival File, FY 2004 and the Performance Analysis System (PAS).

are likely to become permanent residents, such as certain spouses and fiancés(ées) of U.S. citizens.<sup>7</sup>

**Nonimmigrant Admissions in 2004**

According to PAS, there were a total of 180.2 million nonimmigrant admissions<sup>8</sup> into the United States in 2004 (see Table 1). Of those, 30.8 million were issued an I-94 and were captured by NIIS.<sup>9</sup>

The majority of the 180.2 million admissions were by tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors (177.1 million), followed by temporary workers (1.5 million), students and exchange visitors (1.0 million), diplomats and other representatives (277,000), and expected long-term residents (105,000) (see Table 2).

The countries with the highest number of admissions were Mexico (111.2 million) and Canada (42.9 million), followed by the United Kingdom (5.0 million), Japan (4.3 million), and Germany (1.6 million) (see Table 3).

**Estimating Admissions from Canada and Mexico.** There were an estimated 154.1 million admissions from Canada and Mexico combined, including 149.4 million admissions recorded by PAS and 4.7 million admissions recorded by NIIS. Because PAS does not include information on the country of origin, the number of admissions from either Canada or Mexico was estimated using information from PAS on land admissions at the northern or southern borders. In 2004, 29 percent of all land border admissions occurred at the northern border while 71 percent occurred at the southern border. This percent distribution suggests that, of the total 149.4 million admissions recorded by PAS, 42.6 million were admitted from Canada and 106.8 million were admitted from Mexico.<sup>10</sup>

Of the 111.2 million admissions from Mexico, the estimated 106.8 million admissions recorded by PAS were land border admissions, including all BCC and B-1 (business traveler)/B-2 (tourist) visa plus passport admissions. An I-94 Form is required for all air and sea admissions from Mexico, plus some land admissions. Of the 4.5 million admissions from Mexico recorded by NIIS, 2.5 million were land admissions. Combined, the PAS and NIIS data suggest there were an estimated 109.3 million land border admissions from Mexico in 2004.

Unfortunately, the Canadian PAS admissions data cannot easily be disaggregated by mode of transportation. Of the 42.9 million admissions from Canada, the estimated 42.6 million admissions recorded by PAS include visa exempt tourist and business travelers arriving by land, air, and sea. To estimate the number of admissions by land, the percent distribution of Canadian residents returning to Canada from the United States by mode of transportation was derived from Statistics Canada's International Travel Survey. The

<sup>7</sup> The categories students and exchange visitors, temporary workers, diplomats and other representatives, and expected long-term residents include principals, spouses, and children.

<sup>8</sup> The 180.2 million nonimmigrant admissions for fiscal year 2004 exclude sea and air crew admissions (D-1 and D-2 visas) but include the 30.8 million nonimmigrant admissions recorded by NIIS.

<sup>9</sup> The 30.8 million admissions captured by NIIS exclude an indeterminate number of second and subsequent entries by nonimmigrants who were admitted using a multiple-entry I-94 Form at a land border crossing.

<sup>10</sup> For this report, it is assumed that the 42.6 million admissions from Canada were Canadian citizens and the 106.8 million admissions from Mexico were Mexican citizens. However, the PAS admissions include an indeterminate number of second and subsequent entries by nonimmigrants from countries other than Canada and Mexico who were admitted using a multiple entry I-94 Form at a land border crossing.

data suggest that, of the 42.6 million admissions recorded by PAS, 37.1 million (87 percent) arrived by land, 5.4 million (13 percent) arrived by air, and 171,000 (less than one-half of 1 percent) arrived by sea. Certain nonimmigrants from Canada are required to complete an I-94 Form when they enter the United States. Of the 239,000 admissions recorded by NIIS, 96,000 were land admissions. Combined, the PAS and NIIS data suggest there were an estimated 37.1 million land border admissions from Canada in 2004.

### Mean Length of Visit

In this report, the term visit refers to the time between a nonimmigrant's entry and departure. Note that the term visit refers to the trip, not the traveler. A tourist, for example, who came to the United States during a year for a four-week vacation made a single visit. A business traveler who made three one-week trips during the same year made three visits. Length of visit was calculated by subtracting the date of departure in 2004 from the date of arrival. Same day departures were represented as one day.

The mean length of visit represents the average number of days spent per trip by a nonimmigrant admitted to the United States. For the majority of admissions issued an I-94 Form at entry, the average length of visit was calculated from matched arrival and departure records in NIIS. Nonimmigrant departure records were matched to arrival records using three criteria: the admission number included on the arrival and departure portions of the I-94 Form, the first letter of the nonimmigrant's last name, and the nonimmigrant's date of birth. Departures that occurred in 2004 were matched to arrivals that occurred between 2000 and 2004. Of the 26.4 million departures recorded by NIIS in 2004, 24.9 million or 94 percent were matched to arrival records (see Table 4).

In general, most of the matched arrivals and departures used to estimate the mean length of visit occurred within the same year. Over 91 percent of all departures that occurred in 2004 were matched to arrivals that also occurred in 2004 (see Table 5). Thus, the mean length of visit used to calculate the nonimmigrant population estimates represents the actual arrival and departure behavior of 2004 admissions. However, the proportion of matched arrivals and departures where both the arrival and departure occurred in 2004 varies considerably by broad category of admission. Tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors (94 percent) had the highest proportion, followed by diplomats and other representatives (79 percent), temporary workers (64 percent), students and exchange visitors (48 percent) and expected long-term residents (34 percent). For categories of admission with lower percentages of matched arrival and departures both occurring in 2004, such as temporary workers and students and exchange visitors, the mean length of visit reflects the arrival and departure behavior of admissions that occurred in 2004 as well as those that occurred in earlier years.

**Table 4.**

### Nonimmigrant Departures Matched to Nonimmigrant Arrivals (Form I-94 Admissions Only) by Category of Admission: Fiscal Year 2004 (in thousands)

| Category of admission  | Departure records |   |                 |
|--|-------------------|---|-----------------|
|  | Number            | Matched to arrival records <sup>1</sup> | Percent matched |
| Total . . . . .  | 26,394            | 24,901                                  | 94.3            |
| Tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors <sup>2</sup> . . . . . | 23,872            | 22,648                                  | 94.9            |
| Students and exchange visitors . . . . .   | 863               | 773                                     | 89.6            |
| Temporary workers . . . . .  | 1,197             | 1,126                                   | 94.1            |
| Diplomats and other representatives . . . . .                                      | 241               | 229                                     | 95.3            |
| Expected long-term residents . . . . .   | 34                | 31                                      | 90.2            |
| Unknown . . . . .  | 188               | 93                                      | 49.6            |

<sup>1</sup> Includes only those matched records with valid dates of arrival and departure.

<sup>2</sup> Includes transit aliens.

Note: Departures occurred during fiscal year 2004 and were matched to arrivals that occurred between fiscal year 2000 and 2004.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival and Departure Files, FY 2004.

**Table 5.**

### Nonimmigrant Departures Matched to Nonimmigrant Arrivals (Form I-94 Admissions Only) by Category of Admission and Year of Arrival: Fiscal Year 2004 (in thousands)

| Category of admission  | Total  | Departures in 2004 |         |              |         |
|--|--------|--------------------|---------|--------------|---------|
|  |        | Year of arrival    |         |              |         |
|  |        | 2004               |         | 2000 to 2003 |         |
|  |        | Number             | Percent | Number       | Percent |
| Total . . . . .  | 24,901 | 22,724             | 91.3    | 2,177        | 8.7     |
| Tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors <sup>1</sup> . . . . . | 22,648 | 21,358             | 94.3    | 1,291        | 5.7     |
| Students and exchange visitors . . . . .   | 773    | 374                | 48.3    | 399          | 51.7    |
| Temporary workers . . . . .  | 1,126  | 718                | 63.8    | 408          | 36.2    |
| Diplomats and other representatives . . . . .                                      | 229    | 181                | 78.8    | 49           | 21.2    |
| Expected long-term residents . . . . .   | 31     | 10                 | 33.7    | 21           | 66.3    |
| Unknown . . . . .  | 93     | 83                 | 89.0    | 10           | 11.0    |

<sup>1</sup> Includes transit aliens.

Note: Departures occurred during fiscal year 2004 and were matched to arrivals that occurred between fiscal year 2000 and 2004. Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival and Departure Files, FY 2004.

Also, for arrivals without matching departure records, it was assumed that the mean length of visit was the same for nonimmigrants in the same class of admission whose arrival and departure records could be matched. Of the 30.8 million nonimmigrant admissions in 2004, 22.7 million were matched to departures that occurred in 2004, leaving 8.1 million unmatched arrival records.<sup>11</sup> The means derived from the matched arrival and departure records were used to estimate the lengths of visit of the 8.1 million unmatched admissions.

The majority of nonimmigrants issued an I-94 Form at entry remained in the United States for one year or less per visit.

<sup>11</sup> The majority of the 8.1 million unmatched arrivals consist of nonimmigrants who, as of the end of fiscal year 2004, had not yet departed. It also includes arrivals that were not matched because the departures were not recorded by the NIIS data system, primarily because I-94 Forms are not always collected when nonimmigrants leave the United States. This would occur, for example, if an airline failed to collect the I-94 Form from departing air passengers or if nonimmigrants leave via land ports where there are less structured procedures to collect the forms. The exact number of uncollected departure forms is not known.

**Table 6.****Nonimmigrant Departures Matched to Nonimmigrant Arrivals (Form I-94 Admissions Only) by Category of Admission and Length of Visit: Fiscal Year 2004** (in thousands)

| Category of admission  | Number | Length of visit  |         |                    |         |
|--|--------|------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
|  |        | One year or less |         | More than one year |         |
|  |        | Number           | Percent | Number             | Percent |
| Total  | 24,901 | 24,562           | 98.6    | 339                | 1.4     |
| Tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors <sup>1</sup> | 22,648 | 22,572           | 99.7    | 77                 | 0.3     |
| Students and exchange visitors   | 773    | 659              | 85.3    | 114                | 14.7    |
| Temporary workers  | 1,126  | 1,001            | 88.9    | 125                | 11.1    |
| Diplomats and other representatives                                      | 229    | 217              | 94.7    | 12                 | 5.3     |
| Expected long-term residents   | 31     | 22               | 70.2    | 9                  | 29.8    |
| Unknown  | 93     | 91               | 97.9    | 2                  | 2.1     |

<sup>1</sup> Includes transit aliens.

Note: Departures occurred during fiscal year 2004 and were matched to arrivals that occurred between fiscal year 2000 and 2004.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival and Departure Files, FY 2004.

**Table 7.****Length of Visit of Nonimmigrants by Category of Admission: 2004**

| Category of admission                                       | Mean length of visit <sup>4</sup> |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors |                                   |
| I-94 Admissions <sup>2</sup>                                | 22.0                              |
| Admissions from Canada <sup>3</sup>                         | 3.7                               |
| Air   | 9.0                               |
| Land  | 3.0                               |
| Sea   | 7.8                               |
| Land border admissions from Mexico <sup>3,4</sup>           | 1.1                               |
| Students and exchange visitors                              | 219.1                             |
| Temporary workers   | 157.6                             |
| Diplomats and other representatives                         | 87.8                              |
| Expected long-term residents                                | 301.7                             |
| Unknown   | 42.7                              |

<sup>1</sup> Same-day departures are represented as one day.<sup>2</sup> Includes transit aliens.<sup>3</sup> Includes all nonimmigrant admissions not required to complete an I-94 Form upon entry and an indeterminate number of second and subsequent nonimmigrant entries who were admitted using a multiple-entry I-94 Form at a land border crossing.<sup>4</sup> Mean length of visit for 2001.

Source: Statistics Canada, International Travel Survey, special tabulation; Charney and Pavlovich (2002); and U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival and Departure Files, FY 2004 and the Performance Analysis System (PAS).

Approximately 99 percent who departed in 2004 had stayed for one year or less (see Table 6). Overall, less than 2 percent of nonimmigrants remained for more than one year per visit, but this proportion varied considerably by category of admission. Expected long-term residents (30 percent) had the highest proportion staying more than one year, followed by students and exchange visitors (15 percent), temporary workers (11 percent), diplomats and other representatives (5 percent), and tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors (less than one-half of 1 percent).

**Mean Length of Visit for Nonimmigrant Admissions from Canada and Mexico.** Because the dates of admission and departure of nonimmigrant arrivals are not collected by PAS, the mean length of visit for the majority of nonimmigrant admissions from both Canada and Mexico was estimated from other sources. For Canadian

admissions, data from Statistics Canada's International Travel Survey on the length of stay of Canadian citizens returning from the United States were used to estimate mean length of visit of air, land, and sea admissions.<sup>12</sup>

For Mexican land border crossers, the data used to estimate mean length of visit were derived from a study on the economic impact of Mexican visitors from Arizona.<sup>13</sup> The study estimates that, in 2001, over 96 percent of all Mexican visitors were day-trip visitors, with approximately 0.8 percent spending one night, 1.9 percent spending two nights, and 1.2 percent spending three or more nights. This suggests a mean length of visit of 1.1 days for Mexican border crossers.<sup>14</sup> Although the results of this study are specific to Arizona, for generating the nonimmigrant estimates presented

in this report, it is assumed that the behavior of the Mexican land border crossers going to Arizona is the same as all Mexican land border crossers. It is also assumed that the mean length of visit calculated has not changed since 2001.

**Mean Length of Visit by Broad Category of Admission.** On average, tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors who were required to complete an I-94 Form when admitted into the United States remained in the country for 22 days (see Table 7). The average length of visit for admissions from Canada (excluding I-94 admissions) was just under four days, but this varies by mode of transportation. Nonimmigrants arriving by air from Canada remain an average of nine days, while those arriving by sea remain for about eight days and by land for three days. Land border crossers from Mexico remain for just over one day per visit. Diplomats and other representatives stayed for about 13 weeks (88 days) per visit, while temporary workers remain for 23 weeks (158 days), students and exchange visitors for 31 weeks (219 days), and expected long-term residents for 43 weeks (302 days).

**Calculating the Population Estimates**

For nonimmigrants required to complete an I-94 Form, the population estimates were calculated by multiplying the number of admissions by the mean length of visit for each class of admission and country of citizenship group then dividing by 365. For example, the number of B-2 tourist admissions from France was multiplied by the mean length of visit of B-2 tourists from France then divided by 365. If the mean length of visit could not be calculated by the country-specific class of admission, then the mean for the total class of admission was used.

For Canadian and Mexican I-94 admissions, the population estimates were calculated using class of admission, country of citizenship,

<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada, International Travel Survey, special tabulation.<sup>13</sup> See Charney, Alberta and Vera Pavlovich-Kochi, 2002, "The Economic Impacts of Mexican Visitors to Arizona: 2001," University of Arizona, Karl Eller College of Business and Public Administration. A copy of this report is available at <http://ebr.eller.arizona.edu/research/MexicanVisitors.pdf>.<sup>14</sup> Assuming a value of 1 for same-day visits, 2 for visits of one night, 3 for visits of two nights, and 4 for visits of three or more nights,  $((96.1 \times 1) + (0.8 \times 2) + (1.9 \times 3) + (1.2 \times 4)) / 100 = 1.1$  days.

and mode of transportation. For air and sea admissions, the population estimates were calculated by multiplying the number of admissions in each class by the mean length of visit for that class. For land admissions, however, an additional adjustment was required. All I-94 Forms issued at land border crossings are valid for 180 days and for multiple entries. However, only the first entry date (when the I-94 Form was issued) and the last departure date are recorded by NIIS, regardless of the number of entries that occurred during the six-month period. For I-94 land admissions, it is probable that the departure record is collected when the form itself has expired and not at the first departure after initial arrival. To compensate, the means by class of admission for air arrivals were used in place of those for land arrivals.

For Canadian and Mexican nonimmigrants not required to complete an I-94 Form at entry, the person year estimates were derived by multiplying the number of admissions by the mean lengths of visit derived from other data sources.

### Nonimmigrant Population Estimates

On a typical day in 2004, there were 3.8 million nonimmigrants in the United States (see Table 8). Approximately 2.3 million (61 percent) were tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors, while 704,000 (18 percent) were temporary workers and 640,000 (17 percent) students and exchange visitors. Combined, the remaining categories of admission accounted for less than 5 percent of the nonimmigrant population, including 71,000 expected long-term residents (1.9 percent) and 68,000 diplomats and other representatives (1.8 percent).

### Nonimmigrant Population Estimates by Country of Citizenship.

Among the 3.8 million nonimmigrants in the United States on a typical day in 2004, about 889,000 (23 percent) were from Mexico while 572,000 (15 percent) were from Canada (see Table 9). Six additional countries represented over 2 percent each of the non-immigrant population, including India (7.9 percent), the United Kingdom (6.0 percent), Japan (5.1 percent), Korea (3.7 percent), Germany (2.9 percent), and China (2.4 percent).

Of the 3.8 million nonimmigrants, an estimated 841,000 (22 percent) were land border crossers, including 491,000 (13 percent) from Mexico and 350,000 (9 percent) from Canada. Of the 841,000 land border crossers, 58 percent were from Mexico and 42 percent from Canada.

### NEXT STEPS

Estimates of the nonimmigrant population are updated annually by the Office of Immigration Statistics. The assumptions underlying the estimates will be reevaluated and revised as appropriate. Future research by the OIS will focus on refining the nonimmigrant estimates, focusing on the influence of change of status and other factors on the estimates of the temporary resident population.

### SUGGESTED READINGS

Grieco, Elizabeth M., May 2005, "Temporary Admissions of Nonimmigrants to the United States in 2004," *Annual Flow Report*,

**Table 8.**

**Estimated Nonimmigrant Population in the United States by Category of Admission: Fiscal Year 2004** (in thousands)

| Category of admission  | Population estimate |         |
|--|---------------------|---------|
|  | Number              | Percent |
| Total . . . . .  | 3,820               | 100.0   |
| Tourists, business travelers, and other short-term visitors <sup>1</sup> . . . . . | 2,324               | 60.8    |
| Students and exchange visitors . . . . .   | 640                 | 16.7    |
| Temporary workers . . . . .  | 704                 | 18.4    |
| Diplomats and other representatives . . . . .                                      | 68                  | 1.8     |
| Expected long-term residents . . . . .   | 71                  | 1.9     |
| Unknown . . . . .  | 14                  | 0.4     |

<sup>1</sup> Includes transit aliens.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival and Departure Files, FY 2004 and the Performance Analysis System (PAS).

**Table 9.**

**Estimated Nonimmigrant Population in the United States by Country of Origin: Fiscal Year 2004** (in thousands)

| Country of origin              | Population estimate |         |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                                | Number              | Percent |
| Total . . . . .                | 3,820               | 100.0   |
| Mexico . . . . .               | 889                 | 23.3    |
| Land border crossers . . . . . | 491                 | 12.9    |
| Other . . . . .                | 398                 | 10.4    |
| Canada . . . . .               | 572                 | 15.0    |
| Land border crossers . . . . . | 350                 | 9.2     |
| Other . . . . .                | 222                 | 5.8     |
| India . . . . .                | 303                 | 7.9     |
| United Kingdom . . . . .       | 228                 | 6.0     |
| Japan . . . . .                | 196                 | 5.1     |
| Korea <sup>1</sup> . . . . .   | 142                 | 3.7     |
| Germany . . . . .              | 109                 | 2.9     |
| China . . . . .                | 93                  | 2.4     |
| France . . . . .               | 64                  | 1.7     |
| Taiwan . . . . .               | 50                  | 1.3     |
| All other countries . . . . .  | 1,175               | 30.8    |

<sup>1</sup> Korea includes both North and South Korea.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS), Arrival and Departure Files, FY 2004 and the Performance Analysis System (PAS).

Office of Immigration Statistics, Department of Homeland Security. A copy of this report is available at <http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/statistics/publications/FlowRptTempAdmis2004.pdf>.

Grieco, Elizabeth M., March 2005, "Length of Visit of Nonimmigrants Departing the United States in 2003," *Working Paper*, Office of Immigration Statistics, Department of Homeland Security. A copy of this report is available at <http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/statistics/publications/LengthVstNonim2003.pdf>.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the Office of Immigration Statistics web page at <http://www.dhs.gov/immigrationstatistics> or <http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/statistics>.