



# Immigrant Population Growth Slows

## 'Trump Effect' likely explains slowdown

By Steven A. Camarota and Karen Zeigler

Recently released Census Bureau data from the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) shows the number of immigrants (legal and illegal), referred to by the Census Bureau as the “foreign-born”, grew more slowly from 2017 to 2019 than in prior years.<sup>1</sup> Growth in the total number of immigrants does not simply reflect new arrivals, rather it represents the combined effect of mortality, out-migration, and the number of newcomers. Analysis of the new data indicates that net migration — the number coming vs. those leaving — fell considerably between 2017 and 2019. The lower level of net migration likely reflects efforts by the Trump administration to enforce immigration laws and other changes. The new ACS numbers show immigration through mid-2019 and are therefore unaffected by Covid-19.

### Among the key findings in the new data:

- In the first two years of the Trump administration (2017 to 2019), growth in the immigrant population (legal and illegal) averaged only about 200,000 a year, in contrast to 650,000 a year from 2010 to 2017.<sup>2</sup> (Figure 1)
- The data released so far indicates that net migration among immigrants — the difference between the number of immigrants coming vs. those leaving — averaged 525,000 a year between 2017 and 2019, compared to about 953,000 a year between 2010 and 2017.<sup>3</sup> (Figure 2)
- The slowdown in growth and net migration almost certainly reflects policy changes rather than a deterioration in the economy, as unemployment was low and job creation reasonably strong from 2017 to 2019.<sup>4</sup> Covid-19 did not have an impact until 2020.
- The slowdown in growth is entirely due to a decline in non-citizens in the country; the number of naturalized citizens continues to grow. This is probably an indication that some illegal immigrants left or fewer arrived, primarily from Mexico. It may also indicate that more long-term visitors are headed home instead of overstaying their visas. (Table 4 and Figure 4)
- It is not possible from the data released so far to determine if slower growth was caused by fewer people coming or more leaving — though both likely played a role. We do know that between 2010 and 2019, 11.1 million new immigrants settled in the United States.<sup>5</sup> This was offset by roughly 305,000 deaths and out-migration of 325,000 each year.<sup>6</sup>
- While the ACS data only shows population trends through July 1, 2019, the Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey, a much smaller survey, does show the immigrant population continued to decline through August 2020.<sup>7</sup> (Figure 4)

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- Trump administration policies that may have caused the slowdown include:<sup>8</sup>
  - A significant reduction in the number of refugees allowed into the country;
  - Requiring immigrant self-sufficiency through reform of the public charge rules;
  - Modest administrative changes that may have had a cumulative effect;<sup>9</sup>
  - Agreements with Mexico and Central American countries to offer safe haven to people seeking asylum;
  - Increased barriers and fencing at the border;
  - More worksite enforcement against illegal workers and some employers; and
  - Efforts to end TPS and DACA, which may have increased out-migration and/or discouraged new illegal immigration.
- Although the pace of increase has slowed down, the nation’s immigrant population still hit a new record of 44.9 million in July 2019, an increase of about 204,000 over 2018.<sup>10</sup> (Figures 1 and 3)
- As a share of the U.S. population, immigrants (legal and illegal) comprised 13.7 percent in 2019, the highest percentage in 109 years.<sup>11</sup> (Figure 3)
- In addition to immigrants, there were 17.1 million U.S.-born minor children with an immigrant parent in 2019, for a total of 62 million immigrants and their children in the country — accounting for about one in five U.S. residents.<sup>12</sup>

**Sending regions and U.S. states:**

- Mexico accounted for 13 percent or 1.4 million of the immigrants who arrived since 2010, making it the top sending country. However, because of out-migration and natural mortality among the existing population, the overall Mexican-born population actually declined by nearly 780,000 between 2010 and 2019. (Tables 1 and 3)
- There has been a significant increase in immigrants from Latin American countries other than Mexico. The number from Latin America (excluding Mexico) grew 2.1 million between 2010 and 2019 — significantly more than from any other part of the world. (Tables 1 and 2)
- Just between 2018 and 2019, the number of immigrants from Latin America (excluding Mexico), grew 310,000, with Central Americans accounting for about 200,000 of this increase and Venezuela roughly 70,000 of the increase. (Table 2)
- The sending regions with the largest numerical increases 2010 to 2019 were South Asia (up 1.22 million); East Asia (up 1.16 million); Sub-Saharan Africa (up 767,000); the Caribbean (up 755,000); Central America (up 730,000); South America (up 650,000); and the Middle East (up 535,000).<sup>13</sup> (Table 1)
- The states with the largest numerical increase in the number of immigrants 2010 to 2019 were Florida (up 868,000); Texas (up 809,000); California (up 414,000); Washington (up 247,000); New Jersey (up 230,000); Massachusetts (up 207,000); Virginia (up 173,000); North Carolina (up 165,000); Pennsylvania (up 154,000); Georgia (up 149,000); Maryland (up 126,000); Arizona (up 120,000); Michigan (up 113,000); and Nevada (up 102,000). (Table 5)
- The states with the largest percentage increase 2010 to 2019 were North Dakota (up 87 percent); South Dakota (up 63 percent); Kentucky (up 40 percent); Delaware (up 35 percent); South Carolina (up 32 percent); Tennessee (up 29 percent); Washington and West Virginia (each up 28 percent); Iowa and Nebraska (each up 27 percent); and Montana (up 25 percent). (Table 5)

**Data Source.** At the end of September, the Census Bureau released some of the data from the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS). The survey reflects the U.S. population as of July 1, 2019. The ACS is by far the largest survey taken by the federal government each year and includes over two million households.<sup>14</sup> The Census Bureau has posted some of the results from the ACS to its data.census.gov website.<sup>15</sup> It has not released the public-use version of the ACS for researchers to download and analyze. However, a good deal of information can be found at data.census.gov. Unless otherwise indicated, the information in this analysis comes directly from the Bureau’s website.

The immigrant population, referred to as the “foreign-born” by the Census Bureau, is comprised of those individuals who were not U.S. citizens at birth. It includes naturalized citizens, legal permanent residents (green card holders), illegal immigrants, temporary workers, and foreign students. It does not include those born to immigrants in the United States, including to illegal immigrant parents, or those born in outlying U.S. territories, such as Puerto Rico. Prior research by the Department of Homeland Security and others indicates that some 90 percent of illegal immigrants respond to the ACS.<sup>16</sup> Thus all the figures reported above are for both legal and illegal immigrants.

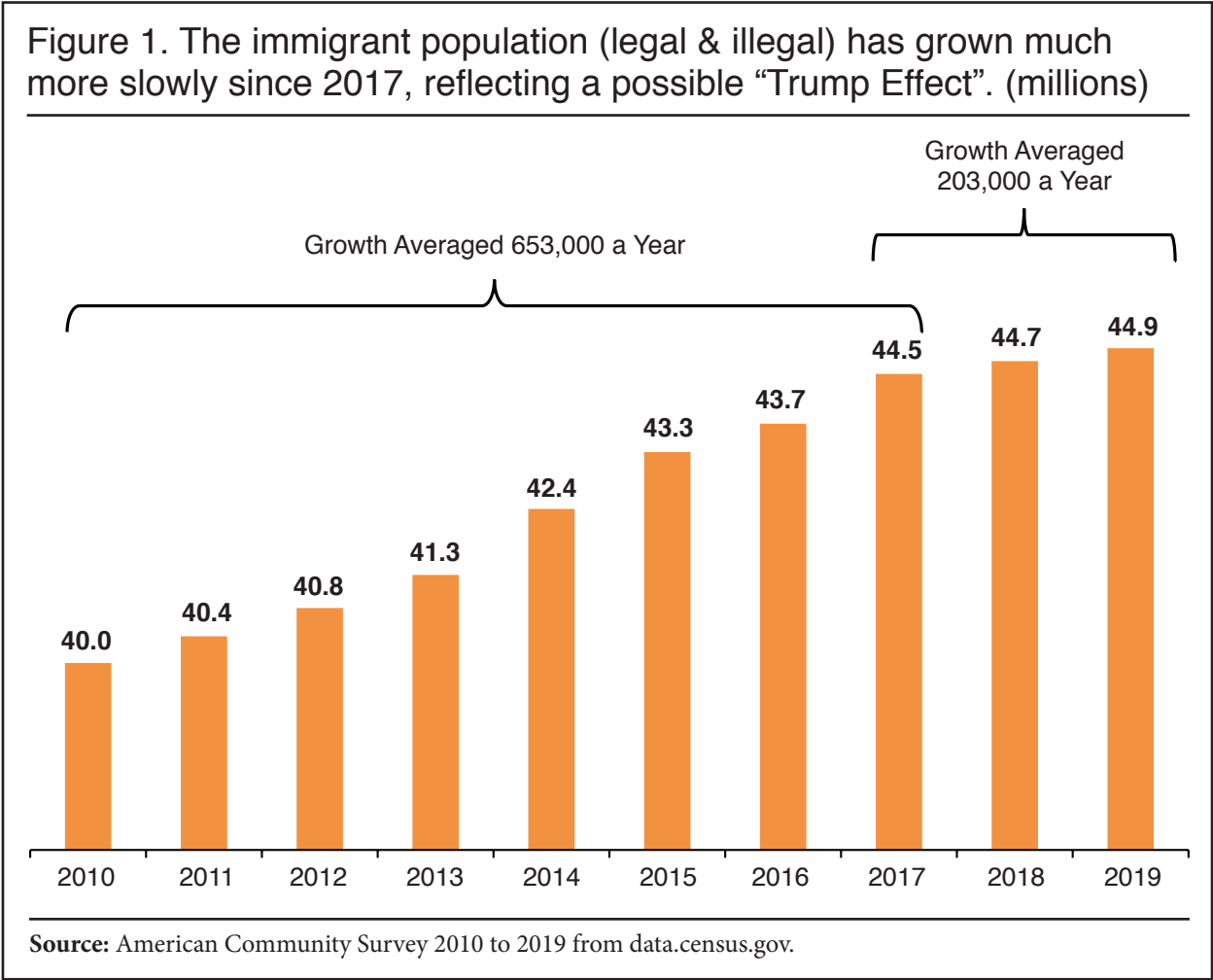
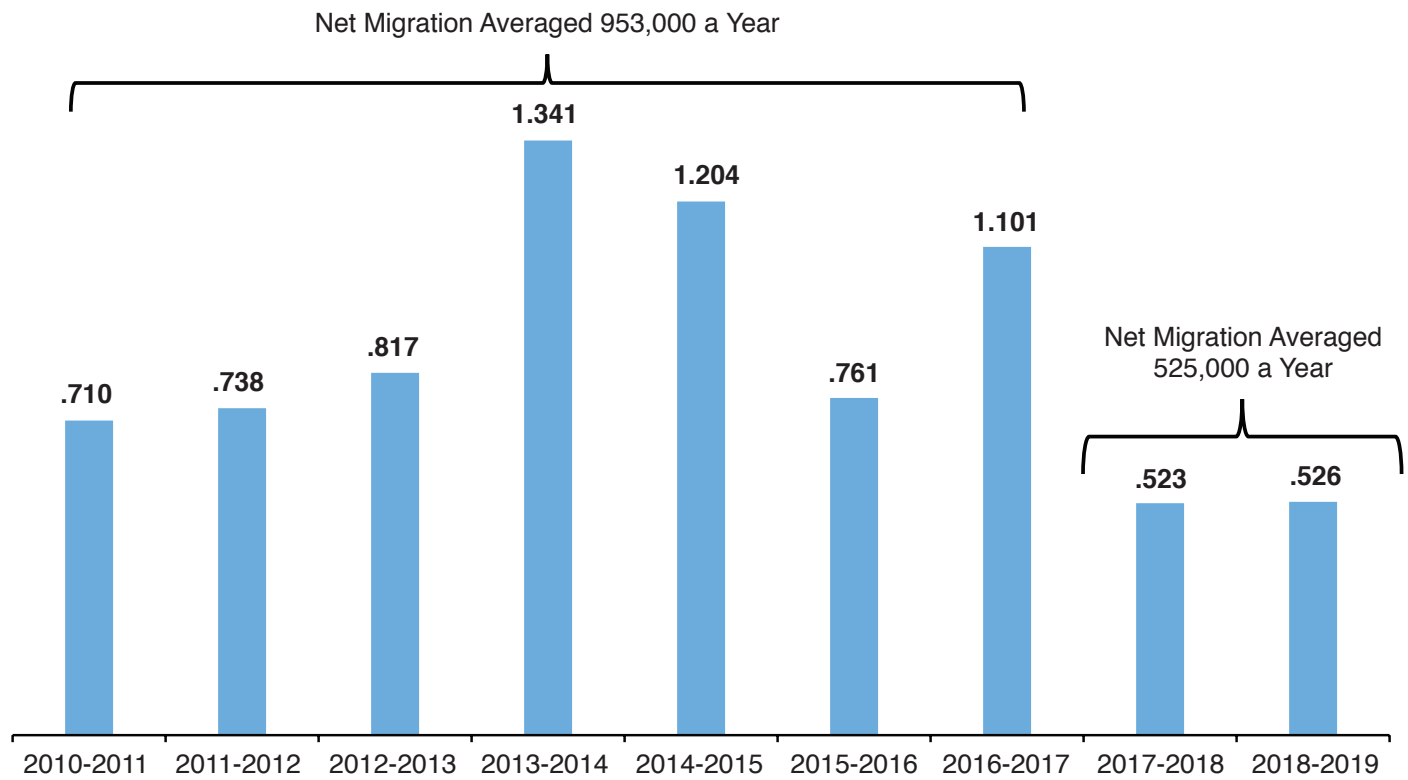
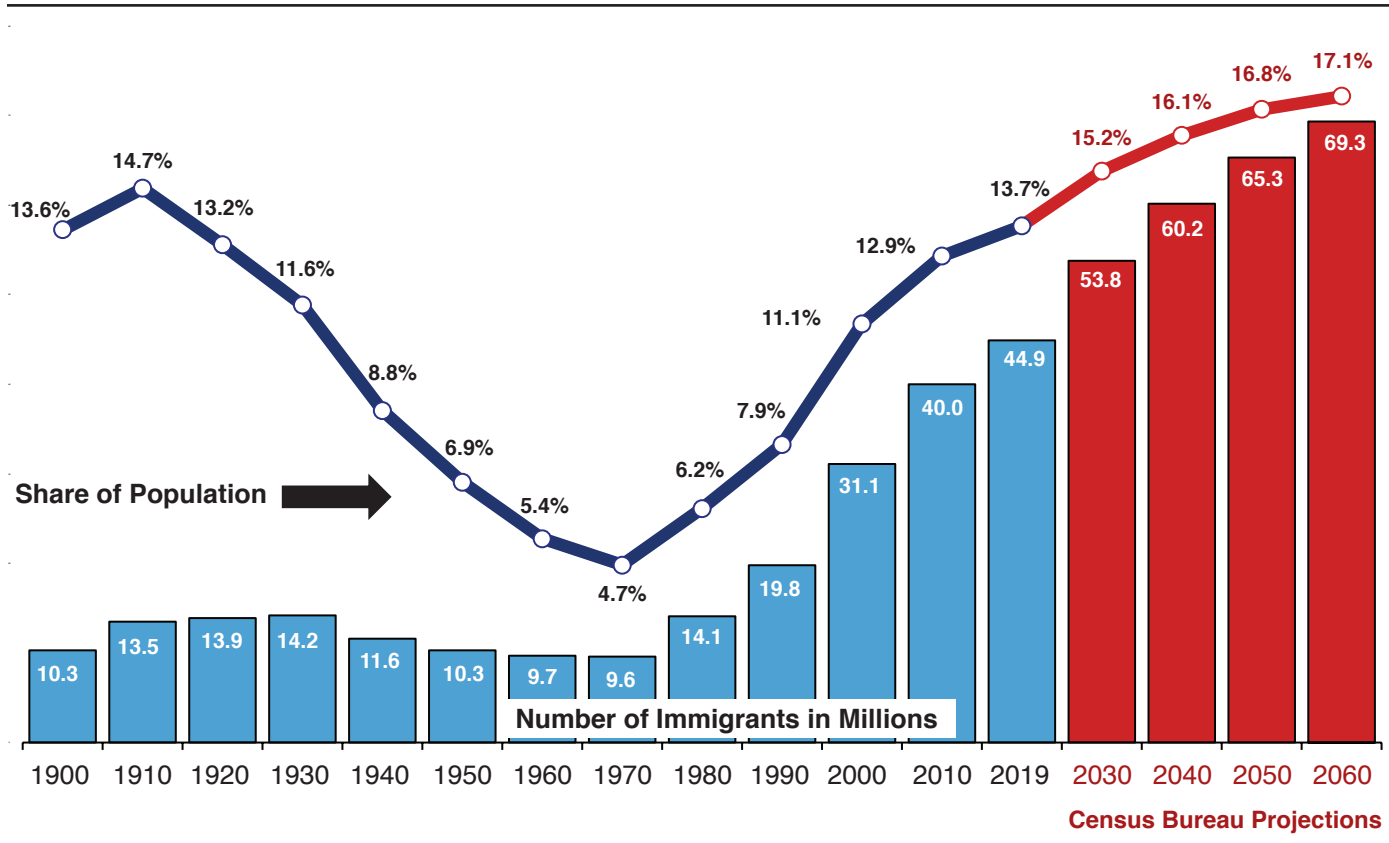


Figure 2. Estimated Annual Net Migration of Immigrants to the United States, 2010 to 2019, based on the ACS (millions)



Source: American Community Survey 2010 to 2019 from data.census.gov.  
See end note 3 for our method of estimating the net migration of immigrants.

Figure 3. Immigrants in the U.S., Number and Percent, 1900-2019, Plus Census Bureau Projections to 2060



Source: Decennial Census for 1900 to 2000, American Community Survey for 2010 to for 2019. For 2030 to 2060 see [Census projections](#) through 2060, reissued in September 2018.

**Table 1. Immigrant Population in the U.S. by Country and Region, 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2019 (thousands)**

Region	1990	2000	2010	2019	Growth 2010-2019	% Growth 2010-2019
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>4,298</b>	<b>9,177</b>	<b>11,711</b>	<b>10,932</b>	<b>(779)</b>	<b>-7%</b>
<b>East Asia</b>	<b>3,759</b>	<b>5,822</b>	<b>7,516</b>	<b>8,680</b>	<b>1,164</b>	<b>15%</b>
China	921	1,519	2,167	2,854	687	32%
Korea	568	864	1,100	1,039	(62)	-6%
Vietnam	543	988	1,241	1,384	143	12%
Philippines	913	1,369	1,778	2,045	268	15%
Burma	20	34	82	151	69	84%
Thailand	107	170	223	261	38	17%
<b>South Asia</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>1,341</b>	<b>2,347</b>	<b>3,566</b>	<b>1,220</b>	<b>52%</b>
India	450	1,023	1,780	2,688	908	51%
Pakistan	92	223	300	398	99	33%
Bangladesh	21	95	154	261	108	70%
Nepal	2	12	69	167	97	140%
<b>Caribbean</b>	<b>1,947</b>	<b>2,962</b>	<b>3,739</b>	<b>4,494</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>20%</b>
Cuba	737	873	1,105	1,360	255	23%
Dominican Republic	348	688	879	1,169	290	33%
Jamaica	334	554	660	772	112	17%
Haiti	225	419	587	702	115	20%
<b>Central America</b>	<b>1,134</b>	<b>2,026</b>	<b>3,053</b>	<b>3,782</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>24%</b>
El Salvador	465	817	1,214	1,412	198	16%
Guatemala	226	481	831	1,111	281	34%
Honduras	109	283	523	746	223	43%
<b>South America</b>	<b>1,037</b>	<b>1,930</b>	<b>2,730</b>	<b>3,380</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>24%</b>
Colombia	286	510	637	808	172	27%
Peru	144	278	429	446	18	4%
Ecuador	143	299	443	431	(12)	-3%
Brazil	82	212	340	502	162	48%
Venezuela	42	107	184	465	281	153%
Guyana	121	211	265	254	(11)	-4%
<b>Middle East</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>1,188</b>	<b>1,612</b>	<b>2,146</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>33%</b>
Iran	211	283	357	385	29	8%
Iraq	45	90	160	250	90	56%
Egypt	66	113	138	206	68	49%
Israel	86	110	128	132	5	4%
Lebanon	86	106	121	120	(1)	-1%
Saudi Arabia	13	22	45	77	32	71%
Syria	37	55	60	93	33	55%
Afghanistan	28	45	54	132	78	143%
<b>Europe</b>	<b>4,360</b>	<b>4,981</b>	<b>4,907</b>	<b>4,753</b>	<b>(154)</b>	<b>-3%</b>
United Kingdom	640	678	670	678	8	1%
Russia	n/a	340	383	392	9	2%
Italy	581	473	365	315	(50)	-14%
Ukraine	n/a	275	326	355	28	9%
Germany	712	707	605	538	(67)	-11%
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>2,094</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>58%</b>
Nigeria	55	135	219	393	174	79%
Ethiopia	35	70	174	256	82	47%
Ghana	21	66	125	199	74	60%
Kenya	14	41	89	153	65	73%
Somalia	2	36	82	115	32	39%
<b>Canada</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>797</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Oceania/Elsewhere</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,767</b>	<b>31,108</b>	<b>39,956</b>	<b>44,933</b>	<b>4,977</b>	<b>12%</b>
Predominantly Muslim Countries	841	1,519	2,185	2,967	782	36%
Latin America	8,417	16,096	21,232	22,588	1,356	6%
Latin America other than Mexico	4,119	6,918	9,521	11,656	2,135	22%

**Source:** Data for 1990 and 2000 are from the decennial Census. Data for 2010 and 2019 are from the American Community Survey at data.census.gov. Figures for 1990 are from Table 3, [here](#). Data for 2000 for Burma, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, and Somalia are from the 2000 Decennial Census (5% sample) public-use data. See end note 13 for a list of countries by region.

**Table 2. Immigrant Population in the U.S. by Country and Region, 2010 to 2019 (thousands)**

Region	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>11,711</b>	<b>11,673</b>	<b>11,563</b>	<b>11,585</b>	<b>11,714</b>	<b>11,643</b>	<b>11,574</b>	<b>11,270</b>	<b>11,172</b>	<b>10,932</b>
<b>East Asia</b>	<b>7,516</b>	<b>7,620</b>	<b>7,777</b>	<b>7,881</b>	<b>8,158</b>	<b>8,363</b>	<b>8,408</b>	<b>8,635</b>	<b>8,625</b>	<b>8,680</b>
China	2,167	2,231	2,292	2,384	2,520	2,677	2,717	2,844	2,845	2,854
Korea	1,100	1,083	1,085	1,070	1,080	1,060	1,042	1,063	1,039	1,039
Vietnam	1,241	1,259	1,259	1,281	1,292	1,301	1,353	1,343	1,346	1,384
Philippines	1,778	1,814	1,868	1,844	1,926	1,982	1,942	2,008	2,014	2,045
Burma	82	96	116	117	128	138	142	160	140	151
Thailand	223	240	237	234	252	247	254	256	269	261
<b>South Asia</b>	<b>2,347</b>	<b>2,464</b>	<b>2,603</b>	<b>2,719</b>	<b>2,940</b>	<b>3,172</b>	<b>3,237</b>	<b>3,453</b>	<b>3,494</b>	<b>3,566</b>
India	1,780	1,857	1,968	2,035	2,206	2,390	2,435	2,611	2,653	2,688
Pakistan	300	304	314	343	371	379	383	392	379	398
Bangladesh	154	184	188	203	210	229	235	249	261	261
Nepal	69	74	86	87	110	121	129	153	149	167
<b>Caribbean</b>	<b>3,739</b>	<b>3,777</b>	<b>3,873</b>	<b>3,954</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>4,173</b>	<b>4,294</b>	<b>4,415</b>	<b>4,461</b>	<b>4,494</b>
Cuba	1,105	1,095	1,114	1,144	1,173	1,211	1,272	1,312	1,344	1,360
Dominican Republic	879	897	957	991	998	1,063	1,085	1,163	1,178	1,169
Jamaica	660	697	681	715	706	711	736	745	733	772
Haiti	587	592	606	594	628	676	668	680	687	702
<b>Central America</b>	<b>3,053</b>	<b>3,085</b>	<b>3,148</b>	<b>3,166</b>	<b>3,320</b>	<b>3,385</b>	<b>3,455</b>	<b>3,527</b>	<b>3,582</b>	<b>3,782</b>
El Salvador	1,214	1,265	1,272	1,252	1,315	1,352	1,387	1,402	1,419	1,412
Guatemala	831	851	859	902	916	928	936	959	1,007	1,111
Honduras	523	491	522	534	588	599	651	655	646	746
<b>South America</b>	<b>2,730</b>	<b>2,711</b>	<b>2,727</b>	<b>2,768</b>	<b>2,856</b>	<b>2,918</b>	<b>2,979</b>	<b>3,213</b>	<b>3,303</b>	<b>3,380</b>
Colombia	637	659	677	677	707	699	705	783	790	808
Peru	429	412	426	440	449	446	427	459	467	446
Ecuador	443	435	421	428	424	441	439	454	443	431
Brazil	340	330	326	337	336	361	410	451	473	502
Venezuela	184	189	194	198	216	256	290	351	394	465
Guyana	265	259	260	260	273	281	266	269	280	254
<b>Middle East</b>	<b>1,612</b>	<b>1,682</b>	<b>1,788</b>	<b>1,820</b>	<b>1,889</b>	<b>1,974</b>	<b>2,083</b>	<b>2,084</b>	<b>2,135</b>	<b>2,146</b>
Iran	357	362	379	364	365	394	386	395	382	385
Iraq	160	170	177	201	217	215	222	232	237	250
Egypt	138	148	173	176	173	186	182	184	208	206
Israel	128	133	138	127	133	130	142	143	130	132
Lebanon	121	118	122	124	119	120	129	125	122	120
Saudi Arabia	45	56	69	89	87	97	100	82	75	77
Syria	60	65	75	79	86	83	97	104	112	93
Afghanistan	54	66	66	67	73	71	95	100	114	132
<b>Europe</b>	<b>4,907</b>	<b>4,975</b>	<b>4,895</b>	<b>4,882</b>	<b>4,851</b>	<b>4,876</b>	<b>4,876</b>	<b>4,914</b>	<b>4,834</b>	<b>4,753</b>
United Kingdom	670	685	679	695	679	683	697	703	699	678
Russia	383	399	399	391	391	387	397	404	383	392
Italy	365	374	354	354	357	352	336	334	325	315
Ukraine	326	340	343	345	332	346	348	354	326	355
Germany	605	608	592	584	583	585	564	553	559	538
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>1,402</b>	<b>1,503</b>	<b>1,609</b>	<b>1,716</b>	<b>1,784</b>	<b>1,933</b>	<b>2,019</b>	<b>2,094</b>
Nigeria	219	227	239	234	264	324	307	345	375	393
Ethiopia	174	162	201	196	215	229	245	250	278	256
Ghana	125	130	129	149	150	156	171	165	195	199
Kenya	89	103	107	111	121	130	130	138	147	153
Somalia	82	89	71	80	96	89	93	107	103	115
<b>Canada</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>797</b>
<b>Oceania/Elsewhere</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>308</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,956</b>	<b>40,378</b>	<b>40,825</b>	<b>41,348</b>	<b>42,391</b>	<b>43,290</b>	<b>43,739</b>	<b>44,525</b>	<b>44,729</b>	<b>44,933</b>
Predominantly Muslim Countries	2,185	2,282	2,365	2,482	2,599	2,702	2,824	2,864	2,926	2,967
Latin America	21,232	21,245	21,311	21,473	21,890	22,119	22,302	22,425	22,518	22,588
Latin America other than Mexico	9,521	9,573	9,748	9,888	10,176	10,476	10,729	11,155	11,346	11,656

**Source:** American Community Survey 2010 to 2019 from data.census.gov.  
See end note 13 for a list of countries by region.

**Table 3. Year of Arrival in 2019 by Region\* (thousands)**

	<b>Before 1990</b>	<b>1990- 1999</b>	<b>2000- 2009</b>	<b>2010- 2019</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,238</b>	<b>9,517</b>	<b>11,035</b>	<b>11,142</b>	<b>44,933</b>
Europe	1,865	1,042	866	892	4,665
Asia	3,864	2,685	3,231	4,320	14,099
Latin America	6,779	5,187	5,995	4,627	22,588
Caribbean	1,488	880	1,009	1,117	4,494
Central America	4,461	3,663	4,091	2,499	14,714
Mexico	3,532	2,942	3,034	1,425	10,932
Other Central America	929	722	1,058	1,074	3,782
South America	830	645	894	1,011	3,380
Other Areas	730	603	944	1,303	3,580

**Source:** 2019 American Community Survey at data.census.gov. The ACS asks respondents what year they came to the United States.

\* Regions reflect the way the Census Bureau groups countries at data.census.gov.

**Table 4. Number of Immigrants by Citizenship and Sending Region\*, 2010 to 2019 (thousands)**

<b>Number of Non-Citizens</b>										
<b>Region</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Total</b>	22,480	22,238	22,138	22,053	22,407	22,593	22,501	22,577	22,099	21,750
Europe	1,842	1,791	1,761	1,733	1,713	1,698	1,671	1,689	1,631	1,549
Asia	4,774	4,854	4,987	4,969	5,289	5,515	5,586	5,819	5,685	5,566
Latin America	14,411	14,146	13,917	13,858	13,916	13,846	13,716	13,432	13,135	13,004
Caribbean	1,711	1,726	1,726	1,673	1,678	1,732	1,749	1,795	1,719	1,682
Central America	11,182	10,986	10,823	10,809	10,858	10,710	10,581	10,126	9,898	9,745
Mexico	9,032	8,857	8,669	8,652	8,606	8,436	8,270	7,815	7,578	7,235
Other Central America	2,150	2,130	2,154	2,157	2,252	2,273	2,311	2,311	2,320	2,510
South America	1,519	1,434	1,367	1,376	1,380	1,404	1,386	1,511	1,518	1,576
All Others	1,453	1,446	1,473	1,493	1,490	1,534	1,528	1,636	1,647	1,632

<b>Number of Naturalized Citizens</b>										
<b>Region</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Total</b>	17,476	18,140	18,686	19,295	19,985	20,697	21,238	21,949	22,630	23,183
Europe	2,975	3,099	3,048	3,070	3,052	3,091	3,114	3,129	3,116	3,117
Asia	6,510	6,708	6,945	7,208	7,462	7,734	7,875	8,089	8,272	8,534
Latin America	6,813	7,099	7,395	7,615	7,975	8,266	8,579	8,993	9,382	9,585
Caribbean	2,020	2,051	2,147	2,280	2,322	2,434	2,537	2,620	2,742	2,812
Central America	3,582	3,772	3,888	3,942	4,177	4,318	4,448	4,671	4,856	4,969
Mexico	2,679	2,816	2,894	2,933	3,109	3,207	3,304	3,455	3,594	3,697
Other Central America	903	956	994	1,010	1,068	1,111	1,145	1,216	1,261	1,272
South America	1,211	1,277	1,360	1,393	1,476	1,514	1,593	1,702	1,785	1,804
All Others	1,178	1,235	1,299	1,401	1,496	1,605	1,670	1,738	1,860	1,948

**Source:** 2019 American Community Survey at data.census.gov.

\* Regions reflect the way the Census Bureau groups countries at data.census.gov.



**Table 5. State Immigrant Populations, 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2019 (thousands)**

State	1990	2000	2010	2019	Growth 2010- 2019	% Growth 2010- 2019
North Dakota	9	12	17	31	14	87.1%
South Dakota	8	13	22	36	14	63.4%
Kentucky	34	80	141	197	56	39.9%
Delaware	22	45	72	97	25	35.3%
South Carolina	50	116	218	288	70	32.0%
Tennessee	59	159	289	373	84	29.2%
Washington	322	614	886	1,133	247	27.8%
West Virginia	16	19	23	29	6	27.7%
Iowa	43	91	139	178	38	27.5%
Nebraska	28	75	112	142	30	27.0%
Montana	14	16	20	25	5	25.1%
Minnesota	113	260	378	472	94	24.8%
New Hampshire	41	54	70	87	17	24.6%
Florida	1,663	2,671	3,658	4,526	868	23.7%
Utah	59	159	223	275	52	23.3%
North Carolina	115	430	719	885	165	23.0%
Massachusetts	574	773	984	1,190	207	21.0%
Pennsylvania	369	508	739	893	154	20.9%
Nevada	105	317	508	611	102	20.1%
Texas	1,524	2,900	4,142	4,951	809	19.5%
Michigan	355	524	588	701	113	19.3%
Indiana	94	187	301	359	58	19.2%
Ohio	260	339	470	559	89	19.0%
Virginia	312	570	911	1,084	173	19.0%
Idaho	29	64	87	103	16	18.4%
Alaska	25	37	49	58	9	18.4%
Arkansas	25	74	132	154	23	17.2%
Oklahoma	65	132	206	240	34	16.4%
Georgia	173	577	943	1,092	149	15.8%
Maryland	313	518	804	929	126	15.6%
Wisconsin	122	194	255	294	39	15.4%
Maine	36	37	46	52	7	14.8%
Arizona	278	656	857	976	120	14.0%
Louisiana	87	116	173	197	24	13.7%
Missouri	84	151	233	262	30	12.7%
New Jersey	967	1,476	1,845	2,075	230	12.5%
Wyoming	8	11	16	18	2	12.2%
Kansas	63	135	187	209	22	11.7%
Colorado	142	370	497	547	50	10.0%
Hawaii	163	212	248	273	25	10.0%
Oregon	139	290	376	411	35	9.3%
Connecticut	279	370	487	528	41	8.5%
Rhode Island	95	119	134	145	11	8.0%
Vermont	18	23	28	29	2	6.6%
Dist. Of Columbia	59	74	82	85	4	4.4%
California	6,459	8,864	10,150	10,564	414	4.1%
Mississippi	20	40	61	64	2	4.1%
Alabama	44	88	169	175	6	3.8%
New York	2,852	3,868	4,298	4,360	63	1.5%
Illinois	952	1,529	1,760	1,766	7	0.4%
New Mexico	81	150	205	202	-3	-1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,767</b>	<b>31,108</b>	<b>39,956</b>	<b>44,933</b>	<b>4,977</b>	<b>12.5%</b>

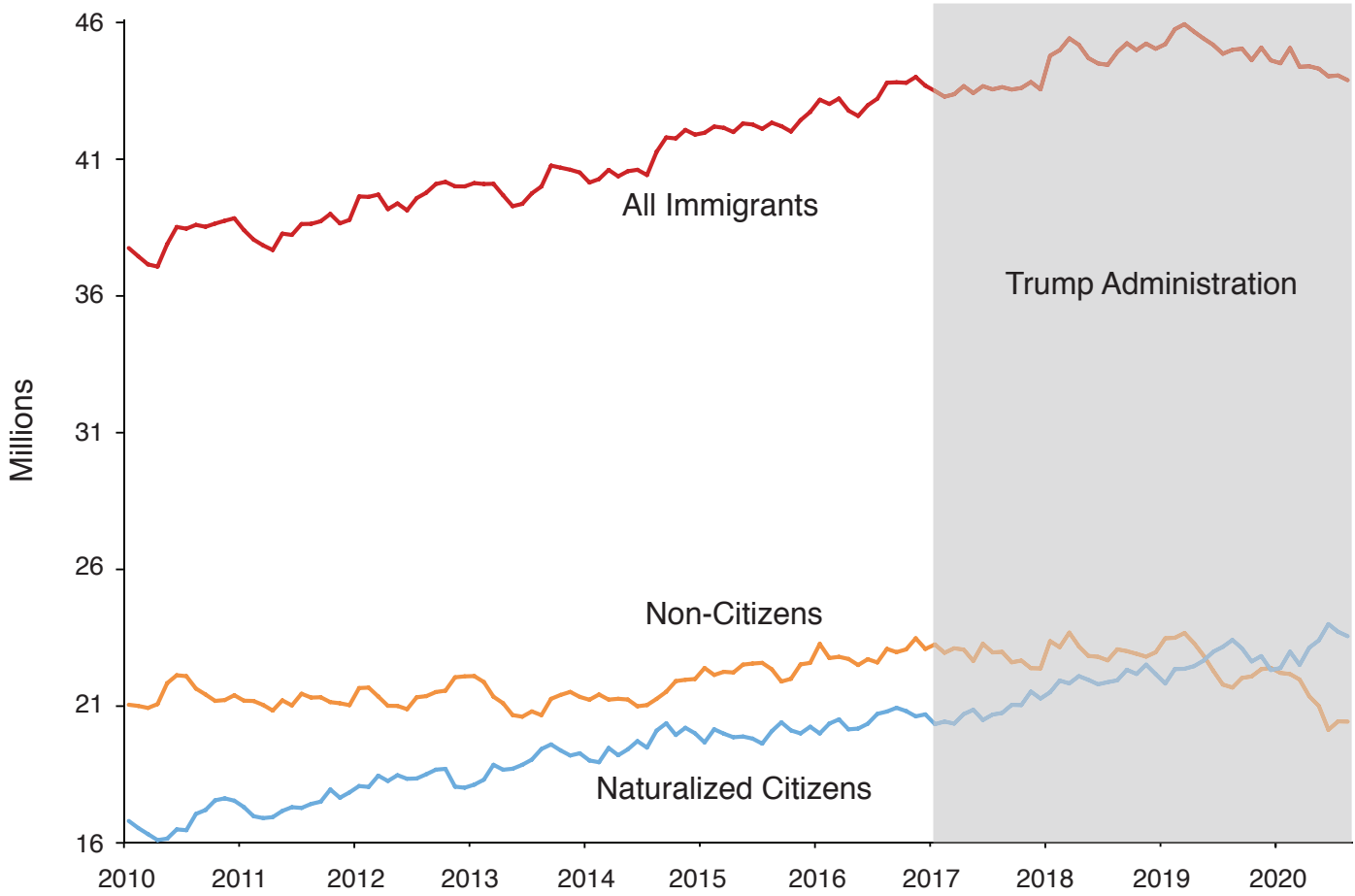
**Source:** Figures for 1990 and 2000 are from the decennial Census. Figures for 2000 are from the Census Bureau's old American FactFinder system. Figures for 1990 are from Table 14, [here](#). Figures for 2010 and 2019 are from [data.census.gov](#).

**Table 6. Immigrant Share by State**

<b>State</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2019</b>
West Virginia	0.9%	1.1%	1.2%	1.6%
Mississippi	0.8%	1.4%	2.1%	2.1%
Montana	1.7%	1.8%	2.0%	2.3%
Wyoming	1.7%	2.3%	2.8%	3.1%
Alabama	1.1%	2.0%	3.5%	3.6%
Maine	3.0%	2.9%	3.4%	3.9%
North Dakota	1.5%	1.9%	2.5%	4.1%
South Dakota	1.1%	1.8%	2.7%	4.1%
Louisiana	2.1%	2.6%	3.8%	4.2%
Missouri	1.6%	2.7%	3.9%	4.3%
Kentucky	0.9%	2.0%	3.2%	4.4%
Vermont	3.1%	3.8%	4.4%	4.7%
Ohio	2.4%	3.0%	4.1%	4.8%
Wisconsin	2.5%	3.6%	4.5%	5.1%
Arkansas	1.1%	2.8%	4.5%	5.1%
Indiana	1.7%	3.1%	4.6%	5.3%
Tennessee	1.2%	2.8%	4.5%	5.5%
South Carolina	1.4%	2.9%	4.7%	5.6%
Iowa	1.6%	3.1%	4.6%	5.6%
Idaho	2.9%	5.0%	5.5%	5.8%
Oklahoma	2.1%	3.8%	5.5%	6.1%
New Hampshire	3.7%	4.4%	5.3%	6.4%
Pennsylvania	3.1%	4.1%	5.8%	7.0%
Michigan	3.8%	5.3%	6.0%	7.0%
Kansas	2.5%	5.0%	6.5%	7.2%
Nebraska	1.8%	4.4%	6.1%	7.4%
Alaska	4.5%	5.9%	6.9%	8.0%
Minnesota	2.6%	5.3%	7.1%	8.4%
North Carolina	1.7%	5.3%	7.5%	8.4%
Utah	3.4%	7.1%	8.0%	8.6%
Colorado	4.3%	8.6%	9.8%	9.5%
New Mexico	5.3%	8.2%	9.9%	9.6%
Oregon	4.9%	8.5%	9.8%	9.7%
Delaware	3.3%	5.7%	8.0%	10.0%
Georgia	2.7%	7.1%	9.7%	10.3%
Dist. Of Columbia	9.7%	12.9%	13.5%	12.1%
Virginia	5.0%	8.1%	11.4%	12.7%
Arizona	7.6%	12.8%	13.4%	13.4%
Rhode Island	9.5%	11.4%	12.8%	13.7%
Illinois	8.3%	12.3%	13.7%	13.9%
Connecticut	8.5%	10.9%	13.6%	14.8%
Washington	6.6%	10.4%	13.1%	14.9%
Maryland	6.6%	9.8%	13.9%	15.4%
Texas	9.0%	13.9%	16.4%	17.1%
Massachusetts	9.5%	12.2%	15.0%	17.3%
Hawaii	14.7%	17.5%	18.2%	19.3%
Nevada	8.7%	15.8%	18.8%	19.8%
Florida	12.9%	16.7%	19.4%	21.1%
New York	15.9%	20.4%	22.2%	22.4%
New Jersey	12.5%	17.5%	21.0%	23.4%
California	21.7%	26.2%	27.2%	26.7%
<b>Nation</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>13.7%</b>

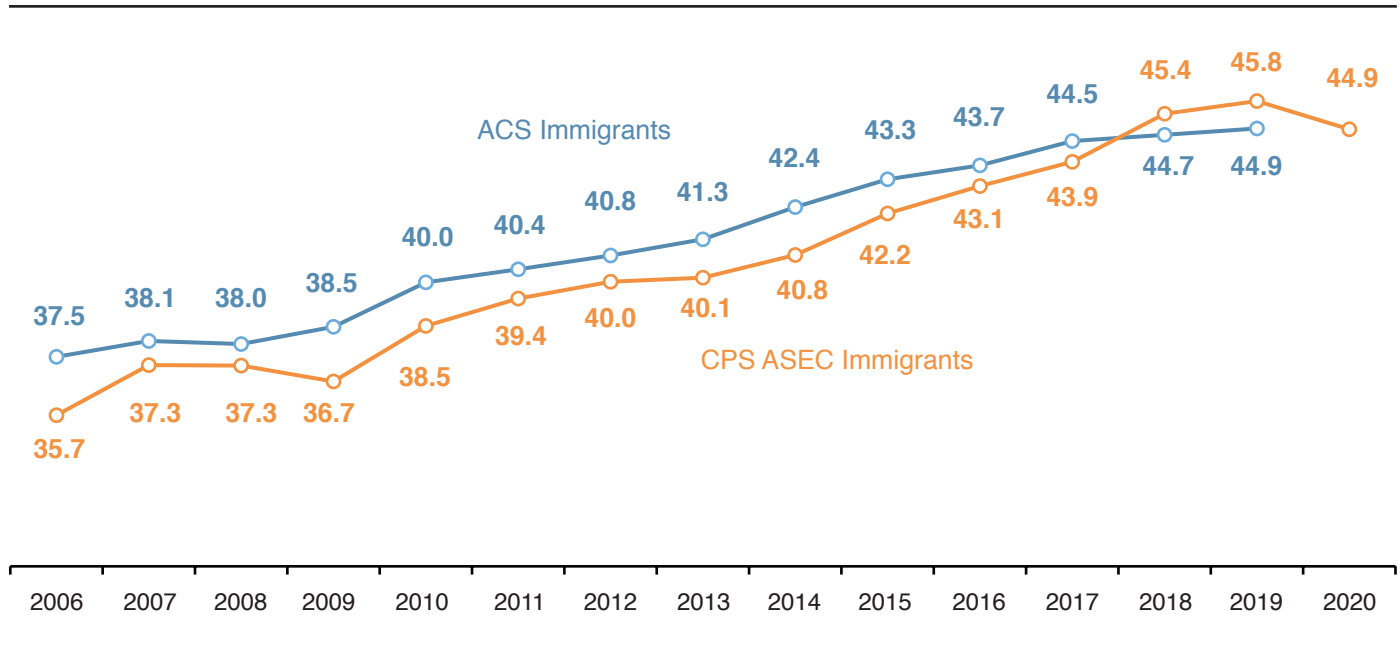
**Source:** Figures for 1990 and 2000 are from the decennial Census. Figures for 2000 are from the Census Bureau's old American FactFinder system. Figures for 1990 are from Table 14, [here](#). Figures for 2010 and 2019 are from data.census.gov.

Figure 4. Immigrants in the Monthly Current Population Survey, January 2010 to August 2020 (millions)



Source: Public-use files of the monthly Current Population Survey.

Figure 5. Starting in 2016, the CPS ASEC started to show a different trend in both the growth and size of the immigrant population from the ACS, but in 2020 the immigrant population fell significantly in the CPS ASEC. (millions)



**Source:** The American Community Survey (ACS) data comes from data.census.gov. The Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC) comes from the public-use files. The ACS reflects the population in July of each year, while the CPS ASEC reflects the population in March. For a detailed discussion of the puzzling difference in the two surveys, see Steven Camarota, [“Latest Census Bureau Surveys Do Not Agree on Size and Growth of Immigrant Population”](#), Center for Immigration Studies, October 16, 2019.

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> Immigrants in the American Community Survey include all individuals who were not U.S.-citizens at birth — naturalized citizens, green card holders, long-term temporary visitors, and illegal immigrants.

<sup>2</sup> We can calculate growth in the immigrant population during the Obama administration in several different ways, but all show the average annual increase during the first part of the Trump administration was about one-third of that. President Obama took office in January of 2009 and left office in January of 2017. The 2009 ACS showed a total immigrant population of 38.462 million, but the survey is widely recognized to have underestimated the size of this population. The [Pew Research Center](#) reweighted the 2009 ACS to reflect the 2010 Census. Pew’s reweighted ACS total immigrant population for 2009 is 39.313. If we take growth from 2009 to 2016, it shows an increase of 4.43 million (632,000 a year). If we ignore 2009 due to data issues and measure the growth in the immigrant population from 2010 to 2016, it shows growth of 3.78 million (631,000 a year). We measure growth to 2017, but the ACS reflects the population on July 1 of each year, so the Obama administration is not “responsible” for growth in the first half of 2017. Measuring growth from 2009 (with Pew’s reweighting) to 2017 shows a growth of 5.21 million and an average annual growth of 652,000.

<sup>3</sup> Figure 2 reports year-over-year net migration of immigrants. The figure is created using a relatively simple and straightforward method of roughly estimating the net migration of immigrants by adding growth in the immigrant population to deaths. Based on the race, age, and gender of the immigrant population in 2010, we estimate 288,000 deaths in that population between 2010 and 2011. The number of deaths increased to 322,000 between 2018 and 2019. Figure 2 takes deaths from year to year and adds it to growth to get the level of net immigration among immigrants. Over the entire period 2010 to 2019, net migration totaled 7.7 million. There are several caveats about these numbers. First, these figures take the point estimates from the ACS as they are, ignoring sampling variability. Using a 90 percent confidence level, the margin of error in the total foreign-born population is  $\pm 81,000$  from 2010 to 2019. This variability may cause growth in the foreign-born to fluctuate from year to year, reflecting the underlying variation in the data rather than actual changes in the net migration of immigrants. Second, this approach uses the prior year to calculate deaths year over year and does not account for the very slight increase in deaths that occurs over the course of a year due to the increasing size of the immigrant population. A third point is also important: Our estimate of net migration is only for the immigrant (foreign-born) population. The movement of native-born Americans is not included. The Census Bureau publishes estimates of net-international migration as part of its population estimates. The Bureau is clear that their estimates of net international migration include “the international migration of both native and foreign-born populations” and are not just for immigrants. See footnote 2 in Table 5 at the Census Bureau’s population estimates page, which shows the components of population change, [here](#).

<sup>4</sup> The [unemployment rate](#) was at or below 4.1 percent for all of 2018 and 2019 after having declined from 4.7 percent to 4.1 percent between January and December 2017. Historical data from the establishment survey shows an [increase](#) of 5.3 million jobs from January 2017 to July 2019.

<sup>5</sup> In addition to asking about citizenship and country of birth, the ACS also asks immigrants what year they came to the United States. The information from data.census.gov, on which this analysis is based, only provides aggregated year of arrival data by decade, such as for 2010 to 2019. Only when the public-use microdata becomes available will we be able to know individual year of arrival.

<sup>6</sup> To estimate out-migration, we can use the same mortality rate as in end note 3 and combine it with the year-of-arrival question in the ACS. However, individual year-of-arrival data has not yet been released by the Bureau for 2019. The information from data.census.gov, on which this analysis is based, only provides aggregated years by decade, such as for 2010 to 2019. The 2019 ACS shows 11.142 million immigrants living in the country who arrived from 2010 to 2019. However, this figure includes all of 2010, while growth from 2010 to 2019 (4.977 million) in the ACS is measured from July 1, 2010, to July 1, 2019, which is the population control date for the survey. Using the prior year’s ACS (2018) and excluding one-half of those who arrived in 2010 (495,000) — to represent those who came in the first half of 2010 — allows us to roughly match arrival numbers to growth figures. This means that 10.647 million new immigrants arrived between July 1, 2010, and July 1, 2019. Deaths over this time period among the immigrant population totaled 2.745 million. Out-migration can be estimated using the following formula: new arrivals – (growth + deaths) = out-migration. Plugging in the numbers, we get the following: 10.647 million – (4.977 million + 2.745 million) = 2.925 million. This means 2.925 million people left the country in the nine years from

2010 to 2019, or about 325,000 annually. Deaths averaged about 305,000 a year. The main limitation with this calculation of outmigration is that it is based on aggregated year-of-arrival data in the 2019 ACS — 2010 to 2019. This means, for example, that an immigrant who arrived in 2012 and left in 2018 would not show up in the analysis. As a result, between 2010 and 2019 the number of new arrivals and departures was almost certainly significantly higher than the 11.1 million reported in the 2019 data. It is likely that annual out-migration between 2010 to 2019 actually averaged at least 450,000 a year. When individual year-of-arrival data is analyzed, a more accurate, and higher, measure of outmigration can be estimated.

<sup>7</sup> The monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) reported in Figure 4 shows that the decline in the total immigrant population was due to a falloff in the number of non-citizens. Additionally, in the March CPS each year, the Census Bureau over-samples minorities and asks respondents additional questions not included in the basic monthly survey. The March CPS with the over-sample and additional questions is referred to as the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC). The CPS ASEC shows a larger immigrant population than the basic monthly CPS due to the differences in survey methodology. However, the CPS ASEC typically shows a smaller immigrant population than the ACS, primarily because the CPS ASEC does not include the institutionalized population, such as those in prisons and nursing homes. For reasons that are unclear, this was not the case in 2018 and 2019. The Center for Immigration Studies has published a [detailed discussion](#) of the puzzling divergence between the ACS and CPS ASEC. The 2020 CPS ASEC, as reported in Figure 5, does show a large decline in the immigrant population from March 2019 to March 2020. This could be an indication that the unexplained divergence between the ACS and CPS ASEC is at an end.

<sup>8</sup> Recently, the Center's Executive Director, Mark Kirkorian, [summarized](#) in National Review some of the most important changes undertaken by the Trump administration with regard to immigration. The Center also published a [detailed look](#) in January 2019 at the progress the administration has made in enacting administrative reforms.

<sup>9</sup> The Trump administration has adopted a number of modest, mostly technical changes to existing policy and law designed to increase the integrity of the process and protect American workers. These changes may have resulted in some illegal immigrants or temporary visa holders giving up on adjusting to permanent status or extending their period of stay, thereby causing them to return home in larger numbers. Among the changes: In an attempt to work through the asylum backlog more quickly, USCIS is taking new cases first and trying to weed out frivolous claims. The Trump administration [expanded](#) the list of reasons immigrants can be deported. The administration has tightened the rules that are used to calculate the time F-1 and M visa holders can be in the country out of status. USCIS [increased](#) the vetting of information applicants provide for visa applications. Along the same lines, the agency requires a more thorough review of applicants for [visa extensions](#) for long-term temporary visitors. USCIS also more [closely reviews](#) the relationship between employers and visa holders when they are at third-party worksites. The president's "Buy American and Hire American" program has [increased cooperation](#) between USCIS and the DOJ in an effort to make sure Americans are not discriminated against.

<sup>10</sup> The Department of Homeland Security has previously estimated that 1.96 million immigrants are missed by the ACS, so the total immigrant population in 2019 was likely 46.9 million. See Table A1-1 on p. 11 in Bryan Baker, ["Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2015"](#), Office of Immigration Statistics, DHS, December 2018.

<sup>11</sup> The immigrant share of the population was very slightly higher in 2019 (13.69 percent) than in 2018 (13.67 percent).

<sup>12</sup> The figure for immigrants is from the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS). The figure for U.S.-born children is from the public-use files of the 2019 and 2020 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC) and is for those under age 18 born in the United States with either a mother or father born outside of the United States. Unlike the ACS, the CPS ASEC asks all respondents about their parents' places of birth, including children. The CPS ASEC is collected in March each year. The 2019 CPS ASEC showed 17.4 million U.S.-born children of immigrants, while the 2020 CPS ASEC showed 16.61 million U.S.-born children of immigrants. While it is not clear why the child population declined, taking the numbers as given and assuming a constant rate of change between March 2019 to March 2020 means that on July 1, the control date of the 2019 ACS, there were 17.1 million U.S.-born minor children of immigrants.

<sup>13</sup> Regions are defined in the following manner: **East Asia:** China (including Hong Kong and Taiwan), Japan, Korea, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Other Southeastern Asia, Other Eastern Asia, Asia n.e.c; **South Asia:** Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka; **Caribbean:** Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies, Other Caribbean, Other Northern America; **Central America:** Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Other Central America; **South America:** Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, Other South America; **Middle East:** Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Other Northern Africa, Other South Central Asia, Other Western Asia; **Europe:** United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Other Northern Europe, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, Other Western Europe, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Armenia, Other Southern Europe, Other Eastern Europe, Europe, n.e.c; **Sub-Saharan Africa:** Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Other Eastern Africa, Cameroon, South Africa, Other Southern Africa, Cape Verde, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Other Western Africa, Other Middle Africa, Africa n.e.c; **Oceania/Elsewhere:** Australia, Oceania, Pacific Islands, Fiji, and elsewhere. **Predominately Muslim Countries** includes the following: the Middle East (excluding Israel) as well as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Somalia, Indonesia, and Malaysia. The country list reflects 2010 and 2019; in 2000 the list of specific countries was less detailed.

<sup>14</sup> Detailed information on the American Community Survey methodology, questions, and other topics on the can be found [here](#).

<sup>15</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all of the information on the immigrant or foreign-born population used in this analysis comes from data.census.gov or its predecessor, American FactFinder, which is now defunct.

<sup>16</sup> The Department of Homeland Security has previously estimated that 1.96 million immigrants are missed by the ACS, so the total immigrant population in 2019 was likely 46.9 million. See Table A1-1 on p. 11 in Bryan Baker, [“Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2015”](#), Office of Immigration Statistics, DHS, December 2018.