

U.S. High-Skilled Immigration: Public Opinion, Trends, and Policy Issues

Neil G. Ruiz

Associate Director of Global Migration & Demography



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- Global migration and demography
- Social and demographic trends
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About the 2018 Global Attitudes Survey

Face-to-face countries

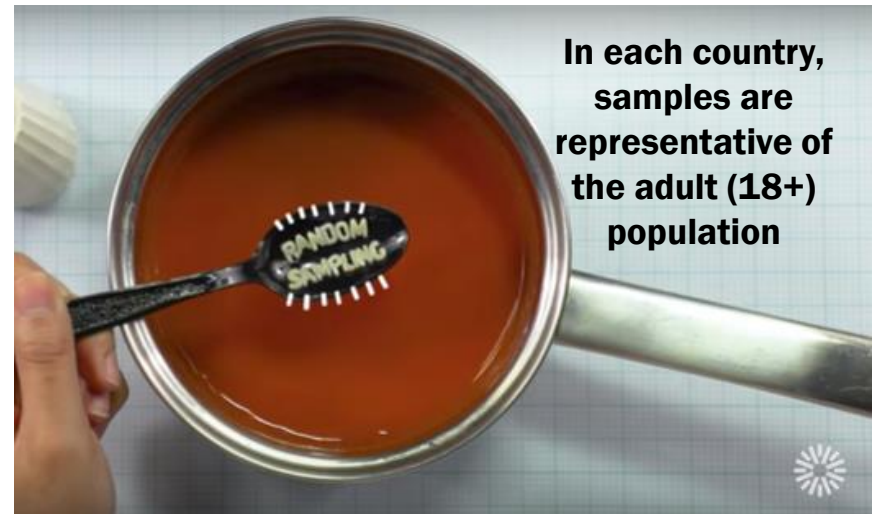
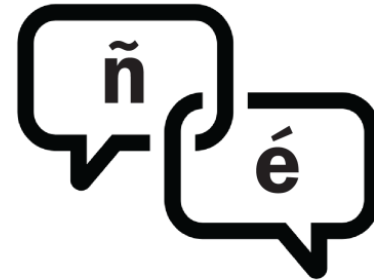
- Argentina
- Brazil
- Mexico
- Greece
- Hungary
- Italy
- Poland
- Russia
- Indonesia
- Philippines
- Israel
- Tunisia
- Kenya
- Nigeria
- South Africa

Telephone countries

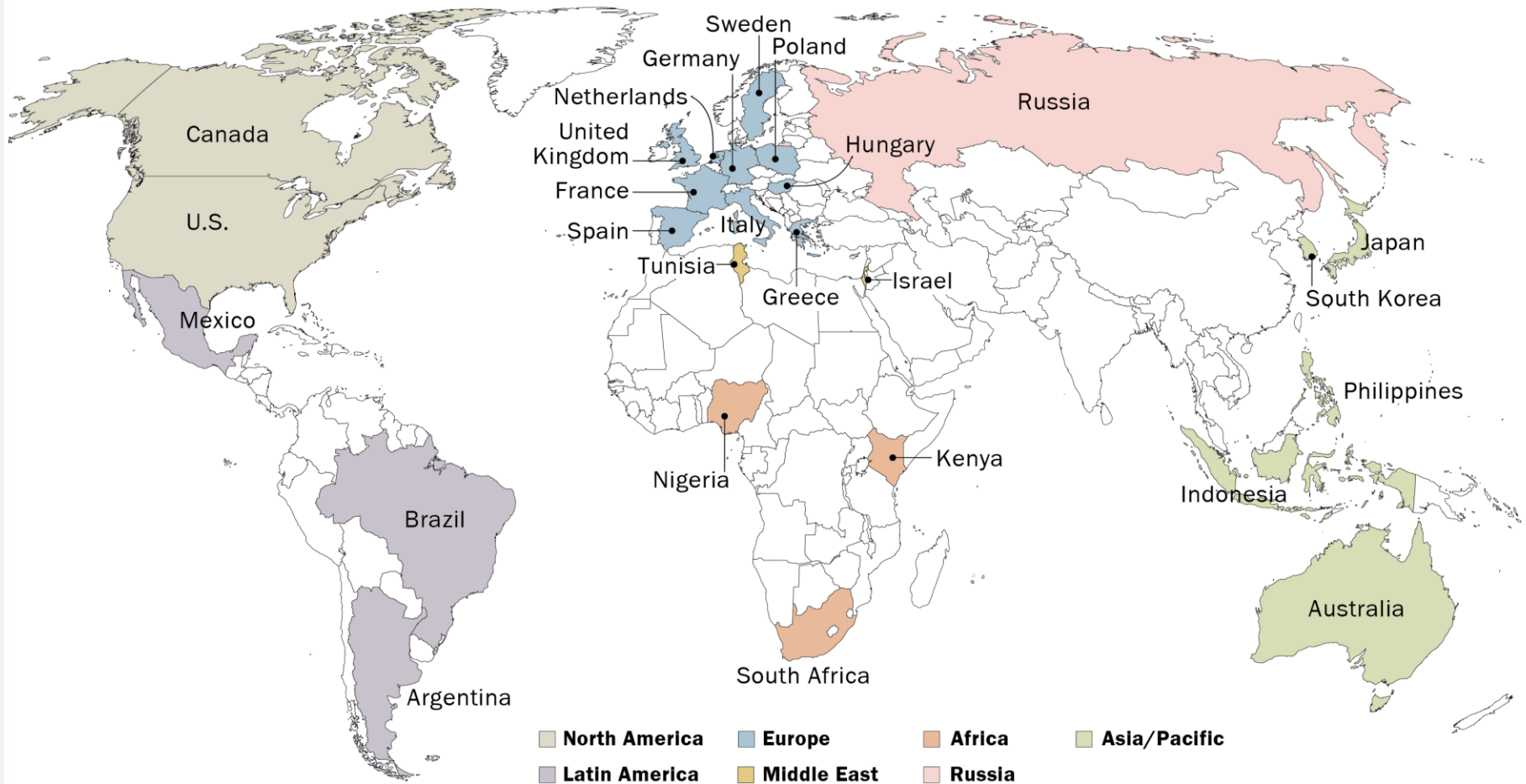
- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- Japan
- South Korea
- Australia

Additional data from a telephone survey of 1,500 U.S. adults conducted from May 14-June 15, 2018

27,612 interviews conducted from May 14 to August 12, 2018 in 31 languages

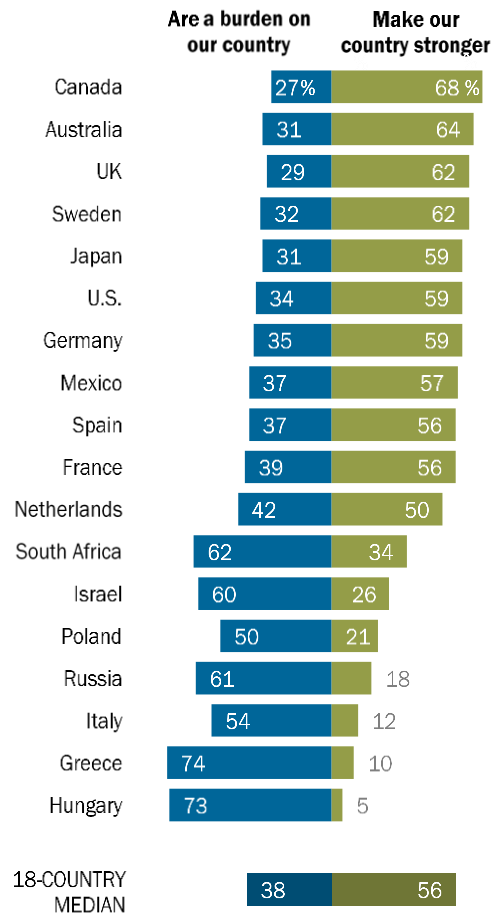


In each country, samples are representative of the adult (18+) population



Half or more in many destination countries view immigrants as a strength

Immigrants today make our country stronger because of their work and talents OR Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs and social benefits

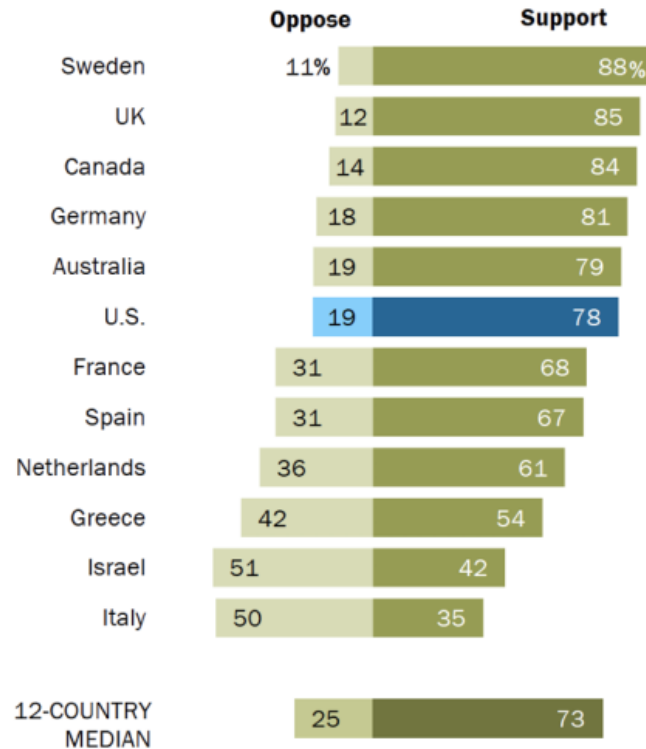


Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey, Q54a.
 "Around the World, More Say Immigrants Are a Strength Than a Burden"

Support of High Skilled Immigration

As in several economically advanced nations, majority of U.S. public supports high-skilled immigration

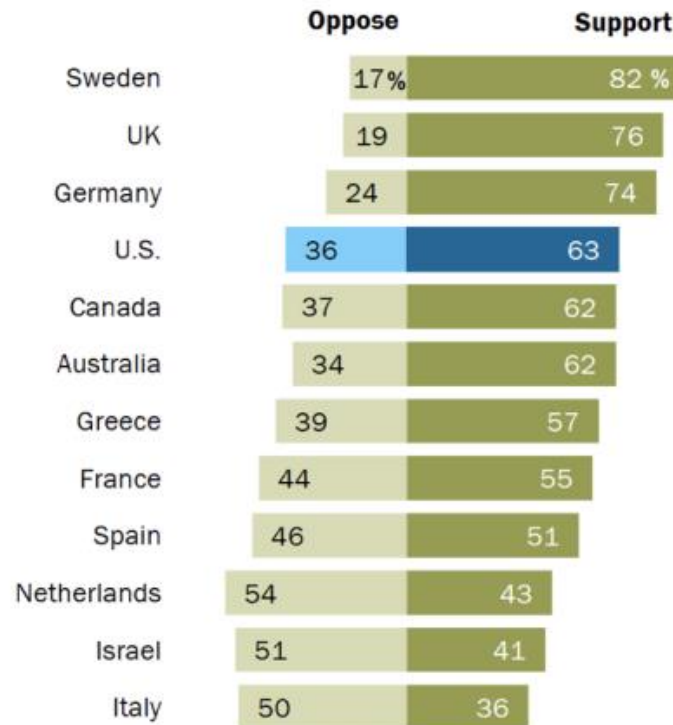
Thinking about immigration, would you ___ encouraging highly skilled people to immigrate and work in (our country)?



Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey. Q53c.
"Majority of U.S. Public Supports High-Skilled Immigration"

Many who want fewer immigrants support high-skilled immigration

Among those who say their country should allow fewer or no immigrants, % who ___encouraging highly skilled people to immigrate and work in (our country)

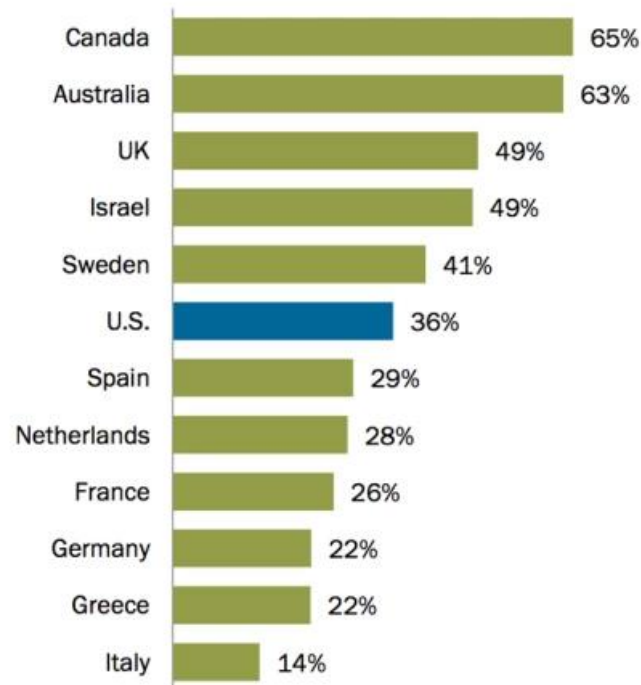


Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey. Q53c.
"Majority of U.S. Public Supports High-Skilled Immigration"

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Roughly a third of all U.S. immigrants have a college degree, a lower share than in many other advanced economies

% of country's foreign-born population, ages 25 and older, with a postsecondary diploma or degree, 2015



Note: College-educated immigrants are those who have completed a postsecondary diploma or degree.

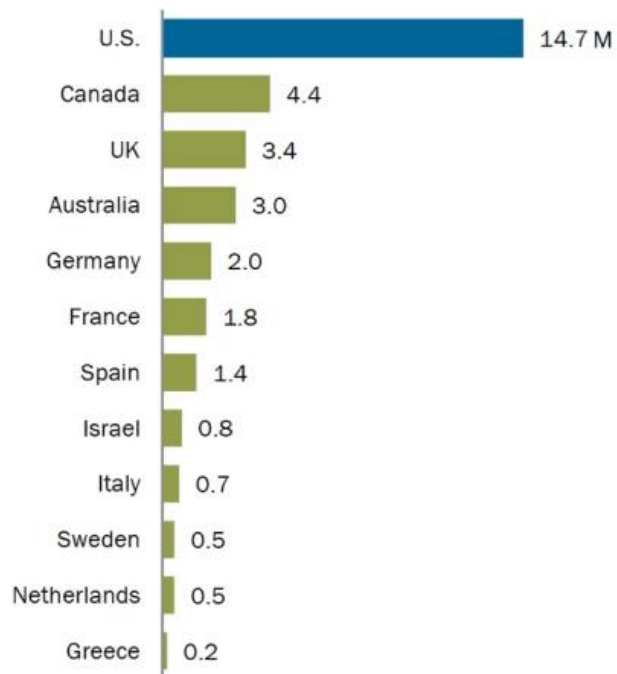
Source: Country censuses and surveys. See Methodology for complete list of data sources and years. See Appendix B for additional advanced economies.

"Majority of U.S. Public Supports High-Skilled Immigration"

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U.S. has more college-educated immigrants than other economically advanced countries

Number of immigrants ages 25 and older with a postsecondary diploma or degree, in millions, 2015



Note: College-educated immigrants are those who have completed a postsecondary diploma or degree.

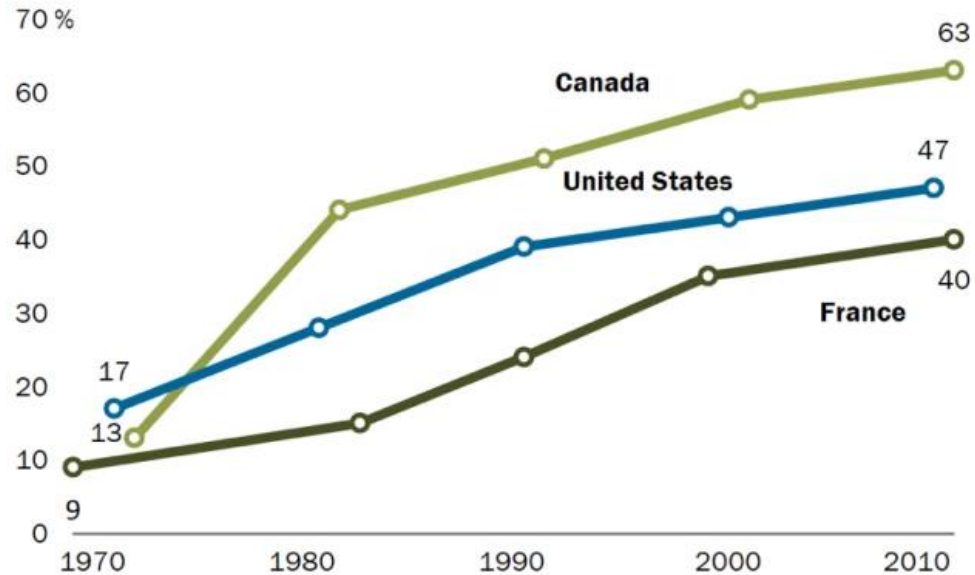
Source: Country censuses and surveys. See Methodology for complete list of data sources and years. See Appendix B for additional advanced economies.

"Majority of U.S. Public Supports High-Skilled Immigration"

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Since adopting a points-based immigration system, Canada has outpaced the U.S. and France in share of immigrants who are college-educated

% of foreign-born population ages 25 and older with some college education or more



Note: Some college is any postsecondary education beyond secondary school, regardless of completion.

Source: Country censuses and surveys (IPUMS International). See Methodology for complete list of data sources and census years.

"Majority of U.S. Public Supports High-Skilled Immigration"

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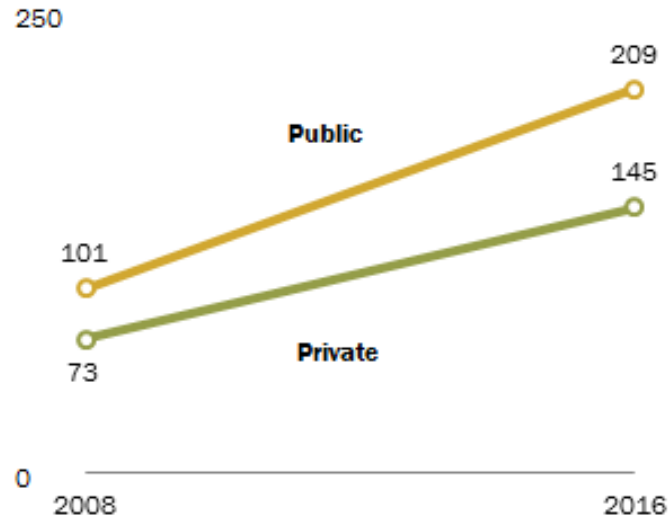
Foreign Students and Higher Education

Main Data Source for Foreign Student & H-1B visa Data



Public colleges and universities saw faster growth in new foreign student enrollments between 2008 and 2016

Number of foreign students with F-1 visas enrolled in associate, bachelors, master's or doctorate degree programs in U.S. (in thousands)



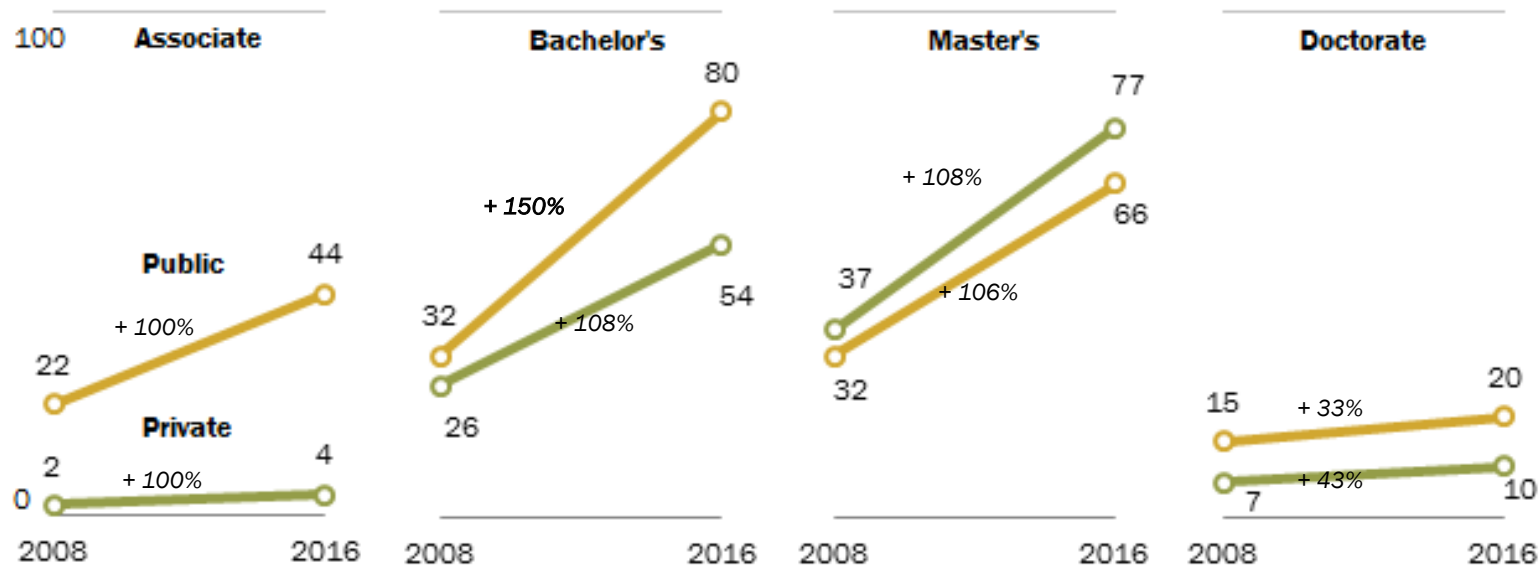
Note: Data based on calendar years. Public and private schools are defined by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions. This chart excludes students at schools not categorized in the Carnegie classification system. Students on F-1 visas are assumed to be enrolled for studies at their sponsoring school.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received March 16, 2017, through a Freedom of Information Act request.

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Public and private higher education enrollment of foreign students, 2008-2016

Number of foreign students with F-1 visas enrolled in degree programs in U.S., by degree type (in thousands)



Note: Data are based on calendar year. Public and private schools are defined by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions. This chart excludes students at schools not categorized in the Carnegie classification system. Students on F-1 visas are assumed to be enrolled for studies at their sponsoring school.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received March 16, 2017, through a Freedom of Information Act request.

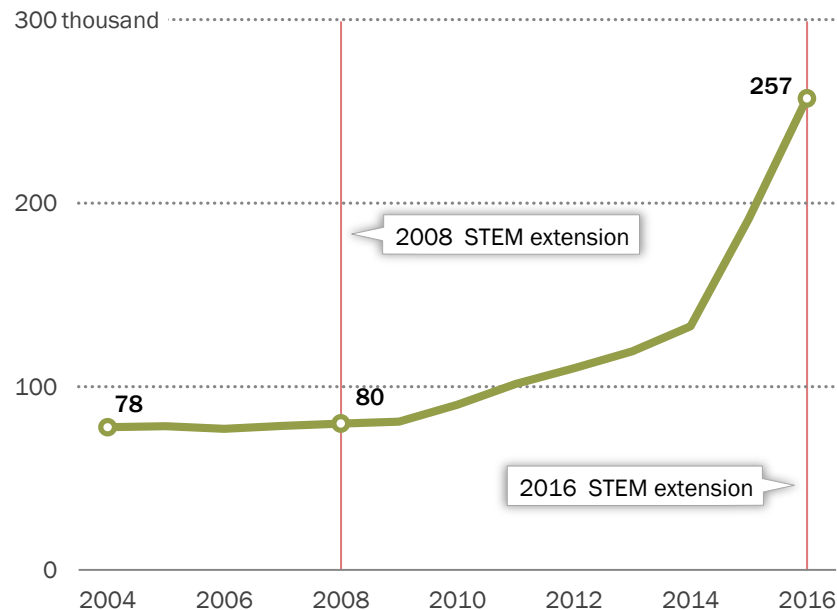
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Optional Practical Training (OPT) Work Authorization for Foreign College Graduates

The OPT program has grown rapidly during OPT expansion and foreign student surge

Optional Practical Training approvals rose substantially after 2008 program expansion

Number of foreign student graduates approved to work in the United States under the OPT program, in thousands



Note: Data based on calendar years.

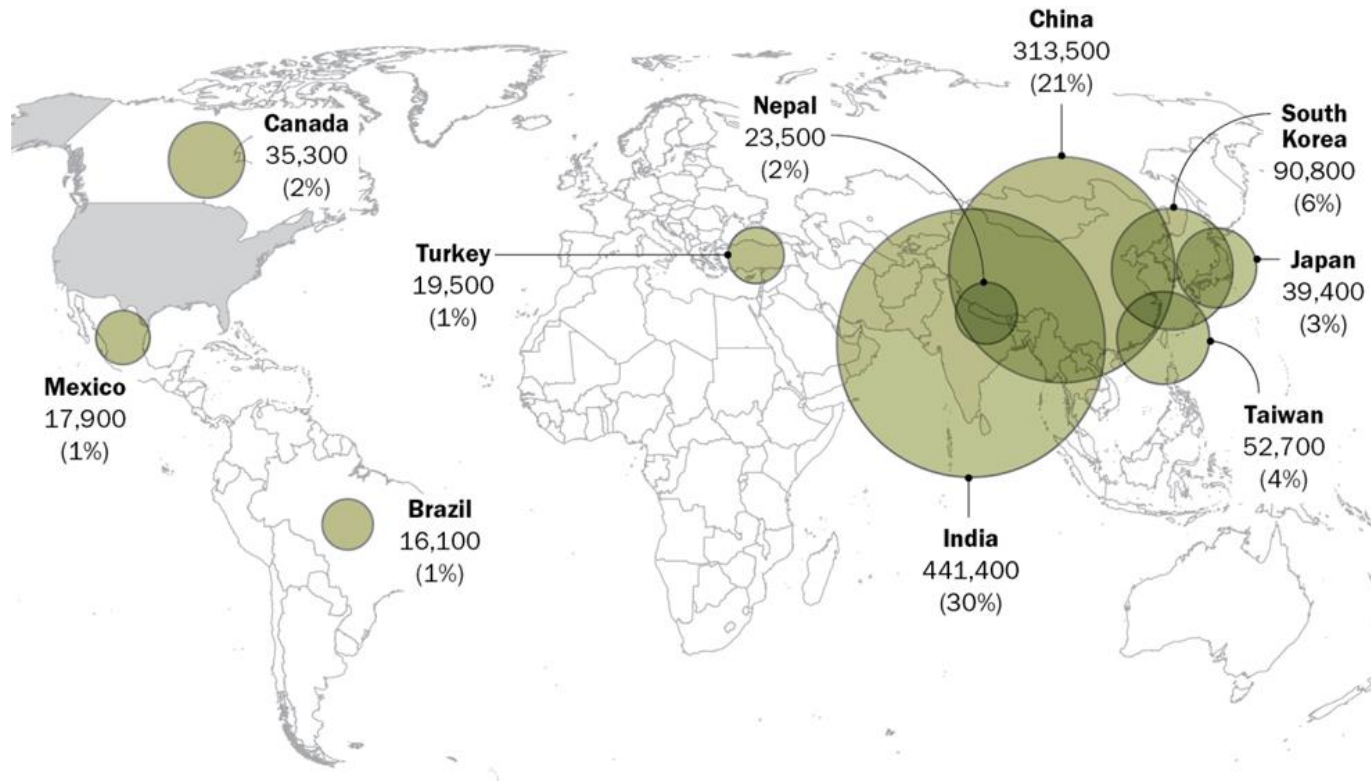
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received August, 2017, through a Freedom of Information Act request.

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Majority of foreign student graduates under OPT are from Asia

Nearly three-quarters of the 1.5 million graduates on OPT came from Asia

Number and % of OPT approvals in the United States from 2004-2016, by country of citizenship



Note: Only top 10 countries shown. Figures are students with an associate degree or higher and are rounded to nearest hundred.

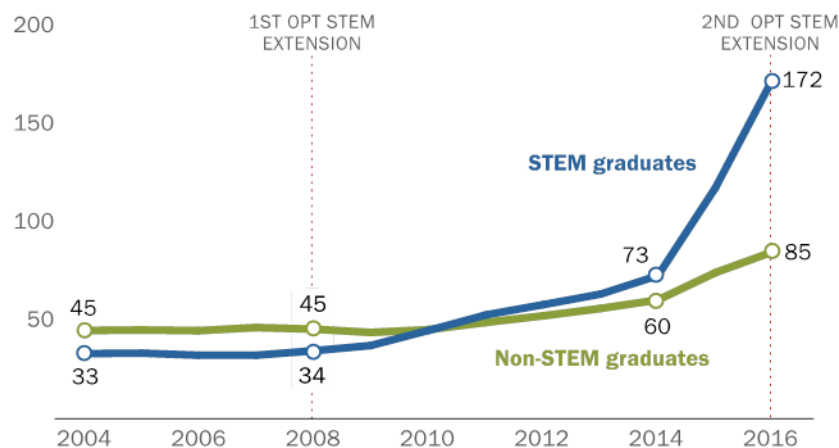
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received August 2017 through a Freedom of Information Act request.

“Number of Foreign College Students Staying and Working in U.S. After Graduation Surges”

STEM foreign graduates are the largest users of the OPT program

Number of foreign students graduating American colleges and obtaining authorization to work in the U.S. grows, especially among those in STEM fields

Number of OPT approvals from 2004-2016, in thousands

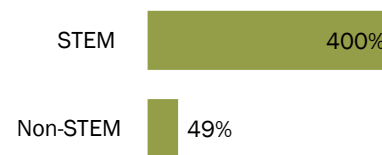


Note: Figures are students with an associate degree or higher. STEM categories are based on fields outlined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.
 Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received August 2017 through a Freedom of Information Act request.
 “Number of Foreign College Students Staying and Working in U.S. After Graduation Surges”

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Number of STEM graduates under OPT grew substantially after the 2008 program expansion

% increase between 2008 and 2016

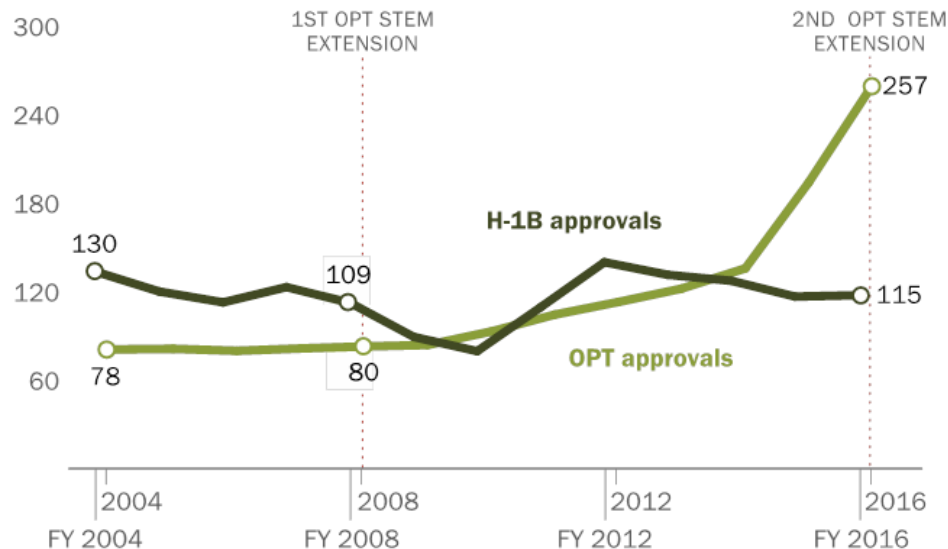


Note: Majors are grouped based on the most recent delineation of majors that fall under the science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) field outlined by the Department of Homeland Security.
 Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received August, 2017, through a Freedom of Information Act request.

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Optional Practical Training approvals surpassed initial H-1B visa approvals in 2010, 2014, 2015 and 2016

Number of OPT and H-1B visa approvals, in thousands



Note: H-1B visa data are in U.S. federal fiscal years, which run from Oct. 1-Sept. 30. OPT data are in calendar years. H-1B data include both capped and uncapped approvals. H-1B visa applications require an equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree or higher. See Appendix B for OPT educational requirements.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received August 2017 through a Freedom of Information Act request and publicly available H-1B visa data from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

"Number of Foreign College Students Staying and Working in U.S. After Graduation Surges"

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Where do foreign students stay to work in the United States?

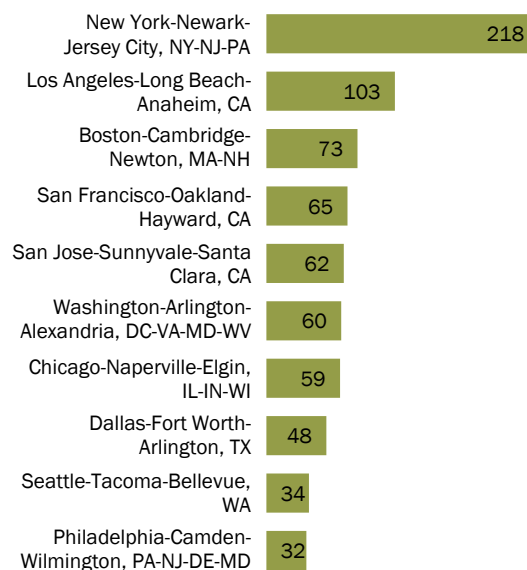
Pew Research Center 

Where foreign students under OPT work

New York, NY metro area had the most foreign student graduates working under OPT

Top 10 metro areas with largest number of foreign graduates on OPT, 2004-2016

Number of OPT approvals, in thousands



Note: For more on the classification of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), see Methodology. Figures are students with degrees in higher education, including an “other” category.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received August 2017 through a Freedom of Information Act request.

“Number of Foreign College Students Staying and Working in U.S. After Graduation Surges”

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Metro Profiles Interactive

<https://pewrsr.ch/OPTprofiles>

Among 170,700 foreign student graduates who studied in...

New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA

85%

STAYED
(144,400 graduates)

15%

LEFT FOR OTHER METRO AREAS
(26,300 graduates)



Here are the top 10 metro areas they relocated to:

1. San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA
2. San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA

In addition ...

74,000

graduates

ARRIVED FROM OTHER METRO AREAS



Here are the top 10 metro areas that support student graduates who worked in New York Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA, which ranks 1st in foreign student graduates.

1. Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH
2. Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD
3. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WA
4. Buffalo-Cheektowaga-Niagara Falls, NY
5. Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI
6. San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA
7. Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk, CT

New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA



Total foreign graduates who worked in area

218,400

National rank: 1st

STEM graduates

42%

Top countries of citizenship

India	54,000
China	49,000
South Korea	19,000
Taiwan	7,500

Type of U.S. degree obtained

Master's	59%
Bachelor's	23%
Doctorate	7%
Associate	6%

Top U.S. universities graduated from

New York University	22,500
Columbia University	18,800
Baruch College, City University of New York	17,500
New Jersey Institute of Technology	6,800
The New School	6,700

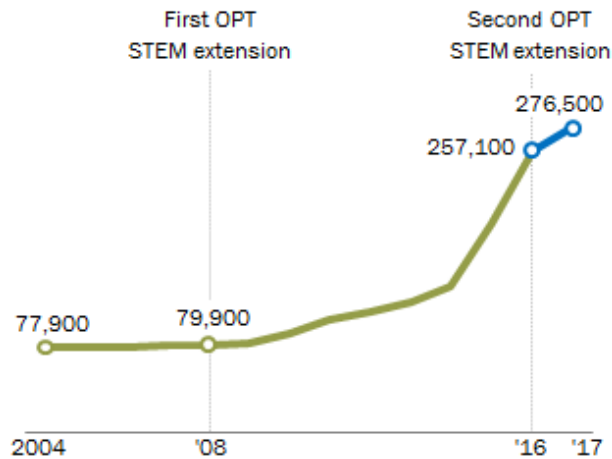
Top areas of study

Business, management, marketing and related support services	23%
Engineering	15%
Computer and information sciences and support services	13%
Visual and performing arts	12%

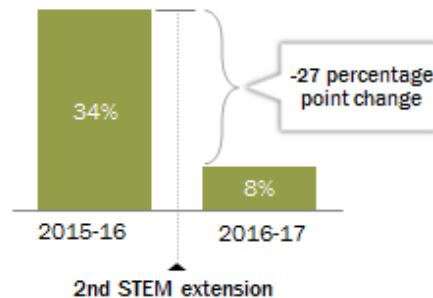
The Future for Foreign Students in U.S.

Growth of foreign graduates who stayed and worked in the U.S. slowed in 2017

Number of Optional Practical Training (OPT) approvals, 2004-2017



% growth of OPT approvals



Note: Foreign graduates refers to those with an associate degree or higher from a U.S. college or university. OPT approvals rounded to the nearest hundred. Percentages calculated using unrounded figures, then rounded to whole numbers. For methodology, see May 2018 report, "Number of Foreign College Students Staying and Working in U.S. After Graduation Surges."

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received April 2018 through a Freedom of Information Act request.

Indian foreign graduates under OPT saw largest decline in growth, 2016 to 2017

Number and % growth of OPT approvals in the United States, by country of citizenship

Country	2015	2016	2017	% growth, 2015-16	% growth, 2016-17	Pctg. point difference, 2015-16 to 2016-17
India	61,000	104,600	122,100	71%	17%	-55 points
Colombia	1,300	1,700	1,700	32	-1	-34
Malaysia	1,200	1,600	1,500	31	-1	-32
Brazil	1,900	2,500	2,600	30	2	-29
Mexico	2,000	2,500	2,400	22	-2	-24
United Kingdom	1,500	1,800	1,900	21	<1	-20
Hong Kong	1,100	1,200	1,200	14	-5	-19
Thailand	1,200	1,300	1,200	11	-8	-18
Kenya	600	700	600	8	-11	-18
Canada	3,600	4,200	4,300	18	<1	-18
China	58,100	68,800	69,200	18	<1	-18
Japan	1,900	2,200	2,100	14	-4	-17
Indonesia	1,200	1,500	1,600	24	9	-16
Germany	1,000	1,100	1,100	11	-4	-14
South Korea	8,700	9,600	9,100	9	-5	-14
Pakistan	1,000	1,300	1,500	29	16	-13
Taiwan	4,600	5,100	4,900	10	-3	-13
Turkey	1,700	2,000	2,100	15	4	-11
Venezuela	1,600	1,800	1,900	14	3	-11
Vietnam	2,400	2,800	2,900	15	5	-10
Russia	1,000	1,100	1,200	12	2	-10
Iran	2,200	2,500	2,700	13	9	-4
Nigeria	2,100	2,500	3,000	20	20	<1
France	1,400	1,500	1,600	6	7	+1
Nepal	2,400	2,100	2,400	-11	13	+24

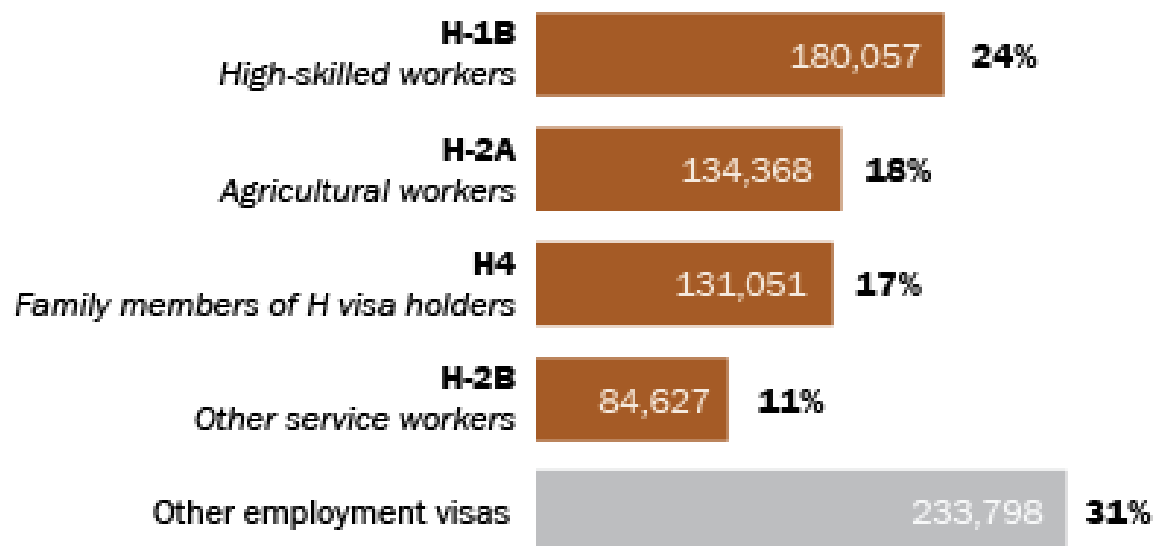
Note: Foreign graduates refers to those with an associate degree or higher from a U.S. college or university. OPT approvals rounded to the nearest hundred. Percentages calculated using unrounded figures, then rounded to whole numbers. For methodology, see May 2018 report, "Number of Foreign College Students Staying and Working in U.S. After Graduation Surges."

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received April 2018 through a Freedom of Information Act request.

Main Pathway for Retention in US: Temporary Employment-Based Visa System

H-1B visas account for a quarter of temporary employment visas issued in 2016

Temporary employment visas issued, fiscal year 2016



Note: "Other employment visas" includes H1B1, H3, L, O, P and Q visas.

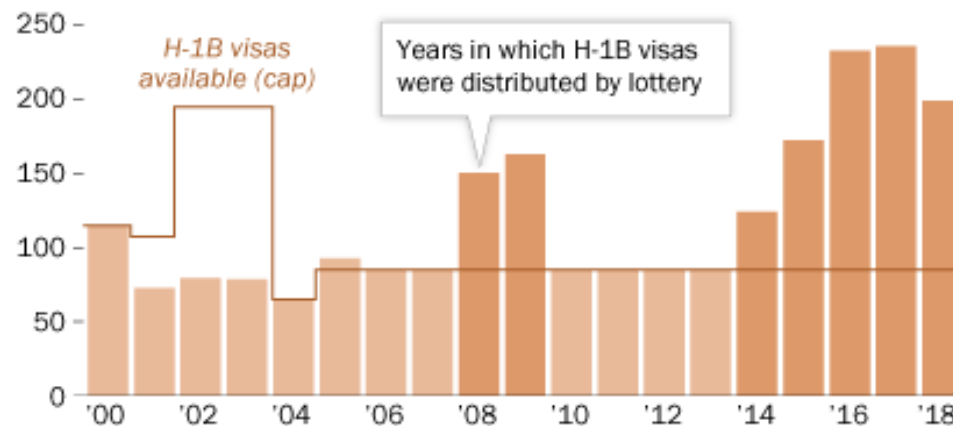
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

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H-1B visa applications have exceeded supply for the past five years

H-1B visa applications have exceeded supply for the past five years

Number of capped H-1B applications, by fiscal year, in thousands



Notes: Due to rollover from previous fiscal years, some application totals may exceed the cap. Beginning in fiscal 2005, an additional 20,000 H-1B visas were added to the cap for foreign advanced degree graduates of U.S. universities. For fiscal years 2004, 2006-07 and 2010-13, the cap was reached but total applications were not published. Data not available for fiscal years 1990 to 1999. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services data.

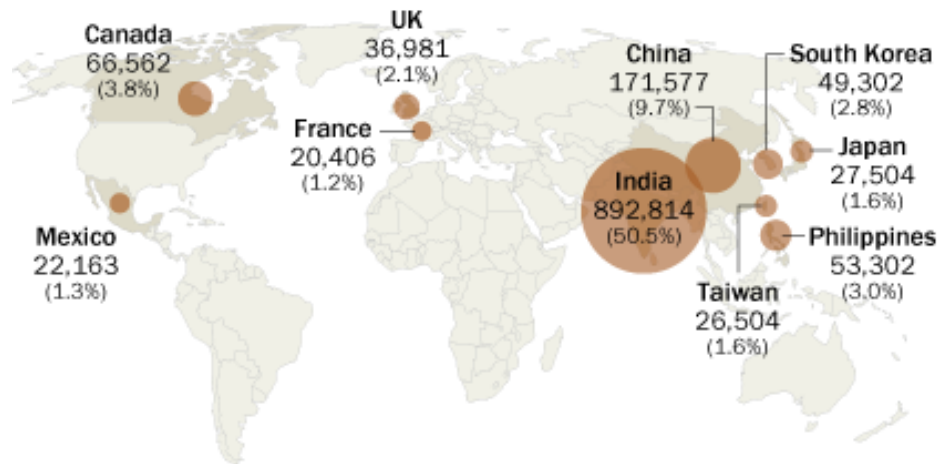
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Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services data.

Since 2001, half of H-1B visas have been awarded to Indian nationals

Since 2001, half of H-1B visas have been awarded to Indian nationals

H-1B petitions approved, by country of birth (initial employment), fiscal years 2001-2015



Notes: Fiscal year begins Oct. 1 and ends Sept. 30. Top 10 countries of birth by approved H-1Bs for initial employment only.

Source: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services annual reports to Congress on H-1B petitions.

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Source: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services annual reports to Congress on H-1B petitions.

Top prospective employers of foreign workers with H-1B visas

Companies with the highest number of approved H-1B visa applications and average annual salary, fiscal year 2016

Employer	Approved applications	Average salary
Cognizant Tech Solutions	21,459	\$84,303
Infosys	12,780	\$84,344
Tata Consultancy Services	11,295	\$71,819
Accenture	6,831	\$79,416
Wipro	6,819	\$73,937
IBM	3,569	\$79,275
Microsoft	3,556	\$126,096
HCL America	3,492	\$83,980
Tech Mahindra Americas	3,344	\$76,737
Deloitte Consulting	3,114	\$102,558
Amazon	2,739	\$115,257
Google	2,517	\$131,882
Syntel Consulting	2,286	\$67,145
Capgemini America	2,024	\$71,667
Apple	1,992	\$138,563
Intel	1,873	\$101,025
Larsen & Toubro Infotech	1,558	\$76,643
Ernst & Young	1,552	\$96,316
Cisco Sys	1,529	\$121,372
JP Morgan Chase & Co.	1,467	\$111,469
Oracle America	1,448	\$118,507
Qualcomm Technologies	1,254	\$118,155
Capgemini America	1,252	\$84,274
L & T Tech Services	1,143	\$65,246
UST	1,136	\$71,371
Facebook	1,107	\$140,758
Mindtree	1,103	\$73,691
PricewaterhouseCoopers	1,050	\$82,363
Capgemini Financial Services	1,048	\$91,068
Mphasis	1,016	\$81,750

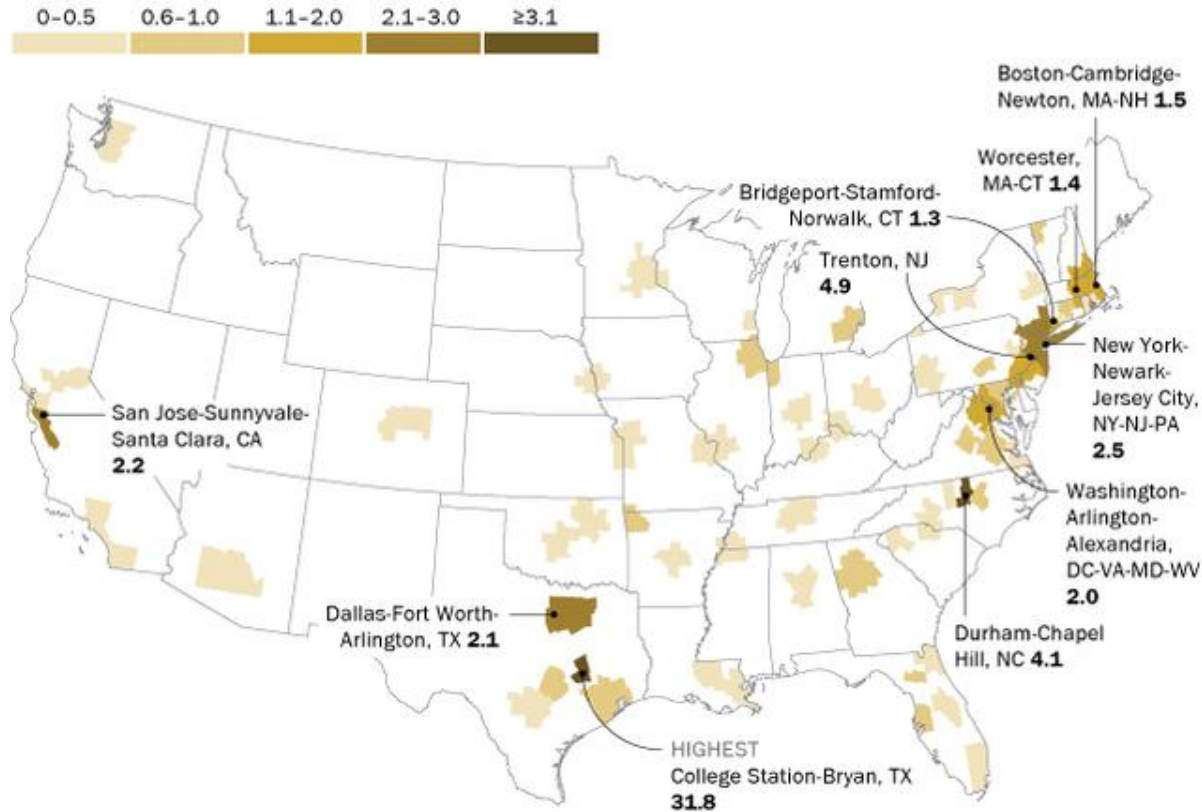
Note: Data is of applications approved by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; includes first-time and renewal applications, and applications subject to an annual cap and those not subject to one. Capgemini America appears multiple times because it has several tax ID numbers where H-1B visa applications were filed.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services data.

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H-1B visa approvals concentrated in East Coast and Texas metro areas

H-1B visa approvals per 100 workers, fiscal 2010-2016



Note: Includes only metro areas with 600 or more H-1B visa approvals. Approval figures are rounded to the nearest tenth. Approval rate uses U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics annual average civilian workforce data, seasonally adjusted for calendar years 2010-2016. H-1B visa approvals subject to an annual cap account for nearly all (99.9%) approvals in this analysis. Approvals data were obtained through a public records request and do not distinguish between approvals for initial and continuing employment.

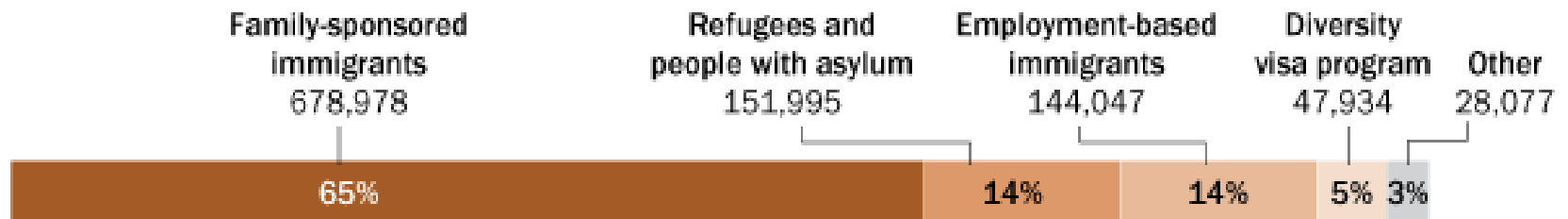
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services data on H-1B visa approvals, received on Nov. 17, 2017 via Freedom of Information Act request. Interactive includes data for fiscal years 2010-2016. Data on average monthly civilian labor force by metropolitan area for calendar years 2010-2016 from Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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One million immigrants receive lawful permanent resident status each year

U.S. Green Card system is majority family-based

Admission categories for 2015 lawful permanent residents



Note: "Other" includes parolees.


Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Contact Information

Neil G. Ruiz

Associate Director of Global Migration & Demography

nruiz@pewresearch.org

 *@neil_ruiz*

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