



November 4, 2003

## Resources for Immigration Policy Reform

Many Senators have expressed interest in reforming our nation's immigration policies, especially in the areas of border control and homeland security, temporary worker programs, compensation to States for costs imposed on them by the presence of illegal immigrants, and legal treatment of longstanding residents without legal status. The following documents are examples of sources that may prove helpful for Senators seeking to explore these issues in greater depth.

### **The Foreign Born Population in the United States: March 2002**

February 2003

U.S. Census Bureau, *available at* [www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/p20-539.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/p20-539.pdf)

This report describes the foreign-born population in the United States based on the 2000 census. The report provides a profile of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, such as region of birth, geographic distribution in the United States, age, educational attainment, earnings, and poverty status. These characteristics are compared with those of the native population.

- The civilian, non-institutionalized population in the U.S. includes 32.5 million foreign born, representing 11.5 percent of the U.S. population.
- Among the foreign born, 52.2 percent were born in Latin America, 25.5 percent were born in Asia, 14 percent were born in Europe, and the remaining 8.3 percent were born in other regions of the world.
- The foreign-born population from Central America (including Mexico) accounted for more than two-thirds of the foreign born from Latin America and more than one-third of the total foreign-born.

### **Immigration and Naturalization Fundamentals**

By Ruth Ellen Wasem

last updated May 20, 2003

CRS Report for Congress, *available at* [www.congress.gov/erp/rs/pdf/RS20916.pdf](http://www.congress.gov/erp/rs/pdf/RS20916.pdf)

This CRS report provides an introduction to immigration and naturalization policy, concepts, and statistical trends. It touches on a range of topics, including numerical limits, refugees and asylees,

exclusion, naturalization, illegal aliens, eligibility for federal benefits, and taxation. The study incorporates considerable data that may prove helpful, including:

- 1,064,318 persons legally immigrated to the United States in FY2001 — 64% of them on the basis of family ties.
- 1.6 million refugees were admitted from 1981-1995, up from 718,000 in the period 1966-1980.
- The Census Bureau estimates that there are 8.7 million unauthorized persons residing in the United States, as of 2000.

### **Border Security: Immigration Issues in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress**

By Lisa M. Seghetti

last updated May 22, 2003

CRS Report for Congress *available at* [www.congress.gov/erp/rl/pdf/RL31727.pdf](http://www.congress.gov/erp/rl/pdf/RL31727.pdf).

This report provides background information on immigration-related border security issues raised as a result of the terrorist attacks and resulting concern for homeland security. It describes enacted legislation in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress as well as in previous Congresses that focus on immigration-related border security issues. The report also poses possible immigration-related border security issues the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress may consider. Some issues in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress include:

- Increasing technology and implementation of biometric identifiers in travel documents. (S. 539/H.R. 1096 and S. 6)
- Requiring an automated entry and exit data system (US-VISIT program) at all ports of entry that will record the arrivals and departures of every alien entering and exiting the country. (S. 539/H.R. 1096 and S. 6)
- Increasing staff at ports of entry along the northern border. (H.R. 853)

CRS intends to keep this report updated to reflect any additional related legislation in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, as well as implementation issues.

### **Immigration: A Guide to Internet Sources**

By Barbara A. Salazar

June 11, 2003

CRS Report for Congress, *available at* [www.congress.gov/erp/rs/pdf/RS20936.pdf](http://www.congress.gov/erp/rs/pdf/RS20936.pdf)

This report identifies selected Web sites from the Internet on immigration topics in the United States. Selected addresses are provided for government, legal, and private organizations' web sites. This report will be updated periodically as new information becomes available and to ensure the currency of the Web addresses as a result of the creation of the Department of Homeland Security.

## **Visa Issuances: Policy, Issues, and Legislation**

By Ruth Ellen Wasem

last updated August 4, 2003

CRS Report for Congress, *available at* <http://www.congress.gov/erp/rl/pdf/RL31512.pdf>

This report addresses policies on immigration visa issuances, options to reassign this function to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that were considered prior to passage of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-296), and other policy options that may arise in the 108th Congress. It opens with an overview of visa issuances, with sections on procedures for aliens coming to live in the United States permanently and on procedures for aliens admitted for temporary stays. Among the data:

- Of the 1,064,318 people who became legal permanent residents (LPRs) in FY2001, 53.0% were relatives of U.S. citizens, 16.8% were employment-based immigrants, 10.5% were family of other LPRs, 10.2% were refugees and other asylees, 3.9% entered through the diversity lottery program, and 5.5% were from other miscellaneous categories.
- In FY2002, DHS issued 5,769,638 nonimmigrant visas, of which 4.3 million were visitors for tourism and business. The latter number is down from 5.7 million in FY2000.

This report explores the grounds for excluding aliens, and summarizes the debate on transferring visa issuance policy functions to DHS. The report then concludes with a discussion of the legislative proposals to reassign the visa issuance activities and to revise visa issuance policies.

## **Where Immigrants Live: An Examination of State Residency of the Foreign Born by Country of Origin in 1990 and 2000**

By Steven A. Camarota and Nora McArdle

September 2003

Center for Immigration Studies, *available at* [www.cis.org/articles/2003/back1203.html](http://www.cis.org/articles/2003/back1203.html)

This study uses the same data as the Census report (above) to further analyze the changing distribution of the nation's immigrant population by country of origin at the state level. The findings show that in one sense, today's immigration is more diverse because people now arrive from every corner of the world. In another sense, however, diversity among the foreign born has actually declined significantly. One country — Mexico — and one region — Spanish-speaking Latin America — came to dominate U.S. immigration during the decade. The report also finds that immigrants from some countries became more spread out in the 1990s, while the dispersion of others changed little. Some conclusions:

- Mexico accounted for 43 percent of the growth in the foreign-born population between 1990 and 2000.
- In 39 states, the share of the population accounted for by the top-sending country increased.

- In 2000, there were 33 states (including the District of Columbia) in which immigrants from Spanish-speaking Latin American countries were the largest single group.

Included are 8 charts with detailed statistical analysis of immigration among the states.