

## 6. TEMPORARY ADMISSIONS

*This section presents information on the number and characteristics of persons who come to the United States on a temporary basis (nonimmigrants) and on parolees—persons allowed temporary entrance under special circumstances.*

### Nonimmigrants

**A** *nonimmigrant is an alien admitted to the United States for a specified purpose and temporary period but not for permanent residence.* (See Glossary)

Although the typical nonimmigrant is a tourist who visits the United States for a few days to several months, there are numerous classes of nonimmigrant admission, ranging from students to ambassadors. Nearly 27.9 million

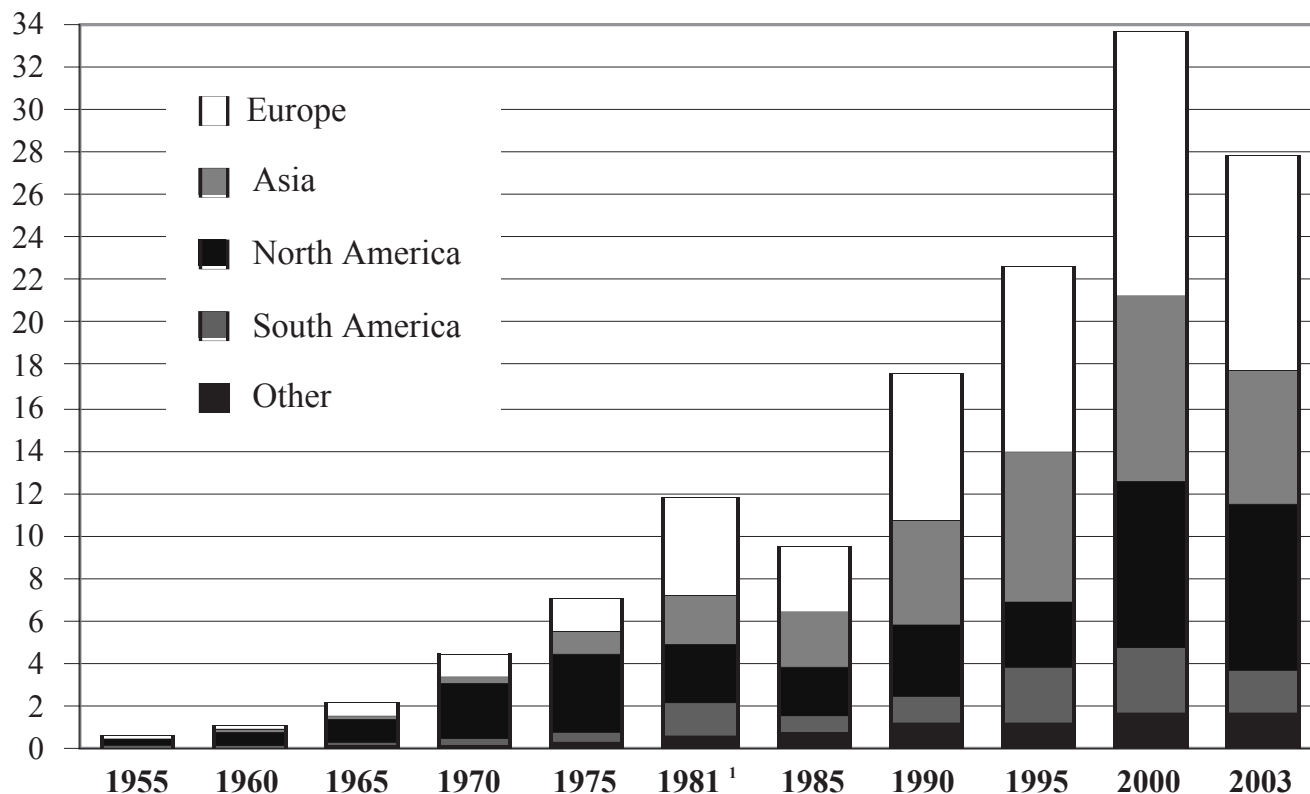
nonimmigrant admissions were counted in the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Nonimmigrant Information System during fiscal year 2003, representing a decrease of nearly 58,000 since 2002, or -.2 percent. This follows a record decrease from 2001-02 (-15.0 percent)—the only decreases since 1982-83.

Nonimmigrant admission counts are based on collection of entry/exit forms (I-94) at the ports of entry. The I-94 forms are required of all temporary visitors except for

**Chart E**

### Nonimmigrants Admitted by Region of Last Residence: Selected Fiscal Years 1955-2003

Millions



<sup>1</sup> No data available for 1980. NOTE: See Glossary for fiscal year definitions.

Source: 2003, 2000, 1995, 1990, and 1985, Table 22; 1955-81, previous *Yearbooks*.

visitors for business or pleasure (B1 and B2 classes) from Canada and Mexico. These travellers may be required to submit an I-94 at the discretion of the inspection officer. Most citizens of Canada and Mexico who cross land borders for brief periods of time are not required to submit an I-94 (use of the I-94 has been increased in recent years for Mexican admissions; see Table 24). Therefore, millions of Canadian and Mexican visitors are not represented in the admission counts presented in this section (see Data Collection section). It is estimated that there were nearly 181 million nonimmigrant admissions during fiscal year 2003. The vast majority are Canadian and Mexican commuters crossing the border for business or pleasure, typically to shop or to visit family and friends.

Since nonimmigrant admissions data are collected for each arrival and an individual might enter more than once in a fiscal year (*e.g.*, students), the count of admissions exceeds the number of individuals arriving (see Data Collection section).

### **The September 11 terrorist attacks**

The impact of the attacks on foreign travel to the United States during fiscal year 2002 was immediate and substantial. After a severe reduction of arrivals following the attacks in September 2001, resulting in a small annual decrease between 2000 and 2001 (-2.6 percent), a major downturn occurred in 2002—as reflected in a 15 percent decrease in arrivals from 2001-02. Levels of admission in 2003 were nearly identical to the levels of 2002 (see Table 24).

### **U.S. Nonimmigrant Program**

Nonimmigrants were first defined in the Immigration Act of 1819, but the Act of 1855 was the first to require the reporting of “temporary arrivals” separately. The Act of 1924 defined several classes of admission that have been expanded in subsequent legislation. Though “tourists” (temporary visitors for pleasure) have consistently been by far the most numerous nonimmigrant class of admission to the United States, a wide variety of temporary visitors now fall within the definition of a nonimmigrant. Second in volume to tourists are business people coming to the United States to engage in commercial transactions (though not for employment in this country).

#### **Nonimmigrant categories** (Tables 22-25, 28, 30)

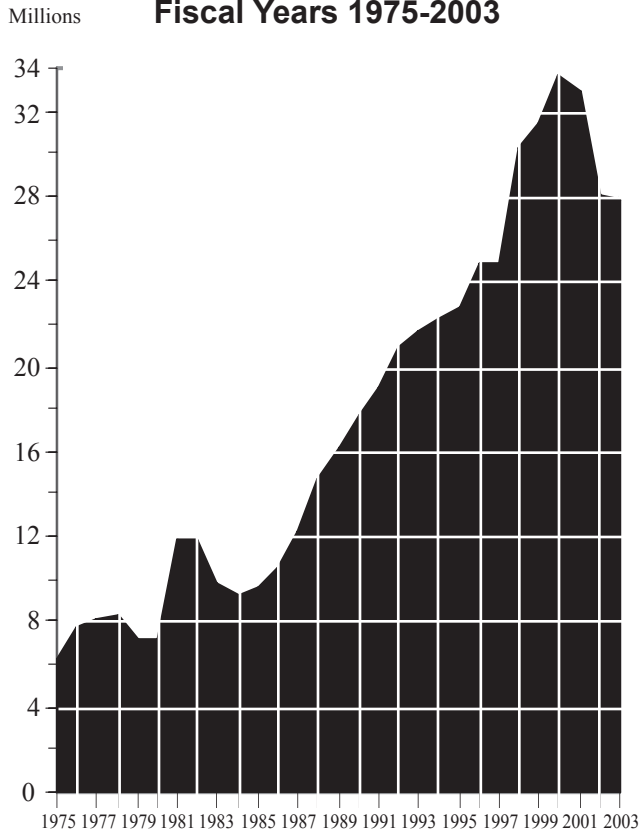
Other categories of admission make up a much smaller share of the nonimmigrant total, such as foreign students

and temporary workers. Temporary workers are admitted to the United States with “specialty occupations” (for example, computer systems analysts and programmers) or to perform temporary services or labor when persons capable of performing such services or labor cannot be found in this country (for example, agricultural laborers). Others who are granted authorization to work temporarily in the United States include: exchange visitors who enter to study, teach, or conduct research; intracompany transferees, to render managerial or executive services in the United States to international firms or corporations; entertainers and athletes; and industrial trainees. Treaty traders and treaty investors enter temporarily to conduct trade or to invest substantially in enterprises under the provisions of treaties of commerce and navigation between the United States and foreign states.

Nonimmigrants also include several types of temporary visitors who are connected in some way with a foreign government or who represent an international organization. Ambassadors, public ministers, diplomats, and consular officers serve temporarily in this country, bringing with them members of their immediate families as well as personal employees, attendants, and servants. Officers and employees of international organizations such as the United Nations add to the list of nonimmigrant visitors entering the United States each year.

Classes of nonimmigrants were established in 2001 that resulted in entries for a partial fiscal year in 2001 and a complete year in 2002. The levels of such admissions have, for most of these classes, expanded in 2003 (Table 24). Admissions increased for the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act of 2000 (see Glossary), which authorized nonimmigrant admission to allow the spouses or children of U.S. citizens to complete processing for permanent resident status while in the United States. Similar nonimmigrant admission was granted to spouses or children (or dependents of spouses or children) of legal permanent residents who have had petitions for immigrant visas pending for more than 3 years. Admissions increased somewhat for the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (see Glossary), which authorized nonimmigrant admission to individuals (and spouses, children, or parents) who are or have been victims of a severe form of trafficking. Admissions increased slightly for another portion of this act, which authorized admission to individuals (and spouses, children, or parents) who have suffered

**Chart F**  
**Nonimmigrants Admitted:**  
**Fiscal Years 1975-2003**



NOTE: Data estimated for last quarter of 1979 and no data available for 1980 and 1997. See Glossary for fiscal year definitions.  
 Source: Table 22 and previous *Yearbooks*.

substantial physical or mental abuse as victims of criminal activities.

The Glossary contains a detailed definition of nonimmigrants, a listing of each of the nonimmigrant classes of admission, and a definition of each class.

**Admission policy**

There is no set limit on the total number of nonimmigrant admissions each year. However, there are limits on the number of petitions approved for initial employment for certain categories of temporary workers as well as numerical limits on a few other categories. Maximum numbers of persons who may be issued visas or otherwise provided nonimmigrant status have been established for the following types of nonimmigrants: aliens suffering physical or mental abuse as a result of being victims of criminal activity; victims of severe forms of trafficking (and dependent family members); Mexican workers (and

spouses and children) qualifying under the North American Free-Trade Agreement (limit will be removed in 2004); participants in the Irish Peace Process Program; registered nurses in the Nursing Relief for Disadvantaged Areas Program; and visitors (and immediate family members) under a special program to provide certain critical information to federal or state courts.

Regulations govern additional areas such as the grounds for nonimmigrant admission, length and extension of stay, employment in the United States, accompaniment by family members, travel restrictions within the United States, and change of admission status. For example, ambassadors are allowed to remain in the United States for the duration of their service, students to complete their studies, visitors for business for up to 12 months (plus 6-month extensions), and aliens in transit through the United States for not more than 29 days (with no extensions).

Prior to the terrorist attacks in September 2001 the INS maintained two programs for aliens in transit through the United States: the International-to-International (ITI) program (also known as the In-Transit Lounge (ITL) program) and the Transit Without Visa (TWOV) program. The ITI/ITL program allowed passengers in transit with or without visas to be inspected but not admitted to the United States and required them to remain in Federal Inspection Service (FIS) “transit lounge” areas. An ITI/ITL alien did not complete an I-94 form. Passengers without visas also were allowed to transit the United States as TWOV aliens. These passengers were inspected and admitted to the United States and thus required to use the I-94. The ITI/ITL program was suspended in September 2001 due to the terrorist attacks. However, aliens arriving without visas still were allowed to transit the United States under the TWOV program, except some aliens who qualified for the Visa Waiver Program. This resulted in a large increase in the TWOV count for fiscal year 2002 (Table 24). In April 2002, the ITI/ITL program was reinstated though carriers of transit aliens at only ten ports of entry chose to resume use of ITI/ITL operations (program use was voluntary for carriers providing certain regulations were followed). Other carriers preferred continued use of the TWOV program, which kept the number of TWOV aliens admitted at a high level for 2003, though not as high as the peak reached in 2002. The TWOV and ITI/ITL programs were both suspended on August 2, 2003 based on credible intelligence concerning a specific threat of exploitation of the TWOV program by terrorist organizations. Since August 2003, passengers who previously used the TWOV or ITI/ITL

programs are required to obtain visas, seek other routes of travel without visas than through the United States, or qualify for travel without visas through the United States by means of the Visa Waiver Program.

### Employment, family members

(Tables 23-25, 28, 30)

Most types of nonimmigrants are not allowed employment while in the United States, though exceptions may be granted, for example, to students and to family members of international representatives. On the other hand, temporary workers come to the United States expressly for purposes of employment. Most nonimmigrant aliens may bring immediate family members with them. Some nonimmigrant aliens are prohibited from changing to another nonimmigrant category while in this country: transit aliens (except certain diplomats); crewmen; Visa Waiver Program visitors; fiance(e)s coming to the United States to marry U.S. citizens; visitors under a special program to provide certain critical information to federal or state courts; and certain exchange visitors, non-agricultural workers, industrial trainees, vocational students, NATO personnel, and Irish Peace Process aliens.

### Visa Waiver Program (Tables 22, F)

The Visa Waiver Program was established by the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 and made permanent by the Visa Waiver Permanent Program Act of 2000 (see Glossary). This program permits entry to the United States on a temporary basis without nonimmigrant visas for certain nonimmigrants from qualified countries. The program extends only to approved countries that offer a reciprocal waiver of visas to U.S. citizens and adhere to other statutory and regulatory requirements. These include development of machine-readable passports and the condition that designation in the program will not compromise U.S. law enforcement or national security. Entry is limited to the visitor for pleasure and for business classes, with admission not to exceed 90 days. At the beginning of fiscal year 2003, 28 countries were members of the Visa Waiver Program. Uruguay was removed in April 2003. Entries for current participant countries during fiscal year 2002 and 2003 are shown in Table F.

Data for business and pleasure are not available separately for 2000 and 2001 due to the expiration of the Visa Waiver

Country of citizenship	Visa Waiver visitors to Guam, fiscal year 2003	
	For pleasure	For business
Total .....	89,646	1,184
Korea .....	73,629	1,016
Taiwan <sup>1</sup> .....	13,068	59
Hong Kong .....	1,292	23
United Kingdom .....	410	15
Indonesia .....	356	14
Japan .....	94	4
Australia .....	78	6
Singapore .....	70	19
Malaysia .....	60	7
Papua New Guinea ...	23	D
New Zealand .....	18	D
Vanuatu .....	15	D
Solomon Islands .....	10	-
Nauru .....	5	-
Samoa .....	4	-
Brunei .....	-	-
Unknown/Other .....	332	21

<sup>1</sup> Includes 4,209 pleasure and 13 business admissions miscoded as the People's Republic of China, which is not in the Guam Visa Waiver program. - Represents zero. D Disclosure standards not met.

Pilot Program before it was made permanent (Table 24). From May 1 through October 30, 2000 all visa waiver entries were inspected using parole provisions and were not differentiated as to visitors for business or pleasure.

### Guam Visa Waiver Program

Under the Visa Waiver Program, certain visitors from designated countries may visit Guam for up to 15 days without first having to obtain nonimmigrant visitor visas. The table above shows the countries participating in this program and entries for fiscal year 2003.

### North American Free-Trade Agreement

(Tables 23-25, 29, 30)

In December 1992, the Presidents of the United States and Mexico and the Prime Minister of Canada signed an agreement, enacted in December 1993, known as the North American Free-Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (see Glossary).

**Table F**  
**Nonimmigrants Admitted Under the Visa Waiver Program by Country of Citizenship**  
**Fiscal Years 2002-03**

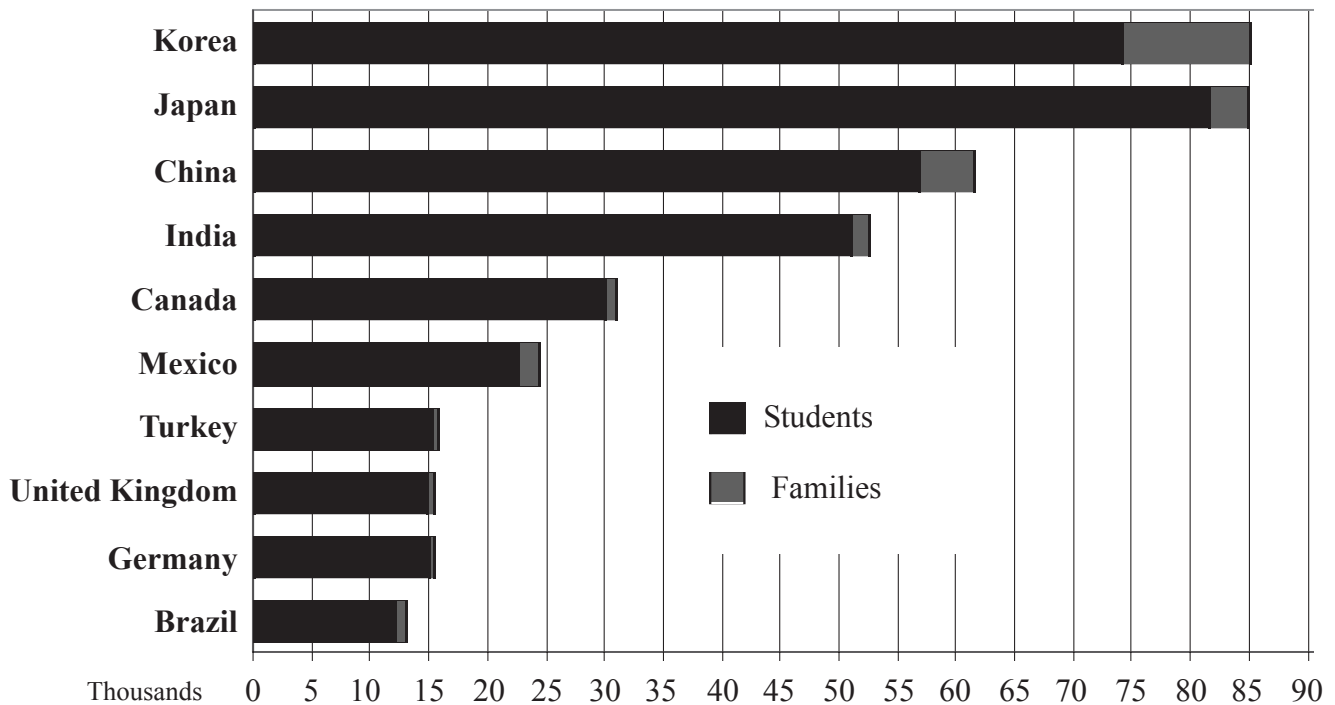
Country of citizenship	Visitors for pleasure				Visitors for business			
	2003	2002	Change		2003	2002	Change	
			Number	Percent			Number	Percent
<b>All Visa Waiver admissions .....</b>	<b>11,610,325</b>	<b>11,182,774</b>	<b>427,551</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>1,970,364</b>	<b>2,047,227</b>	<b>-76,863</b>	<b>-3.8</b>
United Kingdom .....	3,659,662	3,405,697	253,965	7.5	530,669	533,982	-3,313	- .6
Japan .....	2,988,047	2,986,224	1,823	.1	315,929	361,863	-45,934	-12.7
Germany .....	998,290	946,029	52,261	5.5	256,200	262,098	-5,898	-2.3
France .....	750,805	756,731	-5,926	-.8	169,979	176,122	-6,143	-3.5
Italy .....	474,455	413,565	60,890	14.7	101,896	101,570	326	.3
Netherlands .....	398,877	386,663	12,214	3.2	99,651	100,011	-360	-.4
Australia .....	389,303	355,499	33,804	9.5	94,867	89,890	4,977	5.5
Spain .....	325,595	299,118	26,477	8.9	49,426	50,927	-1,501	-2.9
Ireland .....	290,166	260,141	30,025	11.5	38,604	37,356	1,248	3.3
Switzerland .....	185,986	188,627	-2,641	-1.4	35,772	39,673	-3,901	-9.8
Sweden .....	167,794	142,142	25,652	18.0	52,783	56,390	-3,607	-6.4
New Zealand .....	154,720	161,372	-6,652	-4.1	25,871	25,909	-38	-.1
Belgium .....	114,633	123,410	-8,777	-7.1	41,061	42,876	-1,815	-4.2
Denmark .....	107,305	90,353	16,952	18.8	34,575	34,466	109	.3
Norway .....	93,886	84,593	9,293	11.0	25,960	26,120	-160	-.6
Austria .....	91,924	83,769	8,155	9.7	23,240	23,867	-627	-2.6
Portugal .....	55,431	49,480	5,951	12.0	8,899	7,771	1,128	14.5
Finland .....	52,328	48,615	3,713	7.6	21,257	22,727	-1,470	-6.5
Singapore .....	36,143	31,969	4,174	13.1	18,485	17,823	662	3.7
Uruguay <sup>1</sup> .....	22,100	33,032	-10,932	-33.1	1,358	2,673	-1,315	-49.2
Iceland .....	16,153	14,342	1,811	12.6	3,657	3,391	266	7.8
Slovenia .....	7,365	5,166	2,199	42.6	2,338	1,785	553	31.0
Luxembourg .....	5,364	4,840	524	10.8	1,083	1,161	-78	-6.7
Liechtenstein .....	851	825	26	3.2	144	171	-27	-15.8
Andorra .....	440	330	110	33.3	38	56	-18	-32.1
Monaco .....	381	344	37	10.8	51	33	18	54.5
San Marino .....	276	252	24	9.5	24	27	-3	-11.1
Brunei .....	231	233	-2	-.9	92	70	22	31.4
Unknown <sup>2</sup> .....	221,814	309,413	-87,599	-28.3	16,455	26,419	-9,964	-37.7

<sup>1</sup> Removed from the Visa Waiver Program April 15, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Includes Guam Visa Waiver Program admissions for countries not shown.

NOTE: Data include entries under the Guam Visa Waiver Program.

**Chart G**  
**Nonimmigrants Admitted as Students and Their Families from Top 10 Countries of Citizenship: Fiscal Year 2003**



NOTE: China includes the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. Source: Table 23.

This law superseded the United States-Canada Free-Trade Agreement, and established a special, reciprocal trading relationship among the United States, Canada, and Mexico. This agreement extended to the citizens of Mexico (with certain stipulations) and Canada the nonimmigrant class of admission exclusively for business people entering the United States to engage in activities at a “professional” level. Additionally, the agreement facilitates entry for Mexican as well as Canadian citizens seeking temporary entry as visitors for business, treaty traders and treaty investors, and intracompany transferees. Entries under NAFTA began in February 1994. Data for fiscal years 1995-2003 are shown for NAFTA in Table 24.

### Data Overview

#### Recent trends in admission (Tables 22, 24)

As noted, the fiscal year 2003 total of nearly 27.9 million I-94 documented nonimmigrant admissions represents a decrease of nearly 58,000 (-.2 percent) from fiscal year 2002. Total nonimmigrant admissions numbered about 6.3 million during 1975 and steadily increased to about 11.8 million in both 1981 and 1982. The number stabilized at

about 9.5 million from 1983 to 1985 (recording a low in 1984), then began a steady increase that continued from 1985 to 2000. The decrease from 2000 to 2001 was the first since 1983-84, with the decreases from 2001-02 and 2002-03 continuing that trend (Chart F).

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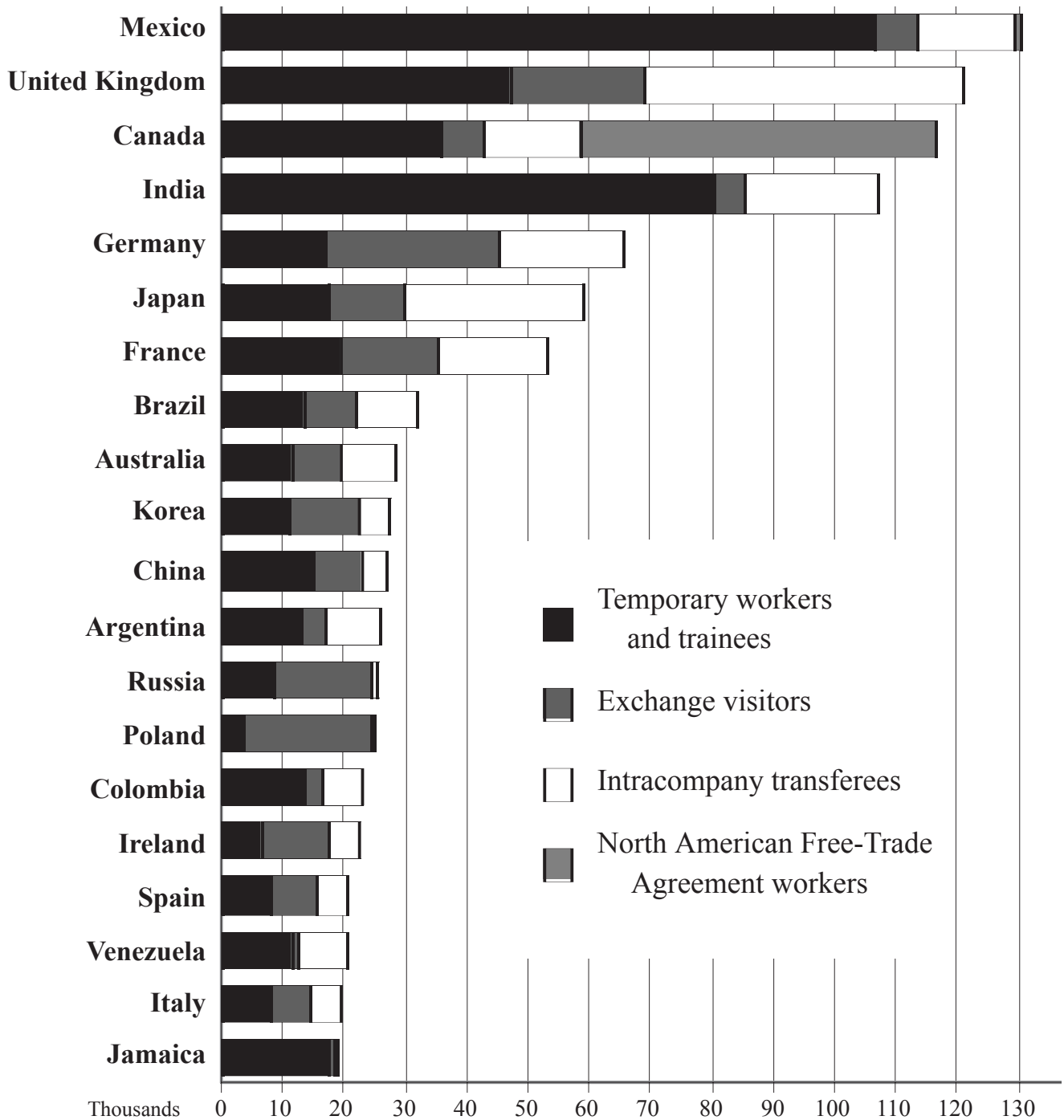
**Nearly 27.9 million I-94 documented nonimmigrants were admitted to the United States in 2003.**

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#### Class of admission (Tables 22-25, 28, 30)

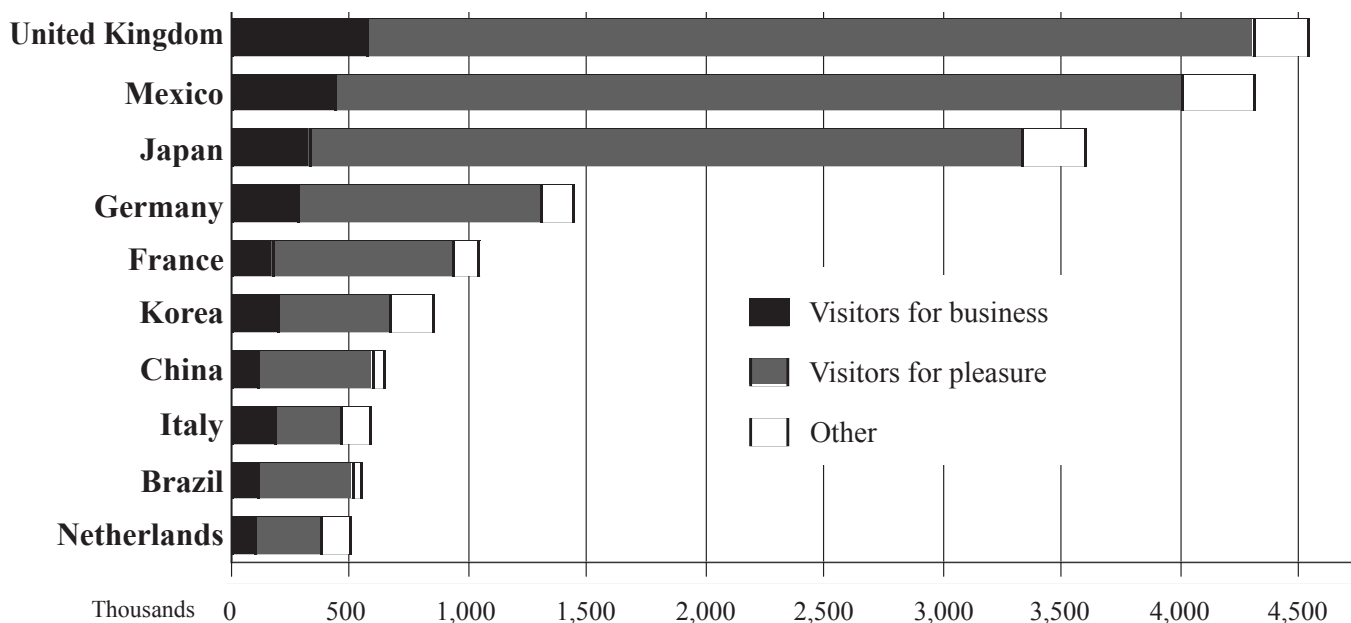
Of the nearly 27.9 million nonimmigrant admissions in fiscal year 2003, a large majority (87.2 percent) entered as visitors for pleasure (tourists) or visitors for business. There were nearly 625,000 foreign student admissions recorded, entering to pursue a full course of study (predominantly in academic institutions) in addition to more than 38,000 associated spouse and children admissions (Chart G and Table 23). Nearly 322,000 persons entered as exchange

**Chart H**  
**Nonimmigrants Admitted as Temporary Workers, Intracompany Transferees, and Exchange Visitors from Top 20 Countries of Citizenship: Fiscal Year 2003**



NOTE: China includes the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. "Temporary workers and trainees" includes admission classes H, O, P, Q, and R (see Nonimmigrant Admission section of text). Also, see Glossary for definitions of nonimmigrant classes of admission.  
 Source: Table 25.

**Chart I**  
**Nonimmigrants Admitted by Selected Class of Admission from Top 10 Countries of Citizenship: Fiscal Year 2003**



NOTE: China includes the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. Source: Table 23.

visitors to study, teach, or conduct research in the United States, bringing with them more than 41,000 spouses and children (Chart H and Table 25).

More than 249,000 representatives of foreign governments entered the United States as nonimmigrants in 2003. This figure consists of: more than 138,000 foreign government officials (including ambassadors, public ministers, career diplomats, and consular officers), family members, and attendants; more than 98,000 foreign representatives to international organizations (including families and attendants); and more than 12,500 officials serving the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (including family members).

**Country of citizenship** (Tables 23, 25-27, 29)

Half of all nonimmigrants arriving in fiscal year 2003 were citizens of one of four countries: the United Kingdom (16.3 percent), Mexico (15.5), Japan (12.9), and Germany (5.2). Both the United Kingdom and Mexico surpassed Japan in total admissions for the first time (in recent history) in 2002 and that relationship remained in 2003.<sup>1</sup> The United Kingdom, Mexico, and Germany had

more arrivals during 2003 than in 2002, while Japan showed a decrease of 1.7 percent (more than 62,000 fewer). Other countries with a significant number of arrivals that showed an increase between 2002 and 2003 were Bulgaria (26.9 percent), the Czech Republic (25.5), Croatia (20.5), and Nigeria (17.7). Countries with a significant number of arrivals that showed a decrease include Serbia and Montenegro (-38.5 percent), Iran (-32.0), and Venezuela (-29.4).

**Port of entry** (Table 26)

Just as four countries dominated nonimmigrant admissions to the United States in 2003, so did four ports of entry. Miami (12.7 percent), New York (11.6), Los Angeles (10.4), and Honolulu (5.5) together accounted for more than 40 percent of all entrants. The share of these four ports was slightly lower than in 2002, due to a small reduction for Miami (13.5 percent in 2002).

<sup>1</sup> The increases in I-94 admissions since 1997 for nationals of Mexico are partially due to changes in policy encouraging more complete use of the I-94 forms for Mexican visitors.



**Table G**  
**Parolees Admitted by Selected Class of Admission from Top Five Countries of Citizenship:**  
**Fiscal Years 1998-2003**

Class of admission/ country of citizenship	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>All parolees .....</b>	<b>234,545</b>	<b>263,755</b>	<b>299,851</b>	<b>273,914</b>	<b>244,834</b>	<b>264,777</b>
<b>Deferred inspections .....</b>	<b>10,108</b>	<b>9,608</b>	<b>10,272</b>	<b>12,677</b>	<b>6,722</b>	<b>11,154</b>
Mexico .....	1,786	1,806	1,773	2,089	967	1,670
Canada .....	822	851	991	951	665	710
Cuba .....	212	399	362	1,540	320	617
Haiti .....	301	145	139	149	124	611
El Salvador .....	199	178	173	145	110	407
Other .....	6,788	6,229	6,834	7,803	4,536	7,139
<b>Advance parolees .....</b>	<b>8,344</b>	<b>7,955</b>	<b>6,039</b>	<b>22,795</b>	<b>28,557</b>	<b>38,235</b>
Canada .....	1,985	2,058	1,610	2,769	3,106	6,256
India .....	248	225	313	2,074	2,572	4,308
Mexico .....	1,729	629	469	2,012	3,799	3,860
United Kingdom .....	420	570	495	1,779	1,971	2,769
China <sup>1</sup> .....	269	353	474	2,280	2,514	2,712
Other .....	3,693	4,120	2,678	11,881	14,595	18,330
<b>Port of entry parolees .....</b>	<b>169,357</b>	<b>196,409</b>	<b>241,625</b>	<b>198,495</b>	<b>171,114</b>	<b>186,522</b>
Mexico .....	55,290	51,928	51,163	42,134	30,663	28,467
India .....	5,940	7,314	14,583	12,619	11,750	14,703
Canada .....	11,234	15,170	17,734	14,737	13,090	12,759
Cuba .....	940	2,773	5,066	6,492	8,341	10,733
United Kingdom .....	8,928	11,886	14,682	10,322	7,894	10,226
Other .....	87,025	107,338	138,397	112,191	99,376	109,634
Humanitarian, public interest, and overseas parolees .....	46,736	49,783	41,915	39,947	38,441	28,866

<sup>1</sup> Includes the People's Republic of China and Taiwan.

While total admissions declined slightly from fiscal year 2002 to 2003, several ports with substantial numbers of admissions showed increases, including Tampa, FL (38.4 percent), Port Everglades, FL (35.3), Charlotte Amalie, VI (pre-inspection station) (23.7), and New Orleans, LA (20.2). Pittsburgh, PA (-39.9 percent) and St. Louis, MO (-25.9 percent) showed the largest decreases during 2003 among larger ports.

**State of destination (Tables 28, 29)**

The five states that were the leading destinations of temporary visitors in 2003 were: Florida (16.3 percent of total admissions, 29 percent from the United Kingdom); California (13.4 percent of the total, 20 percent from Mexico

and 13 percent from the United Kingdom); New York (11.5 percent of the total, 22 percent from the United Kingdom); Texas (6.9 percent of the total, 61 percent from Mexico); and Hawaii (5.7 percent of the total, 83 percent from Japan).

**Gender and age (Table 30)**

The largest 5-year age group for all nonimmigrant admissions during fiscal year 2003 is 30-34 years, with nearly 13 percent of the total. For females the predominant age group is 25-29 years (12.5 percent of females); for males 30-34 (13.2 percent of males). Males account for 53.1 percent of total nonimmigrant admissions; nearly 85 percent of intracompany transferees; more than 76 percent of visitors for business; nearly 75

**Table H**  
**Parolees Admitted by Selected Category of Parole from Selected Country of Citizenship:**  
**Fiscal Years 1998-2003**

Class of admission/ country of citizenship	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>All selected parole categories .....</b>	<b>46,736</b>	<b>49,783</b>	<b>41,915</b>	<b>39,947</b>	<b>38,441</b>	<b>28,866</b>
<b>Overseas parolees .....</b>	<b>1,072</b>	<b>2,130</b>	<b>3,345</b>	<b>3,159</b>	<b>2,508</b>	<b>2,292</b>
Ukraine .....	144	601	640	685	370	644
Cuba .....	107	181	103	399	788	426
Russia .....	159	372	304	316	219	317
Mexico .....	86	112	92	59	203	161
Belarus .....	47	20	135	184	79	109
Cambodia .....	9	10	39	122	69	88
Moldova .....	6	71	104	136	80	84
Other .....	514	763	1,928	1,258	700	463
<b>Humanitarian parolees</b>						
<b>(medical and related reasons)</b>	<b>25,141</b>	<b>22,571</b>	<b>22,933</b>	<b>18,374</b>	<b>16,708</b>	<b>14,826</b>
Mexico .....	18,292	16,106	15,948	9,291	6,312	6,423
Cuba .....	234	260	325	903	2,310	1,702
El Salvador .....	742	1,077	699	935	1,724	1,551
Honduras .....	66	68	291	1,034	1,739	1,308
Canada .....	1,802	1,620	1,704	1,957	1,345	935
Other .....	4,005	3,440	3,966	4,254	3,278	2,907
<b>Public interest parolees (legal</b>						
<b>and related reasons) .....</b>	<b>20,523</b>	<b>25,082</b>	<b>15,637</b>	<b>18,414</b>	<b>19,225</b>	<b>11,748</b>
Cuba .....	13,547	16,768	8,760	9,574	12,772	6,943
Mexico .....	3,092	3,581	2,300	2,718	2,550	1,884
Canada .....	543	516	319	578	465	598
Ukraine .....	493	874	504	725	447	341
Colombia .....	79	145	141	273	300	289
Other .....	2,769	3,198	3,613	4,546	2,691	1,693

percent of temporary workers and trainees; more than 72 percent of foreign government officials; and nearly 70 percent of foreign information media. Females show a slight edge in arrivals as visitors for pleasure (51 percent) and for a category with fewer arrivals—the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act (60 percent).

## Parolees

*A parolee is an alien, appearing to be inadmissible to the inspecting officer, allowed to enter the United States under urgent humanitarian reasons or when that alien's entry is determined to be for significant public benefit.* (See Glossary)

## Authority to grant parole

The Secretary of Homeland Security <sup>2</sup> has the authority to permit the temporary admission on a case-by-case basis of an alien who may appear inadmissible but who enters the United States for urgent humanitarian reasons or when that alien's entry is determined to be for significant public benefit. Parole does not constitute formal admission to the United States. It confers only temporary status, and parolees are required to leave when the conditions supporting their admission are ended.

<sup>2</sup> Effective March 1, 2003, immigration parole authority was transferred from the Attorney General.

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***Nearly 265,000 parolees were admitted to the United States during 2003.***

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### **U.S. Parole Program**

Parolees are treated as nonimmigrants at port processing, but their numbers are not reported in the nonimmigrant admission data (Tables 22-30). They are classified into six categories: deferred inspections; port-of-entry paroles; advance paroles; humanitarian; public interest; and overseas paroles. To simplify presentation, some of these categories are combined in Table G. In fiscal year 2003 the total number of parole entries was slightly less than 265,000. This was 20,000 more than the previous year but represented a drop from the record high of nearly 300,000 reached in fiscal year 2000.

### **Categories of parole**

Deferred inspection is used when an alien does not appear to be clearly admissible based on the evidence at hand. The parole is issued and an appointment is made for the alien to appear at another immigration office, where more information is available and the inspection can be completed. These cases are usually resolved within 2 weeks, and, if admissible, the alien is admitted in the appropriate category. Parole may also be granted by advance application to a USCIS field office. Advance parole is issued to an alien who resides legally in the United States in other than lawful permanent resident status who has an unexpected need to travel abroad and return, and whose conditions of stay do not otherwise allow for readmission after temporary departure. Most commonly, parole is extended at ports of entry. These parole admissions comprised 70 percent of all paroles in fiscal year 2003. These cases are most common at the land border ports and often involve the reentry of lawful permanent residents who are not carrying their documents. Again, these cases are typically resolved rapidly when the documents are produced.

The more exceptional instances of parole arise in emergencies or special situations. People may be admitted under humanitarian parole to receive medical treatment or because they are injured or acutely ill. They may be brought to the United States under public interest parole to

take part in legal proceedings as witnesses or defendants, or as part of a special overseas program undertaken in an agreement with another government. The latter category is the only one that may result in a long-term admission to the United States.

### **Country of citizenship**

Table G displays the total number of parolees admitted from fiscal year 1998 through fiscal year 2003 by major categories of parole. Within the deferred inspections, advance parole, and port-of-entry categories, the five countries accounting for the largest number of parole admissions in fiscal year 2003 are shown. Total parole admissions increased by 8.1 percent in fiscal year 2003 compared to fiscal year 2002 but were 11.7 percent below the all-time high reached in fiscal year 2000. Our neighboring countries, Canada and Mexico, always account for a large number of paroles in the deferred inspections, port-of-entry, and advance parole categories. In 2003, citizens of India ranked second in the advance parole and port-of-entry categories. Deferred inspections returned in 2003 to a level comparable to 2001 and earlier years. Advance paroles increased to more than 38,000, many times higher than the level observed in 2000 and earlier years. The growth in the use of advance parole is thought to be caused in part by the continuing backlog of applications for adjustment to lawful permanent resident status. In addition, tightened security measures taken following September 11, 2001 may be partly responsible for the increase in advance paroles by aliens who want to ensure their readmission after departure. Three-fourths of the total increase in the use of parole came in the port-of-entry category and was observed among most countries other than Mexico and Canada.

Table H presents more detail for the same years regarding admissions in the overseas, humanitarian, and public interest parole categories, which all saw a drop in admissions in 2003. Cubans accounted for 59 percent of the public interest parole admissions and were the second most numerous nationality in the other two categories. Most Cubans continued to be admitted under the 1994 migration agreement with Cuba. Many of the overseas paroles were extended to persons from Ukraine, Russia, and other former Soviet republics; if the former Soviet Union were counted as one country, it would have accounted for 56 percent of the overseas parole category, with 1,275 admissions in fiscal year 2003. Most of the parolees from the former Soviet Union arrived under

special legislation after being denied refugee status.<sup>3</sup> These persons are allowed to adjust to immigrant status after one year of residence in the United States. More than 43 percent of the humanitarian parole admissions granted in fiscal year 2003 for medical and related reasons were from Mexico, and humanitarian parole was also used to admit significant numbers from El Salvador and Honduras. The rest came in small numbers from many other countries. A substantial number of the annual admissions under public interest parole for legal and related reasons are also from Mexico as well as Canada.

### Notes on the parole data

Several changes were made in the presentation of the parole data in fiscal year 2000 and continued in subsequent fiscal years. The corresponding changes were made retroactively in the data for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 in Tables G and H. First, the data for the independent republics of the former Soviet Union are no longer combined. This affects the ranking of the countries in the tables, since the former Soviet Union as a whole accounted for a significant share of the paroles in some categories. Second, the practice of combining the humanitarian and public interest parolees from countries with special programs into the overseas parole category is no longer being followed, and the data are presented without this editing step. Many Cubans admitted under the 1994 migration agreement were classified under public interest parole in 2003, but Cubans appear in significant numbers in most other parole categories as well. Most parolees from the republics of the former Soviet Union were classified under overseas or public interest parole. Third, from May 1 through the end of October 2000, the public interest parole authority was used to admit more than 9 million temporary visitors after the Visa Waiver Pilot Program expired without being reauthorized. Although procedures were adopted to distinguish these paroles from ordinary public interest paroles in the data, analysis indicates that the distinction was not made correctly in every case. For this reason, interpretation of the public interest parole data for fiscal year 2000 and to a lesser extent fiscal year 2001 should be made with caution.

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<sup>3</sup> The Foreign Operations Act of November 21, 1989. This provision is commonly known as the Lautenberg Amendment.

## Understanding the Data

### Data Collection

The Nonimmigrant Information System (NIIS) is designed to provide for each nonimmigrant entry a record of legal admission and departure. The system also produces statistics for such variables as age, gender, country of citizenship, class of admission, visa-issuing post, port of entry, and destination in the United States.

As mentioned, many nonimmigrants enter and leave the United States more than once each year, and the NIIS system records each entry (and departure) separately. The data system records each arrival/departure event via collection of a separate Form I-94; thus, admission data represent each arrival event during the year rather than the actual number of individuals admitted. Nonimmigrants in several classes of admission often enter (and leave) many times in any given year, especially students, intracompany transferees, and visitors for business.

A description of the principal steps in the process of nonimmigrant admission to the United States is useful for understanding the data produced by the NIIS system. A nonimmigrant visa is secured at a U.S. Consulate abroad (except for those entering under the Visa Waiver Program—see Visa Waiver Program section). These visas may be valid for multiple visits to the United States. Prior to departing for the United States, nonimmigrants are screened initially by the transportation company to ensure that their documents are in order.

At the port of entry, each arriving nonimmigrant presents a visa—or proof of visa waiver status—and a completed I-94 form to an inspection officer. The exception, as noted, is most nationals of Canada and Mexico. Among other actions, the inspector checks the form for completeness, determines the length of admission, and stamps the class of admission and port of entry on the I-94. The arrival portion is torn off and sent to a central data processing facility. The matching departure section of the form, usually stapled into the passport, is the nonimmigrant's proof of legal admission to the United States. This section of the I-94, collected at departure, also is sent to the data processing facility where it is processed and matched electronically to the arrival section of the form.

### **Other temporary visitors**

The Nonimmigrant Information System also includes information on parolees (see Parolees section), withdrawals, stowaways, refugees, asylees, and crewmen. Data for crewmen have historically been a very limited subset of arrivals. Improvements in collection and processing of forms during fiscal year 2002 have produced more complete counts for all types of crewmen (air and sea, cargo and pleasure conveyances). However, procedures for inspecting and documenting crewmen admissions continue to exclude certain crew. Data are not shown in the nonimmigrant tables for any of these classes of admission but are included in footnotes to the appropriate tables.

### **Temporary visitor information not collected**

The Nonimmigrant Information System does not include data for permanent resident aliens returning to the United States after short visits abroad or for most of the millions of citizens of Canada and Mexico who cross U.S. land borders for brief periods of time. As noted, NIIS data are generated from I-94 information. Under most circumstances, Canadians do not need visas and are not required to fill out I-94s. Mexicans crossing the border frequently may apply for border crossing cards, which can be used for admission to the United States for business or

pleasure within 25 miles of the Southwestern border for a period not to exceed 72 hours. Under those circumstances, they also are not issued I-94s. Many Mexican visitors obtain Form I-94s that allow multiple visits and are valid for 6 months (mostly those whose travel in the United States will exceed 25 miles or whose stay will exceed 72 hours). Inspection policy for Mexican temporary visitors has changed over the past several years leading to the collection of the I-94 for a greater proportion of visitors from that country. However, most are visitors without benefit of the I-94 form and are, therefore, not included in the nonimmigrant counts.

### **Limitations of Data**

Counts for unknown class of admission increased sharply in fiscal year 2002 and continued into 2003 (Tables 24-26, 30, and 32) due to a processing change in the data base. Certain class of admission codes previously assigned to the visitors for pleasure category were designated as unknown class for fiscal years 2002 and 2003.

The tables on parole admissions in fiscal year 1998 reflect a later edition of the data than was available for production of the report entitled, *Use of the Attorney General's Parole Authority Under the Immigration and Nationality Act: Fiscal Years 1997-1998*.