

# High-Skilled Immigration: Public Opinion, Trends, and Policy Issues

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# About the 2018 Global Attitudes Survey

## Face-to-face countries

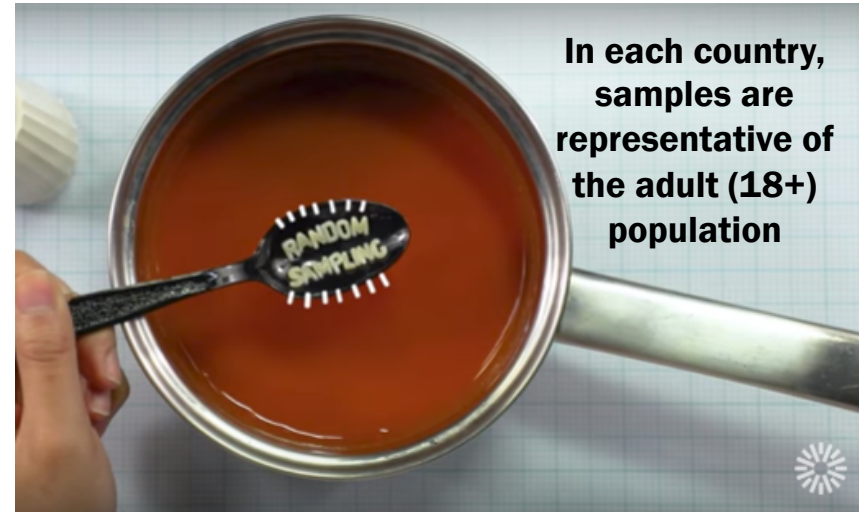
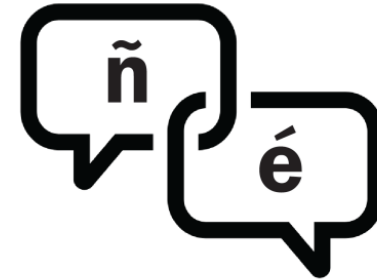
- Argentina
- Brazil
- Mexico
- Greece
- Hungary
- Italy
- Poland
- Russia
- Indonesia
- Philippines
- Israel
- Tunisia
- Kenya
- Nigeria
- South Africa

## 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

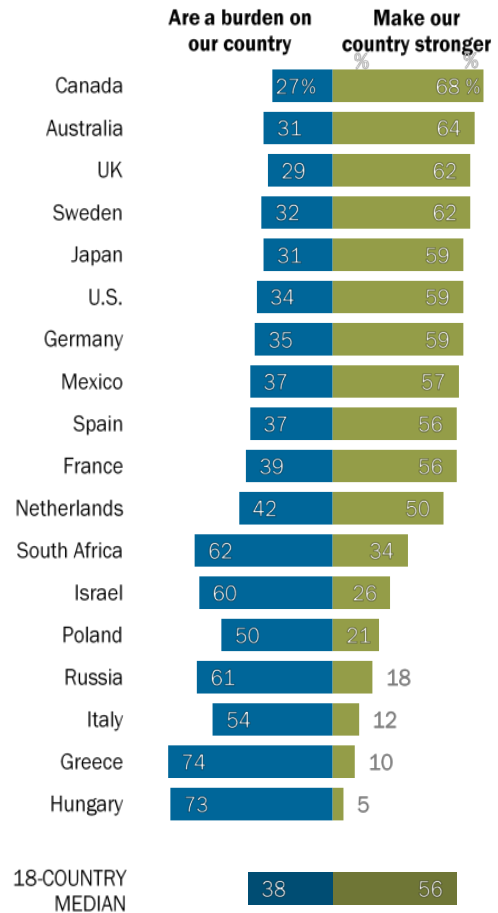
27,612 interviews conducted from May 14 to August 12, 2018 in 31 languages



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*

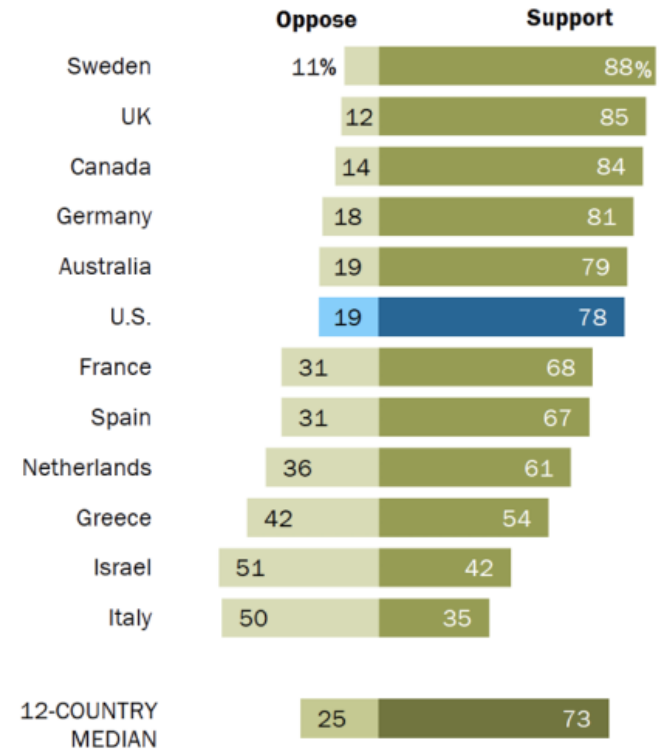


Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey, Q54a.  
 "Around the World, More Say Immigrants Are a Strength Than a Burden"

# Support of High Skilled Immigration

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

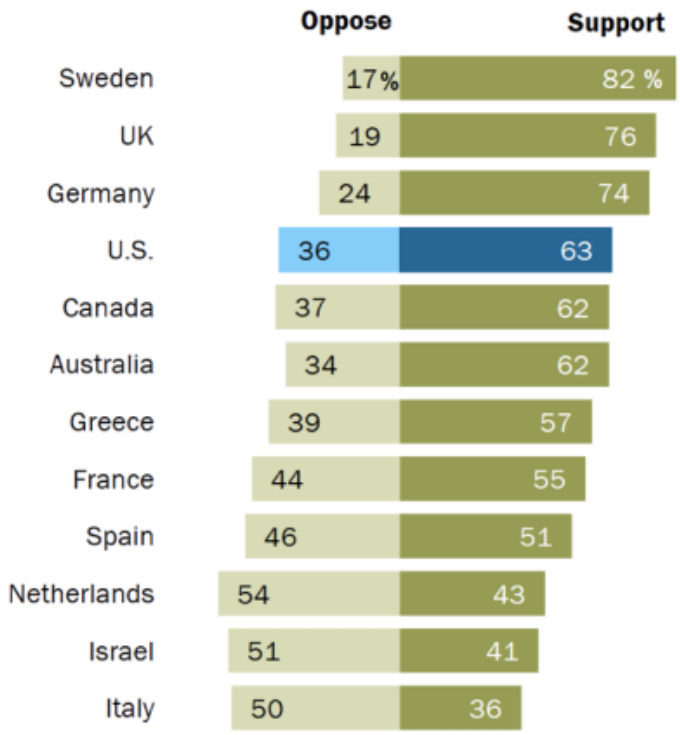
*Thinking about immigration, would you \_\_\_ encouraging highly skilled people to immigrate and work in (our country)?*



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)*

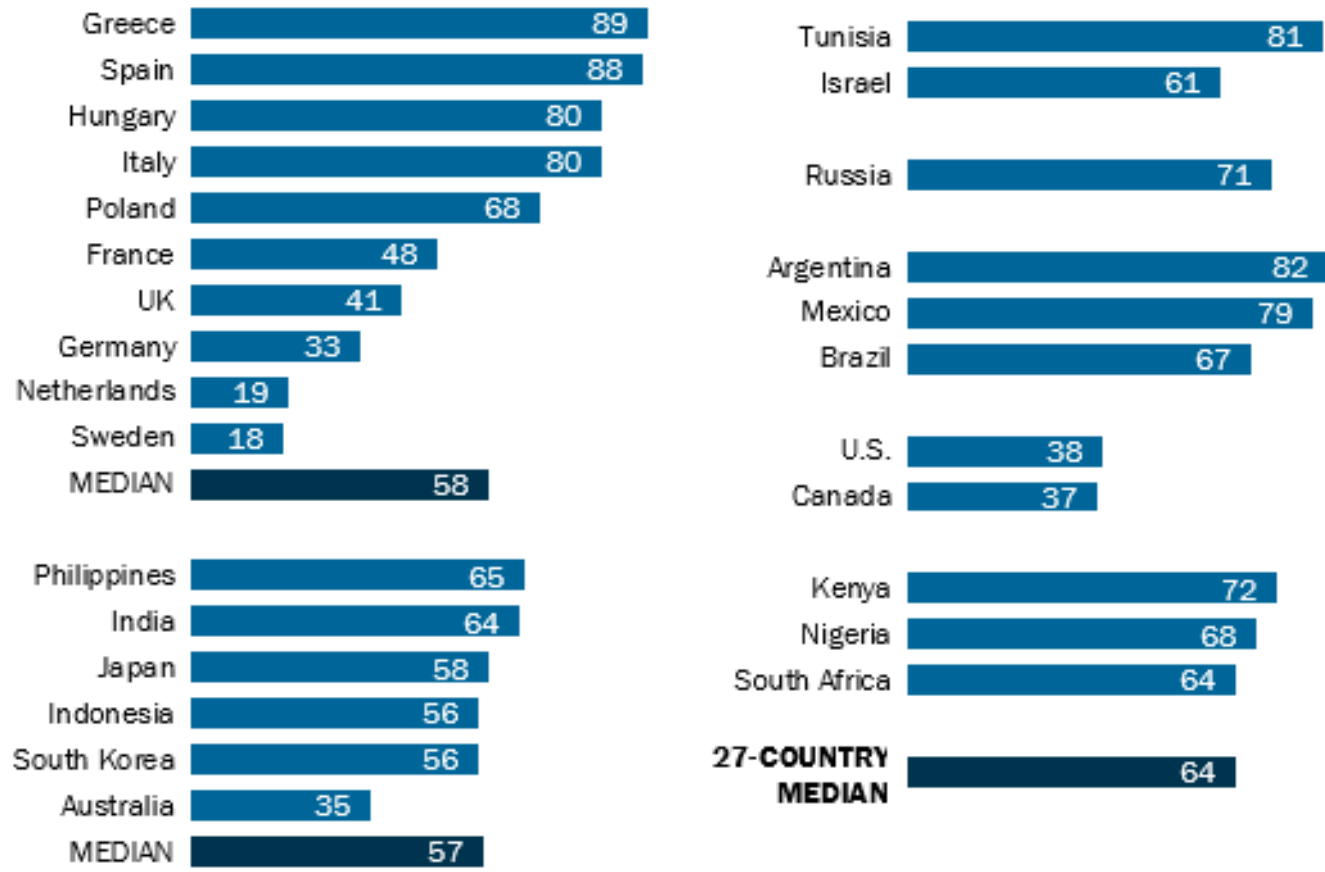


Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey. Q53c.  
"Majority of U.S. Public Supports High-Skilled Immigration"

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# Majorities in many countries think outmigration is a big problem

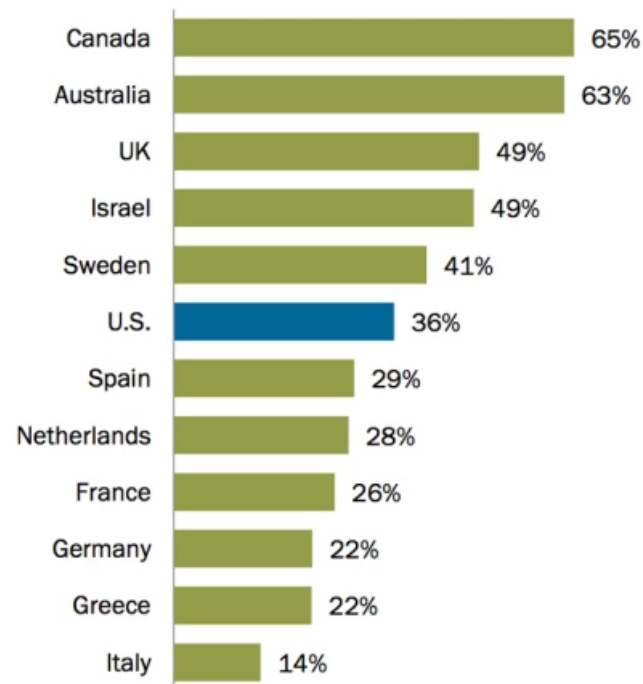
*% who say people leaving their country for jobs in other countries is a very or moderately big problem*



Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey, Q.52.

## 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.

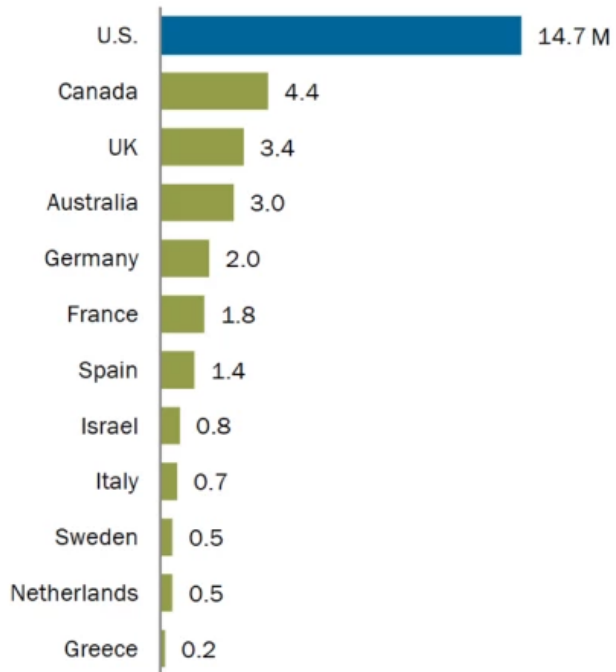
Source: Country censuses and surveys. See Methodology for complete list of data sources and years. See Appendix B for additional advanced economies.

"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.

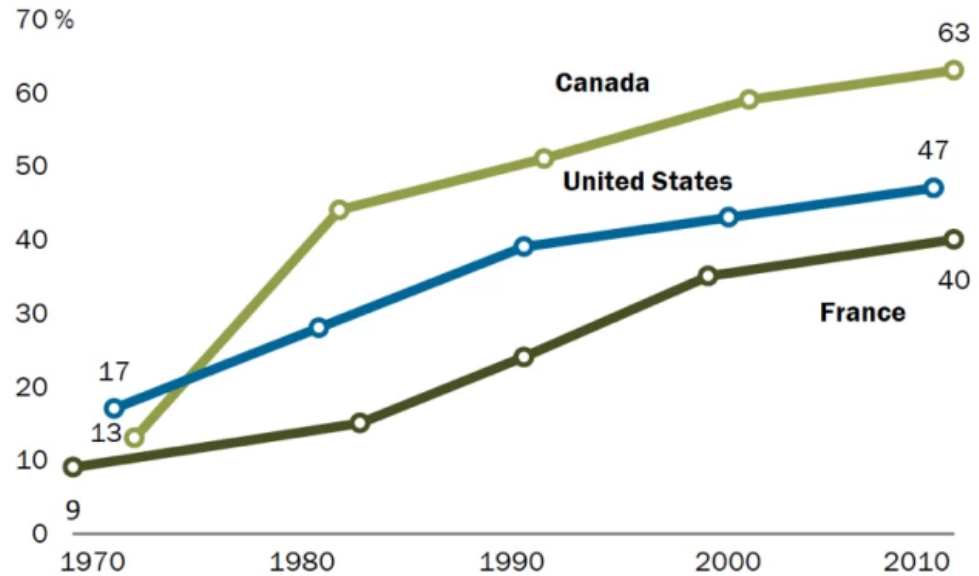
"Majority of U.S. Public Supports High-Skilled Immigration"

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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"

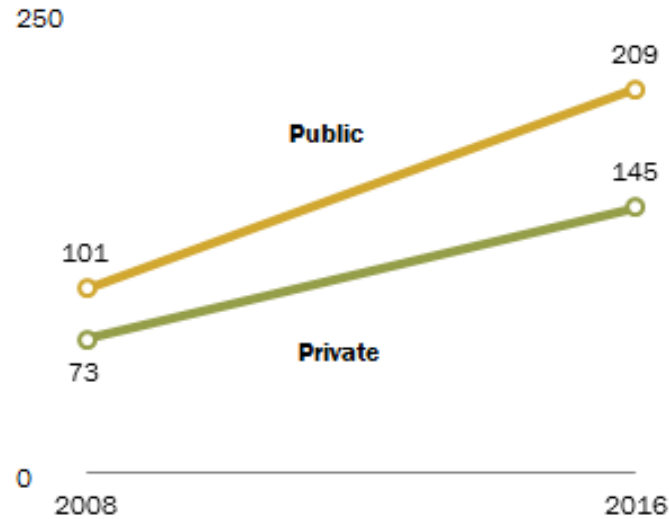
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# Foreign Students and Higher Education

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## 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.

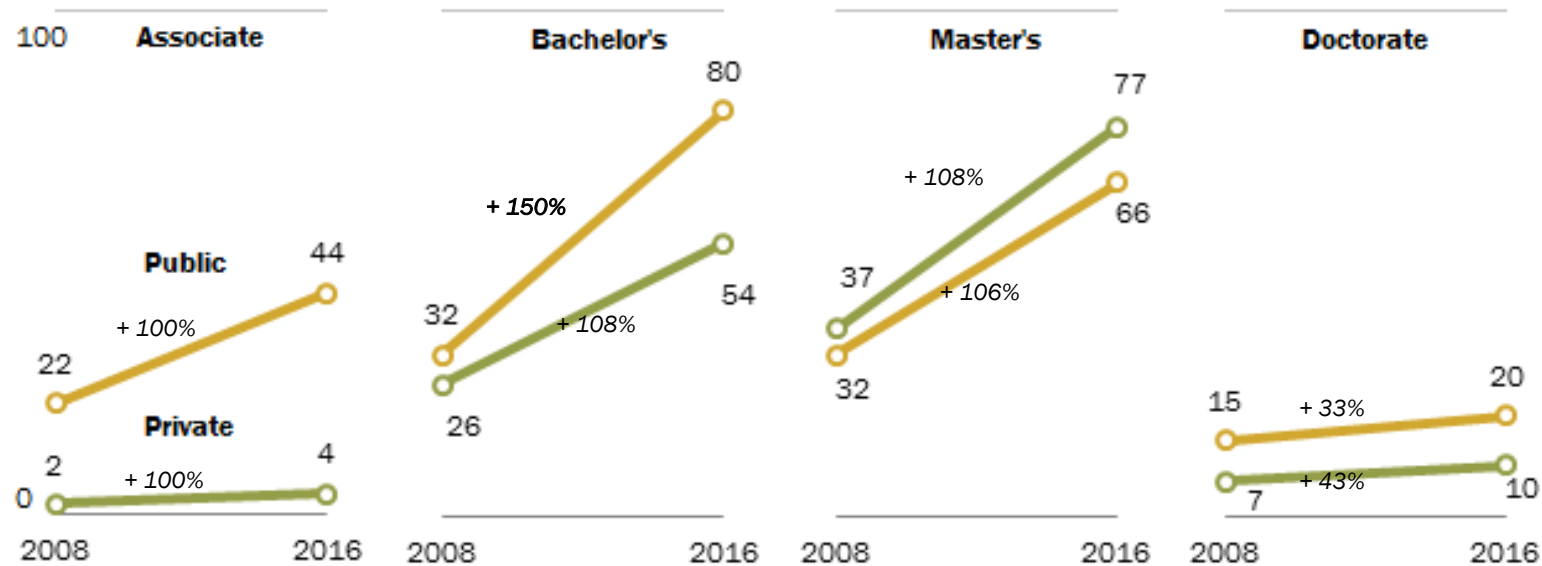
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received March 16, 2017, through a Freedom of Information Act request.

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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.

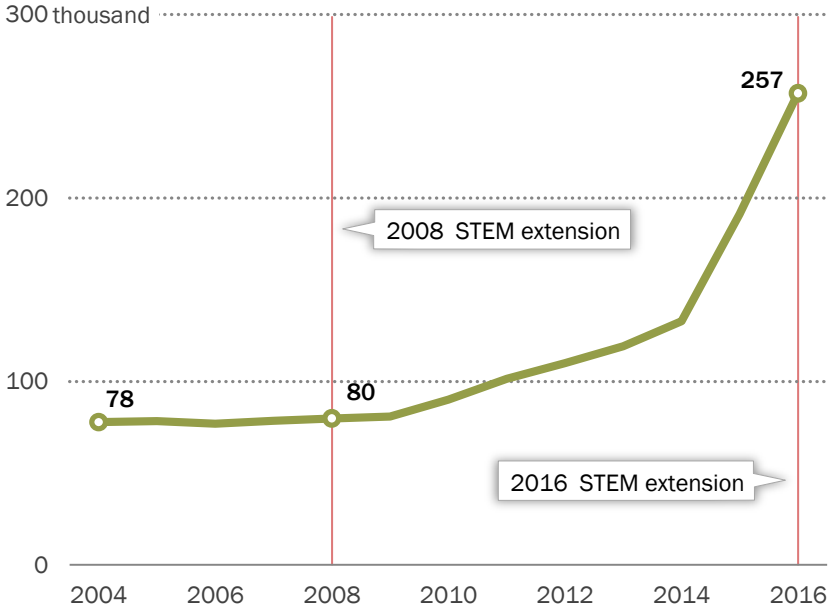
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# Optional Practical Training (OPT) Work Authorization for Foreign College Graduates

# 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



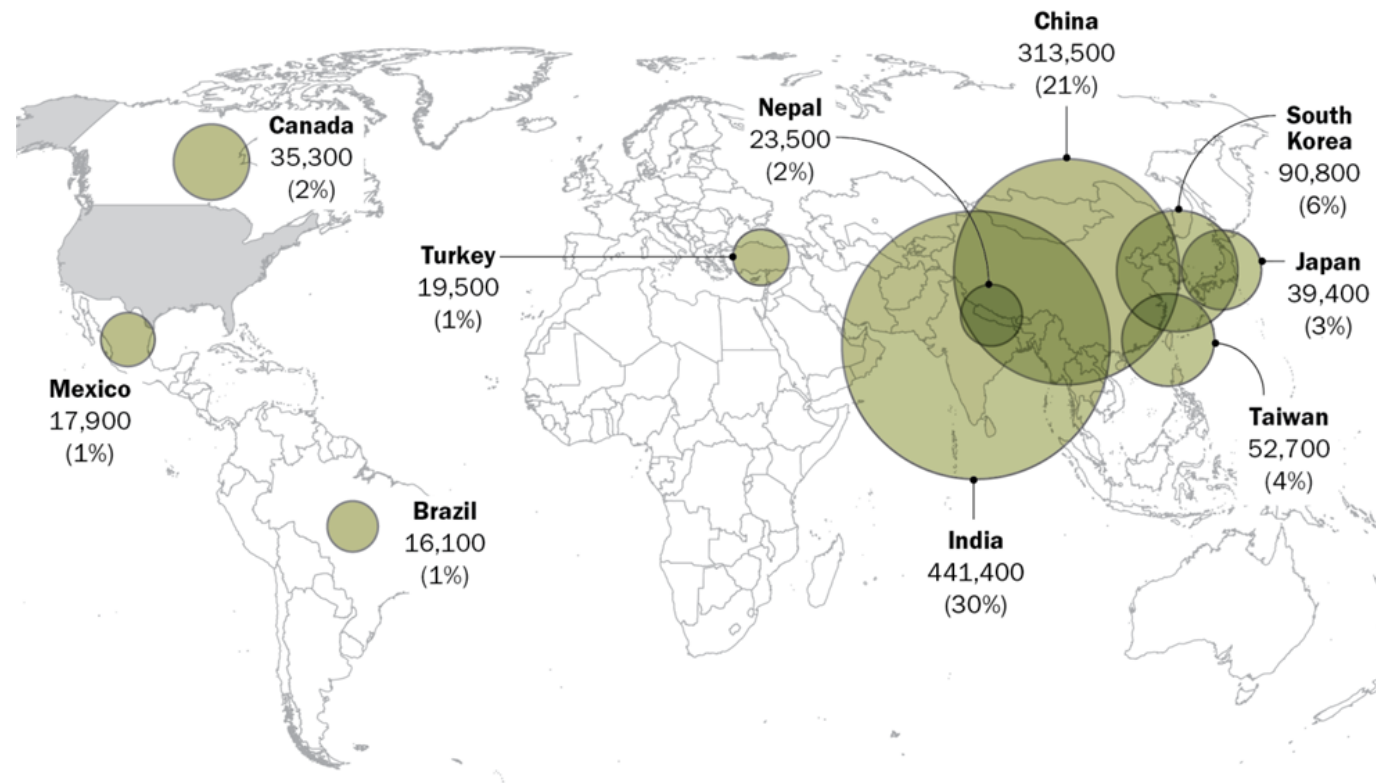
Note: Data based on calendar years.  
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received August, 2017, through a Freedom of Information Act request.

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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

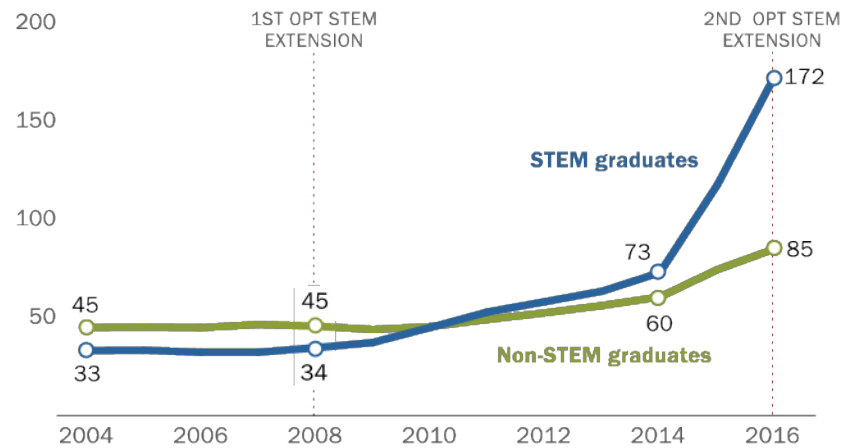


Note: Only top 10 countries shown. Figures are students with an associate degree or higher and are rounded to nearest hundred.  
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received August 2017 through a Freedom of Information Act request.  
“Number of Foreign 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

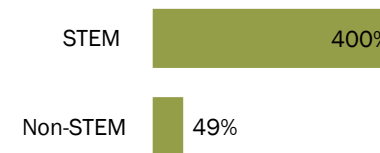


Note: Figures are students with an associate degree or higher. STEM categories are based on fields outlined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.  
 Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received August 2017 through a Freedom of Information Act request.  
 "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



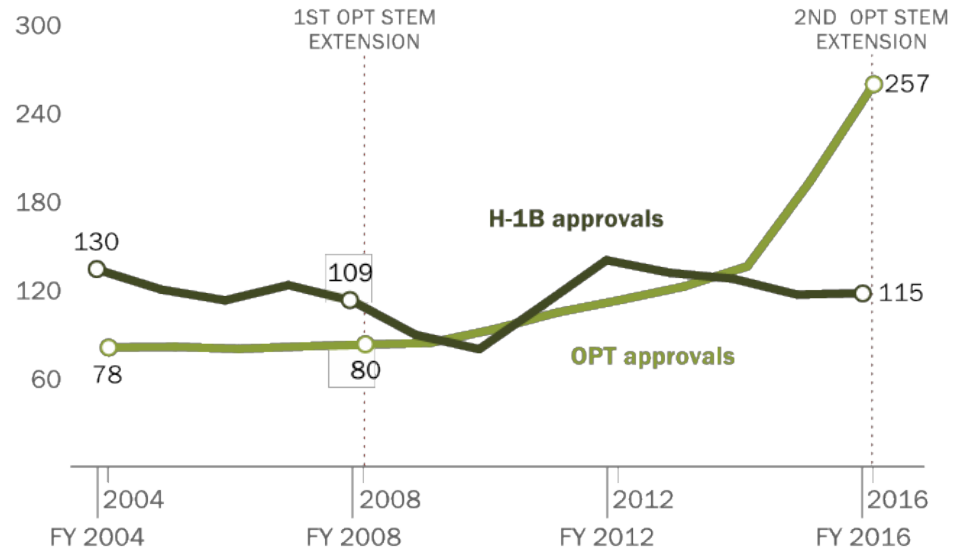
Note: Majors are grouped based on the most recent delineation of majors that fall under the science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) field outlined by the Department of Homeland Security.  
 Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received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

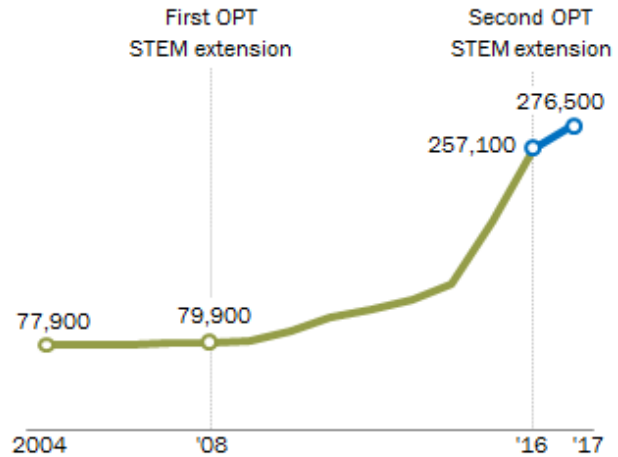
"Number of Foreign College Students Staying and Working in U.S. After Graduation Surges"

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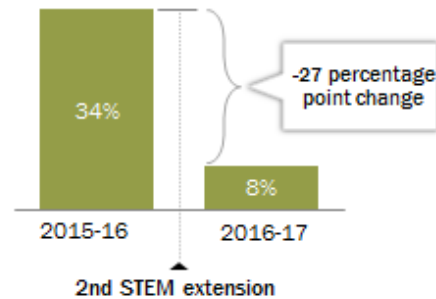
# The Future for Foreign Students in U.S.

## 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."

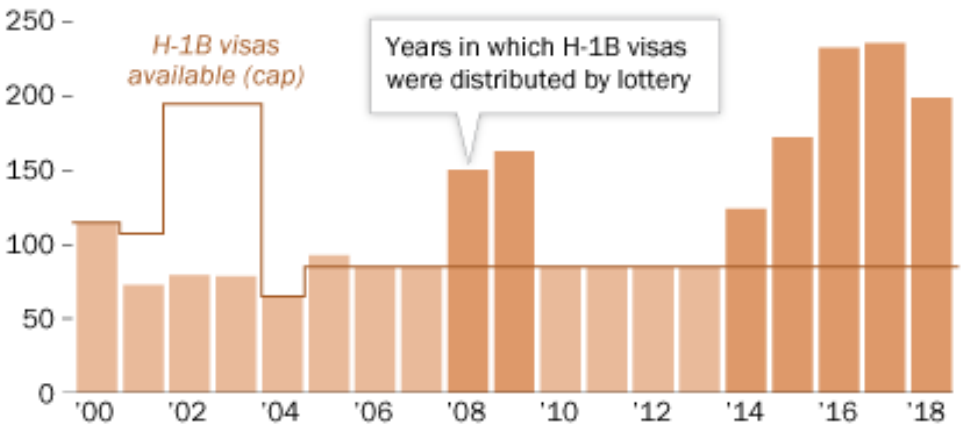
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data received April 2018 through a Freedom of Information Act request.

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

# H-1B 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.

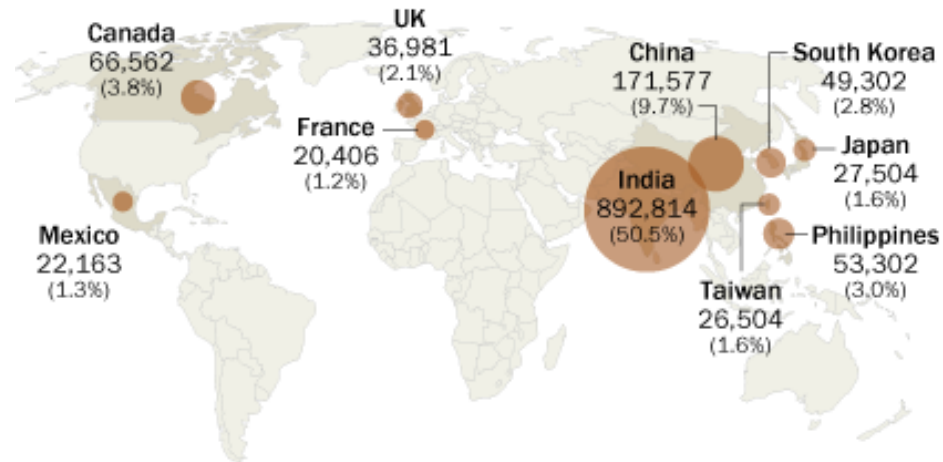
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Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services data.

# 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.

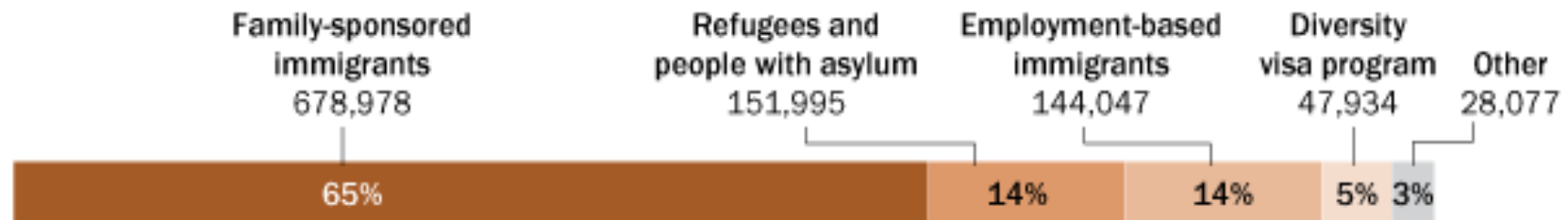
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Source: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services annual reports to Congress on H-1B petitions.

# 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

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