

History of U.S. Immigration

Immigration Unrestricted: 1492-1874

- 1492 Native American migration
- 1565 Spain settlement
- 1607 English colonization
- 1790 *The Naturalization Act* governs U.S. citizenship
- 1819 Immigration data collection begins

Exclusion Laws and Centralized Control of Immigration: 1875-1920

- 1875 Criminals, prostitutes and Chinese contract laborers are excluded
- 1882 *The Chinese Exclusion Act* suspends immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years
- 1891 The Bureau of Immigration is created
- 1892 Ellis Island U.S. immigration station opens in New York Harbor
- 1917 Immigration from Asian Pacific countries is prohibited

National-Origins Quota System and End of Anti-Asian Exclusion: 1921-1964

- 1921 A national-origins quota system begins favoring Northwestern Europeans
- 1929 *The Registry Act* allows immigrants who arrived before 1921 to register retroactively
- 1942 The *Bracero* program brings 5 million Mexican temporary field workers into the U.S.
- 1948 *The Displaced Persons Act* provided admission for Baltic and Ukrainian refugees
- 1954 U.S. operation deports 1 million Mexican immigrants

End of National-Origins Quota System and Creation of Refugee Resettlement: 1965-1985

- 1965 *Immigration and Nationality Act* abolished discriminatory quota system and organized immigration law
- 1975 *Indochina Migration and Refugee Act* provided resettlement for Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees

Rising Immigration Control and Limiting Immigrant Rights: 1986-2000

- 1986 *The Immigration Reform and Control Act* allowed undocumented residents to apply for legal status and created employer sanctions against hiring undocumented immigrants
- 1990 *Immigrant Investor Program* encouraged U.S. businesses to hire skilled foreign workers, favoring educational, professional or financial contributions
- 1994 – *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act* toughened border enforcement, decreased legal rights and eligibility for public benefits
- 1996
- 1997 A new Congress mitigated some of the overly harsh restrictions

Immigration Control Linked to National Security: 2001-Present

- 2001 *USA Patriot Act* expanded authority to detain, prosecute and remove aliens suspected of terrorism and established new regulations targeting non-citizens, expanded detention, restricted immigration appeals, and the refugee resettlement system was temporarily halted while the new security procedures were implemented
- 2002 *The Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act* implemented new visa procedures
- 2005 *The Real ID Act* requires proof of citizenship or legal immigrant status to obtain driving license
- 2006 *The Secure Fence Act* calls for the building of an additional 850 miles of fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border
- 2010 – Over 150 anti-immigration laws passed
- 2012
- 2013 Senate passes the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Bill S.B. 744—*Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013*.

– Source: Immigration Policy Center, www.immigrationpolicy.org

