



Illegal Immigration

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The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) estimates that in [January of 2000](#) there were

7 million illegal aliens living in the United States, a number that is growing by half a million a year. Thus, the illegal-alien population in 2003 stands at at least 8 million. Included in this estimate are approximately 78,000 illegal aliens from countries who are of special concern in the war on terror. It is important to note that the 500,000 annual increase is the net growth in the illegal-alien population (new illegal immigration minus deaths, legalizations, and out-migration). In 1999 for example, the INS estimates that 968,000 new illegal aliens settled in the U.S. This number was offset by 210,000 illegal aliens who either died or returned home on their own, 63,000 who were removed by the INS, and 183,000 illegal aliens who were given green cards as part of the normal "legal" immigration process. One of the most important findings of the INS report is the intimate link between legal and illegal immigration. The INS estimates that it gave out 1.5 million green cards to illegal aliens in the 1990s. This was not due to amnesty legislation, but rather reflects how the legal immigration process embraces illegal immigration and encourages it through legal exemptions. According to the INS, only 412,000 illegal aliens were removed during the decade.

The Census Bureau has also developed estimates of its own. Their [estimate](#) at the time of the 2000 Census suggests that the illegal immigration population was about 8 million. Using this number, it can be concluded that the illegal-alien population grew by almost half a million a year in the 1990s. This conclusion is derived from a draft report given to the House immigration subcommittee by the INS that estimated the illegal population was 3.5 million in 1990. For the illegal population to have reached 8 million by 2000, the net increase had to be 400,000 to 500,000 per year during the 1990s.

The two "magnets" which attract illegal aliens are jobs and family connections. The typical Mexican worker earns one-tenth his American counterpart, and numerous American businesses are willing to hire cheap, compliant labor from abroad; such businesses are seldom punished because our country lacks a viable system to verify new hires' work eligibility. In addition, communities of recently arrived legal immigrants help create immigration networks used by illegal aliens and serve as incubators for illegal immigration, providing jobs, housing, and entree to America for illegal-alien relatives and fellow countrymen.

The standard response to illegal immigration has been increased border enforcement. And, in fact, such tightening of the border was long overdue. But there has been almost no attention paid to enforcement at worksites within the United States. Nor has there been any recognition that the networks created by high levels of legal immigration contribute to mass illegal immigration.

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