



Race and Ethnicity

Immigrants and the U.S. workforce

A demographer's view from the pandemic

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Pew Research Center

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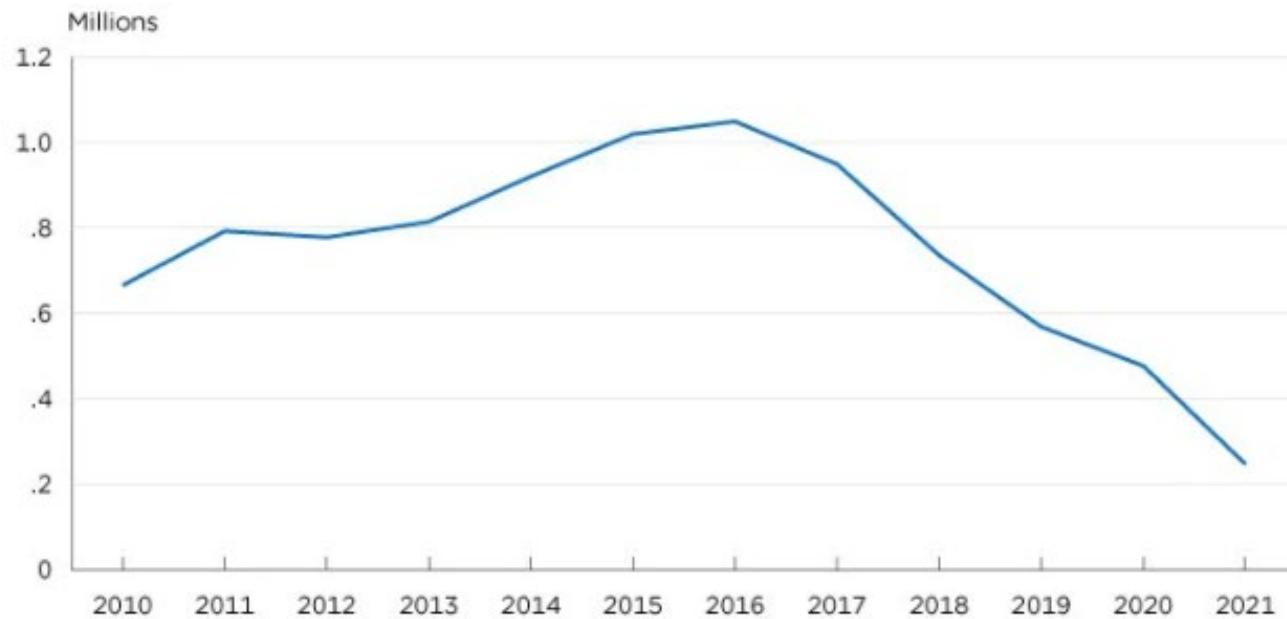
Today's presentation

- **Recent data on immigration flows**
 - Flows are way down from historical levels
 - Recent data (OIS) show some upticks but still low
- **How many immigrants live in the US?**
 - Surveys (ACS, CPS–March/monthly) are “*all over the place*”
 - **No current data incorporate results of 2020 census**
 - Little growth in last 2 years – 46 million of 14%
- **How many *unauthorized immigrants* live in the US**
 - New Pew estimates for '18-'19 → little change at ~ 10 million
 - '20-'21 data imply no big increases, if any
- **Where are we going to get workers?**
 - Immigrant share has gone up, especially in some industries
 - Projections show slowing workforce growth through 2040
 - **ALL** growth will come from *future* immigration

Census Bureau & DHS

Net International migration down Down 76% from 2010s peak

Net International Migration: July 1, 2010–June 30, 2021

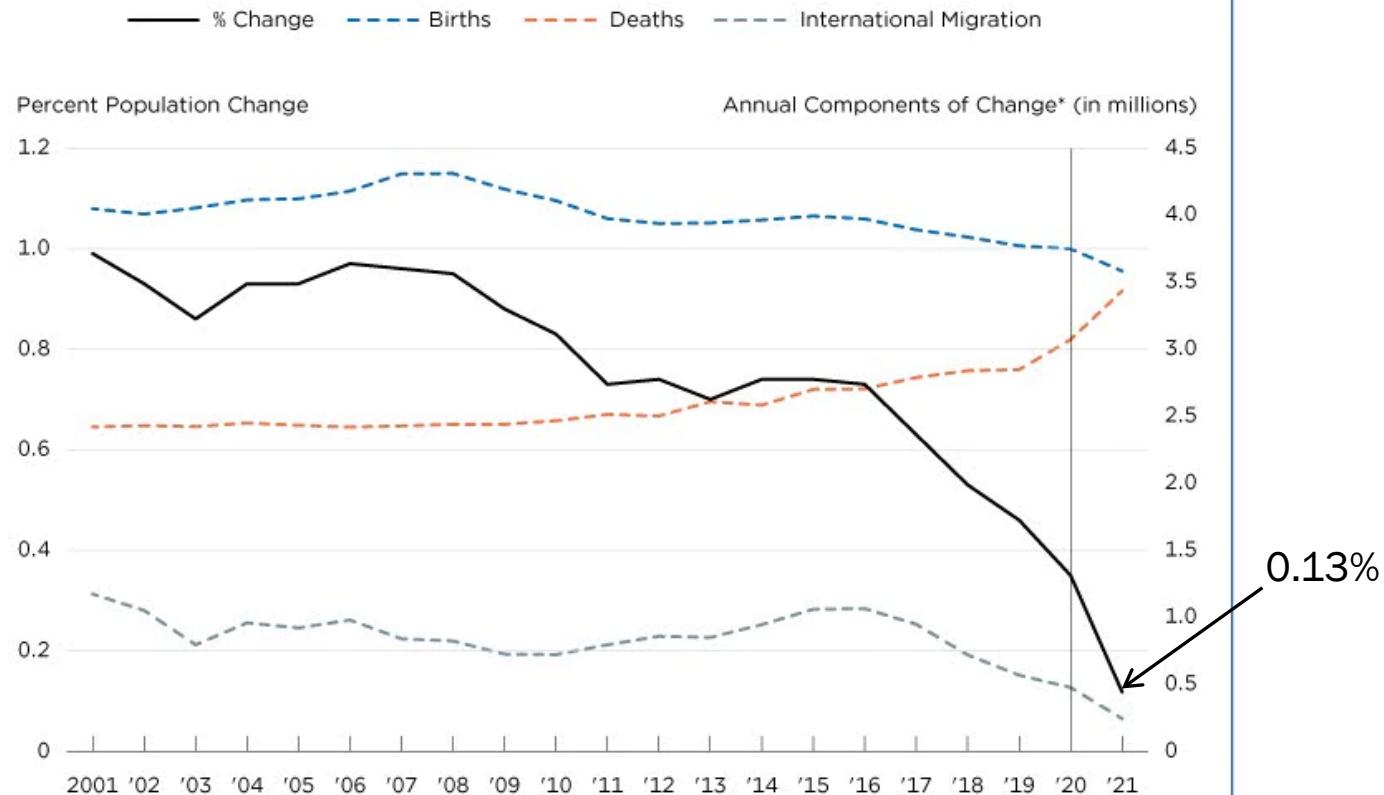


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Vintage 2021 Population Estimates.

Slowest growth in US history for '20-'21

Figure 2.

Population Change and the Components of Change: 2001-2021



* Components of change include births, deaths and net international migration.

Note: Only data to the right of the line are from Vintage 2021.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Vintage 2020 Estimates; Vintage 2021 Estimates; 2000-2010 Intercensal Estimates.

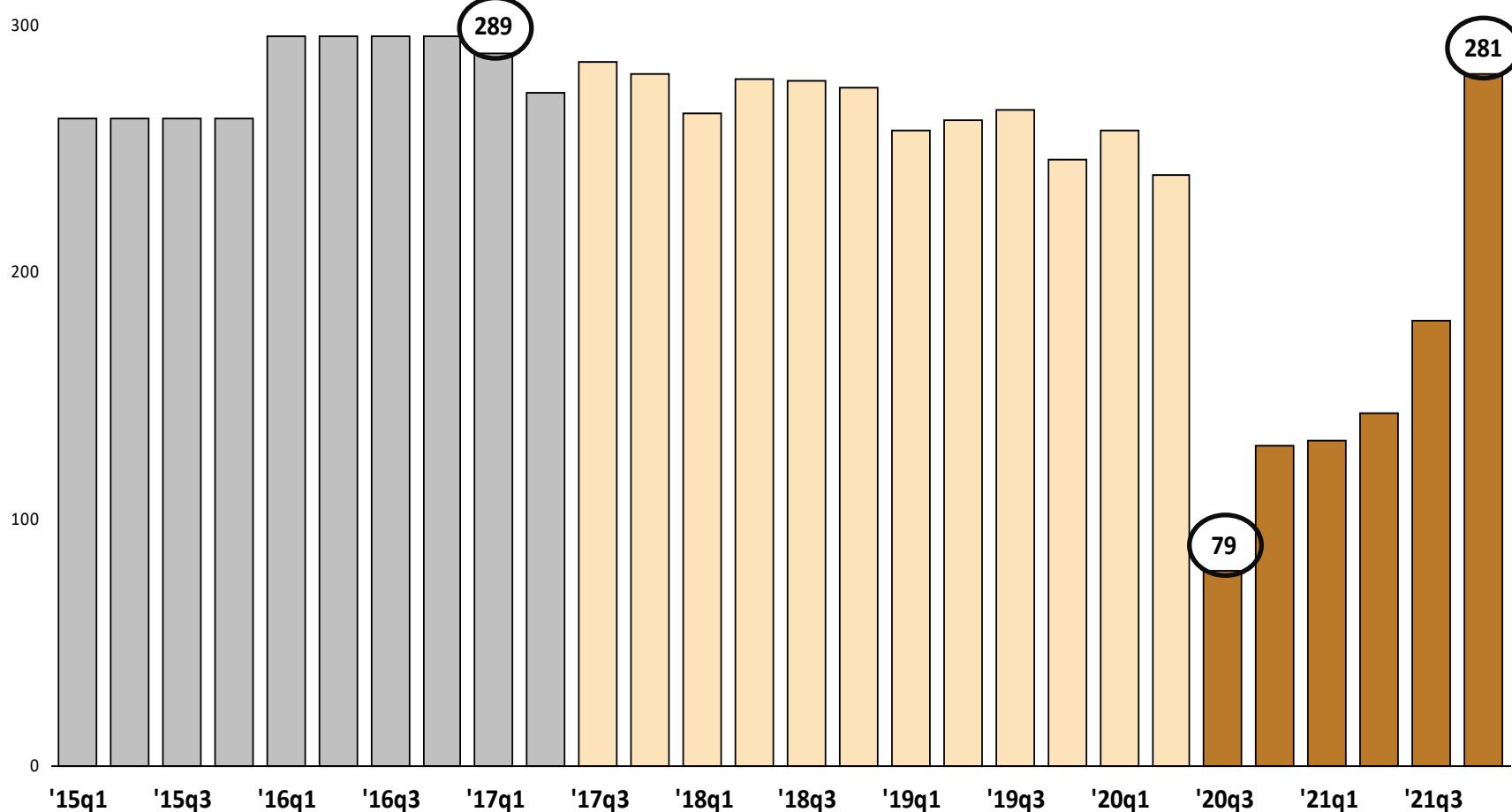
Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS in DHS)

- **Release quarterly statistics with minimal lag**
 - a. Trump administration innovation
 - b. Green cards (LPR admissions)
 - c. Refugee arrivals
 - d. Naturalizations
 - e. Nonimmigrant arrivals (lag one quarter)
- ***Inflows way down from 3rd quarter FY20 (Apr '20)***
 - a. “New arrival” green cards
 - b. Refugees
 - c. Legal temporary admissions (I-94)
- ***Some recovery by 4th quarter FY21 (Sep '21)***
 - a. Still WAY BELOW prepandemic levels
 - b. Exceptions for some categories

Total green cards granted fell almost 75%

4th quarter FY21 basically back to '15-'16 levels

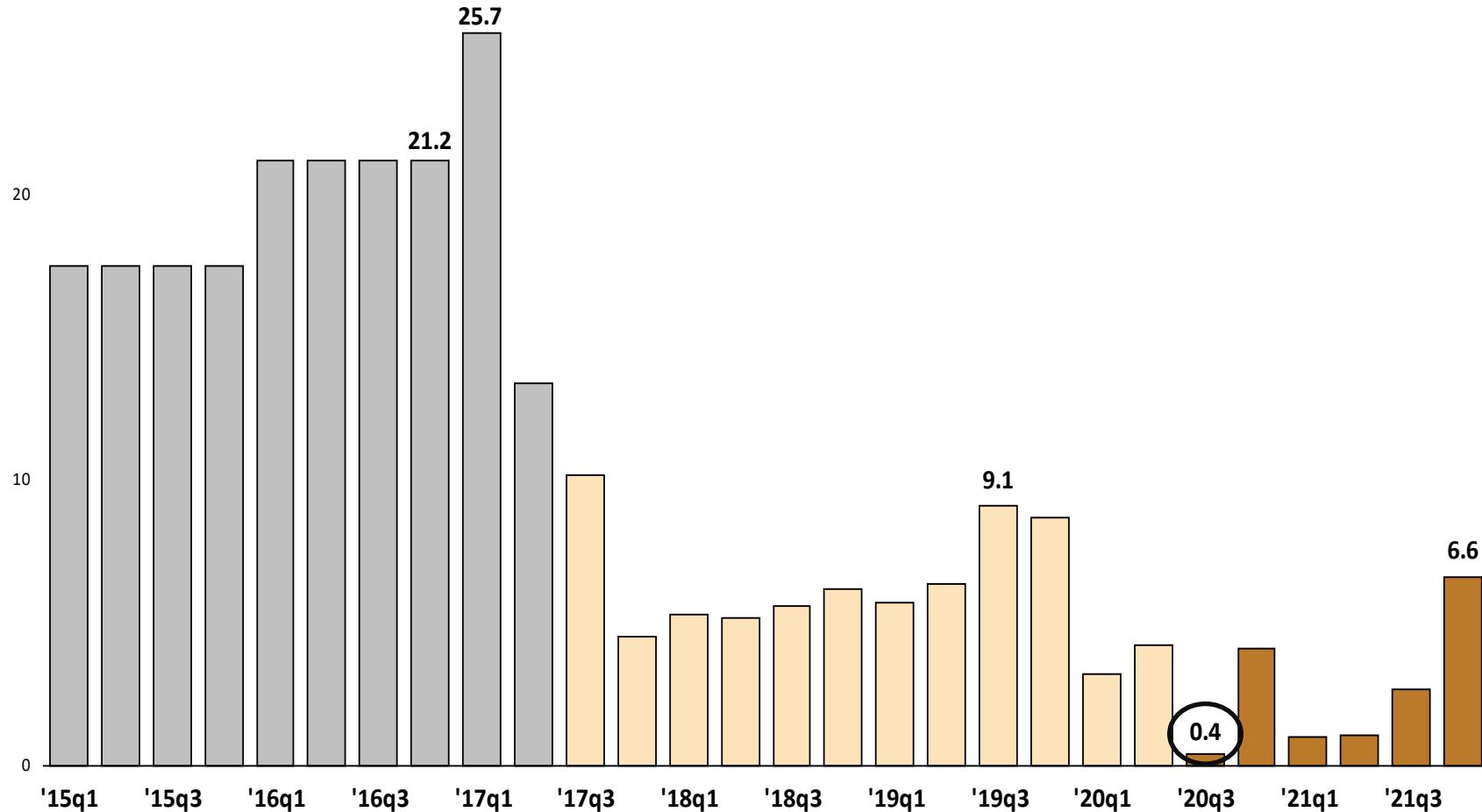
(in thousands)



Refugee arrivals slowed under Trump & stopped

4th quarter FY21 still far below pre-Trump levels

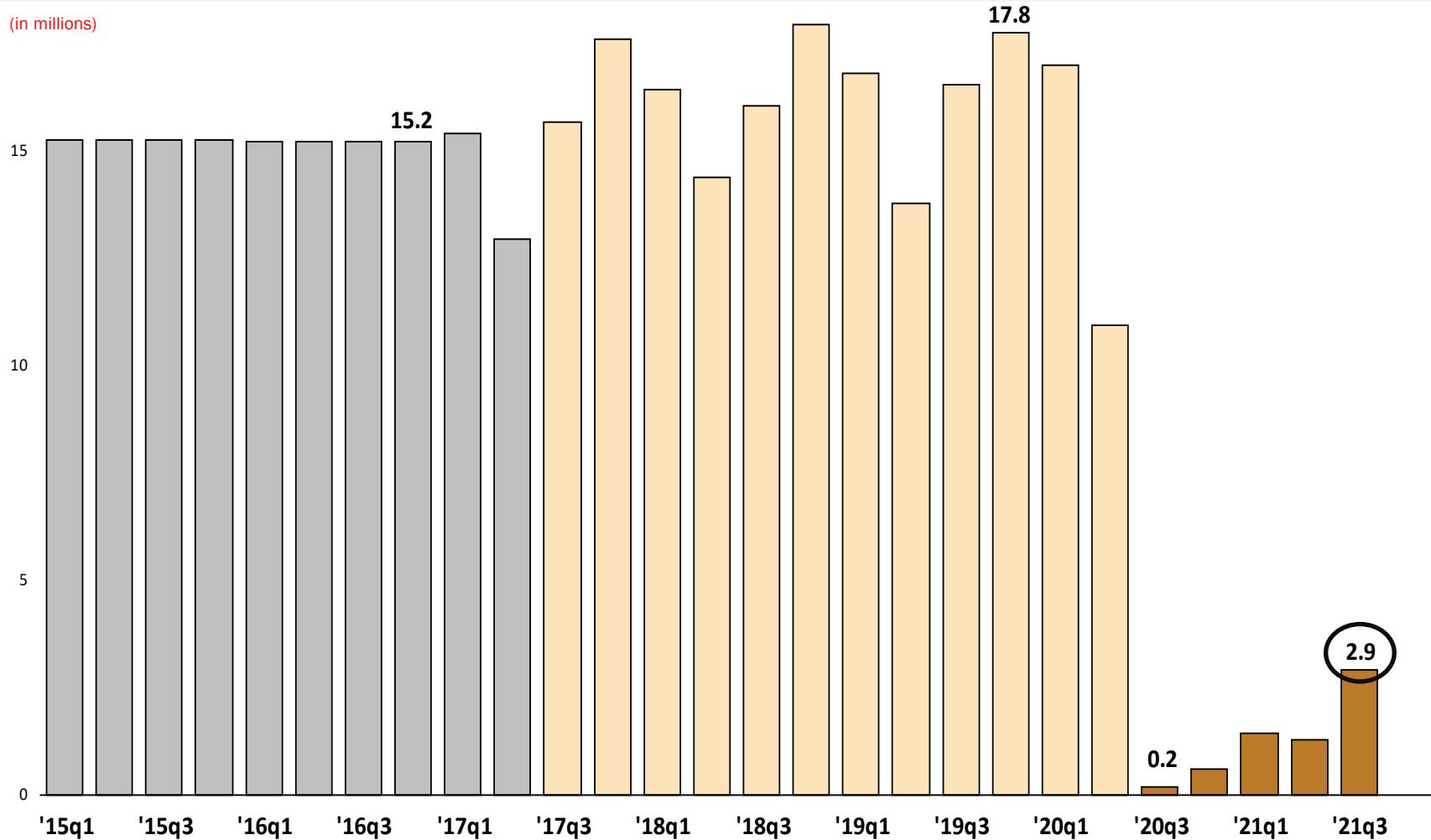
(in thousands)



Tourist visas cratered during the pandemic

3rd quarter FY21 still 80% below normal

(in millions)



Business visitor visas also disappeared

3rd quarter FY21 still 80% below normal

(in millions)

2.5

2

1.5

1

0.5

0

'15q1 '15q3 '16q1 '16q3 '17q1 '17q3 '18q1 '18q3 '19q1 '19q3 '20q1 '20q3 '21q1 '21q3

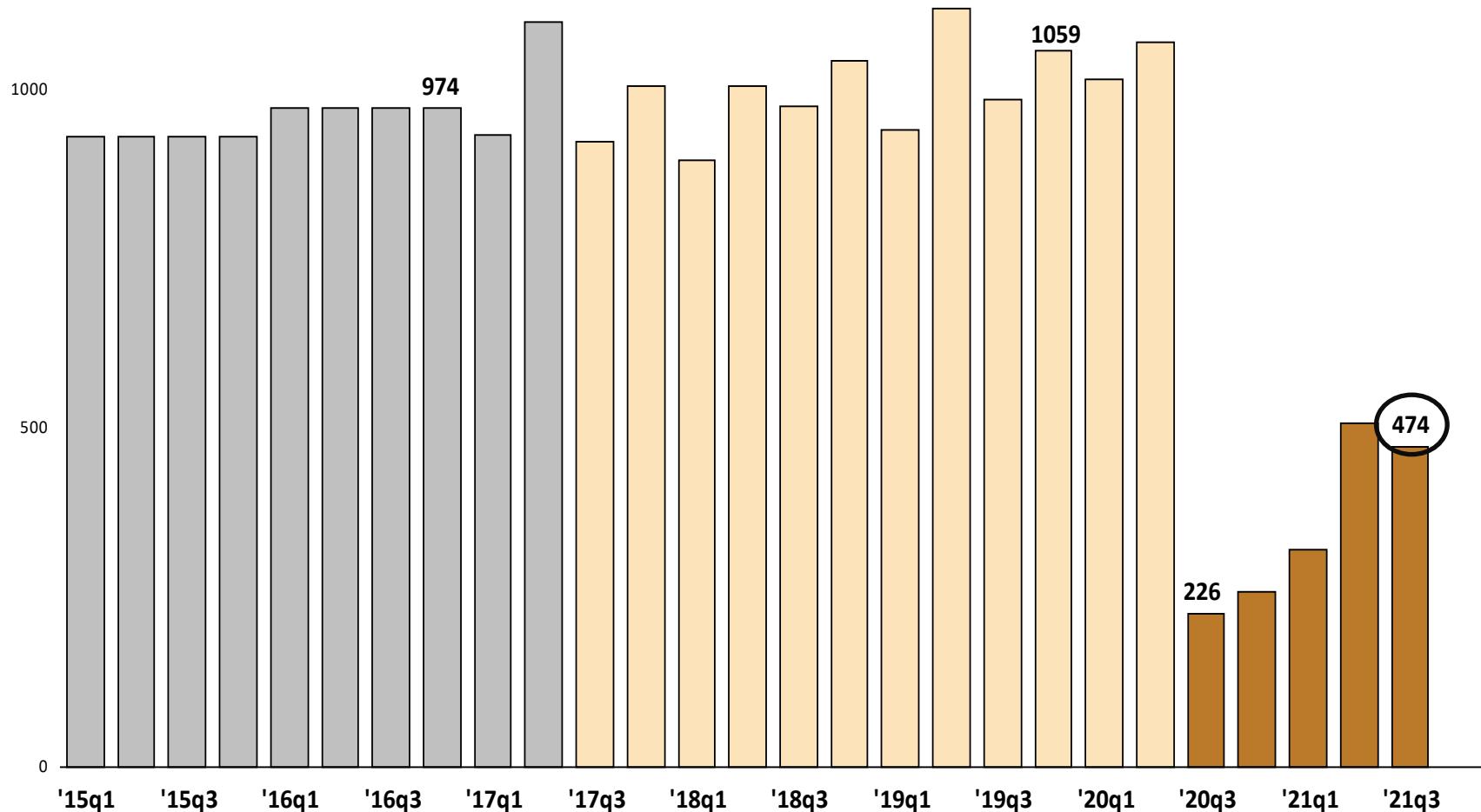
0.4

Source: Office of Immigration Statistics, DHS, Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, 2015-2017 and quarterly reports for 2017-2021

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Employment visas did not fall as far 3rd quarter FY21 up but only half of normal

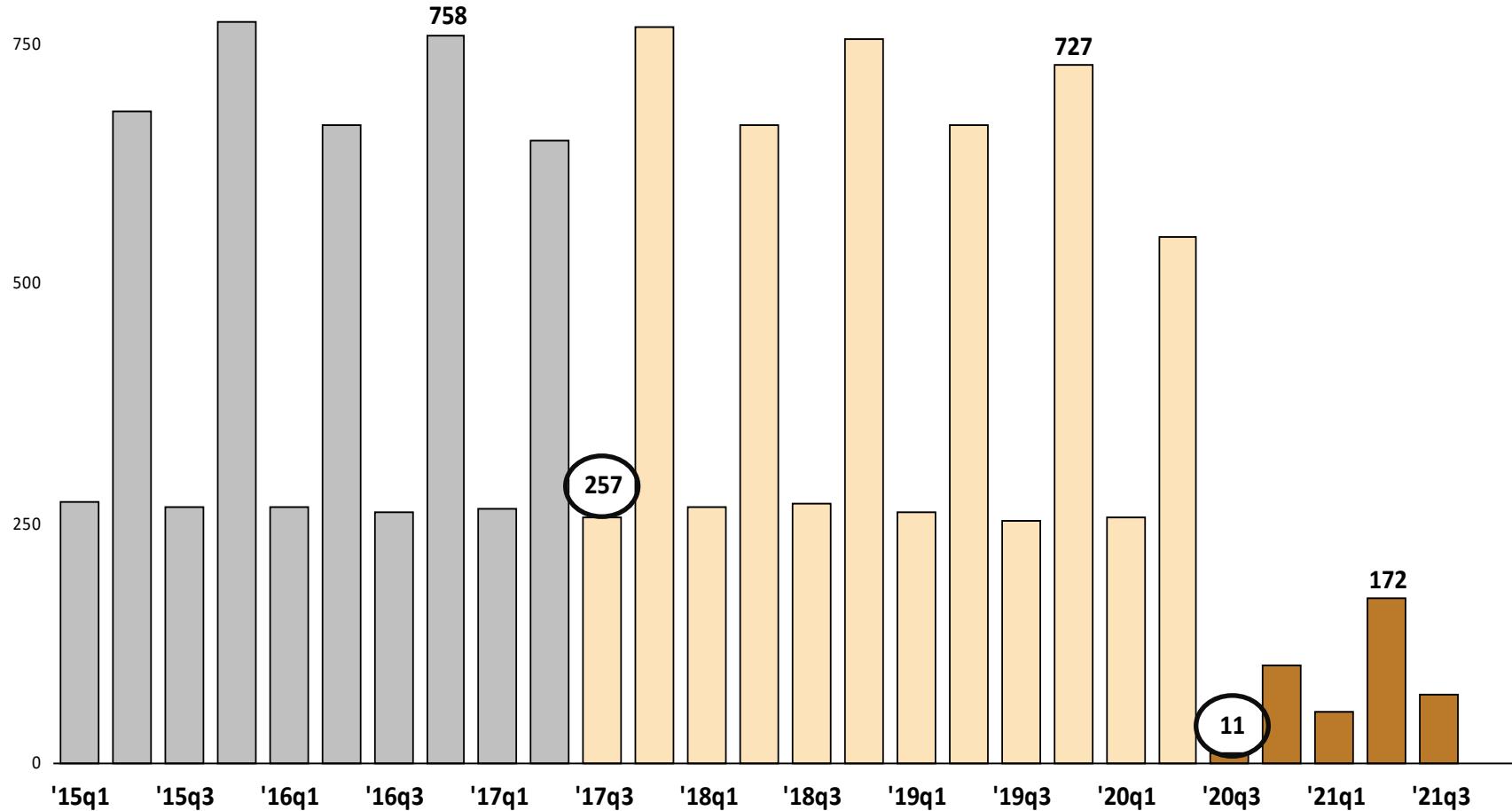
(in thousands)



Foreign students not allowed in initially

FY21 levels still 75% below normal

(in thousands)



Immigrant Population in the US

Population data sources

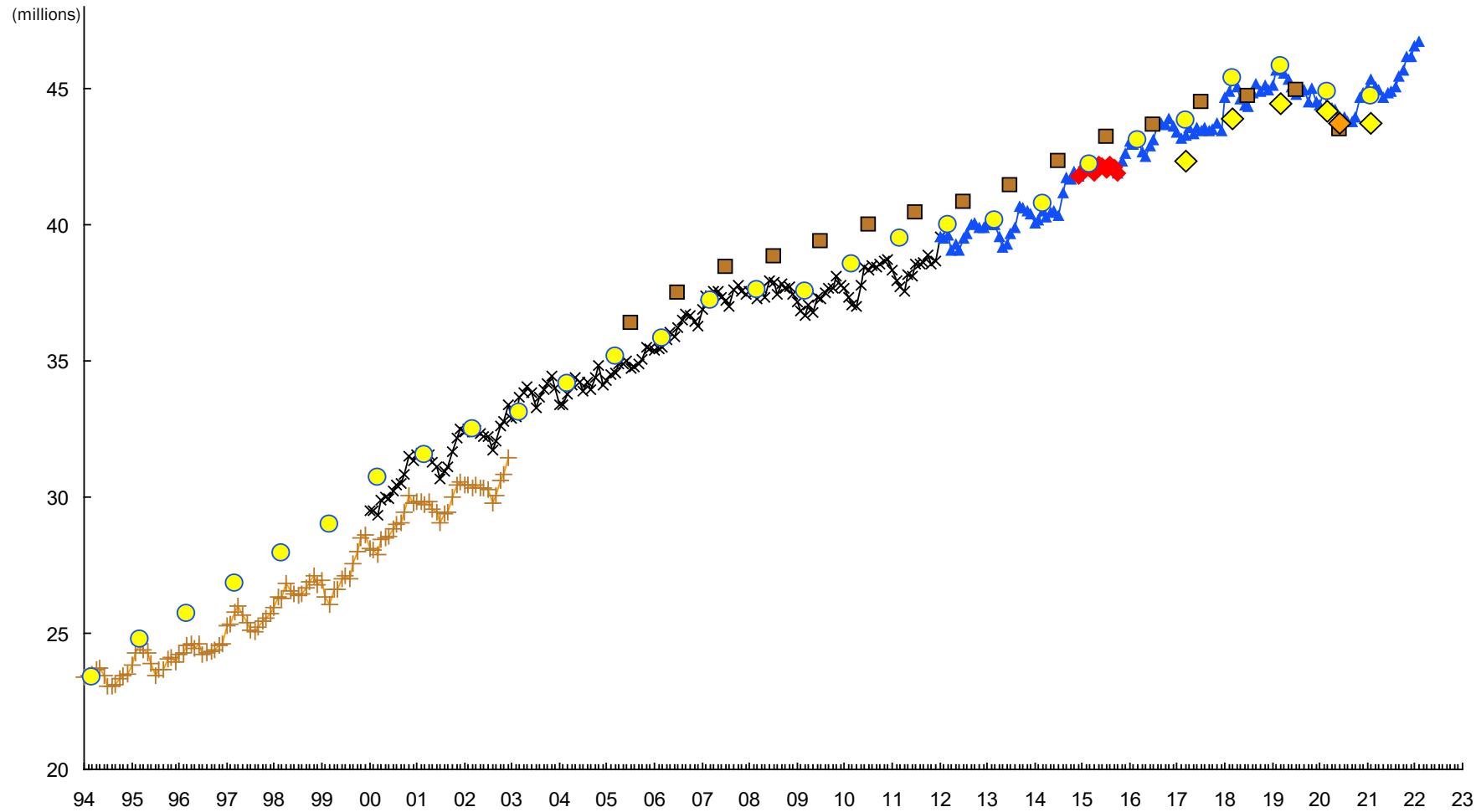
- **Two (or three) major surveys**
 - American Community Survey (ACS) – 1% random sample (>1M HHs)
 - “Rolling” sample collected over 12 months
 - Monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) – 40K HHs
 - Overlapping, state-based design with clustering
 - March CPS ASEC – 60K HHs (oversamples for children & minorities)
- **Timing varies considerably**
 - Monthly CPS – month after data collection (very timely!!)
 - March CPS – September of collection year
 - ACS – fall of year after reference date and data collection
- **Weighting determines size of immigrant population**
 - Weights assigned to agree with census-based population estimates
 - Weights use age, sex, race/Hispanic and geography mainly
 - **None of the surveys use nativity in the weighting (!)**
 - CPS uses short-term projections made before data collection
 - **Current data *DOES NOT* use 2020 Census results**

Pandemic challenges

- **In-person data collection stopped in mid-March 2020**
 - 1st & 5th CPS monthly interviews are supposed to be in-person
 - Mailing of materials was also halted as Jeffersonville, IN mail center closed
 - At least *6 months* of ACS data was severely compromised
 - Follow-ups were limited to telephone (and on-line)
- **Non-response rates skyrocketed**
 - Immigrants have higher non-response rates; more likely to need in-person interviews
 - Immigrants are underrepresented in the samples (and in follow-ups)
 - Regular weighting does not compensate
- **Alternative weighting (entropy balance) applied to ASEC & ACS**
 - Designed to “correct” over-reporting on income (and underreporting of poverty)
 - Incorporates administrative records into the weighting
 - Does not always use full weighting scheme
- **Consistently LOWER immigrant populations with EB weights in ASEC – about 1 million fewer**
 - 1st applied to March ‘20 ASEC; then March ‘21 ASEC and finally ‘20 ACS
 - Revised ‘20 ASEC weights produced and, for trending, EB weights for ‘17-‘19
 - Monthly response patterns seem to have almost returned to normal

Foreign-born population

Alternative survey estimates – “All over the place”

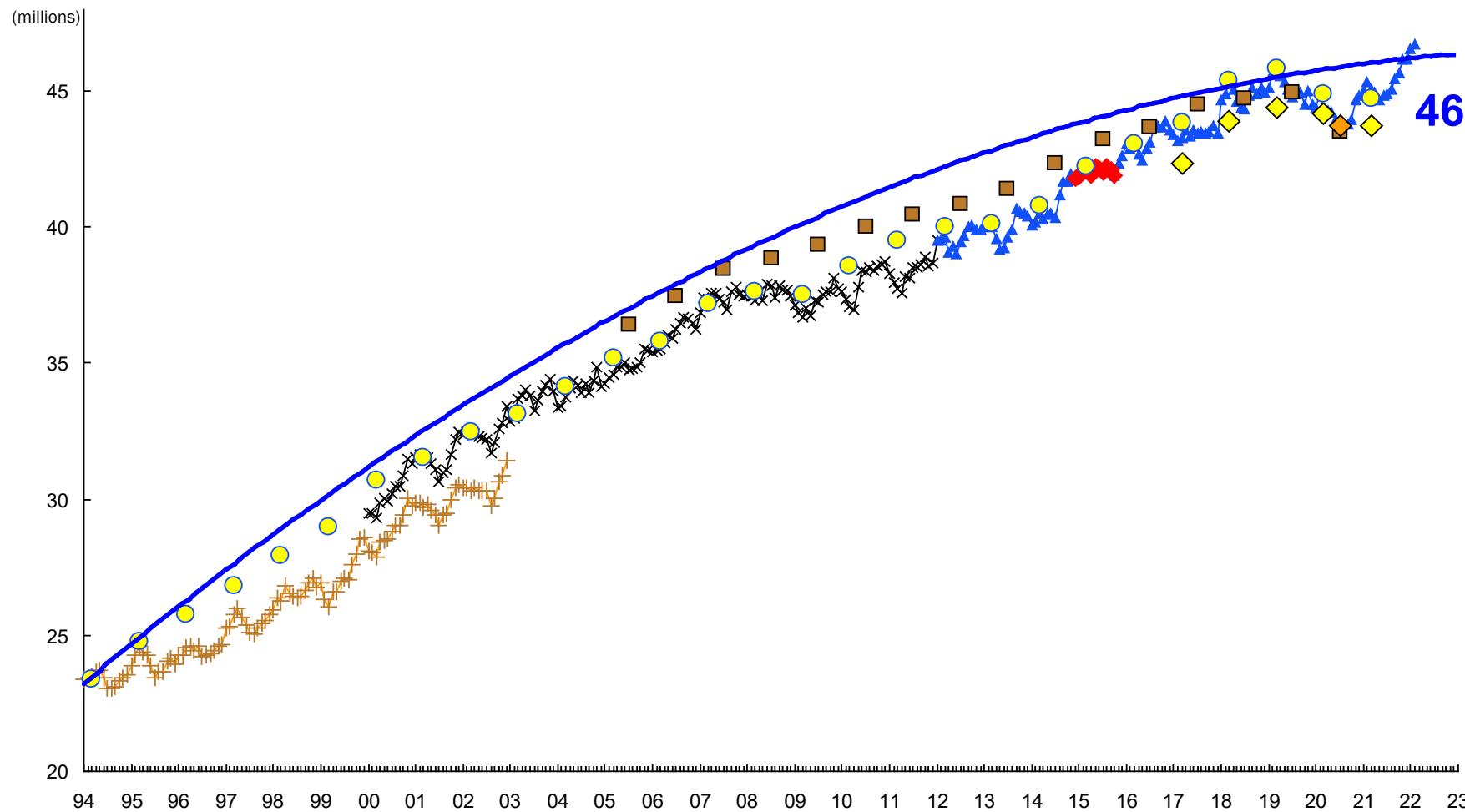


Source: Pew Research and Census Bureau alternative weights for many years, especially in the '90s and '00s.
Contact author for more information.

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Rough trend of foreign-born population

Discount pandemic estimates → 46 million

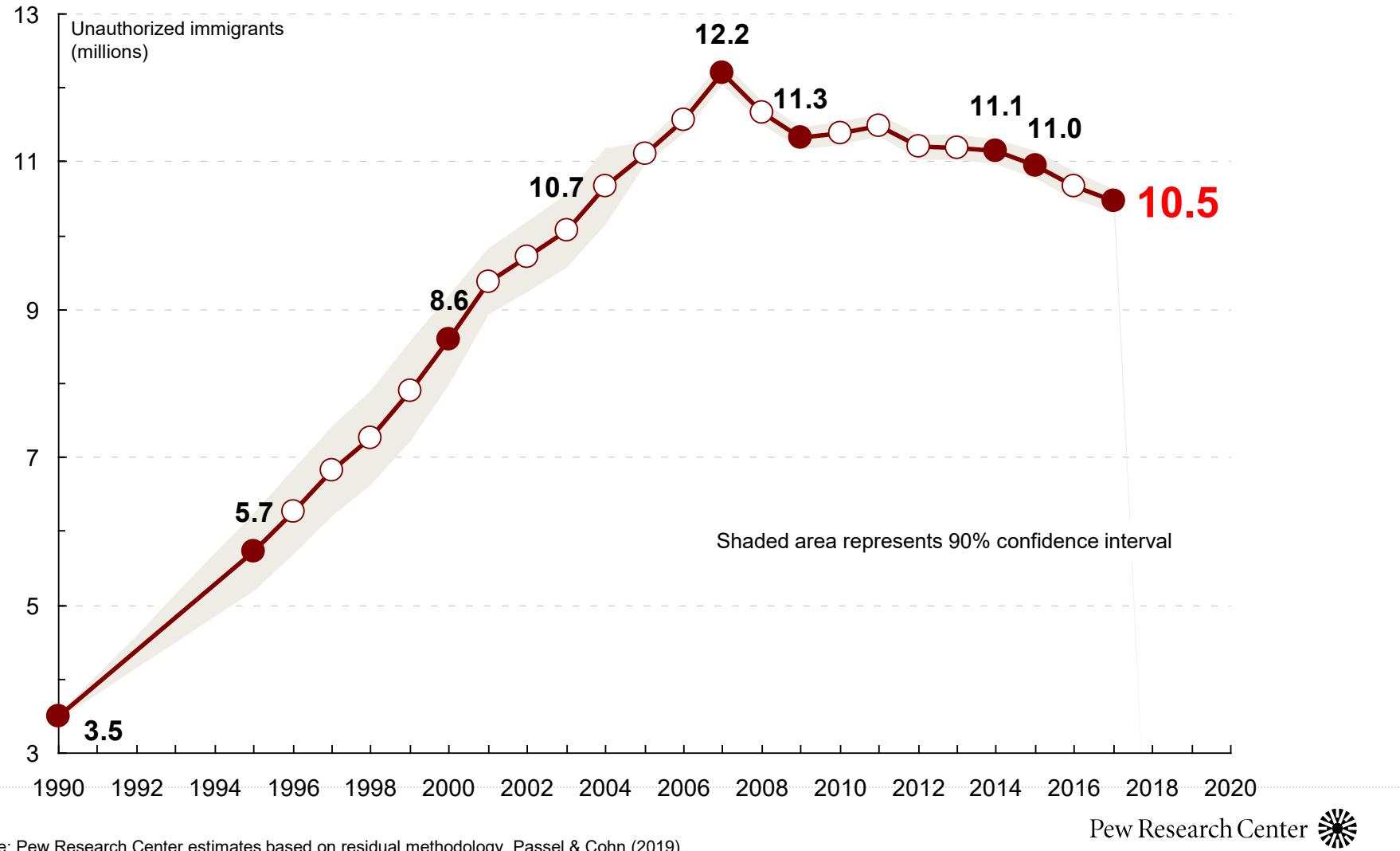


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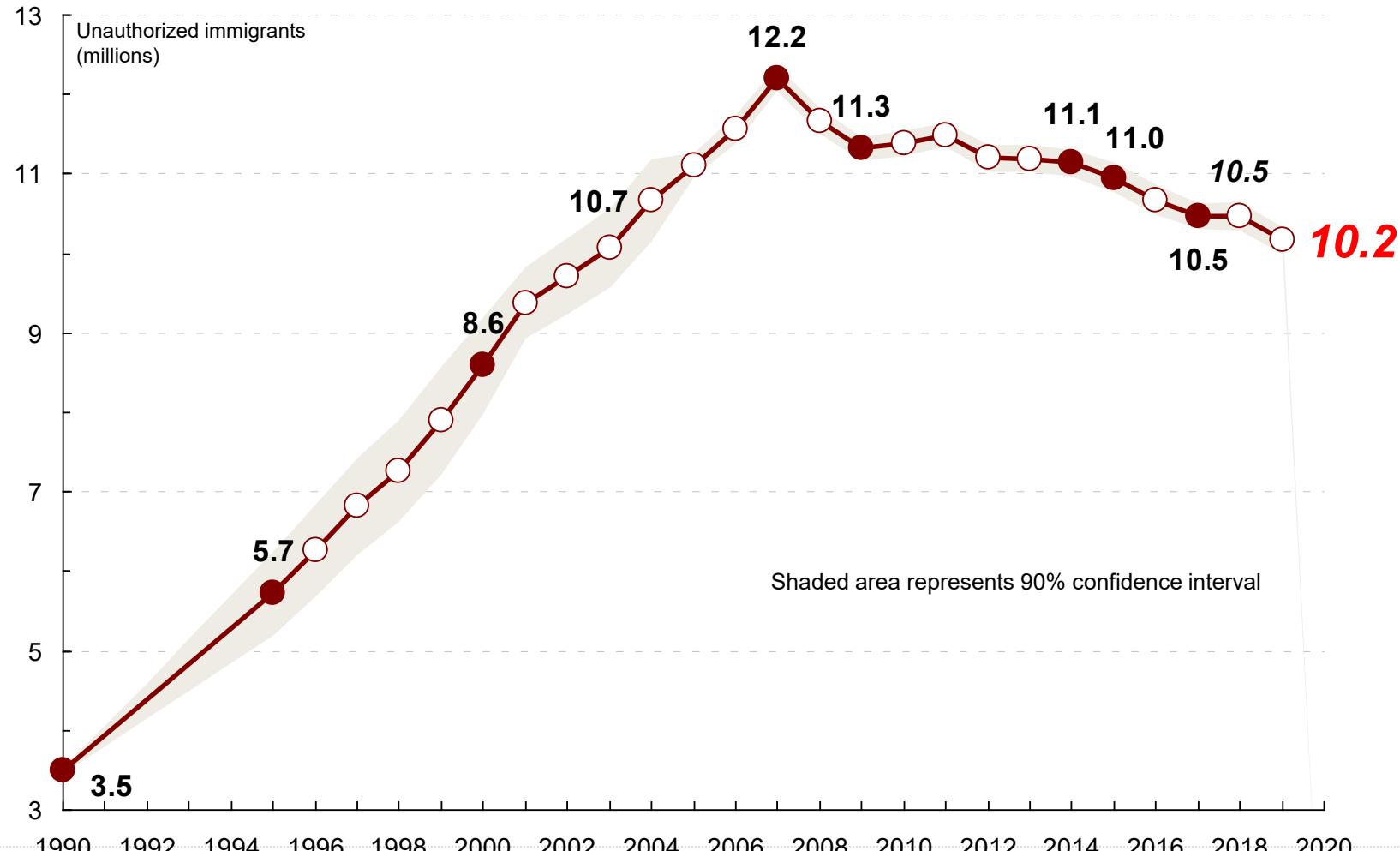
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What about unauthorized immigrants?

Pew estimates show large decline after '07, Followed by slow decline in '15-'17 to '04 (!) level

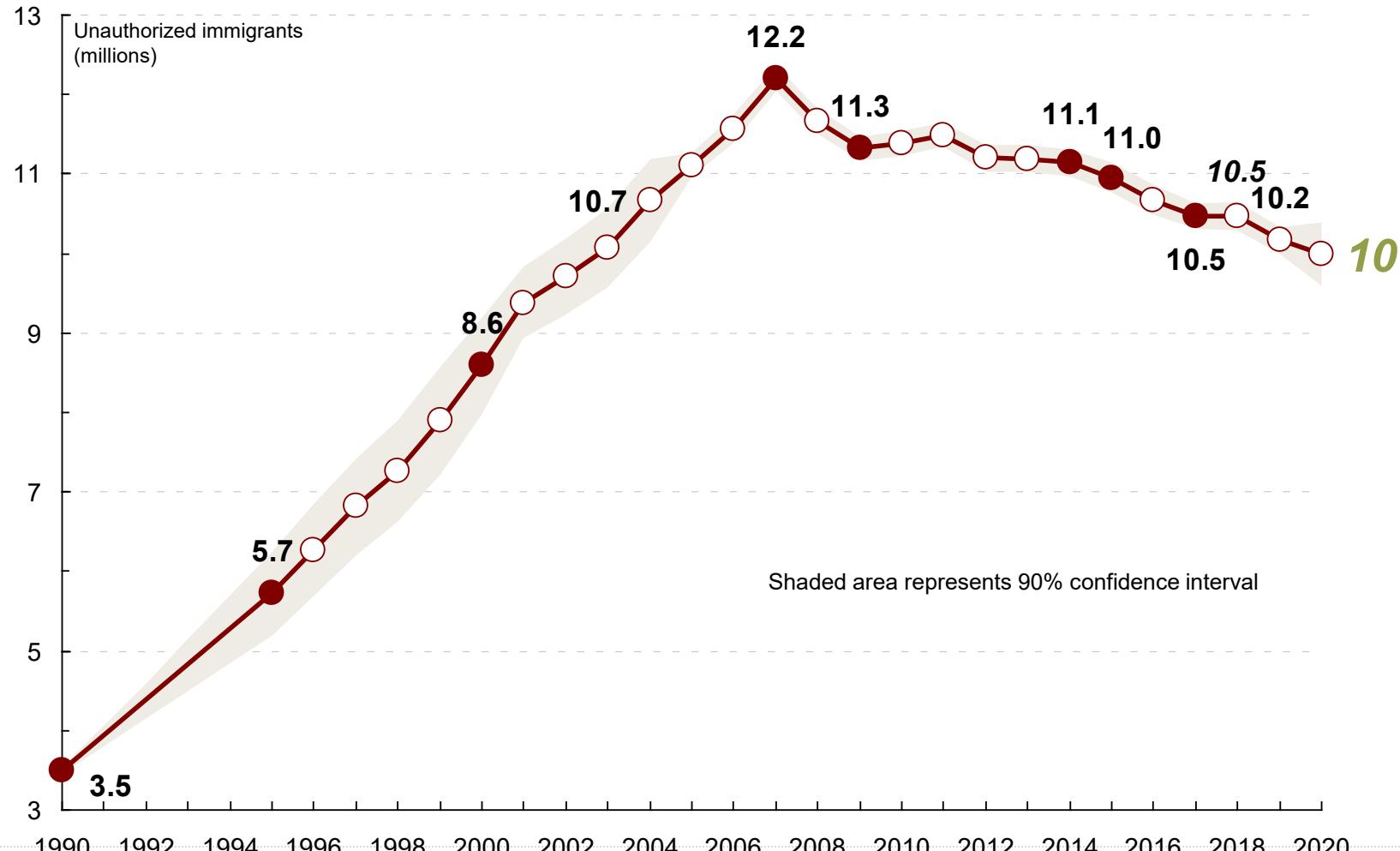


New estimates (still preliminary) show levelling at a bit over 10 million for 2019



Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on residual methodology, Passel & Cohn (2019).

2020 figure is *unlikely* to go up – Great uncertainty from data sources



Immigrants and the US workforce

Where will the US workforce come from in the future?

Future US workforce projection

- **Virtually all workers in the 2040 workforce are currently alive.**
- **2040 Projection:**
 - a. 2020 population by age, sex, race/Hispanic and nativity
 - b. 2020 census counts of adults/children by race/Hispanic with 2020 ACS for nativity/gender.
 - c. Increased mortality from recent projections (i.e., pandemic effect).
 - d. Future fertility has minimal impact for 2040
 - e. Apply labor force participation rates from 2020

Conclusions

- **Decreased immigration** has slowed population & labor force growth
- **2040 projected workforce** (without future immigration) would be **163 million** compared with the current (2020) workforce of **165 million**
- Modest immigration could grow it to **178 million**
 - Growth in 2020s and 2030s still below 2010s
- Decreases in *labor force participation* would reduce the size of the workforce a bit more
- Productivity increase would offset slowing workforce growth

Thank you!



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