

2007-2008 Immigration Update 5

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Pew Hispanic Center Releases Population Projections Through 2050

In February, the Pew Hispanic Center released a new report making projections on the U.S. population through the year 2050. Chief among the report's conclusions is that, if current trends continue, the U.S. population will stand at 438 million in 2050 (from 296 million in 2005). Eighty-two percent of the increase will be due to new immigration. Of the 117 million people added through immigration, 67 million will be immigrants; the other 50 million will be their children and grandchildren. The researchers project that about one in five Americans will be an immigrant in 2050. White Americans will be in the minority in 2050. Also of note: the elderly population is predicted to double between 2005 and 2050. To read a summary or download the entire report, go to <http://pewhispanic.org/reports/report.php?ReportID=85>.

Virtual Fence Pilot Project Faces Problems

In late February, the Department of Homeland Security and Government Accounting Office reported to Congress that an \$85 million pilot program to build a 28-mile virtual fence along the U.S.-Mexico border had serious flaws. Completion of the complete 100-mile project will be delayed for a minimum of three years while the virtual fence is redesigned.

The pilot stretch of virtual fence, developed by Boeing, is essentially a network of tower-mounted sensors and surveillance equipment. It was intended to complement the more traditional fence currently under construction. According to the GAO, however, Boeing did not spend enough time gathering information from Border Patrol agents who would use the system, used inappropriate software to process the data gathered electronically, and failed to test equipment that subsequently malfunctioned. The pilot project worked so poorly that the virtual fence will be completely redesigned before the remainder of the project is constructed.

Unnamed sources cited by the *Washington Post* said the problems resulted from pressure to speed the project along in 2007, when the Bush administration was trying to move immigration reform legislation through Congress. Boeing has offered to give the Department of Homeland Security a \$2 million credit from the amount it has been paid. (Access the *Post* article at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/27/AR2008022703747_pf.html.)

UN Hosts Conference on Human Trafficking

In mid-February, the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) held a conference in Vienna, at which 1,400 delegates from 116 countries

shared knowledge and discussed a coordinated strategy to combat human trafficking. Describing the Vienna Forum as a “tipping point” in the global battle against human trafficking, Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), said, “This Forum is just the beginning of a process. Let us build on the momentum generated here to ensure that people’s lives will not be for sale.”

Mr. Costa urged national governments, businesses and civil society to speed up the implementation of practical measures to prevent trafficking, including:

- The implementation of self-certification by businesses to take slave-made products off the shelves
- The development of technology to identify, monitor and disrupt human trafficking routes
- The tracking and blocking of credit card payments for internet human trafficking transactions
- The development of codes of conduct to curb sex tourism

UN.GIFT was launched in March 2007 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) together with the International Labour Organization (ILO); the International Organization for Migration (IOM); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

University of Denver law professor and Buddhist chaplain Claude d’Estree attended the conference. Professor d’Estree is charged with coordinating the efforts of clergy worldwide to end human trafficking.

Facing History Workshop on Immigration

Tuesday, March 22, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., Facing History and Ourselves is presenting a workshop entitled “The Dream of American: Exploring Immigration and Citizenship in the US.” The workshop will explore resources and pedagogies addressing two questions: What does it mean to be an American? What does it mean to become an American? Participants will explore Bill Moyers’ three-part documentary *Becoming American: The Chinese Experience*, as well as other resources.

The free workshop will be held at the New America School at the Community College of Aurora at Lowry (9125 East 7th Place, Building 905). To register, go to <http://www.facinghistory.org/Campus/Events.nsf/HTMLWorkshopsByLocation/E17F41C17EB8C2F0852573540058EE06?Opendocument>. For more information, contact Karen Mortimer at karen_mortimer@facing.org.

Readings and Resources

The following are some new resources on immigration:

- A recent op-ed by CU-Boulder historian William Wei dealt with the history of Asian immigration to the United States and Colorado:
<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/news/2008/mar/01/speakout-asian-immigration-a-troubled-tale/>.
- Fox News commentator Geraldo Rivera, who recently engaged in a shouting match about immigration with his colleague Bill O'Reilly, has published a book: *His Panic: Why Americans Fear Hispanics in the U.S.* A lengthy excerpt about his Puerto Rican roots and several controversial views on the issues facing the Puerto Rican community in the continental U.S. is available at
<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/WaterCooler/story?id=4339477&page=1>
- *Crossing the Boulevard: Strangers, Neighbors, Aliens in a New America*, by Warren Lehrer and Judith Sloan tells the story of recent immigrants in Queens, New York. The book is one product of the Crossing the Boulevard project (see <http://www.crossingtheblvd.org/>), which will be featured at the Facing History project listed above.