U.S. IMMIGRATION
PROJECTING IMMIGRATION AS IT AFFECTS THE SOCIAL SECURITY AREA

March 29, 2019
Technical Panel
Washington, DC

Office of the Chief Actuary
Social Security Administration
Overview

- Definitions
- Projection Methodology
- Results
- Additional Issues
- More Information
What is Migration?

Five types of migration:

1) Lawful permanent resident (LPR) immigration
2) Legal emigration
3) Other-than-LPR immigration
4) Other-than-LPR emigration
5) Adjustments of status (transfers)
LPR Immigration

- **LPR immigration:**
  Foreign-born individuals, either new arrivals or adjustments of status, who are granted LPR status.

- **Legal emigration:**
  LPRs and citizens who leave the Social Security area.
Other-than-LPR Immigration

- **Other-than-LPR immigration:**
  Individuals who enter the Social Security area without LPR status, such as undocumented immigrants, temporary workers, and students.

- **Other-than-LPR emigration:**
  Individuals from the OTL population who leave the Social Security area or adjust status to become LPRs.
Adjustments of Status

- Adjustments of status (transfers):
  Individuals who adjust their status (transfer) from the other-than-LPR population to become LPRs.

- They are counted in the number of LPR immigrants.

- They are counted in the number of other-than-LPR emigrants.
Modeling Immigration Flows

Other-than-LPR immigrants entering (1,350,000 per year)

Other-than-LPR immigrants becoming LPRs (450,000 per year)

LPRs entering (600,000 per year)

LPRs and Citizens leaving (262,500 per year)

Other-than-LPR immigrants leaving (annual number varies; averages about 425,000)

Social Security Area Population

LPR Population

Other-than-LPR Immigrant Population
Other-than-LPR Population

- **Never authorized**
  Those that were never authorized to enter the Social Security area.

- **Nonimmigrants**
  Those legally admitted for a limited period of time such as students, temporary worker, and exchange visitors.

- **Overstayers**
  Those that were nonimmigrants, but overstay their visas.
LPR Immigration Flows

2018 Trustees Report, Intermediate Assumptions

Notes: Transfers do not include those legalized under the IRCA of 1986.
Projections based on the intermediate assumptions of the 2018 Trustees Report.
Other-than-LPR Immigration Flows

2018 Trustees Report, Intermediate Assumptions

Notes: Transfers do not include those legalized under the IRCA of 1986.
Projections based on the intermediate assumptions of the 2018 Trustees Report.
All 5 immigration categories are projected by single year of age and sex.

In general, a distribution is used to break out the assumed total.

Annual distributions are constant for all categories, except OTL emigration.
Results – Population Stocks

- **Total population**
- **Foreign-born population** (crossed out)
- **OTL population**
Other-than-LPR Population

2018 Trustees Report, Intermediate Assumptions

Other-than-LPR Mid-Year Population

Age

2016
2055
2092
Coverage and Earnings

- **LPR immigrants:**
  - Assumed equally likely as US-born workers to be in the labor force, work in covered employment, and become insured for benefits.
  - Average earnings assumed equal to the average for US-born workers.

- **Other-than-LPR immigrants:**
  - Assumed just as likely to be in the labor force (in general).
  - Less likely to work in covered employment.
  - Much less likely to become insured for benefits.
  - Average earnings assumed lower than the average for US-born workers (varies by category).
Additional Issues

- **LPR immigration is limited by law**
  - Generally, we do not anticipate changes in law

- **Other-than-LPR immigration is more difficult to project**
  - Past panels have suggested a rise in proportion to overall population size
  - But will “demand” for other-than-LPR change in the future?
  - Will the US be viewed as a land of relative opportunity?
  - Will other nations become more or less desirable, affecting their emigration?
More Information

- 2018 OASDI Trustees Report

- Actuarial Note, Number 148

- Actuarial Note, Number 151

- Demographic Assumptions

- Model Documentation