

Temporary Visa for Highly Skilled Jobs: A Brief Overview of the Specialty Worker H-1B Visa

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B. Lindsay Lowell
Institute for the Study of International Migration
Georgetown University
lowellbl@georgetown.edu

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US admissions system

- Legal Permanent Residents (green card)
 - Three major classes, 140k cap, 30-50% principals
- Temporary “non-immigrants” & alphabet soup. 2007:
 - **H-1B** specialty workers: 155,000 visas
 - **L-1** intracompany transferees: 84,500 visas
 - **E1, 2, 3** Treaty Traders: 40,900 visas
 - **P, O** Athletes & Extraordinary: 26,600 visas
 - **TN** Trade NAFTA: 74,000 admissions
 - **J** cultural exchange, 344,000 most not “workers”



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General Data on Temp Visas

- Dept Homeland Security: Visa Admissions
 - Entries of visaholders, a count of border crossings, country of origin but no worker information
- Dept of State: Visa Issuances
 - Issuance of visa abroad, a count of individuals (more or less), country of origin but no worker information



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National Shares of Skilled Temporary Working Visas

Nation / Region	E-1, 2, 3		H-1B		L-1	
	1997	2006	1997	2006	1997	2006
India	0.0%	0.1%	39.3%	47.8%	4.4%	43.8%
Japan	44.9%	34.3%	3.6%	2.8%	19.5%	7.0%
China	0.1%	0.1%	4.0%	7.0%	8.3%	2.6%
South Korea	7.1%	8.1%	1.1%	2.9%	3.0%	1.6%
APEC Asia	56.5%	48.7%	15.5%	19.4%	34.3%	15.0%
Asia Total	59.4%	50.5%	59.3%	70.7%	40.7%	60.7%
Mexico	2.9%	4.4%	3.5%	2.0%	6.4%	3.3%
N.A. Total	6.9%	8.5%	4.7%	3.6%	7.1%	4.2%
Great Britain	8.6%	7.2%	8.6%	3.5%	16.0%	8.7%
Germany	8.1%	11.3%	2.6%	1.8%	6.7%	4.2%
France	3.6%	3.3%	2.4%	1.7%	4.1%	2.9%
Europe Total	31.6%	30.9%	25.9%	16.4%	41.1%	25.5%
S.A. Total	1.2%	1.6%	4.6%	6.3%	5.7%	5.5%
Oceania Total	0.7%	8.3%	2.3%	1.0%	3.6%	2.4%
Africa Total	0.1%	0.2%	3.1%	2.1%	1.6%	1.6%
NIV category	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



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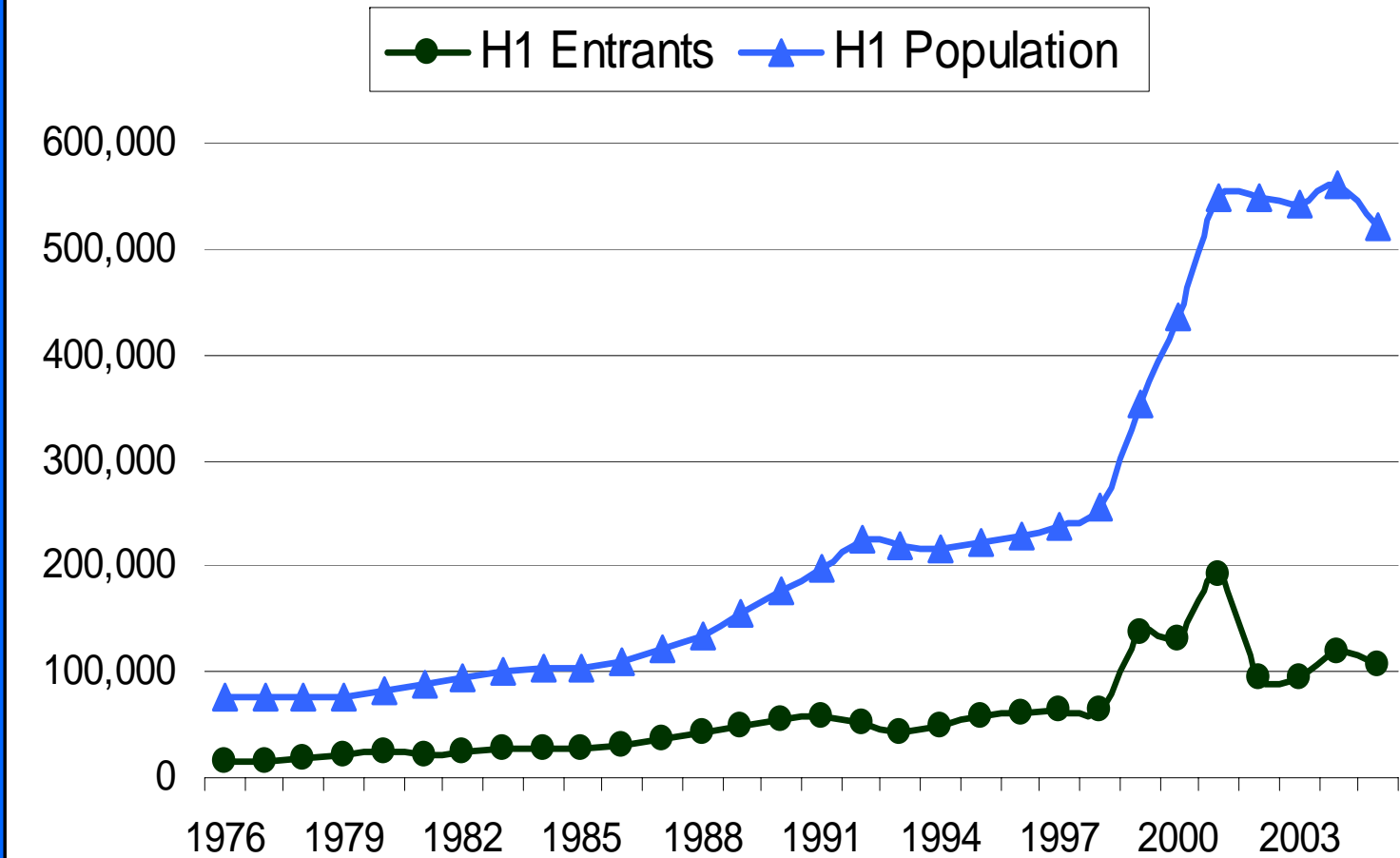
H-1BData Sources

- Dept of Labor: Labor Condition Apps
 - Employer application for position, occupation and wage, no educational info, multiple applications
- Dept Homeland Security: Petitions
 - Employer petition for worker, occupation, education, wage data, etc., no place of education/other
- Dept of State: Visa Issuances
 - Issuance of visa abroad, no worker information



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Specialty H-1B Entrants and Population



Source: Lowell, estimates



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Table 1. H-1 Occupations for Northern and Eastern INS Regions, 1989.

Occupation	Number	Percent
Nursing, health care, medical, and related	16,689	27.7
Entertainment, movies and television, modeling, and allied	9,764	16.2
Engineering, science, and related	8,813	14.6
Computers, programming, and related	6,894	11.4
Managers and executives	10,127	3.6
Marketing and sales	1,892	3.1
Finance, law, accounting, and related	1,259	2.1
Supervisors, skilled craftsmen, and technicians	541	0.9
Other occupations	1,445	2.4
Did not respond	636	1.1
Total	60,256	100.0

Source: GAO 1992, p. 33



**Table 12. Annual Compensation of H-1B Beneficiaries for Continuing Employment by Major Occupation Group:
Fiscal Year 2002**

Occupation	Earnings		Earnings		
	Petitions	Percent	25th percentile	Median	27th percentile
Total	92,944	100.0	45,358	60,000	77,142
Computer-related occupations (03)	49,172	52.9	53,280	64,739	77,500
Occupations in architecture, engineering, and surveying (00/01)	10,635	11.4	49,517	63,600	80,000
Occupations in administrative specializations (16)	7,163	7.7	37,000	50,000	70,000
Occupations in education (09)	6,472	7.0	31,991	39,000	50,935
Occupations in medicine and health (07)	4,929	5.3	40,000	55,989	114,400
Managers and officials n.e.c. (18)	3,913	4.2	45,000	70,000	100,000
Occupations in life sciences (04)	2,235	2.4	35,000	43,000	60,800
Occupations in mathematics and physical sciences (02)	1,993	2.1	45,000	60,000	75,000
Occupations in social sciences (05)	1,811	1.9	37,740	50,000	74,880
Miscellaneous professional, technical, and managerial (19)	1,728	1.9	40,413	62,030	90,736
Occupations in art (14)	1,046	1.1	35,000	45,000	60,000
Occupations in writing (13)	476	0.5	31,200	38,880	52,000
Occupations in law and jurisprudence (11)	444	0.5	50,000	101,850	150,000
Occupations in entertainment and recreation (15)	259	0.3	28,000	37,162	52,200
Occupations in museum, library, and archival sciences (10)	112	0.1	32,695	40,895	54,920
Fashion models (29)	97	0.1	95,000	100,000	127,000
Occupations in religion and theology (12)	36	0.0	24,960	30,000	42,450
Occupation unknown	423	0.5	37,821	49,000	70,000



Source: DHS, Characteristics of H-1Bs, Fiscal Year 2002

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Table 7. H-1B Petitions Approved by Level of Education of Beneficiary and Type of Petition: Fiscal Year 2003

Level of Education	Total	Percent	Initial	Percent	Continuing	Percent
Total	217,340	-----	105,314	-----	112,026	-----
Education known	217,157	100	105,221	100	111,936	100
No high school diploma	223	0.1	148	0.1	75	0.1
High school graduate	1,027	0.5	822	0.8	205	0.2
Less than 1 year of college credit	204	0.1	122	0.1	82	0.1
1 or more years of college credit, no diploma	1,096	0.5	623	0.6	473	0.4
Associate's degree	962	0.4	534	0.5	428	0.4
Bachelor's degree	107,944	49.7	51,141	48.6	56,803	50.7
Master's degree	66,672	30.7	30,612	29.1	36,060	32.2
Doctorate degree	26,565	12.2	14,448	13.7	12,117	10.8
Professional degree	12,464	5.7	6,771	6.4	5,693	5.1
Education unknown	183	-----	93	-----	90	-----

Source: DHS, Characteristics of H-1B: Fiscal Year 2003



Foreign Workers by Size of Employer, 2003

Number of Employees	Legal Permanent Residents	Temporary workers	Temporary study	Temporary dependent	Total
10 or fewer	11.2	9.1	16.5	24.2	12.4
11-24	8.1	2.6	10.1	13.0	8.0
25-99	12.5	7.8	25.3	8.5	12.0
100-499	11.0	4.2	3.4	7.5	9.5
500-999	6.4	7.4	4.9	6.8	6.5
1000-4999	15.3	19.7	10.1	15.1	15.6
5000-24999	15.6	27.4	11.9	7.4	16.1
25000+	20.0	21.9	17.8	17.5	19.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: NSCG 2003 microdata

Note: Temporary workers includes H-1Bs and Ls



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H-1Bs and Change of Status

Percent of Initial H-1B Petitions approved within the United States:

2002: 34%

2003: 29%

2004: 24%

2005: 23%

USCIS does not maintain separate data regarding whether the degree was earned in the United States or abroad. (Data on beneficiaries with U.S. advanced degrees has been available since May 2005.) Source: DHS Characteristics Report, Fiscal Year 2005.



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Specialty H-1B Worker: Previous Status in 1999 Sample

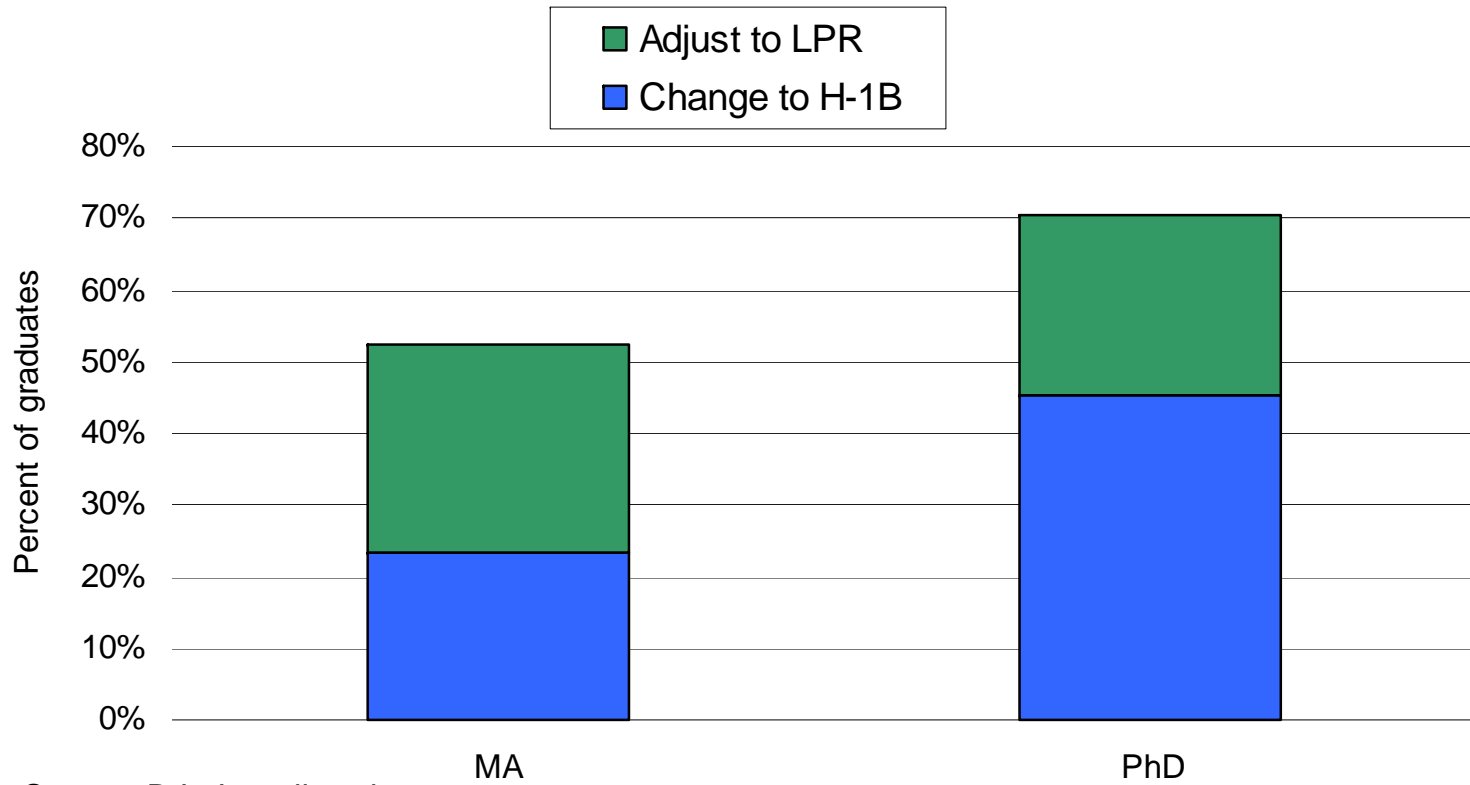
	Percent	Number
Total	100.0%	134,400
Outside the United States	60.3%	81,100
Adjusting from a NIV status	39.7%	53,300
Academic Students (F-1)	22.9%	30,800
Spoused & Children of temp workers (H-4)	3.3%	4,400
Exchange Vistors (J-1)	3.1%	4,200
Visitors for pleasure (B-2)	3.1%	4,100
Professional workers (TN)	1.9%	2,500
Visitors for business (B-1)	1.6%	2,200
Other and unknown	3.8%	5,100

Source: INS, Characteristics of H-1B Workers, Fiscal Year 1999



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Estimated foreign student (F visa) rates of stay after graduation, ca. 1999-2003

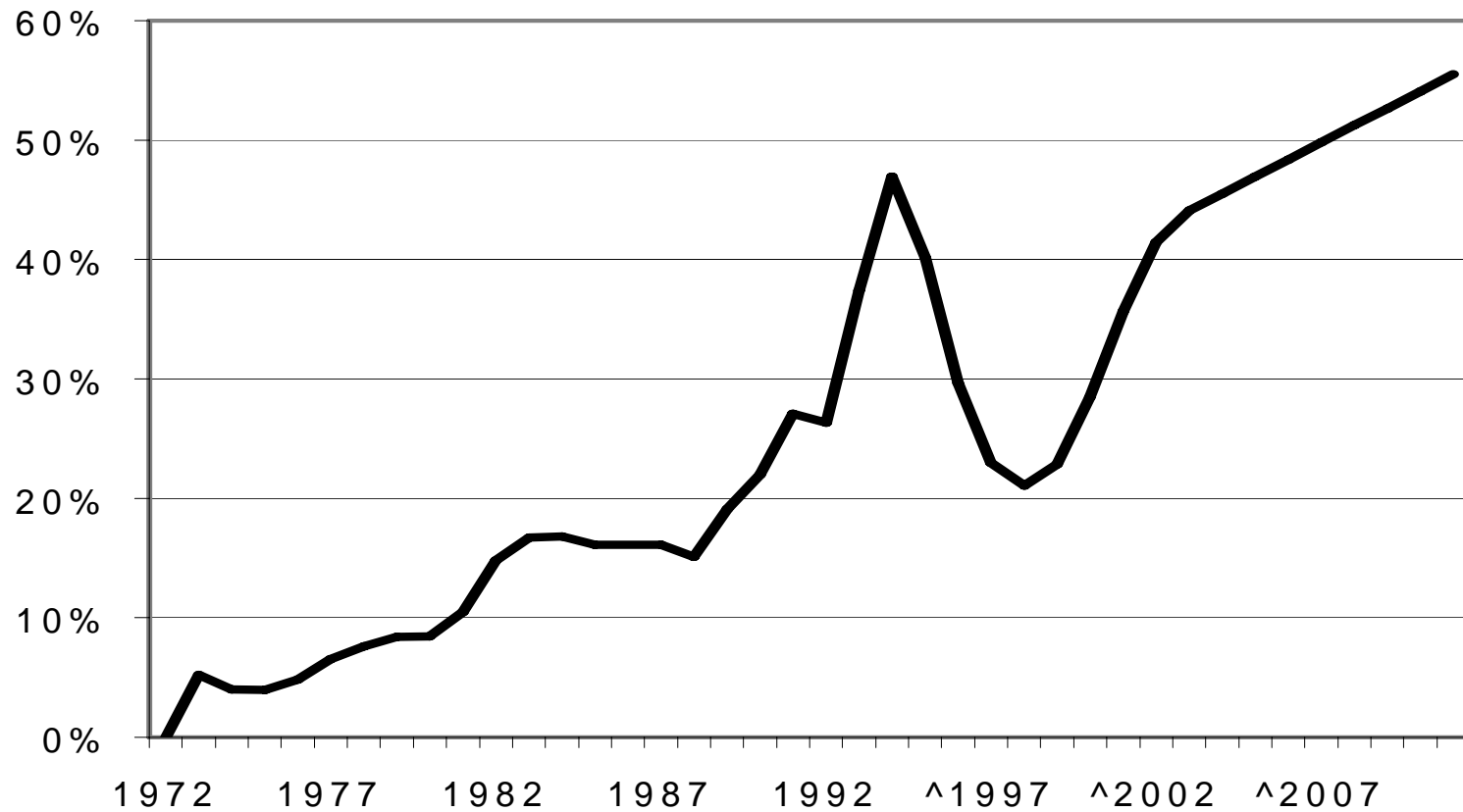


Source: B.L. Lowell, various



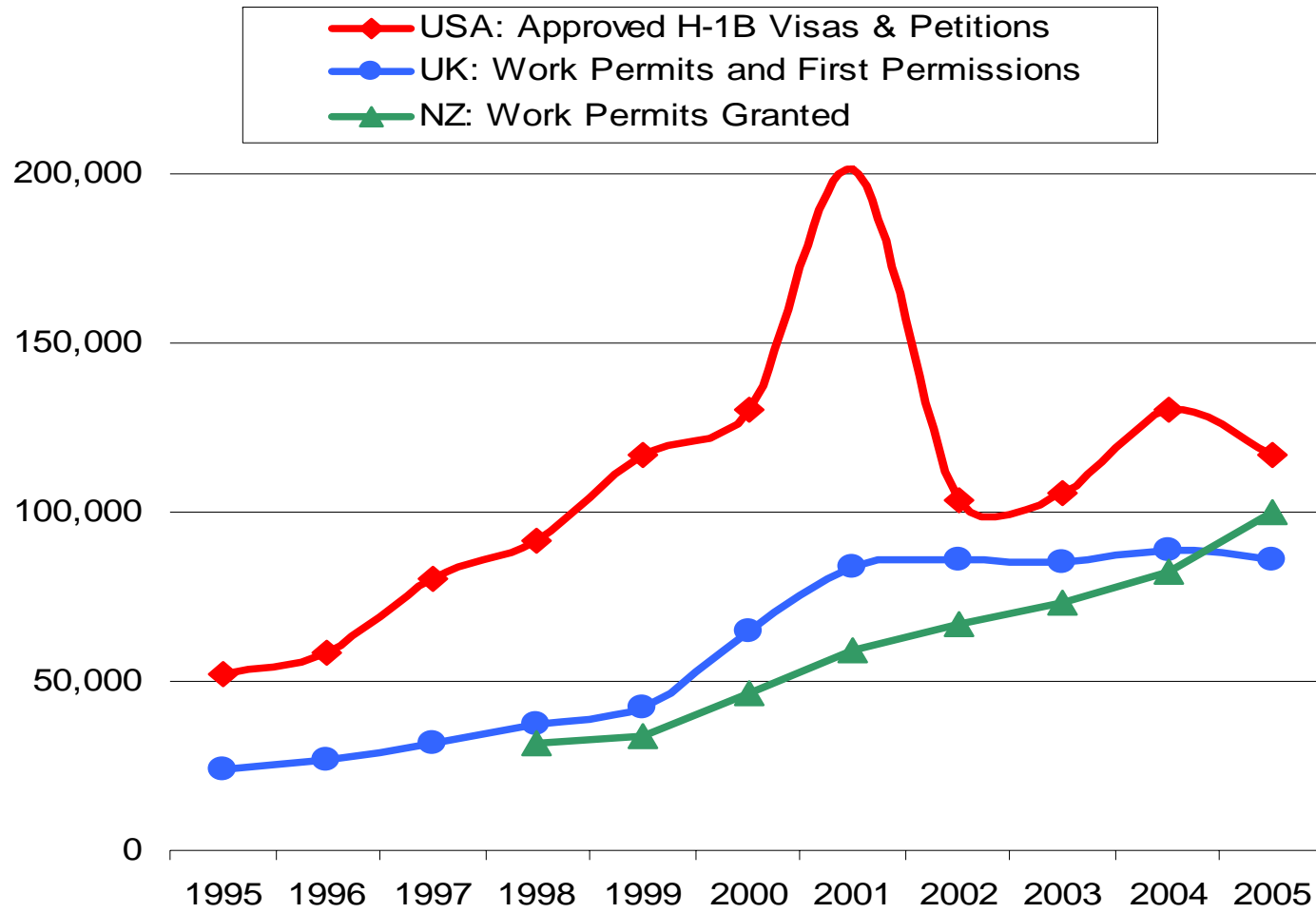
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Figure 3. Percent of H-1 Entry Cohorts Adjusting to Permanent Status, 1972-2010



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Figure 9. Skilled Temporary Workers

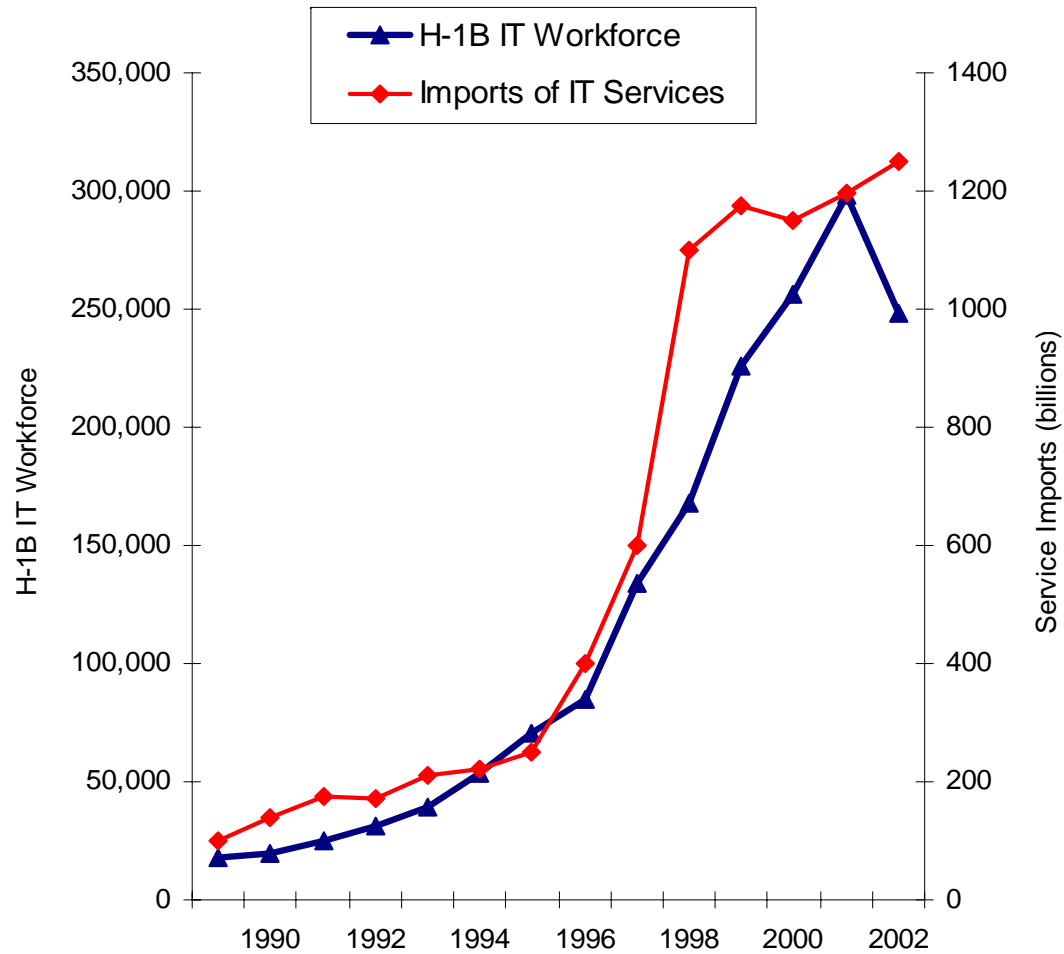


Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Salt 2006 SOPEMI report



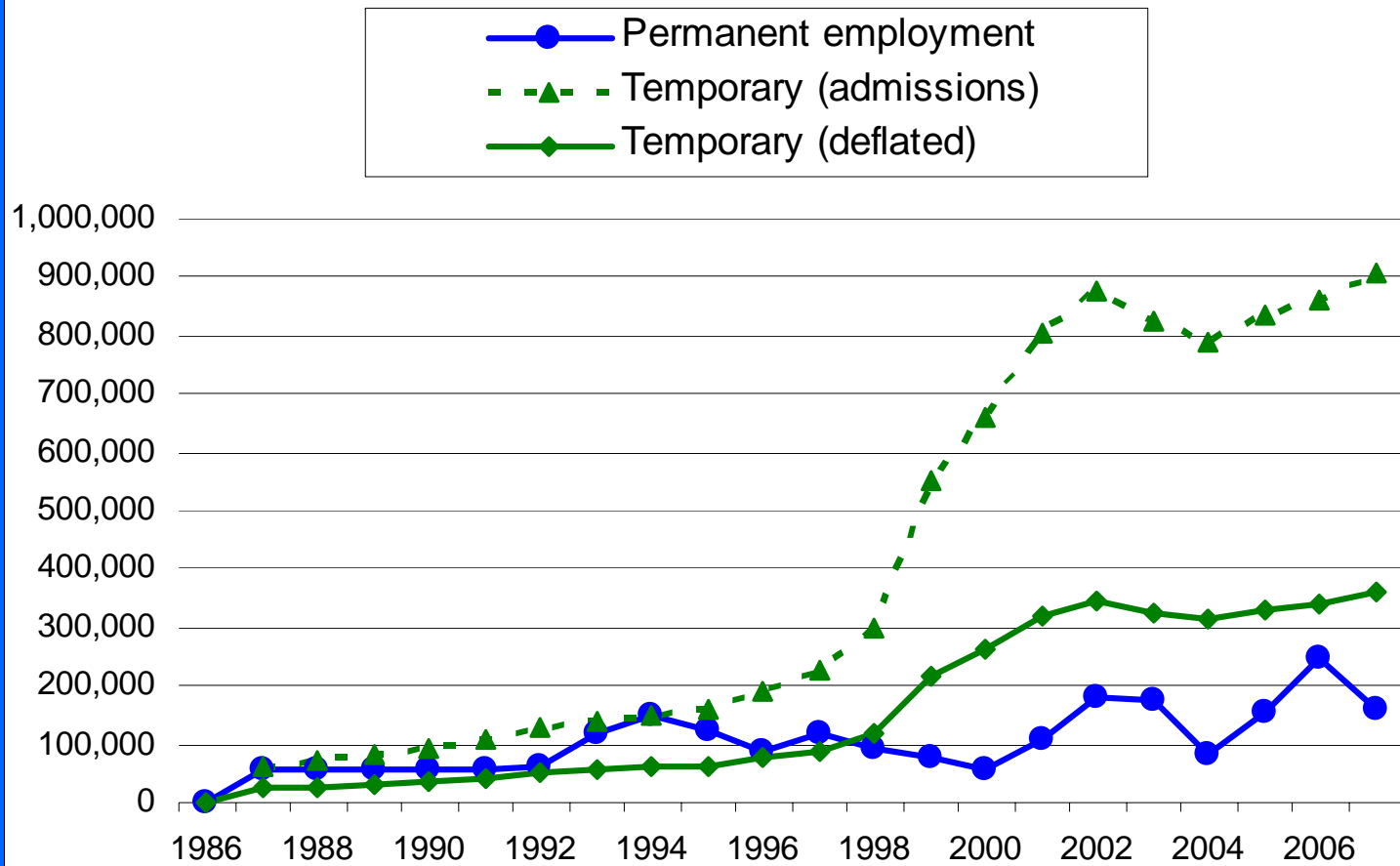
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Figure 2. The H-1B Workforce in Information Technology (IT) and U.S. IT Imports



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Figure 1. Annual Admissions of Skilled Permanent and Temporary Workers

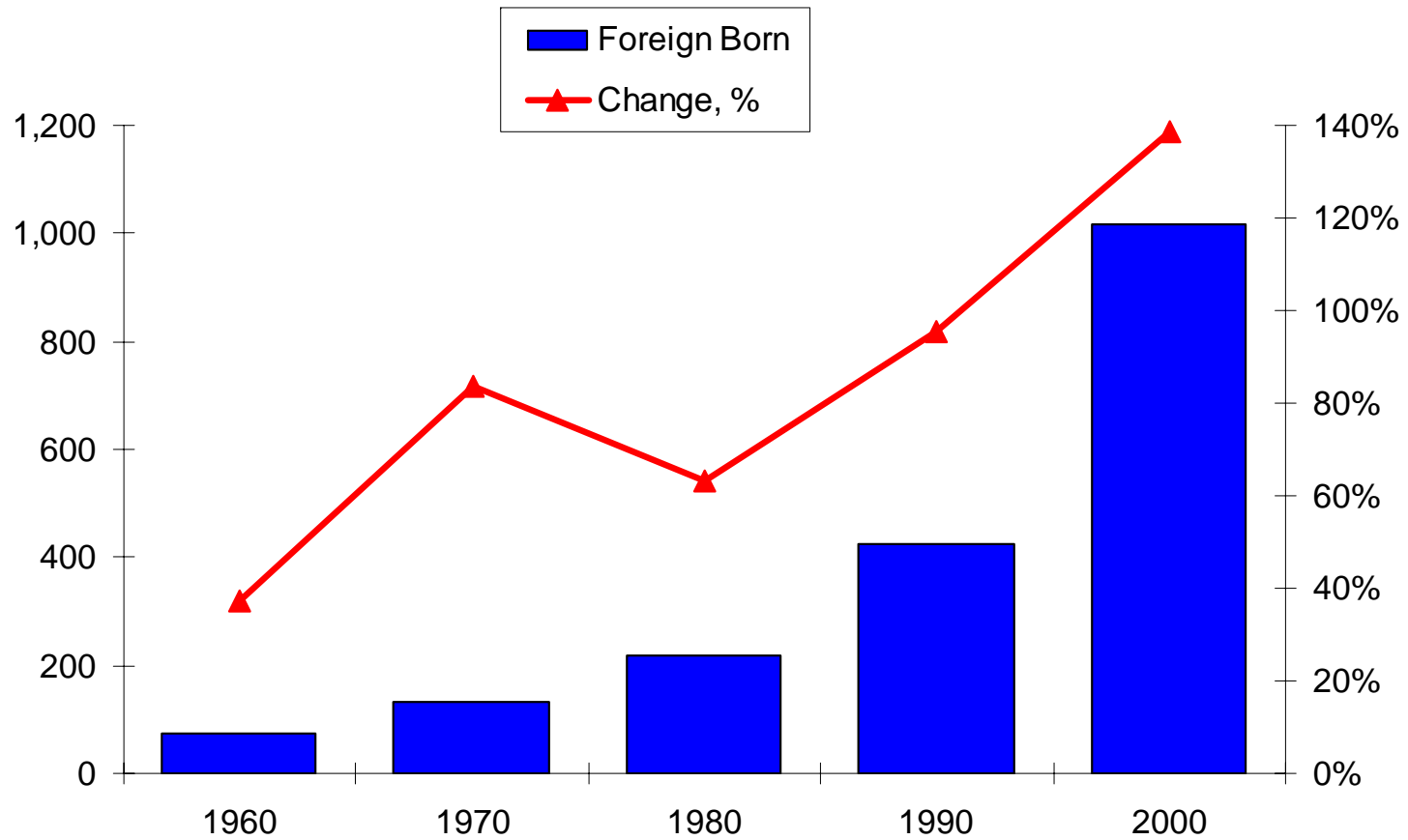


Source: DHS, Yearbook of Immigration Statistics



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Figure 4. Number of Core-STEM Workers and Percent Growth from Prior Decade

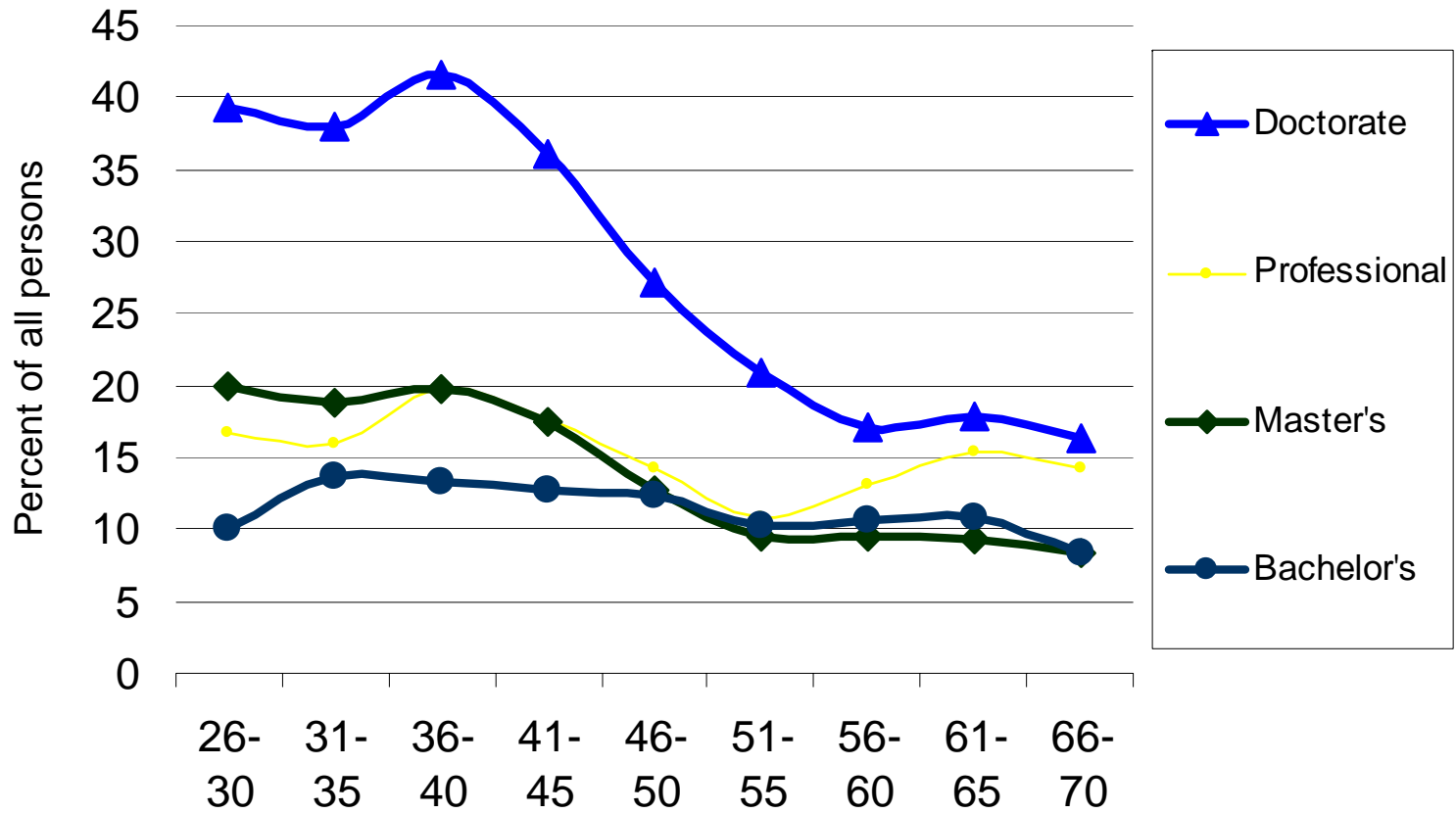


Source: Census microdata (Lowell 2006)



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Foreign-Born Share of Education and Age Group, 2003

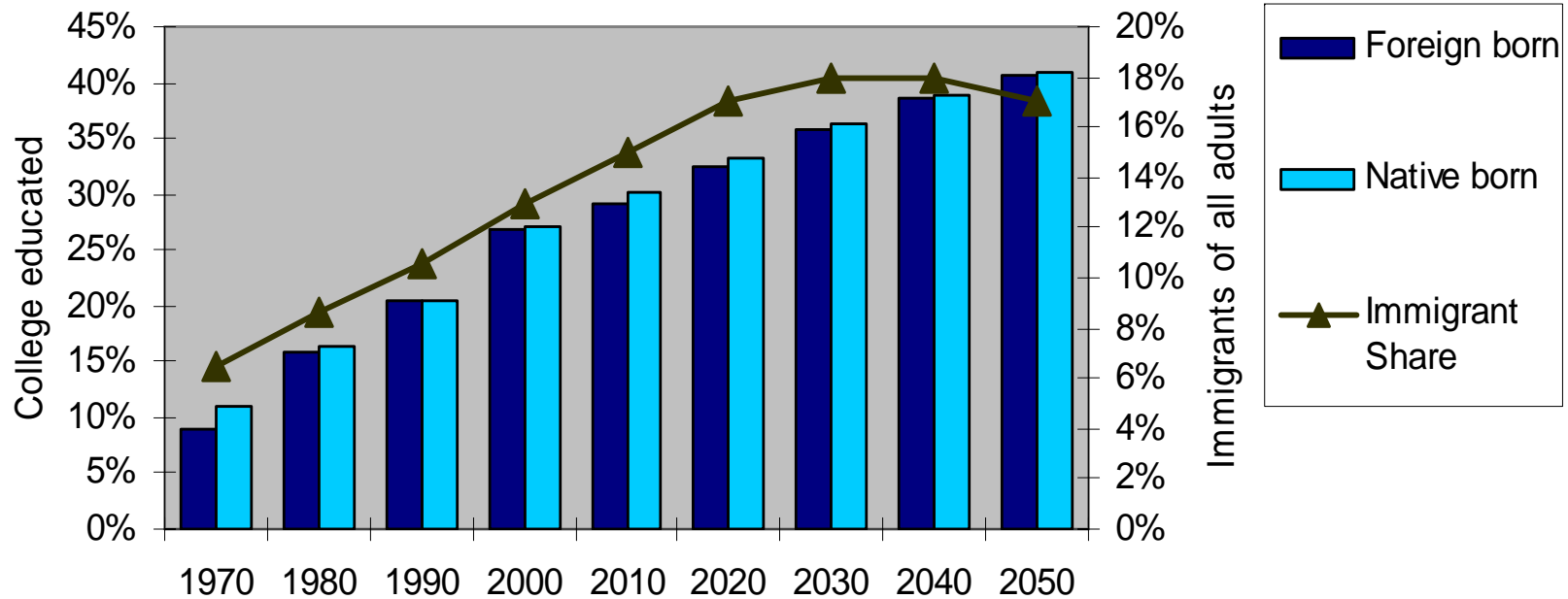


Source: Lowell, tabulations NSCG03 microdata



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Figure 3. College Educated Adults by Nativity and Percent of Adults who are Foreign Born



Source: Lowell et al, 2005; Passel 2007

