

Immigration Can Reverse Rural Population Decline

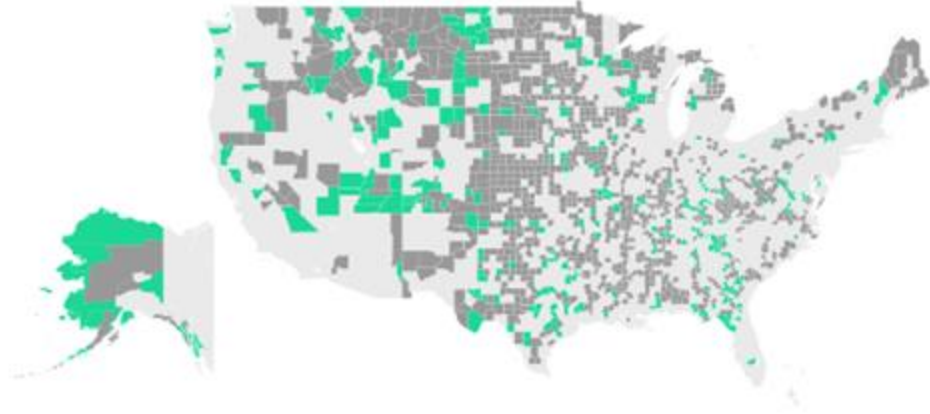


*FWD.us analysis
reveals the severity
of rural decline:*
**more than three-
quarters (77%) of
U.S. rural
counties have
fewer working-
age people, ages
15 to 64, than 20
years ago.**

**The majority of rural counties are facing
population decline....**

WORKING-AGE POPULATION CHANGE BETWEEN 2000 & 2020

GROWTH ● DECLINE ●

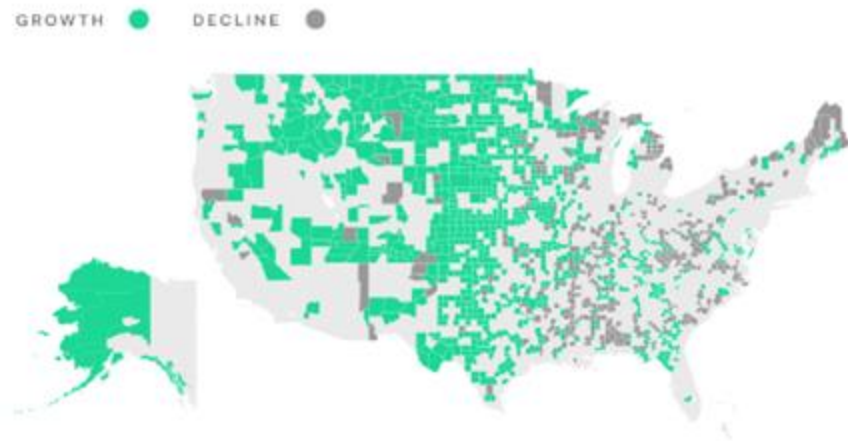


fwd.us/rural

"FWD.us projects that nearly three-quarter (71%) of rural counties nationwide would see larger working-age populations in 2040 than in 2000 if just 200 new immigrants settled in their county each year."

... but increased immigration would reverse population losses for most rural counties

PROJECTED WORKING-AGE POPULATION CHANGE BETWEEN 2000 & 2040, WITH 200 NEW IMMIGRANTS EACH YEAR BETWEEN 2025 & 2040



Note: Working-age population (ages 15-64). Rural counties are noncore-based counties according to the Office of Management and Budget's 2013 rural definition. See Methodology for details.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau population data (2000, 2020). FWD.us population projections (2040).

fwd.us/rural

A wide-angle photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, a dark, gravelly field is visible. A paved road curves from the bottom left towards the center. To the right of the road, there is a white, single-story house with a dark roof and a satellite dish. The background features a line of trees with some autumn-colored foliage, followed by a small town or village with various buildings and more trees under a clear sky.

Many rural counties are facing
downward population spirals

A photograph of a rural farm scene. In the center is a large red barn with a stone base and a white roof. Behind the barn is a tall, cylindrical metal silo. To the left of the barn is a long, low yellow building. To the right is another yellow building with a dark roof. The foreground is a green field with some crops. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Increasing international immigration
could help breathe new life into
communities and economies
throughout rural America

Rural America's workforce is shrinking but immigration can rebuild it.

SELECT STATE AND RURAL COUNTY FOR WORKING-AGE POPULATION ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS.

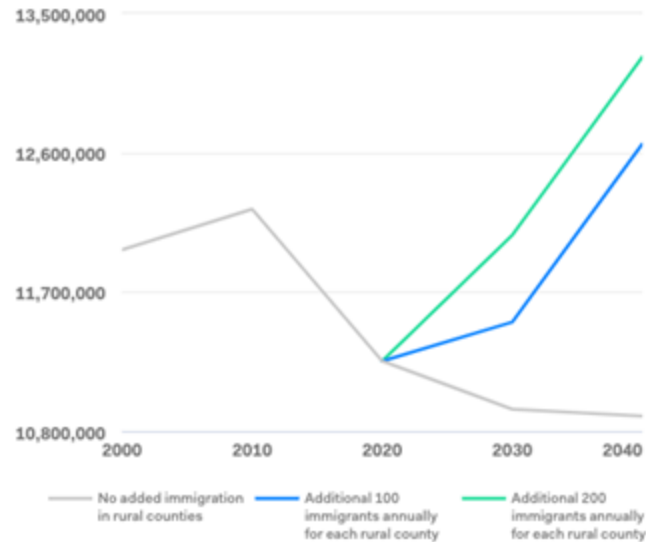
ALL STATES



ALL RURAL COUNTIES



ESTIMATED WORKING-AGE POPULATION (AGES 15-64), BY YEAR



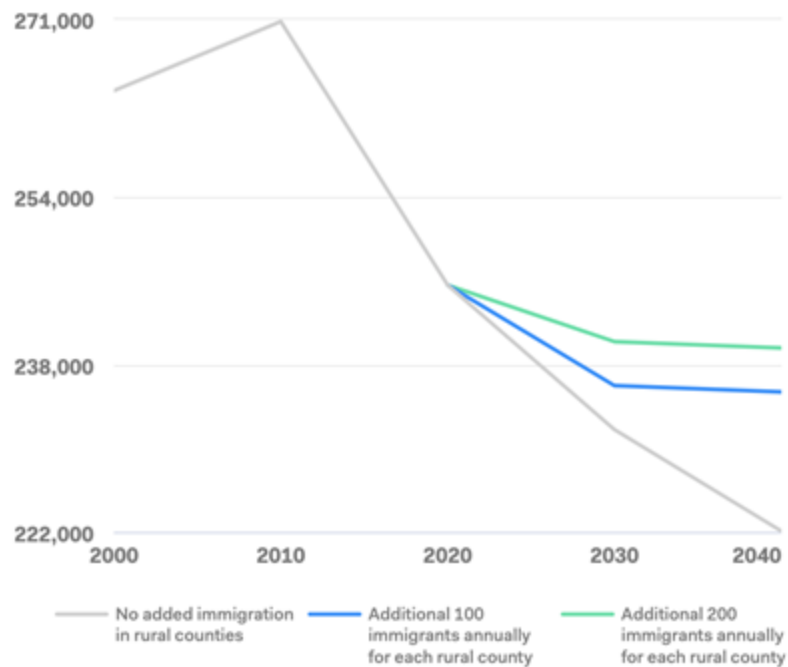
NEW YORK



ALL RURAL COUNTIES



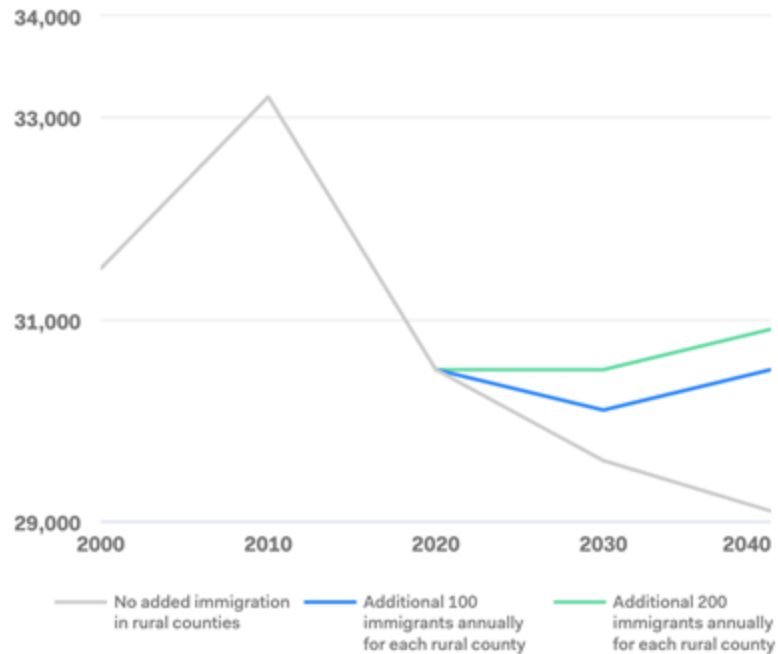
ESTIMATED WORKING-AGE POPULATION (AGES 15-64), BY YEAR



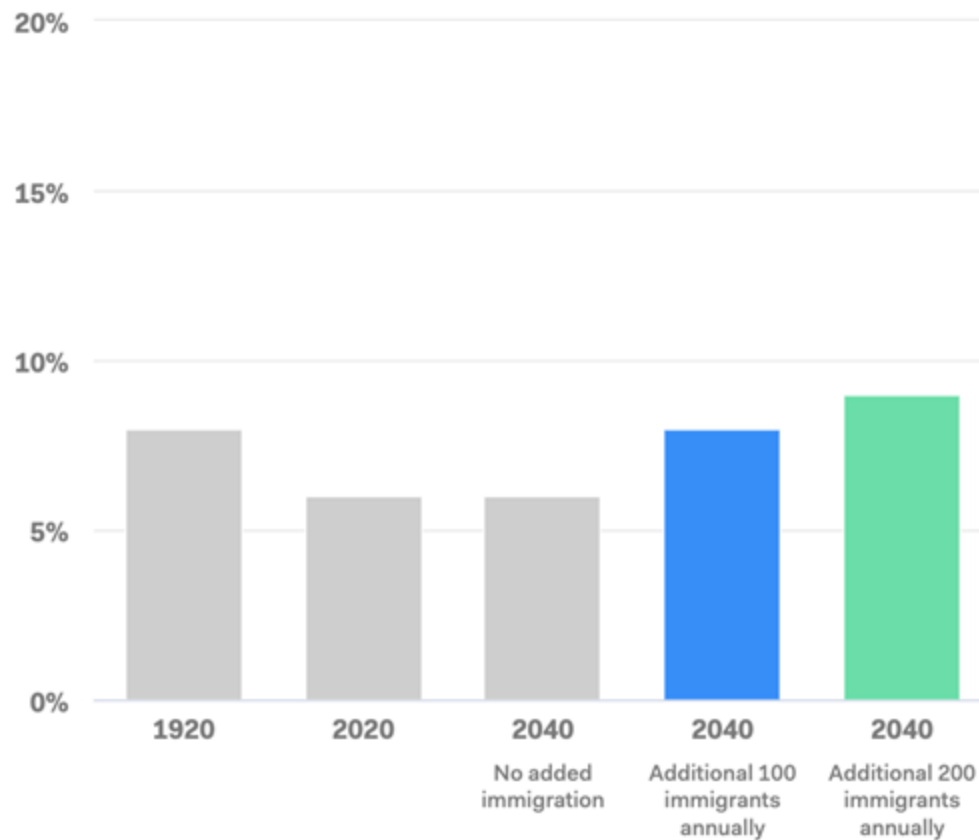
NEW YORK

GREENE COUNTY

ESTIMATED WORKING-AGE POPULATION (AGES 15-64), BY YEAR



% IMMIGRANT OF TOTAL POPULATION, BY YEAR



A street scene in Franklin County, Alabama. The image shows a two-lane road with double yellow lines. On the right side, there are brick buildings. One building has a sign that says "IMMIGRATION". There are also American flags and historical portraits hanging from the building. A white car is parked on the street in the foreground. In the background, there are more buildings and a traffic light. The sky is blue with some clouds.


Immigration helped Franklin County,
Alabama, buck national trends



Immigrants are meeting workforce
needs in Sioux County, Iowa

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape in Aroostook County, Maine. In the upper left, a white house with a dark roof sits on a grassy hill. To its right, a small white shed with a brown roof stands on a green field. The foreground and right side of the image are dominated by a dense forest of evergreen and deciduous trees, many of which are displaying vibrant autumn colors in shades of orange, yellow, and red. The scene is captured from a high angle, looking down on the property.

Remote Aroostook County, Maine,
looks to immigrants as a lifeline

A Black woman and a Black man are standing together in front of a red house. The woman is on the left, wearing a black cardigan over a mustard-colored top and a blue and white striped headband. The man is on the right, wearing a red and white striped polo shirt, with his hand on the woman's shoulder. The background shows a white door with a wreath and a window with a white frame.

Rural America is ready to welcome
immigrants, and Congress can help

Immigration Policies Rural Leaders Can Advocate

Keeping the immigrants already in rural areas

- Work with those without legal status or with temporary protections to look for any legal status options, including making an asylum claim
- Advocate alongside business organizations in requesting Congress and the administration to retain work permits for temporarily protected individuals such as paroled immigrants, TPS holders, DACA recipients, and asylum seekers
- Advocate to congress for legalization of undocumented immigrants
- Become a more welcoming community through building trust-based relationships

Attracting new immigrants

- Offer incentives to attract immigrants living elsewhere in the U.S., including affordable housing availability, job opportunities, and positive welcome to newly arriving immigrants
- Become strong advocates for existing immigration programs like refugee resettlement, H2A-H2B programs
- Lobby Congress to adopt new immigration visa programs that impact rural communities, including expansion of H2A-H2B visa programs, a Heartland-Regional visa that offers residency to immigrants to specifically settle in rural areas

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