

IMMIGRATION LAW ANSWERS BLOG

NEWS, INFORMATION, AND RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE WITH IMMIGRATION QUESTIONS

PUBLISHED BY

**Kraft &
Associates**
Immigration Lawyers, P.C.

Study: Illegal immigration from Mexico declines overall, but not in Texas

Posted at 5:18 AM on September 7, 2010 by Robert A. Kraft

A [new study](#) by the Pew Hispanic Center says illegal entries from Mexico are declining and the total illegal immigrant population is down by about one million, but not in Texas, which has actually seen a slight increase. A [map of unauthorized immigrants state-by-state](#) is also part of the Pew report.

The [Dallas Morning News](#) ran a recent article about this report. Here are excerpts:

The report by the Pew Hispanic Center avoids naming causes for the contraction to 11.1 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. But it notes that the recession and tougher immigration enforcement paralleled a trend that "represents the first significant reversal in the growth of this population over the past two decades."

The findings come at a time when the national debate over illegal immigration grows more vigorous and polarized. Rancor comes from Arizona's tough new immigration law, which is being challenged in the federal courts. And while some press for a partial legalization program for those here illegally, others have called for an end to birthright citizenship for the children of illegal immigrants.

Much of the drop the Pew reports found in the unauthorized immigrant population comes from the nation's Southeast coast and the states of Nevada, Arizona, Colorado and Utah.

Mexican officials and others have speculated that Texas became a destination state for some immigrants from more economically battered U.S. states. Texas' jobless rate — now at 8.2 percent — has been 1 to 2 percentage points below the national average for much of the recession.

The Pew study follows another report this week that says in Texas one out of three young students under the age of 8 has an immigrant parent. The Washington-based Urban Institute says nationwide one out of four students under the age of 8, roughly third-graders, has an immigrant parent.

And Texas continues to have one of the nation's highest percentages of illegal immigrants in the labor force, at nearly 9 percent. Illegal immigrants account for 6.5 percent of the state's 24 million residents, or an estimated 1.6 million people in 2009. It's the third highest rate in the nation in a cluster led by California (with a 6.9 percent share).

The Pew center said that the unauthorized immigrant population peaked at 12 million in March 2007, several months before the recession officially hit the U.S. And the nonpartisan research center noted that 72 percent of the overall foreign-born population was in the U.S. legally in 2009.