

Notes and Brief Reports

Foreign-Born Workers Awarded Retirement and Disability Benefits, 1978

A recently developed study file has enabled the Social Security Administration to examine the experience of foreign-born workers who were living in the United States at the time they began collecting benefits under the Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance program. Of the 1.9 million persons awarded retired-worker and disabled-worker benefits in 1978, about 88,000 were born outside the United States. They made up less than 5 percent of persons awarded retired-worker benefits (table 1) and about 4 percent of all disabled-worker allowances (table 2). Most of the foreign-born awardees had worked in Social Security covered employment since before 1960.

Data in the study file—a 4-percent sample of awards to retired and disabled workers in 1978—showed that, on the average, foreign-born beneficiaries were older than others at the time of award. The retired workers among them had higher average primary insurance amounts (PIA's)¹ than did retired workers in general; a larger proportion of them were in the highest PIA cate-

¹ The PIA is the amount payable to a worker retiring at age 65. It is based on the duration and level of lifetime covered earnings.

gory. Among disabled workers, the foreign born had lower PIA's and fewer were in the highest PIA group.

The study file has been used to produce a 12-page report (with 20 detailed tables) on the status of foreign-born workers awarded retirement and disability benefits. Data are presented for all foreign-born retired and disabled workers. In most cases, data are also presented for those of European birth and for those born in Spanish-language countries. (The latter group includes persons born in Puerto Rico, who are U.S. citizens by birth, but who were included with the Spanish-language countries because Spanish is their primary language.) These groups are compared by age, race, and sex, as well as by average PIA and the distribution of their PIA's.

Persons born in Europe made up the majority of the foreign-born awardees. Compared with other foreign-born awardees, they were older at the time of award and received larger benefits. Hispanic workers, on the other hand, were younger than the average, and their benefit amounts were lower.

Further information on this study can be obtained by writing:

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Office of Policy, Social Security Administration,
Room 1120, 1875 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washing-
ton, D.C. 20009.

Requests may also be placed by telephone: (202) 673-5209.

Table 1.—Number and percentage distribution of retired workers awarded OASDI benefits in 1978, by level of primary insurance amount, birthplace, and sex

| Primary insurance amount ¹ | All retired workers | | | Foreign born | | | Natives of Spanish-language countries (including Puerto Rico) | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------|---------|--------------|--------|--------|---|-------|-------|
| | Total | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women |
| Total number | 1,460,350 | 843,275 | 617,075 | 70,650 | 42,225 | 28,425 | 13,225 | 7,825 | 5,400 |
| Total percent | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Less than \$121.90 | 9.3 | 3.6 | 16.9 | 7.0 | 2.2 | 14.2 | 10.4 | 5.1 | 18.0 |
| \$121.90-\$149.90 | 5.5 | 2.6 | 9.4 | 3.7 | 1.4 | 7.1 | 6.4 | 3.2 | 11.1 |
| \$150.00-\$174.90 | 5.2 | 3.1 | 8.1 | 5.3 | 3.3 | 8.4 | 7.9 | 5.4 | 11.6 |
| \$175.00-\$199.90 | 6.1 | 3.7 | 9.5 | 7.3 | 4.6 | 11.4 | 11.2 | 10.2 | 12.5 |
| \$200.00-\$224.90 | 5.8 | 3.6 | 8.9 | 7.1 | 4.9 | 10.5 | 9.3 | 8.6 | 10.2 |
| \$225.00-\$249.90 | 5.7 | 4.0 | 8.0 | 5.4 | 4.1 | 7.3 | 9.4 | 10.2 | 8.3 |
| \$250.00-\$299.90 | 11.1 | 9.2 | 13.7 | 10.9 | 9.3 | 13.3 | 13.6 | 15.0 | 11.6 |
| \$300.00-\$349.90 | 12.3 | 13.5 | 10.8 | 11.8 | 11.0 | 13.0 | 12.1 | 13.7 | 9.7 |
| \$350.00 or more | 39.0 | 56.7 | 14.7 | 41.4 | 59.3 | 14.9 | 19.7 | 28.4 | 6.9 |

¹ The PIA's shown are those in the month of award. For January-May 1978, the minimum benefit was \$114.30; for June-December, it was \$121.80.

Table 2.—Number and percentage distribution of disabled workers awarded OASDI benefits in 1978, by level of primary insurance amount, birthplace, and sex

| Primary insurance amount ¹ | All disabled workers | | | Foreign born | | | Natives of Spanish-language countries (including Puerto Rico) | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|---------|---------|--------------|--------|-------|---|-------|-------|
| | Total | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women |
| Total number | 455,425 | 318,800 | 136,625 | 17,275 | 11,000 | 6,275 | 6,975 | 4,875 | 2,100 |
| Total percent | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Less than \$121.90 | 2.4 | 1.2 | 5.6 | 1.5 | .4 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 1.5 | 8.4 |
| \$121.90-\$149.90 | 2.6 | 1.1 | 6.2 | 1.3 | .4 | 2.8 | 1.8 | 1.5 | 2.4 |
| \$150.00-\$174.90 | 4.0 | 1.9 | 9.0 | 5.1 | 1.8 | 10.8 | 6.5 | 3.6 | 13.1 |
| \$175.00-\$199.90 | 6.3 | 3.4 | 13.1 | 6.6 | 2.7 | 13.6 | 8.2 | 4.6 | 16.7 |
| \$200.00-\$224.90 | 6.1 | 3.9 | 11.3 | 8.2 | 5.4 | 13.9 | 9.3 | 6.2 | 16.7 |
| \$225.00-\$249.90 | 6.7 | 4.8 | 11.1 | 8.4 | 6.6 | 11.6 | 11.5 | 10.8 | 13.1 |
| \$250.00-\$299.90 | 13.6 | 11.6 | 18.1 | 15.2 | 13.5 | 17.9 | 17.2 | 16.9 | 17.9 |
| \$300.00-\$349.90 | 14.4 | 15.6 | 11.8 | 15.8 | 17.4 | 12.8 | 16.8 | 21.0 | 7.1 |
| \$350.00 or more | 43.9 | 56.8 | 13.9 | 37.9 | 51.7 | 13.2 | 25.1 | 33.8 | 4.8 |

¹ The PIA's shown are those in the month of award. For January-May 1978, the minimum benefit was \$114.30; for June-December, it was \$121.80.