

Reassessing Number of Mainland Chinese Immigrants with Declassified Archival Data

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ABSTRACT

After World War II, and particularly in 1949, a massive influx of mainland Chinese immigrants to Taiwan drastically altered the island's demography. However, demographic statistics did not include military personnel on active duty who were not required to file household registration. Hence, exactly how many mainland Chinese migrated to Taiwan remained unknown. Estimations varied widely, ranging from less than 1 million to two million. Newly declassified Presidential Office Archives and Executive Yuan Archives contain previously undisclosed 1956 census reports of military personnel on active duty. Estimation on the basis of these archival data yielded a population of 1,024,233 mainland Chinese immigrants in Taiwan and the Kinmen-Matsu military zones on September 16th, 1956. Furthermore, the male to female ratio among the immigrants was 375:100.

Keywords: Mainlanders, Census, Human Migration