

Refugees and Asylees: 2022

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The United States provides protection to certain persons who have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution mainly through two programs: refugee status and admission for persons outside the United States and their eligible relatives,¹ and asylum for persons physically present or arriving in the United States and their eligible relatives.² The 2022 *Refugees and Asylees Annual Flow Report*, authored by the Office of Homeland Security Statistics (OHSS), presents information on persons admitted to the United States as refugees, those who applied for asylum in the United States, and those granted asylum in the United States in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022.^{3, 4, 5, 6}

SUMMARY

A total of 25,519 persons were admitted to the United States as refugees during 2022, including 9,012 as principal refugees and 16,507 as derivative accompanying refugees.⁷ The leading countries of nationality for refugees admitted during this period were the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syria, and Burma. The United States also provided protection to 36,615 asylees during 2022,⁸ including 14,134 individuals who were granted asylum affirmatively by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) within DHS,⁹ and 22,481 individuals who were granted asylum defensively by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR). An additional 2,561 individuals received derivative asylum or refugee status while residing in the United States based on a relative's refugee or asylum grant.¹⁰ In addition, 507 individuals abroad were approved as follow-to-join refugees and admitted to the United States, and 8,673 individuals abroad were approved as follow-to-join asylees and issued travel documents to enter the United States.¹¹ The leading countries of nationality for persons granted either affirmative or defensive asylum were the People's Republic of China (China), Venezuela, and El Salvador. Monthly refugee arrivals and asylum grants fluctuated during the Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. In addition, refugee admissions were suspended in October 2019 and 2020 until the President issued the annual Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions authorizing refugees for admission.

DEFINING "REFUGEE" AND "ASYLUM" STATUS

To be eligible for refugee or asylum status, a principal applicant must, among other requirements, meet the definition of a refugee set forth in Section 101(a)(42) of INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(42), which states in part that a refugee is a person who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of nationality (or country of last habitual residence, if stateless) because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.¹² Applicants for refugee status are outside the United States, whereas applicants seeking asylum are either within the United States or arriving at a U.S. port of entry (POE).

¹ See Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) § 207, 8 U.S.C. § 1157.

² See INA § 208, 8 U.S.C. § 1158. In addition to providing protection through refugee and asylum status, U.S. law generally bars removing individuals to a country where their "life or freedom would be threatened because of the [noncitizen]'s race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion." INA § 241(b)(3)(A), 8 U.S.C. § 1231(b)(3)(A). This is known as statutory withholding of removal. See 8 CFR § 208.16(a)-(b). Pursuant to regulations implementing the United States' obligations under Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture (CAT) and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the United States is obligated not to remove individuals to a country where it is more likely than not that they would be tortured. Individuals may seek withholding or deferral of removal under these regulations. See 8 CFR §§ 208.16(c)-.18, 1208.16(c)-.18. Data on withholding and deferral of removal are not included in this report.

³ This report was prepared by the OHSS, which replaced the Office of Immigration Statistics in September 2023. The OHSS's mission is to provide quality assurance and governance of Department-wide statistical data, support data-driven decision-making, and improve the efficiency and transparency of statistical reporting. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Statistical Official heads OHSS.

⁴ This report includes OHSS's analysis of relevant statutes, policy, and processes to provide background and context for DHS statistical data. The report has been reviewed for accuracy by relevant DHS Components.

⁵ In this report, a year refers to a fiscal year (October 1 to September 30). Fiscal Year 2022 ran from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022.

⁶ The 2022 *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* and other OHSS reports contain additional context. Not all numbers reported are contained in this report's tables.

⁷ Derivative refugees are eligible dependents (spouses and unmarried children under 21 years of age) of the principal refugee who either accompany the principal refugee or are petitioned for by the principal as follow-to-join derivatives. The terms derivative and dependent are therefore used interchangeably in this report. Refugee data in this report may differ slightly from numbers reported by the Department of State (DOS). DOS refugee numbers include Amerasians (children born in Cambodia, Korea, Laos, Thailand, or Vietnam after December 31, 1950 and before October 22, 1982 and fathered by a U.S. citizen), whereas DHS reports these Amerasians as lawful permanent residents.

⁸ These asylum grants were based upon a principal asylum applicant's application, which may also include an accompanying spouse and unmarried children under 21 years of age. They do not include individuals who were approved for follow-to-join asylum status while residing in the United States or abroad.

⁹ Affirmative asylum data for 2022 were retrieved by OHSS April 4, 2023. Data in this report may differ slightly from year-end 2022 numbers retrieved and reported at different times by USCIS's Asylum Division.

¹⁰ Of these, 2,539 were based on a principal asylee's grant, and 22 were based on a principal refugee's admission to the United States.

¹¹ OHSS does not currently receive data on how many of those issued travel documents reached the United States and who obtained asylum status.

¹² Congress expanded this definition in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, providing persons who have been forced to abort a pregnancy or undergo involuntary sterilization or who have been persecuted for failure or refusal to undergo such a procedure or for other resistance to a coercive population control program shall be deemed to have been persecuted on account of political opinion.



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The INA also generally requires that a person must be outside their country of nationality or, if stateless, country of last habitual residence to qualify as a refugee. However, the INA grants the President authority to designate countries for “in-country processing,” allowing people to be processed for refugee status within their own countries.

REFUGEES

Refugee Admissions Ceiling

Under the INA, the President establishes an overall refugee admissions ceiling and has typically set regional allocations before the beginning of each fiscal year following “appropriate consultation” with Congress.¹³ This ceiling has fluctuated widely in recent years.

On October 27, 2020, President Trump issued the Presidential Determination (PD) on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2021 (PD 2021-02), setting the refugee ceiling at 15,000—its lowest level since the inception of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) in 1980. This followed the second-lowest refugee ceiling of 18,000 in 2020. In response to lowered ceilings, both the number of USCIS staff assigned to its Refugee Corps and the number of community resettlement initiatives decreased.¹⁴ In 2020, fewer than 2,000 refugee interviews were conducted by USCIS, compared to nearly 45,000 the prior year.¹⁵ Notably, refugee admissions ceilings in 2020 and initially in 2021 were based on admission categories rather than world geographic regional allotments as in previous years.

On February 4, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 14013, “Rebuilding and Enhancing Programs to Resettle Refugees and Planning for the Impact of Climate Change on Migration,” which directed a broad set of actions to rebuild, expand, and improve the USRAP.¹⁶ On April 16, 2021, President Biden issued the Emergency Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2021 (PD 2021-05), which was intended

to respond to unforeseen emergency refugee situations around the globe. PD 2021-05 resumed the previous practice of establishing refugee limits based on Region/Country of Chargeability¹⁷ and re-designated eligible persons in Cuba, Eurasia, the Baltics, Iraq, Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador for in-country processing, as well as in special circumstances persons identified by a U.S. Embassy in any location or initially referred to the Federal Government by a designated non-governmental organization. On May 3, 2021, President Biden issued another Emergency Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2021 (PD 2021-06), which raised the overall limit to 62,500 from 15,000.

On October 8, 2021, President Biden issued the Memorandum for the Secretary of State on Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2022 (PD 2-22-02). This established a refugee ceiling of 125,000 for 2022 along regional allocations (Table 1). PD 2022-02 designated the same group of eligible persons for in-country processing as in the previous year (Cuba, Eurasia, the Baltics, Iraq, Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador) as well as in special circumstances persons identified by a U.S. Embassy in any location.

Notably, refugee admissions were slow to recover in 2022 and 2021 despite these years having much higher ceilings than 2020. This slow rebuild was due to a variety of factors, including longstanding impacts from funding cuts, program pauses, and increased vetting during the Trump administration.¹⁸

Table 1.
Proposed and Actual Refugee Admissions by Region of Chargeability:
Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

Region	2020		2021		2022	
	Ceiling	Admissions	Ceiling	Admissions	Ceiling	Admissions
Total	18,000	11,840	62,500	11,454	125,000	25,519
Africa	X	4,171	22,000	6,250	40,000	11,393
East Asia	X	2,131	6,000	776	15,000	2,215
Europe/Central Asia	X	2,578	4,000	983	10,000	2,351
Latin America/Caribbean	X	948	5,000	400	15,000	2,485
Near East/South Asia	X	2,012	13,000	3,045	35,000	7,075
Unallocated Reserve	X	0	12,500	0	10,000	0

X Not applicable.

Notes: Ceiling and admission numbers reflect revisions made each year. In 2020 and initially in 2021, refugee admissions ceilings were based on Admission Category and not by Region/Country of Chargeability. On April 16, 2021 Presidential Memorandum revised the 2021 limits based on Region/Country of Chargeability, and a subsequent May 3, 2021 Emergency Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2021 revised the overall allocation to 62,500. Based on the terms of a settlement in *Doe v. Trump*, No. 17-0178 (W.D. Wash.), certain refugees who are admitted in 2020 and any future years are counted toward the 2018 refugee admissions ceiling. In 2020, the number of such applicants was 26, in 2021 the number was 43, and in 2022 the number was 54.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOS data.

Refugee Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for refugee status, a principal applicant must: (1) be of special humanitarian concern to the United States; (2) meet the refugee definition as set forth in Section 101(a)(42) of the INA; (3) be admissible under the INA (or be granted a waiver of inadmissibility); (4) not be firmly resettled in any foreign country; and (5) merit a favorable exercise of discretion. Derivative refugees need not meet all these eligibility requirements, but they must be admissible to the United States and demonstrate a bona fide relationship as the spouse or child of a principal refugee applicant or an admitted refugee. Any person who has ordered, incited, assisted, or

¹³ In many cases, an unallocated reserve is also designated, which can be used in any region if the need arises and only after notification to Congress.

¹⁴ USCIS. “FY2021 Appropriations Reporting Requirement Refugee Data – FY2018 TO FY2021”. Accessed May 31, 2023. <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-and-studies/refugee-processing-data/fy2021-appropriations-reporting-requirement-refugee-data-fy2018-to-fy2021>.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Executive Order 14013 also revoked the October 24, 2017 Executive Order 13815, “Resuming the United States Refugee Admissions Program With Enhanced Vetting Capabilities,” and the September 26, 2019 Executive Order 13888, “Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement.”

¹⁷ Country of chargeability is defined as, “The independent country to which an immigrant entering under the preference system is accredited for purposes of numerical limitations” by USCIS’ public glossary. See USCIS. *Country of Chargeability*. Accessed August 22, 2023. <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/glossary>.

¹⁸ Refugee Council USA. *Where are the Refugees?*. 2019. Accessed May 31, 2023. <https://rcusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/RCUSA-Report-1.pdf>.

otherwise participated in the persecution of another on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion is ineligible for refugee status, including as a derivative refugee.

Refugee Application Process

The USRAP establishes processing priorities that identify individuals and groups who are of special humanitarian concern to the United States and who are eligible for refugee resettlement consideration. The Priority One (P-1) category includes individuals referred by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a U.S. Embassy, or certain non-governmental organizations (NGOs); Priority Two (P-2) includes groups of special humanitarian concern; and Priority Three (P-3) includes family reunification cases. The years 2020 and start of 2021 were unusual in that the United States only accepted referrals from UNHCR in the categories listed above. Once principal refugee applicants are referred or granted access to the USRAP under any of these priorities, they still must meet all other eligibility criteria, including meriting a favorable exercise of discretion. Upon referral, a Resettlement Support Center, working under a cooperative agreement with DOS, conducts pre-screening interviews with applicants. A USCIS officer then interviews applicants and accompanying dependents to determine eligibility for resettlement in the United States. Multiple security checks must be completed before a Form I-590, *Registration for Classification as Refugee*, is approved. Additionally, applicants must undergo a medical exam.

Individuals who are approved for refugee classification are assigned to a resettlement agency (sponsor) that assists with housing, employment, and other services upon arrival. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) arranges the refugee's travel to the United States. After arrival, refugees are authorized to work and may request documentation to travel outside the United States.

The spouse and unmarried children under the age of 21 of a principal refugee may obtain refugee status as accompanying or follow-to-join derivatives.¹⁹ Accompanying derivatives may enter the United States with the principal refugee or within four months after the principal refugee's admission.²⁰ A spouse or child who joins the principal refugee more than four months after admission to the United States is a follow-to-join derivative. Follow-to-join derivatives may also be located inside the United States. Principal refugees may petition for follow-to-join benefits for their qualifying derivatives within two years of the refugee's admission to the United States. The principal and the derivative refugee relative's relationship must have existed at the time of the principal's admission into the United States, at the time of filing for follow-to-join benefits, at the time of the derivative's interview, and at the time of the relative's subsequent approval. Principal refugees must file

¹⁹ Children may include those age 21 or over who are covered by the Child Status Protection Act, Pub. L. No. 107-208 (Aug. 6, 2002). See INA §§ 207(c)(2)(B), 208(b)(3)(B); 8 U.S.C. §§ 1157(c)(2)(B), 1158(b)(3)(B). A derivative child must be unmarried when the principal refugee is admitted to the United States, when the principal refugee files Form I-730, *Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition*, when the child is interviewed, and at the time of the child's subsequent admission.

²⁰ In practice, most accompanying derivative refugees enter the United States with the principal refugee.

Form I-730²¹ for each qualifying follow-to-join derivative family member. These beneficiaries are not required to demonstrate an independent refugee claim. Once a principal's Form I-730 has been approved for an individual located abroad, there are no time constraints placed upon that derivative relative's travel to the United States, provided that (1) the principal's status has not been revoked; (2) the relationship of the derivative to the principal continues to exist; and (3) in the case of a child, the child is unmarried at the time of admission.

DATA

All refugee data presented in this report are from the DOS Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) refugee case management system. Follow-to-join refugee data are pulled from USCIS Computer-Linked Application Information Management System (CLAIMS) and Case and Activity Management for International Operations (CAMINO) system.

TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF REFUGEES

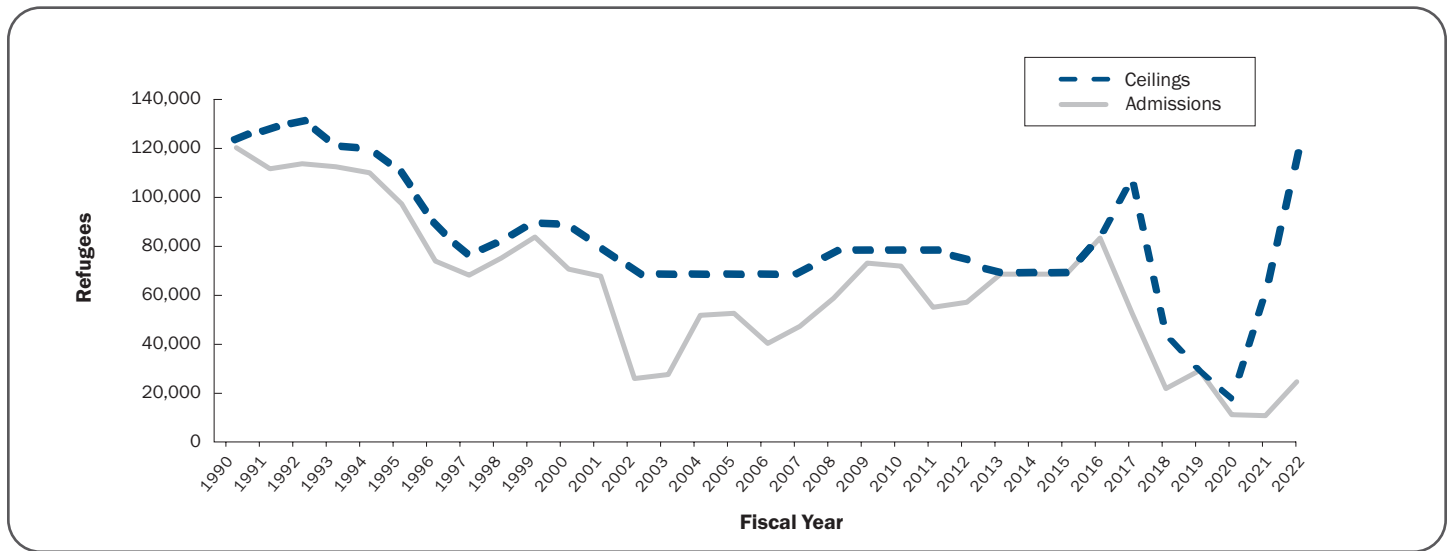
In 2022, the United States admitted 25,519 refugees, more than the total refugees admitted in 2021 and 2020 combined.

Since the inception of USRAP in 1980, the United States has accepted more than 3 million refugees. Since reaching peak refugee admissions (122,066) in 1990 under the current legal framework, refugee admissions have gone through three general trends (Figure 1). Admissions generally declined during the 1990s, as the refugee program's focus shifted to more diverse populations across the world. Admissions reached a low point in 2002, due in part to security procedures and changes to admission requirements after September 11, 2001. Refugee admissions reached a post-2001 peak of 84,989 in 2016 under the Obama administration. Immediately afterwards, the Trump administration reduced the refugee ceiling during each of its four years and implemented new refugee vetting and screening procedures, contributing to a decrease in admissions from 2017-2021, with the final two years of this period making up the lowest levels of refugee admissions in U.S. history. Recent 2022 admissions levels indicate a slight rebound but remain the next-lowest admissions (outside the 2017-2021 period) since the program started.

²¹ This petition is used to file for relatives of both refugees and asylees. Refugee follow-to-join admissions are counted within the annual refugee ceiling. Asylum follow-to-join admissions are not counted in the annual admission ceilings.

Figure 1.

Refugee Admissions and Proposed Ceilings to the United States: Fiscal Years 1990 to 2022



Note: Data for 2020-2022 as of February 6, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOS data.

Table 2.

Refugee Arrivals by Relationship to Principal Applicant and Case Priority: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

Category of admission and case priority	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
RELATIONSHIP TO PRINCIPAL APPLICANT						
Total	11,840	100.0	11,454	100.0	25,519	100.0
Principal applicant	5,142	43.4	4,557	39.8	9,012	35.3
Dependents	6,698	56.6	6,897	60.2	16,507	64.7
Spouse	1,455	12.3	1,364	11.9	3,271	12.8
Child	5,186	43.8	5,493	48.0	13,136	51.5
Siblings, parents, and other	57	0.5	40	0.3	100	0.4
CASE PRIORITY						
Total	11,840	100.0	11,454	100.0	25,519	100.0
Priority 1	5,613	47.4	7,059	61.6	17,637	69.1
Priority 2	5,820	49.2	3,934	34.3	7,273	28.5
Priority 3	83	0.7	58	0.5	102	0.4
Follow-to-join beneficiaries	324	2.7	403	3.5	507	2.0

Notes: Numbers in the principal applicant category previously included siblings, parents, and other dependents, who are now reported as dependents. Data as of February 6, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOS data.

Category of Admission

In 2022, most refugees were admitted under P-1 processing (69 percent, individuals referred by the UNHCR, a U.S. Embassy, or certain NGOs) and P-2 processing (29 percent, groups of special humanitarian concern) (Table 2). P-3 processing (family reunification cases) constituted just 0.4 percent of refugees admitted and follow-to-join refugee beneficiaries made up 2.0 percent of refugees admitted. Principal refugees accounted for 9,012 (35 percent) of the 25,519 refugees admitted to the United States in 2022, while accompanying spouses and children represented 13 and 51 percent, respectively.

Country of Nationality

In 2022, the leading countries of nationality for individuals admitted as refugees were the Democratic Republic of the Congo (30 percent), Syria (18 percent), Burma (8.4 percent), Sudan (6.5 percent), and Afghanistan (6.3 percent) (Table 3). These countries made up 70 percent of total refugee admissions in 2022.

Since the inception of the refugee program, the nationalities of refugees admitted to the United States have changed as policies evolved and new conflicts arose around the world. Over the last decade the United States has admitted just under half a million refugees (449,618 people). Of these, 18 percent have been from Burma, 17 percent from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 16 percent from Iraq, 9.3 percent from Somalia, and 7.5 percent from Bhutan (Figure 2).

Table 3.

Refugee Arrivals by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

(Ranked by 2022 country of nationality)

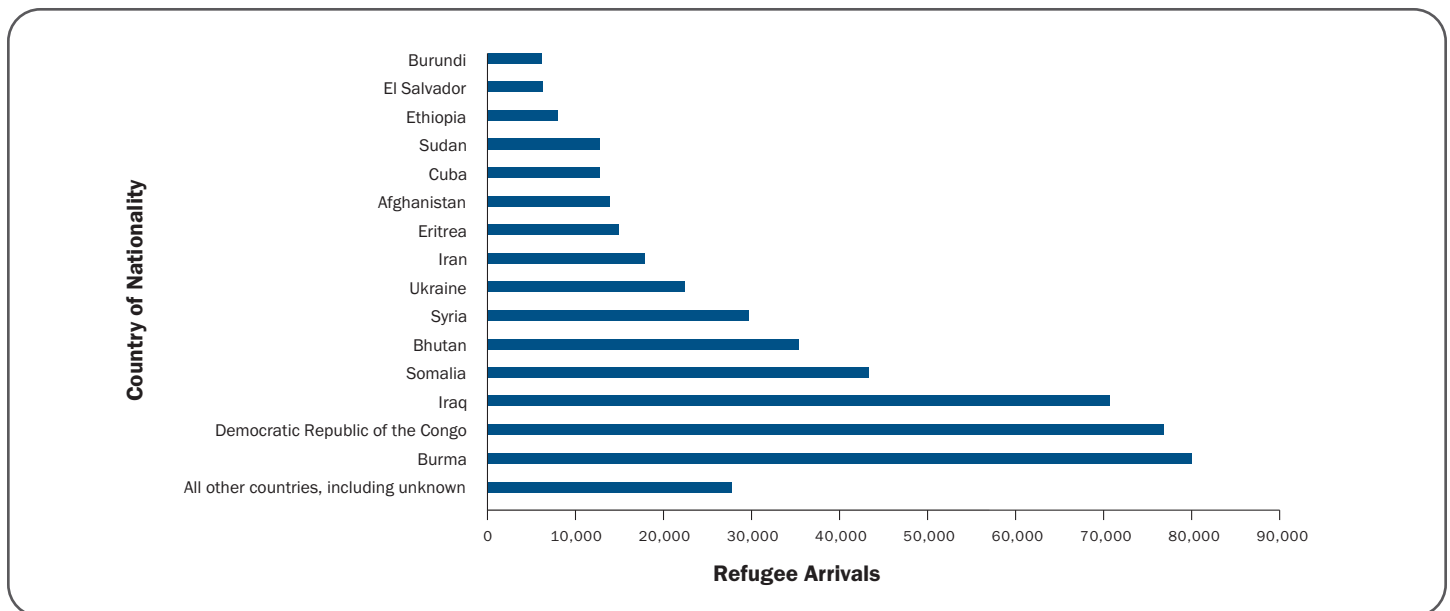
Country of nationality	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	11,840	100.0	11,454	100.0	25,519	100.0
Congo, Democratic Republic	2,863	24.2	4,876	42.6	7,742	30.3
Syria	486	4.1	1,255	11.0	4,562	17.9
Burma	2,112	17.8	769	6.7	2,141	8.4
Sudan	258	2.2	510	4.5	1,665	6.5
Afghanistan	603	5.1	874	7.6	1,619	6.3
Ukraine	1,935	16.3	802	7.0	1,586	6.2
Guatemala	249	2.1	64	0.6	1,084	4.2
El Salvador	362	3.1	200	1.7	524	2.1
Moldova	352	3.0	75	0.7	511	2.0
Iraq	541	4.6	500	4.4	501	2.0
All other countries, including unknown	2,079	17.6	1,529	13.3	3,584	14.0

Note: Data as of February 6, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOS data.

Figure 2.

Refugee Arrivals by Top Country of Nationality: Sum of Fiscal Years 2013 to 2022



Note: Data as of February 6, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOS data.

Age, Sex, and Marital Status

Seventy-four percent of total refugees admitted to the United States in 2022 were under 35 years of age, and 44 percent of the total were children under 18 years of age (Table 4). Refugees tend to be relatively younger than the native-born population, with a median age of 20 for those arriving in 2022, compared to 37 for the whole U.S. population.²² Refugee median age did not vary widely by sex in 2022, but did vary widely by region and country of birth: refugees from Africa and Near East/South Asia had the

lowest median age of 19, while those from Europe and Central Asia had the highest median age of 26. Slightly more male than female refugees were admitted in 2022. Among adult arrivals in 2022, 54 percent were married, compared to 48 percent in 2021.

²² The U.S. population is defined as only those within the 50 states and District of Columbia. U.S. Census Bureau/MDAT. 2022. Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, March 2022. Web. 2 March 2023.

Table 4.

Refugee Arrivals by Age, Sex, and Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

Characteristic	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total	11,840	100.0	11,454	100.0	25,519	100.0
0 to 17 years	4,808	40.6	4,526	39.5	11,269	44.2
18 to 24 years	1,584	13.4	1,644	14.4	3,479	13.6
25 to 34 years	2,504	21.1	2,188	19.1	4,179	16.4
35 to 44 years	1,426	12.0	1,466	12.8	3,306	13.0
45 to 54 years	756	6.4	833	7.3	1,937	7.6
55 to 64 years	484	4.1	493	4.3	854	3.3
65 years and over	278	2.3	304	2.7	495	1.9
SEX						
Total	11,840	100.0	11,454	100.0	25,519	100.0
Female	5,700	48.1	5,486	47.9	12,695	49.7
Male	6,140	51.9	5,968	52.1	12,824	50.3
MARITAL STATUS						
Total	11,840	100.0	11,454	100.0	25,519	100.0
Married ¹	3,505	29.6	3,322	29.0	7,746	30.4
Single ²	7,873	66.5	7,666	66.9	16,946	66.4
Other ³	462	3.9	466	4.1	827	3.2

¹ Includes persons in common law marriage and persons who are separated.

² Includes persons who were engaged and not yet married.

³ Includes persons who were divorced, widowed, or of unknown marital status.

Note: Data as of February 6, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOS data.

State of Initial Resettlement

In 2022, more than half of admitted refugees (54 percent) were resettled within ten states (Table 5). California, Texas, and New York resettled the most refugees (8.6, 8.3, and 5.5 percent of admitted refugees, respectively), while Kentucky and Idaho resettled the most refugees per capita, respectively resettling 29 and 23 refugees per 100,000 population in 2022 (Figure 3).²³

Table 5.

Refugee Arrivals by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

(Ranked by 2022 state of residence)

State of residence	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	11,840	100.0	11,454	100.0	25,519	100.0
California	1,192	10.1	986	8.6	2,182	8.6
Texas	905	7.6	929	8.1	2,109	8.3
New York	626	5.3	710	6.2	1,399	5.5
Kentucky	476	4.0	669	5.8	1,300	5.1
Washington	1,116	9.4	480	4.2	1,243	4.9
North Carolina	469	4.0	502	4.4	1,152	4.5
Michigan	493	4.2	534	4.7	1,143	4.5
Ohio	427	3.6	453	4.0	1,128	4.4
Pennsylvania	448	3.8	402	3.5	1,101	4.3
Arizona	444	3.8	422	3.7	1,029	4.0
Other	5,244	44.3	5,367	46.9	11,733	46.0

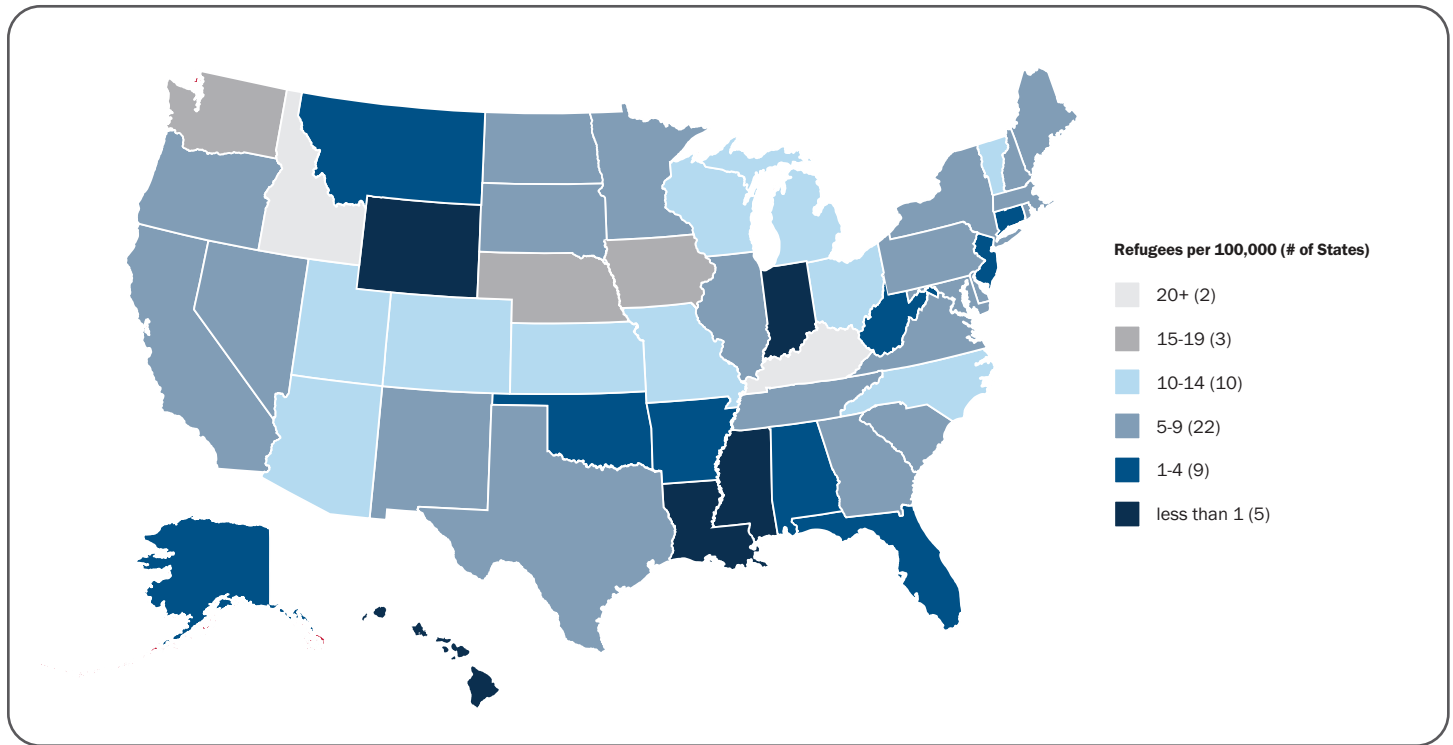
Note: Data as of February 6, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOS data.

²³ State population estimates for per capita calculations from U.S. Census Bureau's Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for the United States, Regions, States, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2022 (NST-EST2022-POP).

Figure 3.

Per Capita Refugee Resettlement by State of Residence: Fiscal Year 2022



Note: Refugee data as of February 6, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOS data and of Census data from U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, December 2022. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for the United States, Regions, States, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2022 (NST-EST2022-POP). Web. 2 March 2023. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-state-total.html>

Lawful Permanent Residence and Naturalization of Refugees

One year after being admitted to the United States, refugees are statutorily required to apply for lawful permanent resident (LPR) status. Of the 1.1 million people arriving as refugees between 2000 and 2020, 96 percent gained LPR status by the end of 2022.²⁴ These rates were similar across sex and age group but varied by world region. For example, among refugees who arrived between 2016 and 2020, by the end of 2022, only 80 percent of those from Latin America/Caribbean gained LPR status, compared to a regional high of 95 percent of those from Near East/South Asia.²⁵

When granted LPR status, a refugee’s “resident since” date is rolled back to the individual’s date of admission as a refugee. Refugees who have become LPRs may apply for naturalization five years after their “resident since” date. Refugees have some of the highest naturalization rates of all immigrants. Of the approximately 730,000 adults who obtained LPR status from 2000 to 2016 based on prior admission as a refugee, 58 percent naturalized

within six years.²⁶ These naturalization rates varied slightly across sex, 60 percent of female refugees naturalized within six years of obtaining LPR status compared to 56 percent of males. The naturalization rate varied considerably by age group, with a six-year naturalization rate of 59 percent for those refugees who gained LPR status between ages 18 and 34, 52 percent for those who gained LPR status between ages 35 and 54, and 70 percent for those who became LPRs at 55 years of age or older.

ASYLEES

Filing of Asylum Applications

Generally, any foreign national physically present in the United States or arriving at a POE may seek asylum regardless of immigration status. Those seeking asylum must apply within one year from the date of most recent arrival or establish that an exception applies based on changed or extraordinary circumstances.²⁷ Principal applicants obtain asylum in one of two ways: affirmatively through a USCIS asylum officer or defensively in removal proceedings before an immigration judge of the DOJ’s EOIR. An

²⁴ Due to the one-year U.S. residence requirement for LPR eligibility and allowing one additional year for application filing and processing, 2020 is used as the cut-off year because it is too early to observe adjustment of status/naturalization for more recent arrivals.

²⁵ This rate by world region is not available for those arriving prior to 2016. Here 2020 is used as an end year due to it being one year of waiting to be eligible for LPR status plus one additional year to file paperwork and undergo processing before the current 2022 data.

²⁶ Here 2016 is used as the end year to account for five years of waiting to be eligible for naturalization plus one additional year to file paperwork and undergo processing before the current 2022 data; in other words, allowing a full six years for refugees to naturalize. The data were restricted to individuals who were at least 18 years old when LPR status was obtained, indicating a choice to adjust status was made.

²⁷ Unaccompanied noncitizen children are not subject to the one-year filing deadline. INA § 208(a)(2)(E), 8 U.S.C. § 1158(a)(2)(E).

individual applies for asylum by filing Form I-589, *Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal*.

Spouses and unmarried children under the age of 21 who are not included in the principal's grant of asylum may obtain derivative asylum status.²⁸ A principal asylee may petition for follow-to-join benefits for qualifying derivatives within two years after they were granted asylum, as long as the relationship between the principal and their spouse and/or child existed on the date the principal was granted asylum. The principal asylee must file a Form I-730 for each qualifying family member, who may be located abroad or in the United States. Once a Form I-730 is approved for an individual located abroad, there are no time constraints placed upon the derivative relative's travel to the United States, as long as (1) the principal's status has not been revoked; (2) the relationship of the derivative to the principal continues to exist; and (3) in the case of a child, the child is unmarried at the time of their admission.

Adjudication of Asylum Applications

The USCIS Asylum Division adjudicates asylum applications and may grant asylum directly through the affirmative asylum process. Asylum officers conduct interviews to determine asylum eligibility using an applicant's testimony, information on Form I-589, any accompanying evidence provided by the applicant, and material provided by DOS, other USCIS offices, or other credible sources. The asylum applicant must meet the definition of a refugee, be credible considering the totality of the circumstances and all relevant factors, and not be barred from obtaining asylum. If the officer finds that the applicant satisfies the eligibility requirements, then the officer determines whether the application warrants a grant of asylum as a matter of discretion. Individuals may be barred for previously committing certain crimes, posing a national security threat, engaging in the persecution of others, or firmly resettling in another country before coming to the United States.

If applicants with a valid immigration status (e.g., a foreign student visa holder) or parole fail to establish eligibility for asylum, USCIS denies the application and the applicant remains in their valid status or parole. If applicants do not have a valid status or parole at the time of the final decision and are found ineligible for asylum, USCIS places these applicants in removal proceedings before an EOIR immigration judge, where the asylum application is considered anew as a defensive application.²⁹

Defensive asylum applications are when individuals apply for asylum after being placed in removal proceedings by immigration officials because they are unlawfully present, are in violation of their status, or were apprehended while attempting to enter the United States. Defensive applicants apply for asylum directly with an immigration judge in EOIR.³⁰ During the proceedings, an immigration judge may grant asylum or deny the asylum

²⁸ See reference to Child Status Protection Act.

²⁹ OHSS tallies all asylum grants from an immigration judge as defensive grants, regardless of whether they first applied affirmatively.

³⁰ In March 2022 DHS and DOJ published an interim final rule titled "Procedures for Credible Fear Screening and Consideration of Asylum, Withholding of Removal, and CAT Protection Claims by Asylum Officers." Under the rule, beginning in June 2022 USCIS asylum officers may consider the asylum applications of certain individuals subject to expedited removal who establish a fear of persecution or torture during their required credible fear screening.

application and issue a removal order if the noncitizen does not qualify for any other forms of relief or protection (including withholding or deferral of removal under the statute or CAT). Asylum applicants may appeal an immigration judge's denial to the Board of Immigration Appeals and, if unsuccessful there, may seek further review by a U.S. Court of Appeals, and finally the U.S. Supreme Court.

Follow-to-join asylum beneficiaries are not required to demonstrate a persecution claim because their status is derived from the principal asylee. Beneficiaries in the United States are granted derivative asylum immediately upon the approval of their Form I-730 petitions. Beneficiaries abroad are granted derivative asylum when admitted into the United States at a POE.

Lawful Permanent Residence and Citizenship

One year after being granted asylum, asylees are eligible to have their LPR applications adjudicated, as are their qualifying family members who meet the eligibility criteria. If LPR status is approved, the asylee's "resident since" date is rolled back to one year prior to the LPR approval date. Asylees who have become LPRs may apply for naturalization five years after their "resident since" date.³¹

DATA

The affirmative asylee data presented in this report were obtained from Global, a cloud-based platform of USCIS that has replaced the Refugees, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS) mainframe system for storing and managing asylum-related data.³² Defensive asylee data were obtained from EOIR. Follow-to-join asylum derivative data for people residing outside the United States at the time of their admission were obtained from the CLAIMS system of USCIS and the Consular Consolidated Database (CCD) of DOS. These data reflect travel documents issued, not admissions. Follow-to-join data for people residing within the United States at the time of the approval of their Form I-730 petition were obtained from CLAIMS.

TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ASYLEES

Asylum Filings

Affirmative asylum case filings with USCIS nearly quadrupled from 63,074 applications in 2021 to 238,841 in 2022, the highest number on record.³³ Cuba and Venezuela dominated asylum applications in 2022, making up nearly half (47 percent) of all applications combined (Table 6a). Cuba alone accounted for more applications in 2022 than the total applications for all countries received in the previous year. In terms of proportion, Cuban applications made up the highest proportion (27 percent) of total applications in 2022, up from only 4.4 percent in 2021. Venezuelan applications, the second largest group in 2022, made up 20 percent of applications in 2022, much closer to their

³¹ In other words, for naturalization eligibility purposes an asylee is considered an LPR one year before the date USCIS approves the adjustment application.

³² Data migration from RAPS to Global caused slight changes in historical numbers.

³³ The number of individuals included in these applications included 238,841 principal applicants and 101,746 dependents.

proportion in 2021 (15 percent). The next highest number of asylum applications in 2022 came from Haiti, at 7.7 percent. Compared to 2021, in which unaccompanied children accounted for nearly one in ten (9.0 percent) affirmative asylum applications, unaccompanied children made up just 3.8 percent of applications in 2022.³⁴

In the past decade, about 83 percent of affirmative asylum applicants self-reported the status in which they entered the United States before applying for asylum.³⁵ Of those who provided a response, 31 percent reported having entered on B-2 visas (tourists), 24 percent reported having entered without inspection (EWI, i.e., having been unauthorized), and 6.3 percent reported having entered on B-1 visas (temporary business visitors).

The total number of defensive asylum applications filed with EOIR nearly tripled from 88,162 in 2021 to 253,524 in 2022, the highest on record.³⁶ In contrast to recent years, the largest numbers of applications lodged with the courts in 2022 were not only from citizens of the Northern Central American countries and Mexico, but instead from Venezuela (14 percent), Honduras (11 percent), and Cuba (11 percent) (Table 6b). These three countries made up over a third (36 percent) of defensive asylum applications filed with EOIR.

Table 6a.

Affirmative Asylum Cases Filed (USCIS) by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

(Ranked by 2022 country of nationality)

State of residence	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	93,778	100.0	63,074	100.0	238,841	100.0
Cuba	1,410	1.5	2,796	4.4	64,541	27.0
Venezuela	22,736	24.2	9,152	14.5	47,215	19.8
Haiti	5,035	5.4	5,065	8.0	18,281	7.7
Guatemala	8,426	9.0	6,587	10.4	13,213	5.5
Colombia	3,650	3.9	4,102	6.5	10,695	4.5
Honduras	6,064	6.5	4,411	7.0	9,646	4.0
Afghanistan	95	0.1	131	0.2	9,343	3.9
El Salvador	5,466	5.8	3,793	6.0	7,484	3.1
Nicaragua	899	1.0	623	1.0	6,117	2.6
Mexico	4,034	4.3	4,079	6.5	6,065	2.5
All other countries, including unknown	35,963	38.3	22,335	35.4	46,241	19.4

Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join and derivative asylees. Data as of April 4, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

Table 6b.

Defensive Asylum Cases Received (EOIR) by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

(Ranked by 2022 country of nationality)

Country	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	196,911	100.0	88,162	100.0	253,524	100.0
Venezuela	11,759	6.0	5,474	6.2	36,700	14.5
Honduras	34,743	17.6	13,357	15.2	27,616	10.9
Cuba	11,758	6.0	3,717	4.2	26,638	10.5
Guatemala	42,093	21.4	15,155	17.2	23,148	9.1
Ecuador	4,464	2.3	3,099	3.5	17,738	7.0
Brazil	4,006	2.0	3,181	3.6	17,288	6.8
El Salvador	26,198	13.3	10,063	11.4	17,008	6.7
Nicaragua	4,349	2.2	2,222	2.5	15,027	5.9
Mexico	21,175	10.8	10,479	11.9	11,719	4.6
Haiti	2,534	1.3	2,264	2.6	9,917	3.9
All other countries, including unknown	33,832	17.2	19,151	21.7	50,725	20.0

Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Case receipts include I-862 and asylum-only asylum receipts. Data as of January 4, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOJ data.

³⁴ Unaccompanied children, unlike other populations, can apply affirmatively before a USCIS asylum officer after being placed in removal proceedings before an immigration judge. See INA § 208(b)(3)(C), 8 U.S.C. § 1158(b)(3)(C).

³⁵ This paragraph only looks at grants for affirmative asylum principal applicants. Past decade is defined as 2013-2022.

³⁶ EOIR has recently changed its methodology in reporting affirmative asylum cases referred from USCIS. Instead of using the court application date as they do for defensive asylum cases, EOIR now reports on affirmative cases based on the date of the initial asylum application filing with USCIS. This change may result in a slight difference in historical numbers, and OHSS has updated the data reported here and in the Yearbook of Immigration Statistics for 2015 to 2022.

Table 6c.

Number of Individuals Included in Affirmative Asylum Cases Filed (USCIS) by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

(Ranked by 2022 country of nationality)

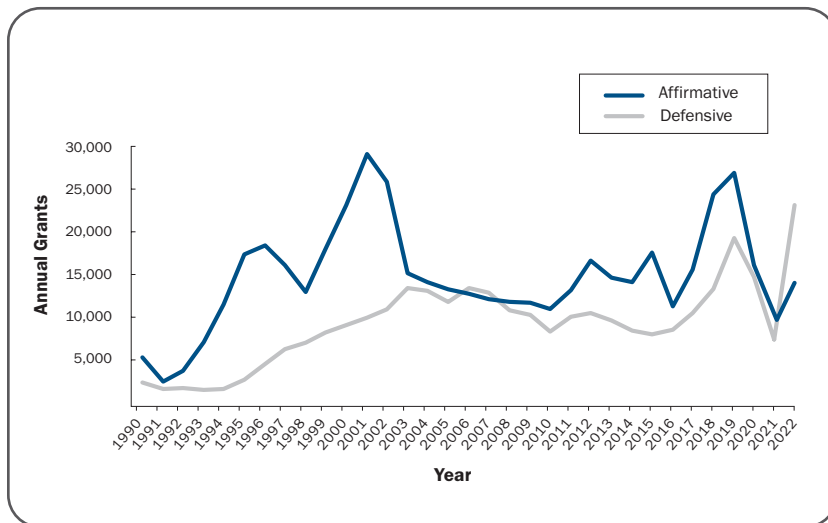
Country	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	143,999	100.0	91,052	100.0	340,587	100.0
Cuba	1,852	1.3	3,523	3.9	77,386	22.7
Venezuela	38,610	26.8	14,052	15.4	71,299	20.9
Haiti	6,517	4.5	6,289	6.9	23,353	6.9
Colombia	7,438	5.2	7,719	8.5	19,589	5.8
Afghanistan	129	0.1	214	0.2	17,695	5.2
Guatemala	10,501	7.3	7,834	8.6	15,978	4.7
Honduras	9,039	6.3	5,961	6.5	14,048	4.1
El Salvador	7,546	5.2	4,835	5.3	9,996	2.9
Mexico	5,867	4.1	5,991	6.6	9,344	2.7
Russia	4,011	2.8	2,263	2.5	8,962	2.6
All other countries, including unknown	52,489	36.5	32,371	35.6	72,937	21.4

Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data as of April 4, 2023.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

Asylum Grants

The total number of persons granted asylum in the United States more than doubled from 16,628 in 2021 to 36,615 in 2022. USCIS granted asylum affirmatively to 14,134 people in 2022, an increase of 53 percent from 2021 and a decrease of 12 percent from 2020. EOIR immigration judges granted defensive asylum to 22,481 people in 2022, three times the number granted in 2021 and an increase of 54 percent from 2020 (Figure 4).

Figure 4.
Annual Grants of Affirmative and Defensive Asylum: Fiscal Years 1990 to 2022



Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data have been updated back to 2012 for affirmative asylum and 2013 for defensive asylum. Defensive asylum data include I-862 and asylum-only initial case completions with an asylum grant. Defensive asylum data as of January 4, 2023; affirmative asylum data as of April 4, 2023.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS and DOJ data.

Of those who applied for affirmative asylum and received grants in the past decade, 93 percent self-reported their entry status.³⁷ Of those who reported a status, in terms of specific visas, 39 percent of those who received grants of

³⁷ This only looks at grants for affirmative asylum principal applicants. Microdata for non-affirmative asylum cases are not available. Past decade is defined as 2013-2022.

asylum reportedly entered on B-2 visas (tourists), 17 percent as EWI (unauthorized immigrants), and 10 percent as F-1 visa holders (students).

Basis of Asylum Claims

USCIS collects data on the specific bases under which individuals are granted asylum. Of those principal applicants who successfully received asylum in 2022, the majority were granted asylum based on their political opinion (51 percent), followed by membership in a particular social group (27 percent) and religion (13 percent). These three bases of claim were also the top three reasons for asylum grants in 2020 and 2021 (Table 7).

Affirmative Asylum Case Processing Time

This section examines USCIS processing capacity relative to affirmative asylum applications filed – i.e., the asylum processing backlog – as well as the time it typically takes for an individual to receive a grant of asylum.³⁸

The number of asylum applications filed fluctuates widely year to year, making it difficult to anticipate processing needs. Notably, the number of asylum applications has consistently outpaced adjudications,³⁹ driving a growing processing backlog.⁴⁰ The number of applications adjudicated has also varied as a function of changes in processing policies, USCIS’s broader workload, resources, and

³⁸ Analysis in this section only looks at affirmative asylum principal applicants.

³⁹ “Adjudications” and “processing” here mean the application received an outcome from USCIS (e.g., grant of asylum, denial of asylum).

⁴⁰ Notably, an individual’s application may not be processed the same year as its submission; comparisons here are made between the number of applications filed and the number of applications that completed processing within the same year for workload purposes.

dedicated funding available to asylum processing.⁴¹ In the past decade, USCIS processed a low of 30 thousand applicants in 2013 and a high of nearly 75 thousand applicants in 2018. Yet as Figure 5 shows, the number of applications filed ranged from 44 thousand to 239 thousand over the same decade, and the gap between incoming applications and completed adjudications (i.e., the difference between the dark blue and light blue columns) ranged from 17 thousand in 2013 to 199 thousand in 2022.

Table 7.

Grants of Affirmative Asylum by Basis of Claim: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

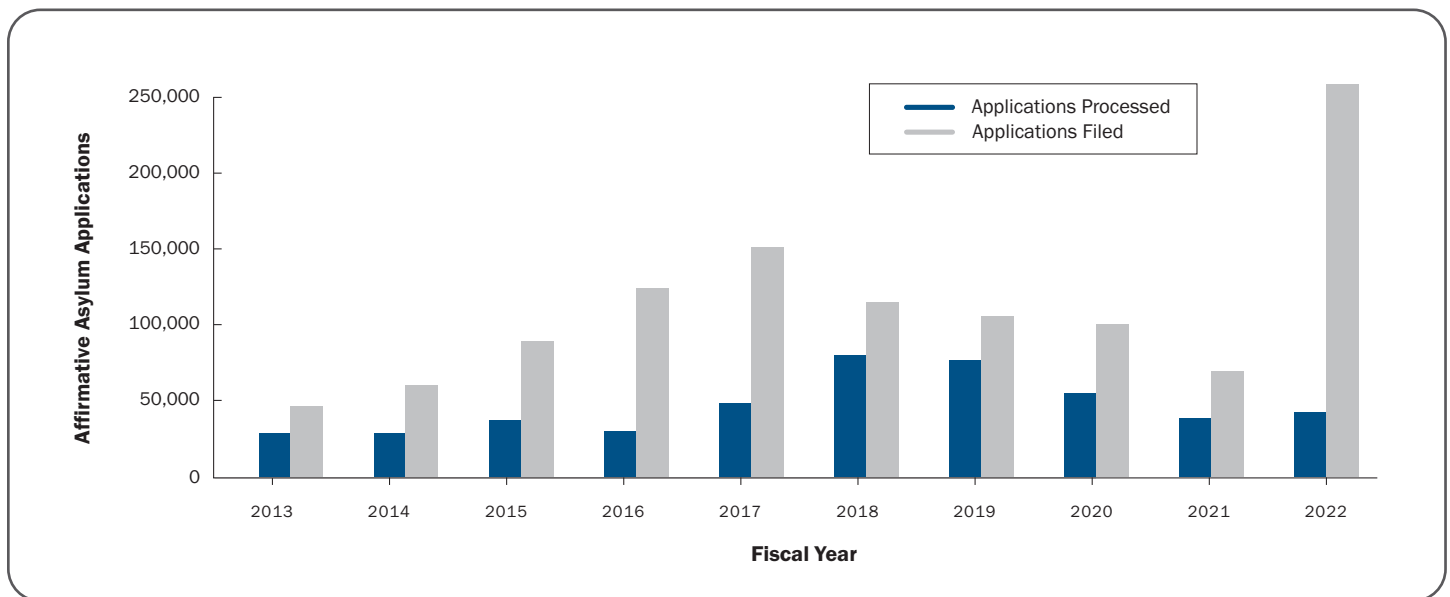
(Ranked by 2022 basis of claim)

Country	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	9,851	100.0	5,929	100.0	8,901	100.0
Political Opinion	4,391	44.6	2,622	44.2	4,564	51.3
Particular Social Group	2,377	24.1	1,918	32.3	2,360	26.5
Religion	1,925	19.5	877	14.8	1,175	13.2
Race	236	2.4	197	3.3	364	4.1
Multiple Bases	273	2.8	155	2.6	224	2.5
Coercive Family Planning	591	6.0	103	1.7	122	1.4
Nationality	43	0.4	50	0.8	85	1.0
Unknown	15	0.2	7	0.1	7	0.1

Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees and derivative asylees. Data as of April 4, 2023.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

Figure 5.

Affirmative Asylum Applications Processed and Filed per Year: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2022



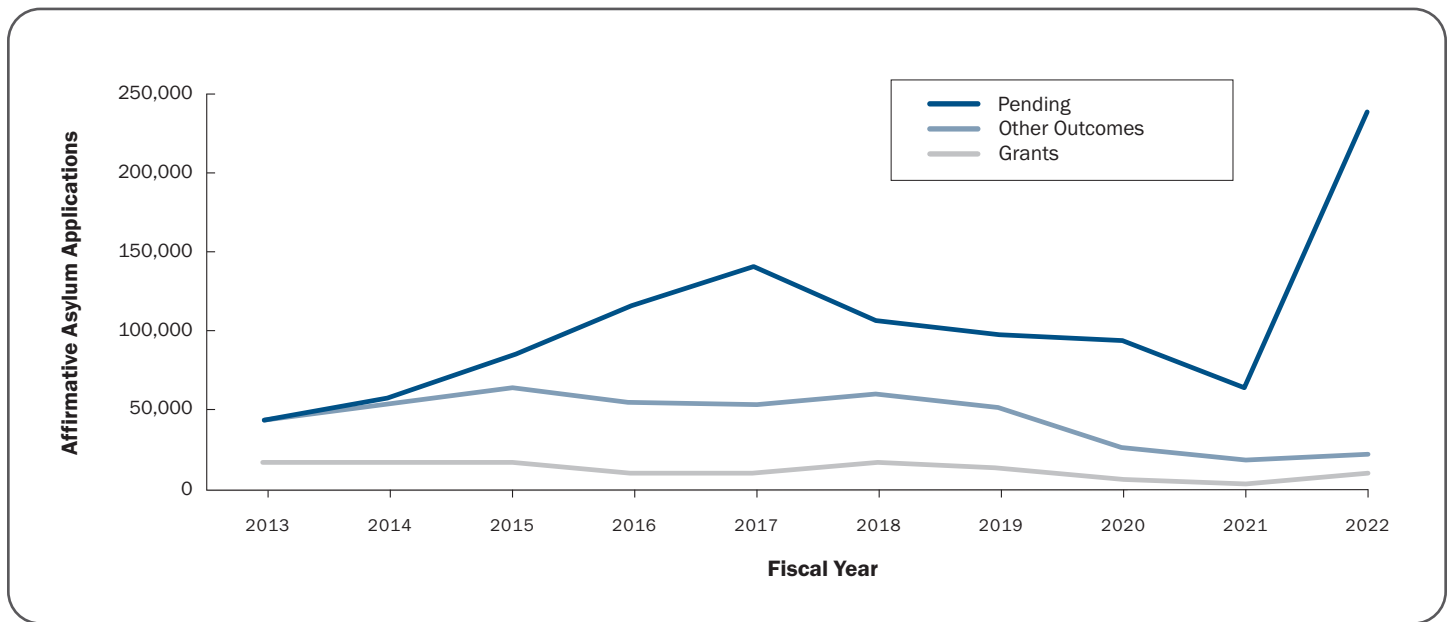
Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees and derivative asylees. Data as of April 4, 2023.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

Notably, cases are not necessarily processed in the same year they are received. Figure 6 depicts applications by filing year since 2013, broken out by adjudication status as of April 2023. For example, of the 44 thousand cases filed in 2013, approximately 1.0 percent of cases are currently pending, about 39 percent have received grants of asylum, and 60 percent have other case completions. A majority (54 percent) of cases filed in 2016 are still pending, 48 percent of cases filed in 2019 are still pending, and 91 percent of cases filed in 2022 are still pending.

⁴¹ USCIS is fee-funded, but asylum filings do not have a fee, so USCIS relies on funding from other fee-funded filings and any Congressional appropriations to fund its humanitarian portfolio.

Figure 6.

Affirmative Asylum Applications by Current Status and Filing Year: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2022



Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees and derivative asylees. Application status as of April 4, 2023. Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

As a result of varying numbers of incoming applications, and changing USCIS processing capacity, the average amount of time between when an asylum applicant submits their application and when USCIS issues a decision on that application has varied.⁴²

As the majority of cases filed in 2016-2017 and 2020-2022 have yet to be adjudicated, precise processing times are not available for those years, but available data indicate that median processing times have exceeded a year for all applications filed since 2013 and have exceeded two years for applications filed since 2015. For the periods for which enough cases have been completed for more precise reporting, median processing times for cases filed 2013-2015 were 280 days, 553 days, and 974 days respectively; and for cases filed 2018-2019, median processing times were 814 days and 995 days respectively.⁴³

Country of Nationality

The three leading countries of nationality of persons granted asylum (affirmatively or defensively) in each of 2020, 2021, and 2022 were China (13 percent in 2022), Venezuela (10 percent), and El Salvador (7.2 percent) (Table 8). Nationals of these three countries accounted for 30 percent of all persons granted asylum in 2022, similar to 2021 (31 percent).

⁴² Note that the time between submission and decision here means when the decision is issued; it generally takes an additional two weeks after a decision is issued for the decision to be received by the applicant.

⁴³ Median processing times are defined as the number of days it took half of individuals filing in one year to be processed. In other words, median times are measures of how long it took USCIS to complete 50 percent of cases within a year.

The leading countries of nationality for persons granted affirmative asylum in 2022 were Venezuela (16 percent), China (11 percent), and Afghanistan (10 percent) (Table 9). Thirty-seven percent of those granted asylum affirmatively in 2022 were nationals of these three countries, up from 28 percent in 2021.

The leading countries of nationality for persons granted defensive asylum in 2022 were China (14 percent), El Salvador (10 percent), and India (9.2 percent) (Table 10). Thirty-three percent of those granted asylum defensively in 2022 were nationals of these countries, about the same level as in 2021 (35 percent).

The leading countries of nationality for follow-to-join asylees authorized for travel to the United States in 2022 were China (26 percent), India (21 percent), and Egypt (5.0 percent) (Table 11). Nationals of these countries accounted for over half (52 percent) of all follow-to-join derivative asylees issued travel documents allowing travel to the United States. Notably, the number of Chinese documents issued in 2022 nearly met the total travel documents issued in 2021 (2,284 Chinese documents in 2022 compared to 2,291 total documents in 2021). Additionally, 2,539 individuals were approved for derivative asylum while residing in the United States based on a relative's asylum grant.

Table 8.**Total Individuals Granted Asylum (Affirmatively or Defensively) by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022**

(Ranked by 2022 country of nationality)

Country	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	30,736	100.0	16,628	100.0	36,615	100.0
China, People's Republic	4,749	15.5	1,870	11.2	4,589	12.5
Venezuela	4,013	13.1	1,916	11.5	3,691	10.1
El Salvador	1,981	6.4	1,422	8.6	2,639	7.2
Guatemala	1,847	6.0	1,300	7.8	2,329	6.4
India	1,335	4.3	704	4.2	2,203	6.0
Honduras	1,257	4.1	988	5.9	1,829	5.0
Afghanistan	57	0.2	107	0.6	1,493	4.1
Turkey	1,556	5.1	912	5.5	1,228	3.4
Russia	971	3.2	555	3.3	1,158	3.2
Mexico	1,205	3.9	665	4.0	975	2.7
All other countries, including unknown	11,765	38.3	6,189	37.2	14,481	39.5

Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Defensive asylum includes I-862 and asylum-only initial case completions with an asylum grant. Defensive asylum data as of January 4, 2023; affirmative asylum data as of April 4, 2023. Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS and DOJ data.

Table 9.**Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022**

(Ranked by 2022 country of nationality)

Country	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	16,132	100.0	9,212	100.0	14,134	100.0
Venezuela	3,123	19.4	1,437	15.6	2,228	15.8
China, People's Republic	2,799	17.4	1,088	11.8	1,538	10.9
Afghanistan	37	0.2	96	1.0	1,438	10.2
Turkey	1,502	9.3	860	9.3	980	6.9
Egypt	1,298	8.0	597	6.5	683	4.8
Ethiopia	196	1.2	259	2.8	582	4.1
Colombia	278	1.7	135	1.5	464	3.3
Russia	725	4.5	399	4.3	450	3.2
Guatemala	410	2.5	415	4.5	328	2.3
El Salvador	250	1.5	262	2.8	300	2.1
All other countries, including unknown	5,514	34.2	3,664	39.8	5,143	36.4

Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data as of April 4, 2023.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

Table 10.**Individuals Granted Asylum Defensively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022**

(Ranked by 2022 country of nationality)

Country	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	14,604	100.0	7,416	100.0	22,481	100.0
China, People's Republic	1,950	13.4	782	10.5	3,051	13.6
El Salvador	1,731	11.9	1,160	15.6	2,339	10.4
India	1,179	8.1	632	8.5	2,074	9.2
Guatemala	1,437	9.8	885	11.9	2,001	8.9
Honduras	1,016	7.0	609	8.2	1,536	6.8
Venezuela	890	6.1	479	6.5	1,463	6.5
Nicaragua	364	2.5	163	2.2	853	3.8
Ecuador	103	0.7	47	0.6	747	3.3
Russia	246	1.7	156	2.1	708	3.1
Mexico	719	4.9	374	5.0	677	3.0
All other countries, including unknown	4,969	34.0	2,129	28.7	7,032	31.3

Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Includes I-862 and asylum only initial case completions with an asylum grant. Data as of January 4, 2023.
Source: Office of Homeland Security analysis of DOJ data.

Table 11.

Follow-to-join Asylee Travel Documents Issued by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

(Ranked by 2022 country of nationality)

Country	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	2,513	100.0	2,291	100.0	8,673	100.0
China, People's Republic	324	12.9	318	13.9	2,284	26.3
India	357	14.2	33	1.4	1,787	20.6
Egypt	104	4.1	138	6.0	433	5.0
El Salvador.....	85	3.4	51	2.2	367	4.2
Cameroon	37	1.5	295	12.9	366	4.2
Nepal	73	2.9	32	1.4	362	4.2
Guatemala.....	112	4.5	50	2.2	289	3.3
Pakistan.....	51	2.0	132	5.8	199	2.3
Eritrea	279	11.1	78	3.4	193	2.2
Turkey	167	6.6	193	8.4	183	2.1
All other countries, including unknown	924	36.8	971	42.4	2,210	25.5

Note: Data as of January 26, 2023 from the DOS CAMINO system and as of February 9, 2023 from other contributing systems.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS and DOS data.

Age, Sex, and Marital Status

In 2022, 63 percent of persons granted affirmative asylum were between the ages of 18 and 44 (Table 12), and the median age of affirmative asylees was 25. Fifty-two percent were male and 57 percent of adults were married. The median age of follow-to-join beneficiaries was 18 years, meaning about half were minors (Table 13). Data on marital status are not available for this latter group.

Table 12.

Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Age, Sex, and Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022

Characteristic	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total	16,132	100.0	9,212	100.0	14,134	100.0
0 to 17 years	3,372	20.9	1,809	19.6	2,668	18.9
18 to 24 years.....	1,872	11.6	1,350	14.7	1,911	13.5
25 to 34 years.....	4,087	25.3	2,153	23.4	3,501	24.8
35 to 44 years.....	3,906	24.2	2,244	24.4	3,425	24.2
45 to 54 years.....	1,987	12.3	1,137	12.3	1,783	12.6
55 to 64 years.....	696	4.3	358	3.9	608	4.3
65 and over.....	212	1.3	161	1.7	238	1.7
SEX						
Total	16,132	100.0	9,212	100.0	14,134	100.0
Female.....	7,887	48.9	4,444	48.2	6,804	48.1
Male.....	8,245	51.1	4,768	51.8	7,323	51.8
Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	0.0
MARITAL STATUS						
Total	16,132	100.0	9,212	100.0	14,134	100.0
Married	7,401	45.9	3,913	42.5	6,157	43.6
Single.....	7,846	48.6	4,823	52.4	7,211	51.0
Other ¹	885	5.5	476	5.2	766	5.4

¹Includes persons who were divorced, separated, widowed, or of unknown marital status.
Notes: Age is defined as each individual's age at grant. Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data as of April 4, 2023.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

Table 13.**Follow-to-join Asylee Travel Documents Issued by Age and Sex: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022**

Characteristic	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total	2,513	100.0	2,291	100.0	8,673	100.0
0 to 17 years	1,285	51.1	1,162	50.7	4,279	49.3
18 to 24 years.....	445	17.7	427	18.6	1,548	17.8
25 to 34 years.....	280	11.1	249	10.9	920	10.6
35 to 44 years.....	289	11.5	251	11.0	1,135	13.1
45 to 54 years.....	157	6.2	137	6.0	576	6.6
55 to 64 years.....	44	1.8	54	2.4	186	2.1
65 and over.....	13	0.5	11	0.5	29	0.3
SEX						
Total	2,513	100.0	2,291	100.0	8,673	100.0
Female.....	1,359	54.1	1,245	54.3	4,862	56.1
Male.....	1,124	44.7	1,045	45.6	3,753	43.3
Unknown	30	1.2	1	0.0	58	0.7

Note: Data as of January 10, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS and DOS data.

State of Residence

In 2022, the leading states of residence for individuals granted asylum affirmatively were California (24 percent), Florida (12 percent), and Virginia (8.0 percent) (Table 14). Forty-four percent of individuals granted affirmative asylum in 2022 resided in these three states, the same proportion as in 2021.

Table 14.**Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022**

(Ranked by 2022 state of residence)

Country	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	16,132	100.0	9,212	100.0	14,134	100.0
California	5,585	34.6	2,684	29.1	3,442	24.4
Florida	1,525	9.5	565	6.1	1,652	11.7
Virginia	846	5.2	832	9.0	1,126	8.0
Illinois	220	1.4	401	4.4	1,097	7.8
New York	810	5.0	652	7.1	832	5.9
Texas	867	5.4	586	6.4	780	5.5
Maryland	165	1.0	365	4.0	671	4.7
New Jersey.....	1,555	9.6	338	3.7	546	3.9
Louisiana.....	142	0.9	373	4.0	357	2.5
Ohio	435	2.7	300	3.3	342	2.4
Other, including unknown.....	3,982	24.7	2,116	23.0	3,289	23.3

Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data as of April 4, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

In 2022, the leading states of residence for individuals granted asylum defensively were California (33 percent), New York (28 percent), and Maryland (4.1 percent) (Table 15). Sixty-five percent of individuals granted defensive asylum in 2022 resided in these three states, up from 49 percent in 2021.

State of residence data are not available for follow-to-join asylees.

Table 15.**Individuals Granted Asylum Defensively by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2020 to 2022**

(Ranked by 2022 country of nationality)

Country	2020		2021		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	14,604	100.0	7,416	100.0	22,481	100.0
California	3,636	24.9	1,172	15.8	7,382	32.8
New York	3,915	26.8	2,323	31.3	6,196	27.6
Maryland	619	4.2	173	2.3	926	4.1
Massachusetts	740	5.1	738	10.0	919	4.1
Virginia	434	3.0	316	4.3	836	3.7
Washington	558	3.8	251	3.4	712	3.2
Florida	599	4.1	245	3.3	650	2.9
Pennsylvania	268	1.8	213	2.9	525	2.3
New Jersey	199	1.4	247	3.3	455	2.0
Utah	368	2.5	206	2.8	441	2.0
Other, including unknown	3,268	22.4	1,532	20.7	3,439	15.3

Notes: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data include I-862 and asylum-only initial case completions with an asylum grant. Data as of January 4, 2023.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOJ data.

Lawful Permanent Residence and Naturalization of Asylees

One year after being admitted to the United States, asylees may, but are not required to, apply for LPR status. Of the nearly 113,000 adults granted affirmative asylum from 2013 to 2020, 83 percent have gained LPR status.⁴⁴ Rates of attaining LPR status are not available for defensive asylees.

Similar to refugees, asylees have some of the highest naturalization rates of all immigrants. Of the nearly 582,000 adults who obtained LPR status from 2000 to 2016 based on a prior grant of asylum (affirmative or defensive), 56 percent naturalized within six years.⁴⁵ These rates varied slightly across sex, with a six-year naturalization rate of 57 percent for female asylees who obtained LPR status and 55 percent for males. Rates varied more considerably by age group, with a six-year naturalization rate of 63 percent for those asylees who gained LPR status between 18 and 34 years of age, 49 percent for those between 35 and 54 years of age, and 53 percent for those who became LPRs at 55 years of age or older. Rates also varied considerably by world region, with a six-year naturalization rate of 47 percent for affirmative asylees from Asia, 27 percent for affirmative asylees from Africa, and 9.0 percent or less for those from other regions.

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⁴⁴ Here, 2020 is used as an end year due to it being one year of waiting to be eligible for LPR status plus one additional year to file paperwork and undergo processing before the current April 4, 2023 data; in other words, allowing a full two years for asylees to gain green card status. The data were restricted to individuals who were at least 18 years old when LPR status was obtained, indicating a choice to adjust status was made.

⁴⁵ Here 2016 is used as an end year due to it being five years of waiting to be eligible for naturalization plus one additional year to file paperwork and undergo processing before the current 2022 data; in other words, allowing a full six years for asylees to naturalize. The data were restricted to individuals who were at least 18 years of age when LPR status was obtained, indicating a choice to adjust status was made.