

Refugees and Asylees: 2014

NADWA MOSSAAD

The United States provides refuge to persons who have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution through two programs: a refugee program for persons outside the U.S. and their immediate relatives and an asylum program for persons in the U.S. and their immediate relatives. This Office of Immigration Statistics Annual Flow Report provides information on the number of persons admitted to the United States as refugees or granted asylum in the United States in 2014.¹

A total of 69,975 persons² were admitted to the United States as refugees during 2014 (see Figure 1). The leading countries of nationality for refugees were Iraq, Burma, Somalia, and Bhutan. During 2014, 23,533 individuals were granted asylum,³ including 14,758 who were granted asylum affirmatively by the Department of Homeland Security⁴ (DHS) and 8,775 who were granted asylum defensively by the Department of Justice (see Figure 2). The leading countries of nationality for persons granted either affirmative or defensive asylum were China, Egypt, and Syria. Documents for travel to the United States were issued to 8,235 individuals who were approved for derivative asylum status while located abroad. In addition to those approved overseas, 1,980 individuals were approved for derivative asylum status while residing in the United States.

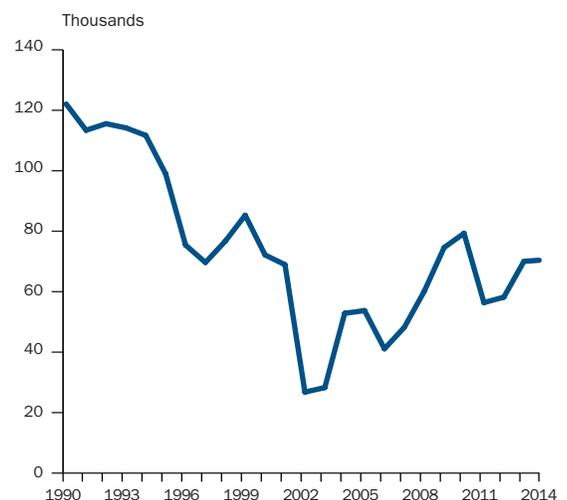
DEFINING “REFUGEE” AND “ASYLUM” STATUS

To be eligible for refugee or asylum status, an applicant must meet the definition of a refugee set forth in 101(a)(42) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA): a person who is unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality⁵ 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.⁶ An applicant for refugee status is outside the United States, while an applicant seeking asylum status is in the United States or at a U.S. port of entry. Although the INA definition of refugee indicates that the individual is outside his or her country of nationality, the INA also provides the President with the authority to designate countries whose nationals may be processed for refugee status within their respective countries (i.e.,

⁶ Congress expanded this definition in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, providing that 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. The definition, as established in 1980, excludes those who have ordered, incited, assisted or otherwise participated in the persecution of others.

Figure 1.
Refugee Admissions to the United States:
1990 to 2014



Source: U.S. Department of State.

¹ In this report, years refer to fiscal years (October 1 to September 30).

² 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 have been fathered by a U.S. citizen), whereas DHS reports Amerasians as lawful permanent residents.

³ These asylum grants were based upon a principal asylum beneficiary's application, which may also include an accompanying spouse and unmarried children under 21 years of age. They do not, however, include individuals who were approved for follow-to-join asylum status while residing in the United States or abroad.

⁴ Affirmative asylum data are current as of January 2015 and differ slightly from fiscal year-end 2014 numbers reported by the Asylum Division, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), of the Department of Homeland Security.

⁵ Or, if an applicant is considered “stateless,” his or her country of last habitual residence.



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in-country processing). In 2014, certain nationals of Iraq, Cuba, Eurasia, and the Baltics were re-designated for in-country processing. In-country processing is also authorized for extraordinary individual protection cases for which resettlement consideration was requested by a U.S. ambassador.

REFUGEES

History of Refugee Legislation

The first refugee legislation in the United States was the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, which brought 400,000 Eastern Europeans to the United States. Other refugee-related legislation included the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 and the Fair Share Refugee Act of 1960. The United States also used the Attorney General's parole authority to bring large groups of persons into the country for humanitarian reasons, beginning in 1956 with Hungarian nationals and culminating with hundreds of thousands of Indochinese parolees in the 1970s.

The 1967 United Nations Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (which the United States ratified in 1968) prohibits any nation from returning a refugee to a country where his or her life or freedom would be threatened. Congress enacted the Refugee Act of 1980 to comply with the requirements and principles of the Protocol, which established a geographically and politically neutral refugee definition. The Refugee Act of 1980 also made a distinction between refugee and asylum status and allowed certain refugee applicants to be processed while in their countries of nationality.

Admission Ceilings

Before the beginning of each fiscal year, the President, in consultation with Congress, establishes an overall refugee admissions ceiling as well as regional allocations.⁷ The total number of refugees authorized for admission in 2014 was 70,000, unchanged from the previous year. The largest regional allocation was to the Near East/South Asia region, which accounted for 47 percent of the authorized admissions number to continue accommodating vul-

⁷ 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.

Table 1.

Refugee Admissions Ceilings: 2012 to 2014*

Region	Ceiling		
	2014	2013 [†]	2012
Total	70,000	70,000	76,000
Africa	15,000	12,000	12,000
East Asia	14,000	17,000	18,000
Europe/Central Asia	1,000	2,000	2,000
Latin America/Caribbean	5,000	5,000	5,500
Near East/South Asia	33,000	31,000	35,500
Unallocated Reserve	2,000	3,000	3,000

* Ceiling numbers reflect revisions made each fiscal year.

[†] 2013 ceiling admissions reflect corrections to last year's printed numbers.

Source: U.S. Department of State.

nerable Iraqi, Bhutanese, and Iranian refugees (see Table 1).

Eligibility Requirements

In order 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; and (4) not be firmly resettled in any foreign country. A derivative refugee relative who is following to join need not meet all of these eligibility requirements but must demonstrate a relationship as the spouse or child of an admitted refugee and be admissible to the United States. A person whom U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has determined meets the refugee definition may nonetheless be inadmissible to the United States due to criminal, security, or other grounds, and therefore be ineligible for refugee resettlement unless the Attorney General grants a discretionary waiver under section 207(c)(3) of the INA.

Application Process

The United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) establishes processing priorities to identify individuals and groups who are of special humanitarian concern to the United States and who are eligible for refugee resettlement consideration. Priority categories are Priority 1 (P-1)—individuals referred by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a U.S. Embassy, or certain non-governmental organizations; Priority 2 (P-2)—groups of special humanitarian concern; and Priority 3 (P-3)—family reunification cases.⁸ Once a principal refugee applicant has been referred or granted access to USRAP under any of these three Priorities, he or she still must meet all other eligibility criteria. Upon referral, a Resettlement Support Center, working under cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of State (DOS), conducts a pre-screening interview with the applicant and helps complete the application for submission to USCIS. A USCIS officer interviews the applicant to determine eligibility for resettlement in the United States. Security checks must be completed before an application is approved. Upon approval, the refugee applicant must also submit to a medical exam.

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

A principal refugee's spouse and unmarried children under the age of 21 may obtain derivative refugee status.⁹ An accompanying derivative is a spouse or child who enters the United States with the principal refugee or within four months after the principal refugee's admission,¹⁰ whereas a following-to-join derivative is a

⁸ Priority 3 processing was suspended in October 2008 due to high level of fraud uncovered via DNA testing but resumed in October 2012 with the introduction of the new form DS-7656, Affidavit of Relationship (AOR).

⁹ Children may include those age 21 or over who are covered by provisions in the Child Status Protection Act, PL. 107-208 (Aug. 6, 2002).

¹⁰ In practice, the vast majority of accompanying derivative refugees enter the United States with the principal refugee.

spouse or child who joins the principal refugee more than four months after his or her admission to the United States. A principal refugee may petition for following-to-join benefits for his or her qualifying derivatives up to two years after the principal was granted refugee status; the relationship between the principal and the derivative relative must have existed at the time of the principal's admission into the United States. The principal refugee must file a Form I-730, *Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition*,¹¹ for each qualifying family member. Unlike P-3 applicants, beneficiaries of I-730s are not required to demonstrate an independent refugee claim, as they derive their status from the refugee relative in the United States who filed the petition. Once an individual's I-730 has been approved, there are no time constraints placed upon that derivative relative's travel to the United States, provided that the principal's status has not been revoked, the relationship of the derivative to the principal is unchanged, and in the case of a child, the child remains unmarried.

Lawful Permanent Residence and Citizenship

One year after being admitted to the United States, refugees are required by statute to apply for lawful permanent resident (LPR) status. Refugees granted status may apply for citizenship five years after their date of admission as a refugee.

DATA

The refugee data presented in this report were obtained from the Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (WRAPS) of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration of the U.S. Department of State. Individuals granted follow-to-join refugee status are included in refugee admissions data.

TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF REFUGEES

In 2014, the total number of refugees admitted to the United States remained virtually unchanged from the previous year at 69,975. The annual number of refugee arrivals declined during the 1990s, reflecting a shift in the refugee program's focus to more diverse populations in dispersed areas. Admissions decreased further, reaching a low point in 2002, due in part to changes in security procedures and admission requirements after September 11, 2001. The number of refugee arrivals subsequently increased and reached a post-2001 peak in 2009. After decreasing from 2009 to 2011, refugee admissions began to increase sharply again in 2012 reflecting better synchronization of security and

¹¹ The petition is used to file for relatives of refugees and asylees. The USRAP program handles only refugee following-to-join petitions, which are counted within the annual refugee ceiling. Asylum following-to-join petitions are processed by USCIS and are not counted in the annual admission ceilings.

medical checks for refugee families as well as staffing increases.

Category of Admission

In 2014, the majority of refugees were admitted under P-1 processing (43 percent)—individuals referred by the UNHCR, a U.S. Embassy, or certain NGOs—and P-2 processing (55 percent)—groups of special humanitarian concern. P-3 processing (family reunification cases) constituted less than one-half percentage point of refugees admitted due to a four-year moratorium.¹² Principal refugees accounted for 30,477 (44 percent) of the 69,975 refugees admitted to the United States in 2014.¹³ Dependent children and spouses represented 40 percent and 16 percent, respectively, of refugee admissions. There were 1,787 following-to-join refugee

¹² The Priority 3 program has undergone significant changes in recent years including a suspension in 2008 due a high rate of fraud in claimed family relationship identified through a pilot DNA testing program. Although the program resumed in October 2012, none of the cases processed under the new rules are expected to arrive before fiscal year 2015.

¹³ As of February 2015.

Table 2.

Refugee Arrivals by Relationship to Principal Applicant and Case Priority: Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014

Category of admission and case priority	2014		2013		2012	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
RELATIONSHIP TO PRINCIPAL APPLICANT						
Total	69,975	100.0	69,909	100.0	58,179	100.0
Principal Applicant	30,477	43.6	31,698	45.3	27,355	47.0
Dependents	39,498	56.4	38,211	54.7	30,824	53.0
Spouse	11,379	16.3	11,278	16.1	9,532	16.4
Child	28,119	40.2	26,933	38.5	21,292	36.6
CASE PRIORITY						
Total	69,975	100.0	69,909	100	58,179	100.0
Priority 1	29,847	42.7	30,659	43.9	22,053	37.9
Priority 2	38,319	54.8	37,516	53.7	34,862	59.9
Priority 3	22	0.0	93	0.1	51	0.1
Following-to-join beneficiaries	1,787	2.6	1,641	2.3	1,213	2.1

Source: U.S. Department of State.

Table 3.

Refugee Arrivals by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014

(Ranked by 2014 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2014		2013		2012	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	69,975	100.0	69,909	100.0	58,179	100.0
Iraq	19,769	28.3	19,487	27.9	12,163	20.9
Burma	14,598	20.9	16,299	23.3	14,160	24.3
Somalia	9,000	12.9	7,608	10.9	4,911	8.4
Bhutan	8,434	12.1	9,134	13.1	15,070	25.9
Congo, Democratic Republic	4,540	6.5	2,563	3.7	1,863	3.2
Cuba	4,062	5.8	4,205	6.0	1,948	3.3
Iran	2,846	4.1	2,579	3.7	1,758	3.0
Eritrea	1,488	2.1	1,824	2.6	1,346	2.3
Sudan	1,315	1.9	2,160	3.1	1,077	1.9
Afghanistan	753	1.1	661	0.9	481	0.8
All other countries, including unknown	3,170	4.5	3,389	4.8	3,402	5.8

Source: U.S. Department of State.

Table 4.

Refugee Arrivals by Age, Sex, and Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014

Characteristic	2014		2013		2012	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total	69,975	100.0	69,909	100.0	58,179	100.0
0 to 17 years	24,647	35.2	23,647	33.8	18,876	32.4
18 to 24 years	10,143	14.5	10,399	14.9	9,700	16.7
25 to 34 years	14,608	20.9	15,328	21.9	13,491	23.2
35 to 44 years	9,223	13.2	9,543	13.7	7,446	12.8
45 to 54 years	5,612	8.0	5,504	7.9	4,409	7.6
55 to 64 years	3,192	4.6	3,098	4.4	2,441	4.2
65 years and over	2,550	3.6	2,390	3.4	1,816	3.1
SEX						
Total	69,975	100.0	69,909	100.0	58,179	100.0
Female	33,208	47.5	32,117	45.9	26,799	46.1
Male	36,767	52.5	37,792	54.1	31,380	53.9
MARITAL STATUS						
Total	69,975	100.0	69,909	100.0	58,179	100.0
Married	26,168	37.4	26,789	38.3	22,322	38.4
Single	39,739	56.8	39,392	56.3	32,608	56.0
Other*	4,068	5.8	3,728	5.3	3,249	5.6

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

Source: U.S. Department of State.

Table 5.

Refugee Arrivals by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014

(Ranked by 2014 state of residence)

State of residence	2014		2013		2012	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	69,975	100.0	69,909	100.0	58,179	100.0
Texas	7,209	10.3	7,466	10.7	5,905	10.1
California	6,108	8.7	6,379	9.1	5,167	8.9
New York	4,082	5.8	3,965	5.7	3,525	6.1
Michigan	4,006	5.7	4,651	6.7	3,594	6.2
Florida	3,519	5.0	3,613	5.2	2,244	3.9
Arizona	2,964	4.2	3,052	4.4	2,234	3.8
Ohio	2,815	4.0	2,788	4.0	2,245	3.9
Pennsylvania	2,739	3.9	2,507	3.6	2,809	4.8
Georgia	2,694	3.8	2,710	3.9	2,516	4.3
Illinois	2,578	3.7	2,452	3.5	2,082	3.6
Other	31,261	44.7	30,326	43.4	25,858	44.4

Source: U.S. Department of State.

beneficiaries (2.6 percent of total refugees) (See Table 2).

Country of Nationality

In 2014, the leading countries of nationality for refugee admissions were Iraq (28 percent), Burma (21 percent), Somalia (13 percent), and Bhutan (12 percent) (see Table 3). Seventy-four percent of refugee admissions in 2014 were from these four countries. Other leading countries included the Democratic Republic of Congo (6.5 percent), Cuba (5.8 percent), and Iran (4.1 percent).

Age, Sex, and Marital Status

Seventy-one percent of refugees admitted to the United States in 2014 were under 35 years of age (see Table 4). Refugees are, on average, younger than the U.S. native-born population. In 2014, the median age of refugees arriving in the United States was 24

years; in contrast, the median age of the native-born population in 2014 was 37 years.¹⁴ A slight majority of refugees were male (53 percent), and 37 percent were married.

State of Residence

In 2014, 55 percent of all admitted refugees resided in ten states. The leading states of residence of refugees admitted to the United States in 2014 were Texas (10 percent) and California (8.7 percent) (see Table 5). Both Texas and California experienced declines (3 percent and 4 percent, respectively) in refugees from 2013. Michigan, one of the top ten destinations for refugees, experienced the largest percentage decline (-14 percent) while Pennsylvania, another top ten destination for refugees, experienced the largest percentage increase (9 percent) from 2013 to 2014.

ASYLEES

Filing of Claims

Generally, any alien present in the United States or arriving at a port of entry may seek asylum regardless of his or her immigration status. Asylum may be obtained in one of three ways: (1) affirmatively through a USCIS asylum officer; (2) defensively in removal proceedings before an immigration judge of the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) of the Department of Justice; or (3) an individual may derive asylum status as the spouse or child of an asylee. To obtain asylum, an alien must apply within one year from the date of last arrival or establish that an exception applies based on changed or extraordinary circumstances. An alien applies for asylum in the United States by filing Form I-589, *Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal*.

Spouses and unmarried children under the age of 21¹⁵ who were listed on the principal's asylum application but not included in the principal's grant of asylum may obtain derivative asylum status from the principal asylee. A principal asylee may petition for following-to-join benefits¹⁶ for his or her qualifying derivatives up to two years after he or she was granted asylum status, as long as the relationship between the principal and the 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. Following-to-join beneficiaries may be located abroad or in the United States. Once an I-730 is approved for an individual located abroad, there are no time constraints placed upon the derivative

¹⁴ Calculated from the March 2014 Current Population Survey public use microdata file from the U.S. Census Bureau.

¹⁵ See reference to Child Status Protection Act.

¹⁶ In practice, the vast majority of derivative asylum status beneficiaries receive following-to-join benefits.

relative's travel to the United States, as long as the principal's status has not been revoked, the relationship of the derivative to the principal is unchanged, and, in the case of a child, the child remains unmarried.

Adjudication of Claims

The Asylum Division within USCIS adjudicates asylum claims filed with the agency through the affirmative asylum process. During an asylum interview, an asylum officer determines if the applicant meets the definition of a refugee, is credible, and is not barred from obtaining asylum. Individuals may be barred for 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. An individual granted asylum is authorized to work in the United States. In addition, an asylee is eligible for certain public benefits including employment assistance, a social security card, and social services.

If an applicant in a valid immigration status (e.g., foreign student) fails to establish eligibility for asylum before USCIS, the application will be denied by USCIS, and the applicant will remain in his or her valid status. If the applicant is not in a valid status and USCIS finds the applicant ineligible for asylum, USCIS places the applicant in removal proceedings before an immigration judge with EOIR, where the application is considered anew.

Aliens who have not previously filed for asylum may be placed in removal proceedings by immigration enforcement officials because they are undocumented, are in violation of their status when apprehended, or were caught attempting entry into the United States without proper documentation. Such individuals may file for asylum directly with EOIR. During the proceedings,

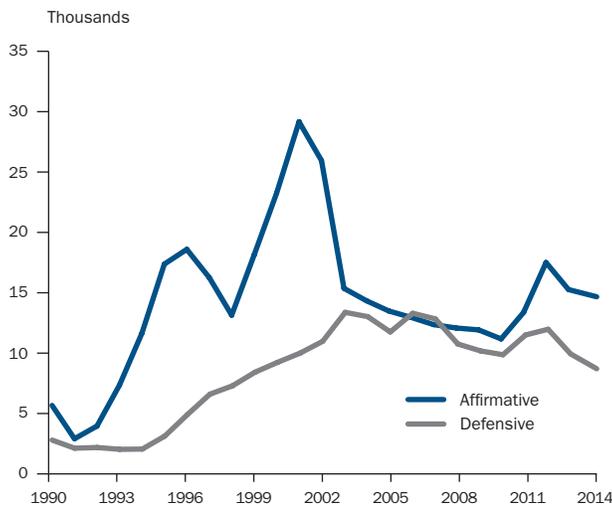
an immigration judge may grant asylum or deny the asylum application and issue an order of removal. The applicant may appeal the denial to the Board of Immigration Appeals and seek further review by a U.S. Court of Appeals.

Asylum following-to-join beneficiaries are not required to demonstrate a persecution claim, as they derive their status from the asylee relative in the United States who filed the I-730 petition. Those beneficiaries who are in the United States at the time of application are granted derivative asylum status immediately upon the approval of their I-730 petitions. Those beneficiaries who were abroad at the time of application are granted derivative asylum when admitted into the United States at a port of entry.

DATA

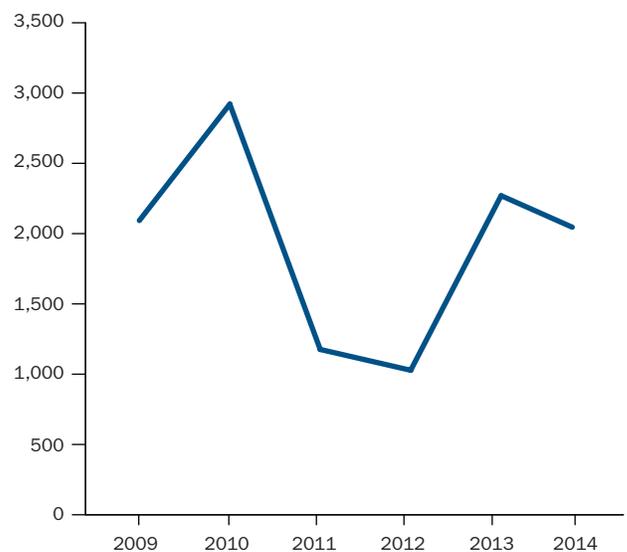
The affirmative asylee data presented in this report were obtained from the Refugee, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS) of USCIS. Defensive asylee data were obtained from EOIR. In 2011, the Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) began receiving data on individuals who were issued travel documents to enter the United States as following-to-join asylum derivatives; previously these data were not included in OIS reports. Most following-to-join asylum derivative data were obtained from the Case and Activity Management for International Operations (CAMINO) system of USCIS and the Consular Consolidated Database (CCD) of the Department of State. These following-to-join data represent only those I-730 beneficiaries who were outside of the United States at the time of application and reflect travel documents issued, not admissions. In 2012, OIS began receiving data on the number of individuals approved for follow-to-join status who were residing in the United States at the time of the approval of their I-730 petition. These data were

Figure 2.
**Annual Flow of Affirmative and Defensive Asylees:
1990 to 2014**



Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Department of Justice.

Figure 3.
**I-730 Follow-to-Join Asylum Beneficiaries Approved
while Residing in the United States: 2009 to 2014**



Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

obtained from the Computer-Linked Application Information Management System (CLAIMS) of USCIS.

TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ASYLEES

Overall, grants of asylum decreased by six percent from 25,100 in 2013 to 23,533 in 2014. USCIS grants of affirmative asylum decreased three percent from 15,155 in 2013 to 14,758 in 2014 (see Figure 2). The number of persons granted asylum defensively by an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals of EOIR also decreased, from 9,945 in 2013 to 8,775 in 2014, a 12 percent decrease. Similarly the number of persons authorized for travel from abroad to the United States as following-to-join derivatives decreased 20 percent from 10,241 in 2013 to 8,235 in 2014. Followers to join who received asylum status while residing in the United States decreased from 2,240 in 2013 to 1,980 in 2014 (see Figure 3).

Country of Nationality

In 2014, the three leading countries of nationality of persons granted either affirmative or defensive asylum were China (34 percent), Egypt (12 percent), and Syria (4.0 percent) (see Table 6). Nationals of these countries accounted for half of all persons granted asylum. The same countries were the leading countries of nationality for affirmative asylum in 2014 and accounted for 50 percent of all persons granted affirmative asylum. The leading countries of nationality for persons granted defensive asylum were China (45 percent) and India (4.2 percent) (see Table 8). Fifty percent of all defensive asylees in 2014 were nationals of these two countries.

The leading countries of nationality for following-to-join asylees authorized for travel to the United States in 2014 were China (42 percent), Egypt (7.8 percent), Nepal (7.4 percent), and Haiti (6.8 percent) (see Table 9). Nationals of these four countries accounted for more than two-thirds of

Table 6.

Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively or Defensively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014

(Ranked by 2014 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2014		2013		2012	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	23,533	100.0	25,100	100.0	28,115	100.0
China, People's Republic	7,880	33.5	8,581	34.2	9,761	34.7
Egypt	2,879	12.2	3,378	13.5	2,852	10.1
Syria	932	4.0	798	3.2	356	1.3
Ethiopia	830	3.5	892	3.6	1,076	3.8
Iran	636	2.7	675	2.7	697	2.5
Iraq	629	2.7	465	1.9	409	1.5
Mexico	591	2.5	358	1.4	414	1.5
Nepal	554	2.4	853	3.4	950	3.4
Haiti	537	2.3	493	2.0	671	2.4
Guatemala	490	2.1	383	1.5	505	1.8
India	490	2.1	680	2.7	346	1.2
All other countries, including unknown	7,085	30.1	7,544	30.1	10,078	35.8

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Department of Justice.

Table 7.

Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014

(Ranked by 2014 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2014		2013		2012	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	14,758	100.0	15,155	100.0	17,400	100.0
China, People's Republic	3,904	26.5	4,047	26.7	4,744	27.3
Egypt	2,616	17.7	3,072	20.3	2,571	14.8
Syria	868	5.9	750	4.9	327	1.9
Iran	577	3.9	612	4.0	608	3.5
Iraq	550	3.7	411	2.7	314	1.8
Ethiopia	507	3.4	491	3.2	664	3.8
Haiti	486	3.3	440	2.9	632	3.6
Mexico	467	3.2	203	1.3	301	1.7
Venezuela	382	2.6	601	4.0	960	5.5
Guatemala	315	2.1	231	1.5	313	1.8
All other countries, including unknown	4,086	27.7	4,297	28.4	5,966	34.3

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Table 8.

Individuals Granted Asylum Defensively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014

(Ranked by 2014 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2014		2013		2012	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	8,775	100.0	9,945	100.0	10,715	100.0
China, People's Republic	3,976	45.3	4,534	45.6	5,017	46.8
India	372	4.2	322	3.2	253	2.4
Ethiopia	323	3.7	401	4.0	412	3.8
Nepal	298	3.4	380	3.8	377	3.5
Egypt	263	3.0	306	3.1	281	2.6
Soviet Union, former	185	2.1	252	2.5	271	2.5
El Salvador	184	2.1	181	1.8	158	1.5
Guatemala	175	2.0	152	1.5	192	1.8
Eritrea	165	1.9	241	2.4	326	3.0
Honduras	151	1.7	92	0.9	77	0.7
All other countries, including unknown	2,683	30.6	3,084	31.0	3,351	31.3

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice.

Table 9.**Follow-to-join Asylee Travel Documents Issued by Country of Nationality:
Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014**

(Ranked by 2014 country of nationality)

Country	2014		2013*		2012*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	8,235	100.0	10,241	100.0	10,194	100.0
China, People's Republic	3,447	41.9	4,801	46.9	4,978	48.8
Egypt.	639	7.8	592	5.8	272	2.7
Nepal	613	7.4	665	6.5	707	6.9
Haiti	556	6.8	551	5.4	617	6.1
India	226	2.7	362	3.5	79	0.8
Guatemala.	171	2.1	160	1.6	135	1.3
Pakistan	169	2.1	213	2.1	128	1.3
Congo, Democratic Republic	140	1.7	127	1.2	125	1.2
Syria	132	1.6	88	0.9	26	0.3
Afghanistan	118	1.4	106	1.0	65	0.6
All other countries, including unknown	2,024	24.6	2,576	25.2	3,062	30.0

* Due to an error in reporting, follow-to-join asylees authorized to travel to the U.S. were overrepresented in the 2011, 2012, and 2013 reports by approximately 7 percent.

Source: U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Table 10.**Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Age, Sex, and Marital Status:
Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014**

Characteristic	2014		2013		2012	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total	14,758	100.0	15,155	100.0	17,400	100.0
0 to 17 years.	2,708	18.3	2,488	16.4	2,451	14.1
18 to 24 years.	2,030	13.8	2,363	15.6	3,539	20.3
25 to 34 years.	4,764	32.3	5,009	33.1	5,817	33.4
35 to 44 years.	3,175	21.5	3,138	20.7	3,409	19.6
45 to 54 years.	1,372	9.3	1,497	9.9	1,589	9.1
55 to 64 years.	464	3.1	431	2.8	450	2.6
65 and over.	245	1.7	229	1.5	145	0.8
SEX						
Total	14,758	100.0	15,155	100.0	17,400	100.0
Female	7,227	49.0	7,471	49.3	8,562	49.2
Male	7,531	51.0	7,684	50.7	8,838	50.8
MARITAL STATUS						
Total	14,758	100.0	15,155	100.0	17,400	100.0
Married	6,876	46.6	7,215	47.6	7,929	45.6
Single	7,095	48.1	7,134	47.1	8,595	49.4
Other*.	787	5.3	806	5.3	876	5.0

* Includes persons who were divorced, separated, widowed, or unknown marital status.

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

all following-to-join derivative relatives issued travel documents prior to their admission into the United States. Country of nationality data are not available for following-to-join asylees who were approved while residing in the United States.

Age, Sex, and Marital Status

In 2014, more than two-thirds (68 percent) of persons granted affirmative asylum were between the ages of 18 and 44, inclusive (see Table 10). Like refugees, affirmative asylees are, on average, younger than the native-born U.S. population: the median age of persons granted affirmative asylum in 2014 was 30 years. Fifty-one percent were male, and 47 percent were married.

In 2014, the median age of following-to-join beneficiaries was 18 years. More than 50 percent of following-to-join beneficiaries were identified as female (see table 11). Data on marital status are not available for this group and are not included in this report. Data on age, sex, and marital status are unavailable for following-to-join asylees approved while residing in the United States.

State of Residence

In 2014, the leading states of residence for individuals granted asylum affirmatively were California (47 percent), New York (13 percent), and Florida (8.2 percent) (see Table 12). Over two-thirds (68 percent) of individuals granted affirmative asylum resided in these three states.

State of residence data were not available for either defensive or following-to-join asylees.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the Office of Immigration Statistics Web page at <http://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics>.

Table 11.**Follow-to-join Asylee Travel Documents Issued by Age and Sex: Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014**

Characteristic	2014		2013*		2012*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total	8,235	100.0	10,241	100.0	10,194	100.0
0 to 17 years	3,835	46.6	4,861	47.5	4,652	45.6
18 to 24 years	1,553	18.9	1,822	17.8	2,087	20.5
25 to 34 years	904	11.0	1,197	11.7	1,135	11.1
35 to 44 years	1,065	12.9	1,416	13.8	1,360	13.3
45 to 54 years	676	8.2	732	7.1	721	7.1
55 to 64 years	179	2.2	192	1.9	212	2.1
65 and over	23	0.3	21	0.2	27	0.3
SEX						
Total	8,235	100.0	10,241	100.0	10,194	100.0
Female	4,169	50.6	5,359	52.3	5,453	53.5
Male	3,755	45.6	4,527	44.2	4,502	44.2
Unknown	311	3.8	355	3.5	239	2.3

* Due to an error in reporting, follow-to-join asylees authorized to travel to the U.S. were overrepresented in the 2011, 2012, and 2013 reports by approximately 7 percent.

Source: U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Table 12.**Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2012 to 2014**

(Ranked by 2014 state of residence)

State of residence	2014		2013		2012	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	14,758	100.0	15,155	100.0	17,400	100.0
California	6,866	46.5	6,389	42.2	6,665	38.3
New York	1,956	13.3	1,989	13.1	2,387	13.7
Florida	1,207	8.2	1,837	12.1	2,596	14.9
Virginia	719	4.9	479	3.2	475	2.7
Maryland	632	4.3	758	5.0	832	4.8
Illinois	482	3.3	463	3.1	387	2.2
New Jersey	467	3.2	550	3.6	708	4.1
Texas	258	1.7	526	3.5	481	2.8
Michigan	243	1.6	138	0.9	198	1.1
Washington	200	1.4	100	0.7	70	0.4
Other	1,728	11.7	1,926	12.7	2,601	14.9

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.