

**Annual Report of Immigrant Visa Applicants in the Family-sponsored and
Employment-based preferences Registered at the National Visa Center
as of November 1, 2015**

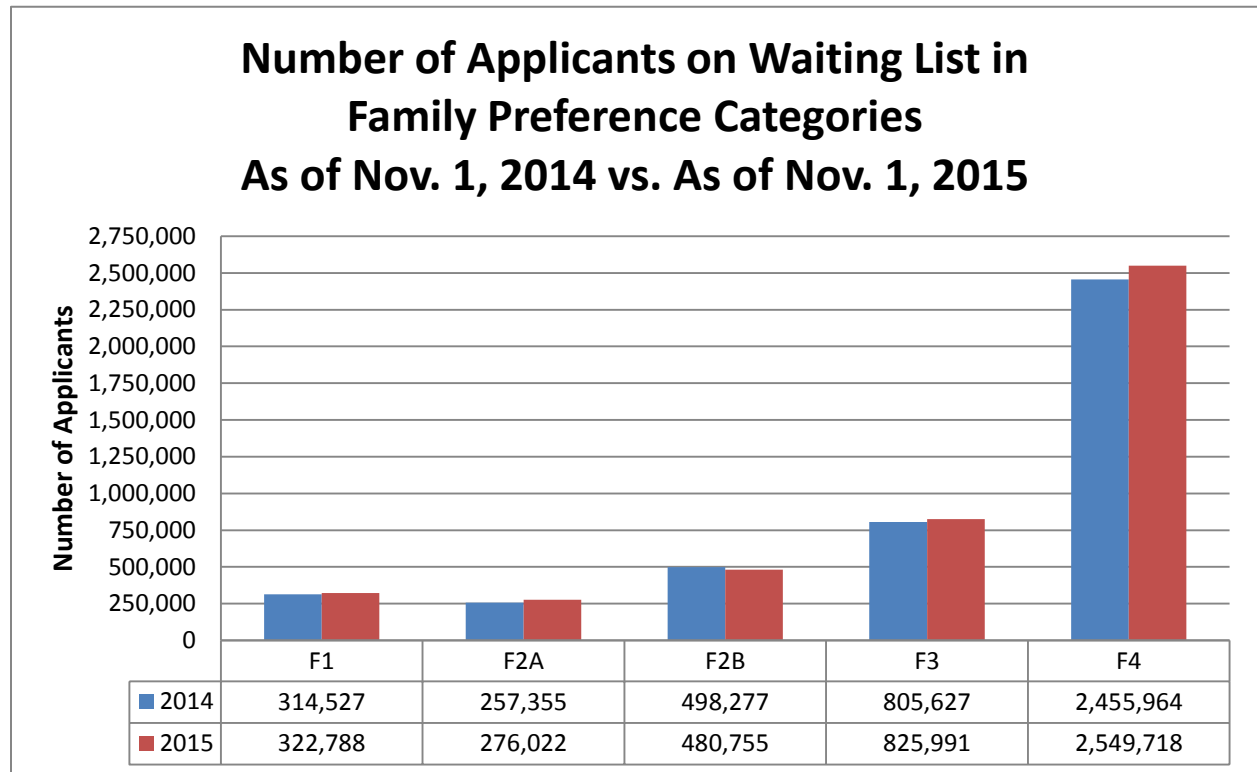
Most prospective immigrant visa applicants qualify for status under the law on the basis of family relationships or employer sponsorship. Entitlement to visa processing in these classes is established ordinarily through approval by Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) of a petition filed on the applicant's behalf. The petitions of applicants who will be processed at an overseas post are forwarded by CIS to the Department of State; applicants in categories subject to numerical limit are registered on the visa waiting list. Each case is assigned a priority (i.e., registration) date based on the filing date accorded to the petition. Visa issuance within each numerically limited category is possible only if the applicant's priority date is within the applicable cut-off dates which are published each month by the Department of State in the Visa Bulletin. Family and Employment preference applicants compete for visa numbers within their respective categories on a worldwide basis according to priority date; a per-country limit on such preference immigrants set by INA 202 places a maximum on the amount of visas which may be issued in a single year to applicants from any one country, however.

In October, the Department of State asked the National Visa Center (NVC) at Portsmouth, New Hampshire to report the totals of applicants on the waiting list in the various numerically-limited immigrant categories. Applications for adjustment of status under INA 245 which are pending at CIS Offices are not included in the tabulation of the immigrant waiting list data which is being provided at this time. As such, the following figures ONLY reflect petitions which the Department of State has received, and do not include the significant number of applications held with the CIS Offices.

The following figures have been compiled from the NVC report submitted to the Department on November 1, 2015, and show the number of immigrant visa applicants on the waiting list in the various preferences and subcategories subject to numerical limit. All figures reflect persons registered under each respective numerical limitation, i.e., the totals represent not only principal applicants or petition beneficiaries, but their spouses and children entitled to derivative status under INA 203(d) as well.

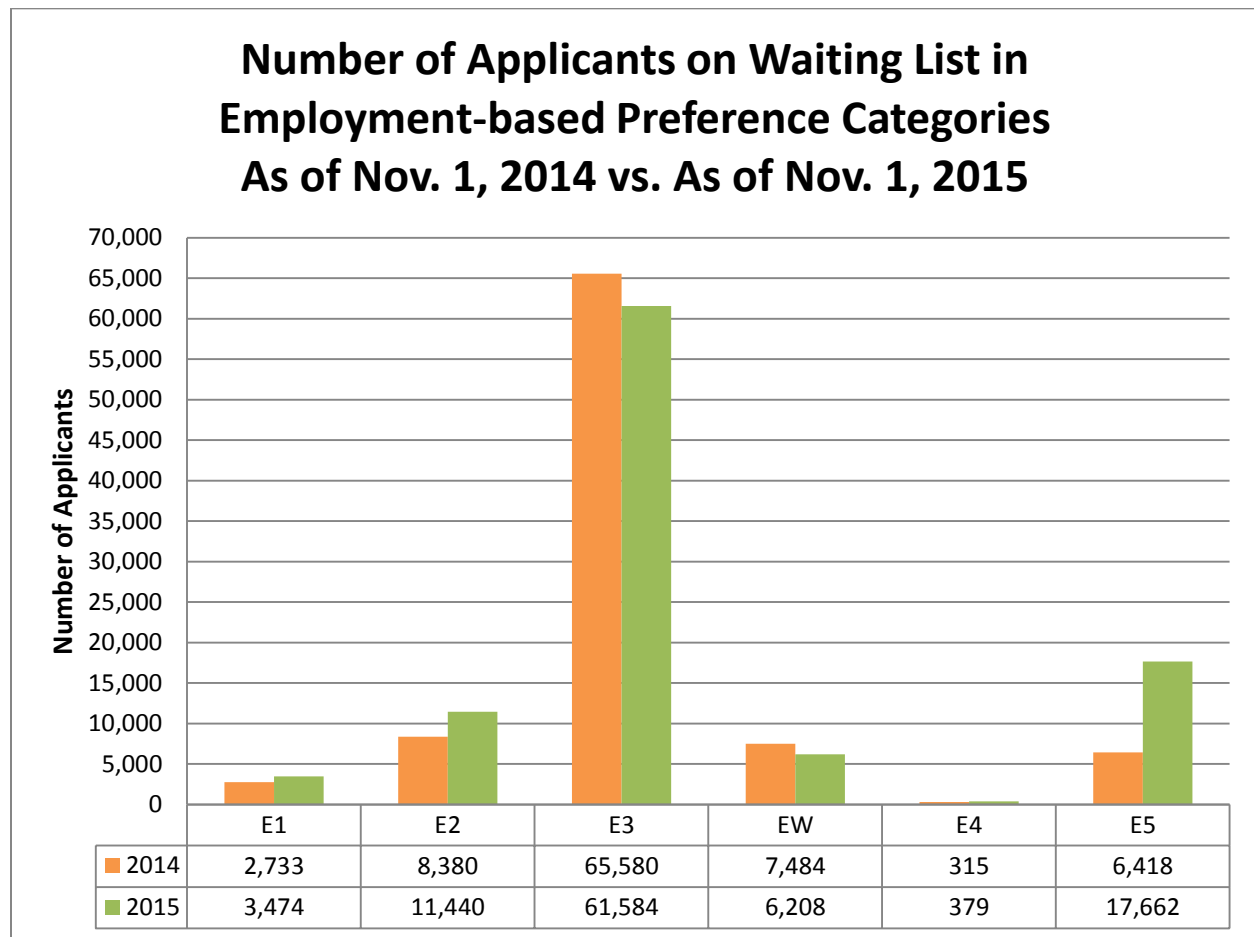
Family-sponsored Preferences

| Category | as of Nov. 1, 2014 | as of Nov. 1, 2015 | % of Change From 2014 Totals |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| FAMILY FIRST | 314,527 | 322,788 | (+2.6%) |
| FAMILY SECOND TOTAL | 755,632 | 756,777 | (+0.1%) |
| 2A-Spouses/Children: | 257,355 | 276,022 | (+7.3%) |
| 2B- Adult Sons/Daughters: | 498,277 | 480,755 | (-3.5%) |
| FAMILY THIRD | 805,627 | 825,991 | (+2.5%) |
| FAMILY FOURTH | 2,455,964 | 2,549,718 | (+3.8%) |
| TOTAL | 4,331,750 | 4,455,274 | (+2.9%) |



Employment-based Preferences

| Category | as of Nov. 1, 2014 | as of Nov. 1, 2015 | % of Change From 2014 Totals |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| EMPLOYMENT FIRST | 2,733 | 3,474 | (+27.1%) |
| EMPLOYMENT SECOND | 8,380 | 11,440 | (+36.5%) |
| EMPLOYMENT THIRD TOTAL | 73,064 | 67,792 | (-7.2%) |
| Skilled Workers: | 65,580 | 61,584 | (-6.1%) |
| Other Workers: | 7,484 | 6,208 | (-17.5%) |
| EMPLOYMENT FOURTH TOTAL | 315 | 379 | (+20.3%) |
| EMPLOYMENT FIFTH TOTAL | 6,418 | 17,662 | (+175.2%) |
| TOTAL | 90,910 | 100,747 | (+10.8%) |
| GRAND TOTAL | 4,422,660 | 4,556,021 | (+3.0%) |



Immigrant Waiting List By Country

Immigrant visa issuances during fiscal year 2016 will be limited by the terms of INA 201 to no more than 226,000 in the family-sponsored preferences and approximately 140,000 in the employment-based preferences. (Visas for "Immediate Relatives" - i.e., spouses, unmarried children under the age of 21 years, and parents of U.S. citizens - are not subject to numerical limitation, however.)

It should by no means be assumed that once an applicant is registered, the case is then continually included in the waiting list totals unless and until a visa is issued. The consular procedures mandate a regular culling of visa cases to remove from the count those unlikely to see further action, so that totals are not unreasonably inflated.

The fifteen countries with the highest number of waiting list registrants in FY 2016 are listed below; together these represent 81% of the total. This list includes all countries with at least 50,000 persons on the waiting list. There is a seven percent per-country limit, which visa issuances to any single country may not exceed. This limit serves to avoid the potential monopolization of virtually all the annual limitation by applicants from only a few countries. That limitation is not a quota to which any particular country is entitled, however. For FY 2016 the per-country limit will be approximately 25,620.

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Applicants</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Mexico | 1,344,429 |
| Philippines | 417,511 |
| India | 344,208 |
| Vietnam | 282,375 |
| China-mainland born | 260,265 |
| Dominican Republic | 207,406 |
| Bangladesh | 183,159 |
| Pakistan | 131,465 |
| Haiti | 119,696 |
| Cuba | 115,208 |
| El Salvador | 82,045 |
| Jamaica | 58,368 |
| Iran | 53,306 |
| Korea, South | 52,887 |
| Peru | 51,772 |
| <u>All Others</u> | <u>851,921</u> |
| Worldwide Total | 4,556,021 |

**Immigrant Waiting List
By Preference Category**

FAMILY-SPONSORED PREFERENCES

Family FIRST Preference:

The worldwide Family FIRST preference numerical limitation is 23,400. The top ten countries with the highest F1 waiting list totals are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Family First Preference Total</u> | <u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u> |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Mexico | 107,584 | 33.3% |
| Dominican Republic | 26,957 | 8.4% |
| Philippines | 22,048 | 6.8% |
| Haiti | 18,317 | 5.7% |
| Jamaica | 17,499 | 5.4% |
| El Salvador | 11,196 | 3.5% |
| Cuba | 8,478 | 2.6% |
| Vietnam | 7,495 | 2.3% |
| Guyana | 7,005 | 2.2% |
| Colombia | 6,762 | 2.1% |
| All Others | 89,447 | 27.7% |
| Total | 322,788 | 100% |

Cases are being added to the waiting list in this category not only by the approval of new FIRST preference petitions, but also through automatic conversion of pending 2B cases into FIRST preference upon the naturalization of the petitioner.

The prospect for increasing future demand in the FIRST preference could result in slower advances in the worldwide cut-off date as a consequence. Only two countries, Mexico and Philippines, have FIRST preference cut-off dates which are earlier than the worldwide date. (NOTE: A Family 2B petition automatically converts to a Family FIRST petition if the petitioner naturalizes. However, Section 6 of the Child Status Protection Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-208, provides relief for Family 2B applicants who would be disadvantaged by a conversion to Family FIRST status due to a less favorable Family FIRST cut-off date).

Family SECOND Preference:

The total Family SECOND preference waiting list figure is 756,777. Of these, 276,022 (36.5%) are spouses and children of permanent residents of the United States (the 2A class), and 480,755 (63.5%) are adult unmarried sons/daughters of permanent residents (the 2B class). The Family SECOND preference represents 17% of the total Family preference waiting list. It will receive 114,200 visa numbers for FY 2016, just over half of the 226,000 family preference total; 77% of SECOND preference numbers are provided to 2A applicants, while the remaining 23% go to the 2B class.

2A: About 87,900 visa numbers are available for use during FY 2016. The top five countries with the highest 2A waiting list totals are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Family 2A Preference Total</u> | <u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Mexico | 92,404 | 33.5% |
| Dominican Republic | 37,742 | 13.7% |
| Cuba | 13,815 | 5.0% |
| Philippines | 13,454 | 4.9% |
| Haiti | 10,855 | 3.9% |
| All Others | 107,752 | 39.0% |
| Total | 276,022 | 100% |

Upon naturalization of the petitioner, a pending 2A case is converted automatically into the “Immediate Relative” visa category, which is not subject to numerical limit and therefore has no visa waiting period. As a result, the amount of cases being processed in the “Immediate Relative” category may increase and partially offset new F2A filings.

2B: Visa numbers for this class of adult sons and daughters will be approximately 26,260 during FY 2016. The waiting list far exceeds the annual limit. The top ten countries with the highest 2B waiting list totals are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Family 2B Preference Total</u> | <u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u> |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Mexico | 180,490 | 37.5% |
| Philippines | 59,679 | 12.5% |
| Dominican Republic | 59,661 | 12.4% |
| Haiti | 23,266 | 4.9% |
| Cuba | 20,349 | 4.2% |
| El Salvador | 14,549 | 3.0% |
| China-mainland born | 13,560 | 2.8% |
| Vietnam | 12,906 | 2.7% |
| Jamaica | 6,936 | 1.4% |
| Guatemala | 6,596 | 1.4% |
| <u>All Others</u> | <u>82,763</u> | <u>17.2%</u> |
| Total | 480,755 | 100% |

Some of the 2B applicants were formerly counted in the 2A waiting list and have since turned 21.

Family THIRD Preference:

The annual visa limit is 23,400. Two oversubscribed countries (Mexico and Philippines) have sufficiently heavy demand in this preference to require a cut-off date substantially earlier than the worldwide date. The top ten countries with the highest F3 waiting list totals are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Family Third Preference Total</u> | <u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Mexico | 203,947 | 24.7% |
| Philippines | 145,101 | 17.6% |
| India | 61,047 | 7.4% |
| Vietnam | 57,607 | 7.0% |
| China-mainland born | 29,046 | 3.5% |
| Cuba | 26,742 | 3.2% |
| Dominican Republic | 18,128 | 2.2% |
| Pakistan | 16,708 | 2.0% |
| Haiti | 15,613 | 1.9% |
| Jamaica | 13,415 | 1.6% |
| <u>All Others</u> | <u>238,637</u> | <u>28.9%</u> |
| Total | 825,991 | 100% |

Family FOURTH Preference:

Applicants registered in the Family FOURTH preference total 2,549,718. Annual visa issuances are limited to 65,000. The waiting period for the Family FOURTH preference is longer than any other category because the demand significantly exceeds the number of available visas. The countries listed below have the largest number of FOURTH preference applicants:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Family Fourth Preference Total</u> | <u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u> |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Mexico | 758,415 | 29.8% |
| India | 241,900 | 9.5% |
| Vietnam | 195,881 | 7.7% |
| China-mainland born | 181,849 | 7.1% |
| Bangladesh | 170,971 | 6.7% |
| Philippines | 147,932 | 5.8% |
| Pakistan | 107,201 | 4.2% |
| Dominican Republic | 64,866 | 2.5% |
| Haiti | 51,634 | 2.0% |
| Cuba | 45,822 | 1.8% |
| All Others | 583,247 | 22.9% |
| Total | 2,549,718 | 100% |

The steadily growing waiting period in this preference is now more than twelve years for countries of most favorable visa availability and even longer for some oversubscribed countries.

EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCES

It is important to note that eighty-five percent of all Employment preference immigrants were processed as adjustment of status cases at CIS offices during FY 2015. Cases pending with CIS are not counted in the consular waiting list tally which is presented below. Therefore, in several Employment categories the waiting list totals being provided below significantly understate real immigrant demand. The Employment waiting list counts not only prospective workers, but also their spouses and children entitled under the law to derivative preference status.

Employment FIRST Preference:

Top countries are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Employment First Preference</u> | <u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u> |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| China-mainland born | 902 | 26.0% |
| India | 333 | 9.6% |
| Great Britain and Northern Ireland | 215 | 6.2% |
| Canada | 212 | 6.1% |
| Iran | 184 | 5.3% |
| Korea, South | 182 | 5.2% |
| Venezuela | 145 | 4.2% |
| France | 109 | 3.1% |
| Mexico | 98 | 2.8% |
| Brazil | 65 | 1.9% |
| <u>All Others</u> | <u>1,029</u> | <u>29.6%</u> |
| Worldwide Total | 3,474 | 100% |

Visa availability is "current" for all countries.

Employment SECOND Preference:

Top countries are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Employment Second Preference</u> | <u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u> |
|------------------------|---|---|
| India | 7,646 | 66.8% |
| Korea, South | 964 | 8.4% |
| China-mainland born | 893 | 7.8% |
| Philippines | 379 | 3.3% |
| Iran | 168 | 1.5% |
| <u>All Others</u> | <u>1,390</u> | <u>12.2%</u> |
| Worldwide Total | 11,440 | 100% |

This category is "current" at present for all but two countries.

Employment THIRD Preference:

Top countries are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Employment Third Preference</u> | <u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u> |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Philippines | 28,102 | 45.7% |
| India | 21,590 | 35.1% |
| China-mainland born | 1,681 | 2.7% |
| Korea, South | 1,379 | 2.2% |
| Great Britain and Northern Ireland | 1,047 | 1.7% |
| <u>All Others</u> | <u>7,785</u> | <u>12.6%</u> |
| Worldwide Total | 61,584 | 100% |

Employment Third “Other Workers”:

Top Countries are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Employment Third Preference: Skilled Worker/ Professional Components</u> | <u>Percent of Waiting List in These Classes</u> |
|------------------------|--|--|
| China-mainland born | 2,796 | 45.0% |
| Korea, South | 819 | 13.2% |
| Philippines | 770 | 12.4% |
| India | 518 | 8.3% |
| Mexico | 503 | 8.1% |
| <u>All Others</u> | <u>802</u> | <u>13.0%</u> |
| Worldwide Total | 6,208 | 100% |

Two oversubscribed countries (China-mainland born and India) have sufficiently heavy demand in the Employment Third and Third “Other Worker” Preferences to require cut-off dates substantially earlier than the worldwide dates.

Employment FOURTH Preference:

Top countries are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Employment Fourth Preference</u> | <u>Percent of Waiting List in These Classes</u> |
|------------------------|--|--|
| India | 121 | 32.0% |
| Afghanistan | 21 | 5.5% |
| Nigeria | 18 | 4.7% |
| Korea, South | 17 | 4.5% |
| Mexico | 16 | 4.2% |
| <u>All Others</u> | <u>186</u> | <u>49.1%</u> |
| Worldwide Total | 379 | 100% |

Visa availability is “current” at present for all countries.

Employment FIFTH Preference:

Top countries are:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Employment Fifth Preference</u> | <u>Percent of Waiting List in These Classes</u> |
|------------------------|---|--|
| China-mainland born | 15,830 | 89.6% |
| Hong Kong S.A.R. | 254 | 1.4% |
| Vietnam | 245 | 1.4% |
| China-Taiwan born | 158 | 0.9% |
| Korea, South | 148 | 0.9% |
| <u>All Others</u> | <u>1,027</u> | <u>5.8%</u> |
| Worldwide Total | 17,662 | 100% |

Visa availability is “current” at present for all countries except China-mainland born.

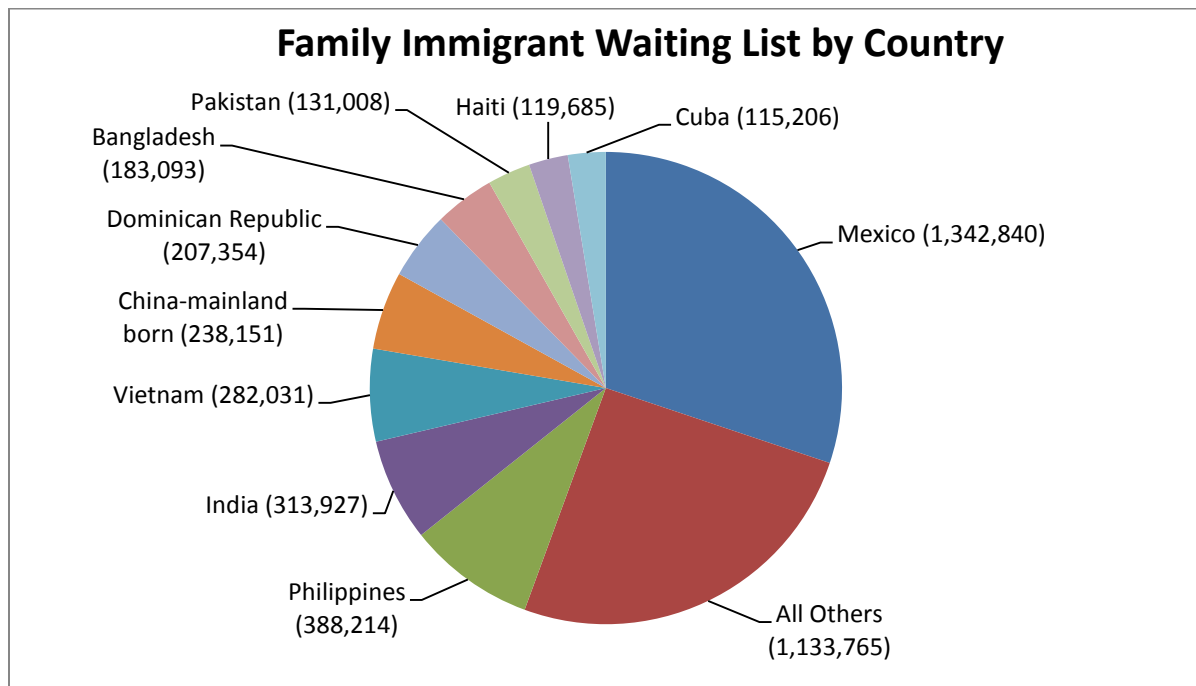
Family

Immigrant Waiting List By Country

The ten countries with the highest number of Family-sponsored waiting list registrants are listed below; together these represent 74.6% of the total. This list includes all countries with at least 115,000 persons on the waiting list. (The per-country limit in INA 202 sets an annual maximum on the amount of Family preference visas which may be issued to applicants from any one country; the FY 2016 per-country limit will be 15,820.)

Family Preferences

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Mexico | 1,342,840 |
| Philippines | 388,214 |
| India | 313,927 |
| Vietnam | 282,031 |
| China-mainland born | 238,151 |
| Dominican Republic | 207,354 |
| Bangladesh | 183,093 |
| Pakistan | 131,008 |
| Haiti | 119,685 |
| Cuba | 115,206 |
| All Others | 1,133,765 |
| Worldwide Total | 4,455,274 |

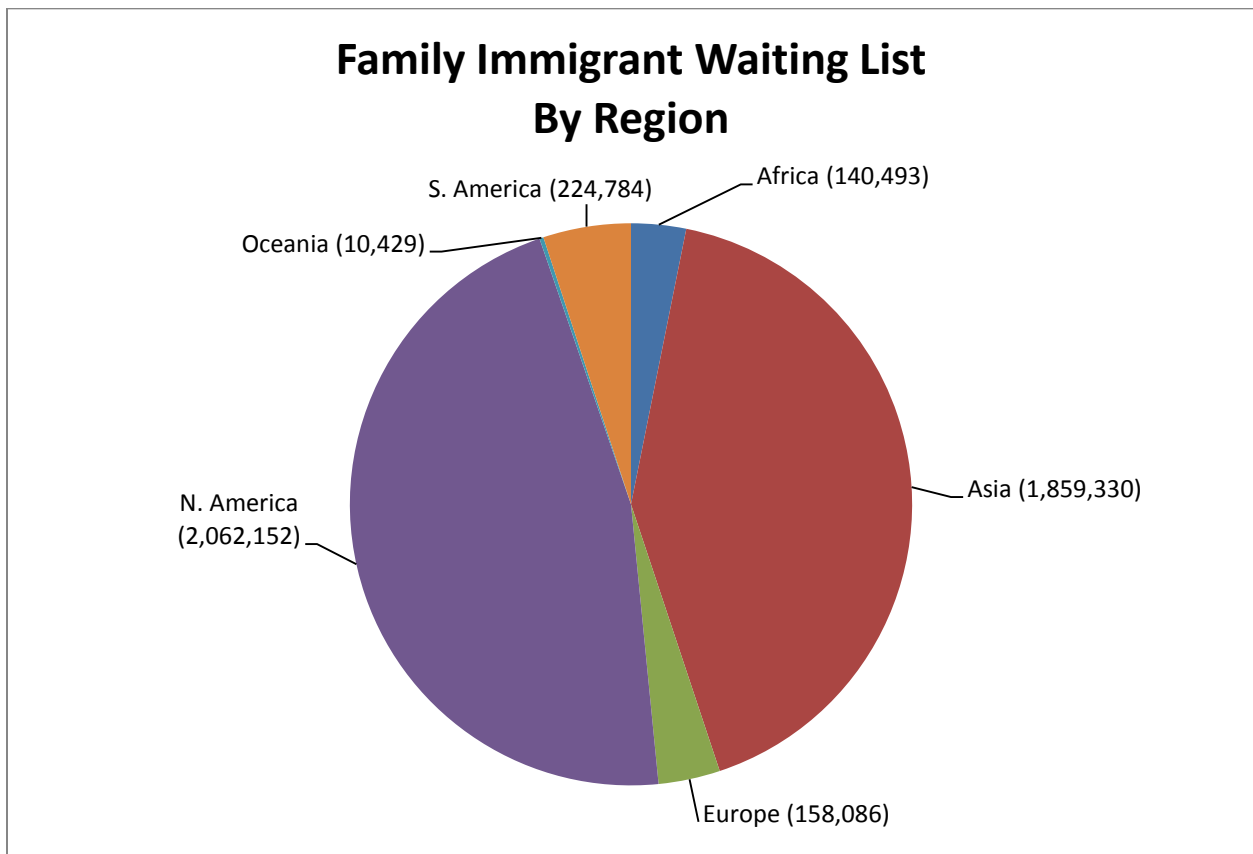


Family Immigrant Waiting List By Region

A breakdown of the NVC waiting list by region is:

| Region | Total |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Africa | 140,493 |
| Asia | 1,859,330 |
| Europe | 158,086 |
| N. America* | 2,062,152 |
| Oceania | 10,429 |
| S. America | 224,784 |
| Family Total | 4,455,274 |

*North America includes Canada, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

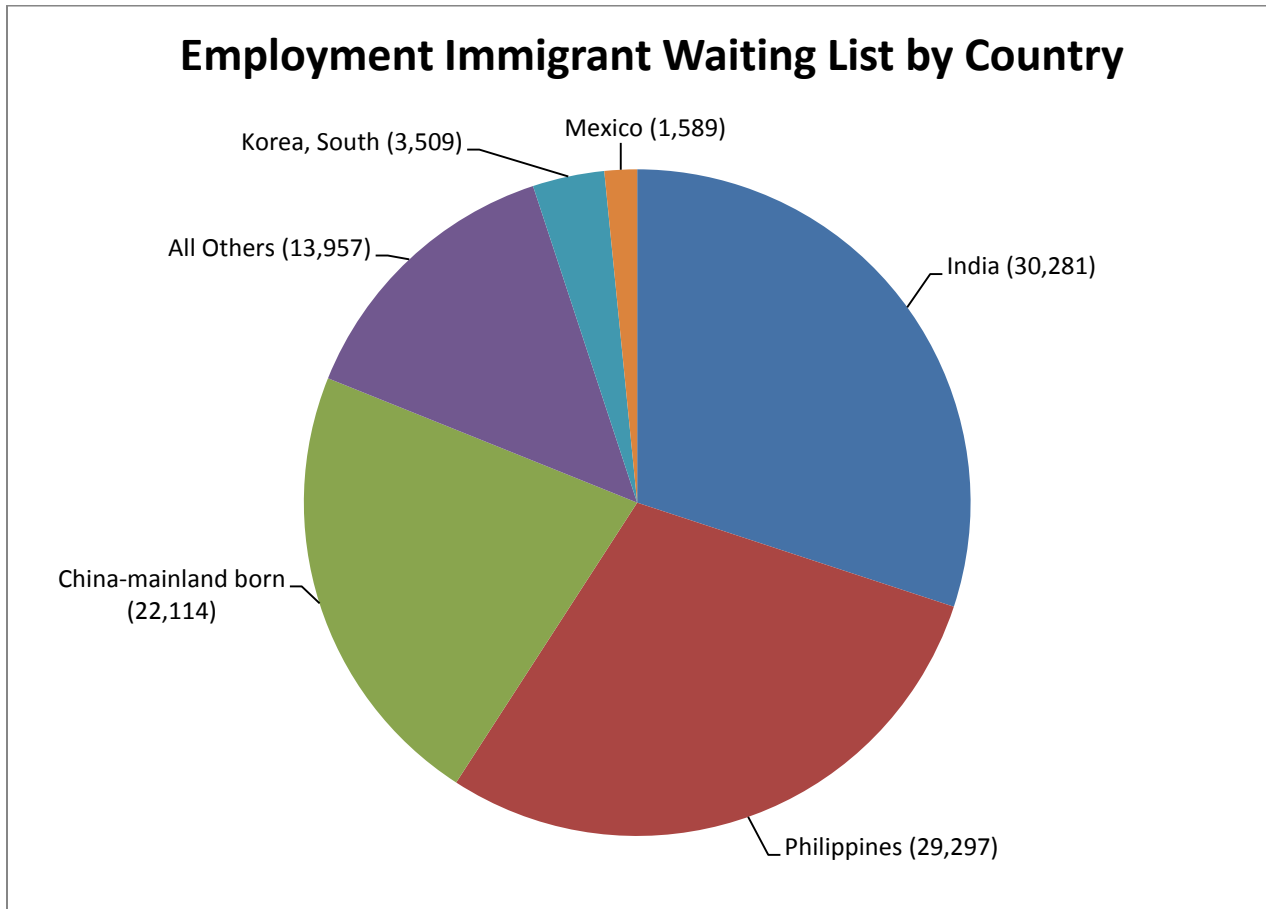


Employment Immigrant Waiting List By Country

The five countries with the highest number of Employment-based waiting list registrants are listed below; together these represent 86.1% of the total. This list includes all countries with at least 1,500 persons on the waiting list. (The per-country limit in INA 202 sets an annual maximum on the amount of Employment preference visas which may be issued to applicants from any one country; the FY 2016 per-country limit will be approximately 9,825.)

Employment Preferences

| Country | Total |
|------------------------|----------------|
| India | 30,281 |
| Philippines | 29,297 |
| China-mainland born | 22,114 |
| Korea, South | 3,509 |
| Mexico | 1,589 |
| All Others | 13,957 |
| Worldwide Total | 100,747 |



Employment Immigrant Waiting List By Region

A breakdown of the NVC waiting list by region is:

| Region | Total |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Africa | 1,106 |
| Asia | 90,922 |
| Europe | 3,353 |
| N. America* | 3,377 |
| Oceania | 184 |
| S. America | 1,805 |
| Employment Total | 100,747 |

*North America includes Canada, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

