

# Refugees and Asylees: 2012

DANIEL C. MARTIN AND JAMES E. YANKAY

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 2012.<sup>1</sup>

A total of 58,179 persons<sup>2</sup> were admitted to the United States as refugees during 2012 (see Figure 1). The leading countries of nationality for refugees were Bhutan, Burma, and Iraq. During 2012, 29,484 individuals were granted asylum,<sup>3</sup> including 17,506 who were granted asylum affirmatively by the Department of Homeland Security<sup>4</sup> (DHS) and 11,978 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 Ethiopia. Documents for travel to the United States were issued to 13,049 individuals who were approved for derivative asylum status while located abroad. The leading countries of nationality for the recipients of follow-to-join travel documents were China, Haiti, and Nepal. In addition to those approved overseas, 1,028 individuals were approved for derivative asylum status while residing in the United States.

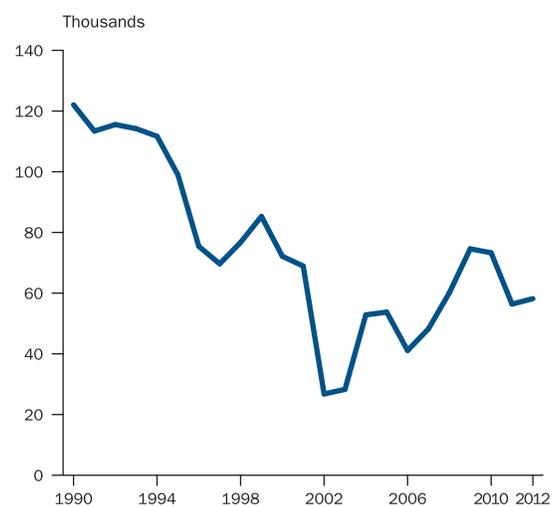
## DEFINING “REFUGEE” AND “ASYLUM” STATUS

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 nationality<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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., in-country processing). In 2012, certain nationals of Cuba, the

<sup>6</sup> Congress expanded this definition in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to include 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. 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 2012



Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (WRAPS).

<sup>1</sup> In this report, years refer to fiscal years (October 1 to September 30). Data presented refer to individuals not cases.

<sup>2</sup> Refugee data in this report differ slightly from numbers reported by the Department of State (DOS). DOS refugee numbers include Amerasians, whereas DHS reports Amerasians as lawful permanent residents.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Affirmative asylum data are current as of January 2013 and differ slightly from fiscal year-end 2012 numbers reported by the Asylum Division, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), of the Department of Homeland Security.

<sup>5</sup> Or, if an applicant is considered "stateless," his or her country of last habitual residence.



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republics of the former Soviet Union, and Iraq were 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 used the Attorney General's parole authority to bring large groups of persons into the country for humanitarian reasons, beginning in 1956 with nationals of Hungary 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.<sup>7</sup> The total number of refugees authorized for admission in 2012 was 76,000. 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 refugee arrivals from Iraq, Burma, and Bhutan (see Table 1).

<sup>7</sup> 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: 2010 to 2012\***

Region	Ceiling		
	2012	2011	2010
Total . . . . .	76,000	80,000	80,000
Africa . . . . .	12,000	15,000	15,500
East Asia . . . . .	18,000	19,000	18,000
Europe/Central Asia . . . . .	2,000	2,000	2,500
Latin America/Caribbean . . . . .	5,500	5,500	5,500
Near East/South Asia . . . . .	35,500	35,500	38,000
Unallocated Reserve . . . . .	3,000	3,000	500

\* Ceiling numbers reflect revisions made each fiscal year.

Source: U.S. Department of State, Proposed Refugee Admissions for FY 2013—Report to Congress.

## 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 One (P-1)—individuals referred by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a U.S. Embassy, or certain nongovernmental organizations; Priority Two (P-2)—groups of special humanitarian concern; and Priority Three (P-3)—family reunification cases.<sup>8</sup> 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, 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<sup>9</sup> may obtain derivative refugee status. 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, whereas a following-to-join derivative is a 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 apply for accompanying or following-to-join benefits for his or her

<sup>8</sup> Priority Three processing was suspended in October 2008, but it will resume in 2013 with the introduction of the new form DS-7656, Affidavit of Relationship (AOR).

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

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 prior to the principal's admission into the United States. The principal refugee must file a Form I-730, *Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition*, 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 legal permanent resident (LPR) status. Refugees granted LPR 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 (PRM) 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 2012, 58,179 refugees were admitted to the United States—a 3.2 percent increase from 56,384 in 2011 (See Figure 1). 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 increased slightly from 2011 to 2012.

### Category of Admission

Principal refugees accounted for 27,355 (47 percent) of the 58,179 refugees admitted to the United States in 2012 (see Table 2).<sup>10</sup> Dependent children and spouses represented 37 percent and 16 percent, respectively, of refugee admissions. There were 1,213 follow-to-join beneficiaries, constituting 2.1 percent of the 58,179 total.

<sup>10</sup> As of January 2013.

### Country of Nationality

In 2012, the leading countries of nationality for refugee admissions were Bhutan (26 percent), Burma (24 percent), and Iraq (21 percent) (see Table 3). Seventy-one percent of refugee admissions in 2012 were from these three countries. Other leading countries included Somalia (8.4 percent), Cuba (3.3 percent), Democratic Republic of Congo (3.2 percent), Iran (3 percent), and Eritrea (2.3 percent).

### Age, Sex, and Marital Status

Thirty-two percent of refugees admitted to the United States in 2012 were under 18 years of age (see Table 4). Refugees are, on average, younger than the U.S. native-born population. In 2012, the median age of refugees arriving in the United States was 24 years; in contrast, the median age of the native-born population in 2012 was 35 years.<sup>11</sup> A slight majority of refugees were male (54 percent), and 38 percent were married.

<sup>11</sup> Calculated from the March 2012 Current Population Survey public use microdata file from the U.S. Census Bureau.

**Table 2.**  
Refugee Arrivals by Category of Admission: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2012

Category of admission	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	58,179	100.0	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0
Principal Applicant . . . . .	27,355	47.0	25,075	44.5	32,251	44.0
Dependents . . . . .	30,824	53.0	31,309	55.5	41,042	56.0
Spouse . . . . .	9,532	16.4	9,751	17.3	12,835	17.5
Child . . . . .	21,292	36.6	21,558	38.2	28,207	38.5

Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (WRAPS).

**Table 3.**  
Refugee Arrivals by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2012  
(Ranked by 2012 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	58,179	100.0	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0
Bhutan . . . . .	15,070	25.9	14,999	26.6	12,363	16.9
Burma . . . . .	14,160	24.3	16,972	30.1	16,693	22.8
Iraq . . . . .	12,163	20.9	9,388	16.7	18,016	24.6
Somalia . . . . .	4,911	8.4	3,161	5.6	4,884	6.7
Cuba . . . . .	1,948	3.3	2,920	5.2	4,818	6.6
Congo, Democratic Republic . . . . .	1,863	3.2	977	1.7	3,174	4.3
Iran . . . . .	1,758	3.0	2,032	3.6	3,543	4.8
Eritrea . . . . .	1,346	2.3	2,032	3.6	2,570	3.5
Sudan . . . . .	1,077	1.9	334	0.6	558	0.8
Ethiopia . . . . .	620	1.1	560	1.0	668	0.9
All other countries, including unknown . . . . .	3,263	5.6	3,009	5.3	6,006	8.2

Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (WRAPS).

**Table 4.****Refugee Arrivals by Age, Sex, and Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2012**

Characteristic	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>AGE</b>						
Total . . . . .	58,179	100.0	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0
0 to 17 years . . . . .	18,876	32.4	19,232	34.1	25,373	34.6
18 to 24 years . . . . .	9,700	16.7	9,588	17.0	11,853	16.2
25 to 34 years . . . . .	13,491	23.2	11,802	20.9	14,954	20.4
35 to 44 years . . . . .	7,446	12.8	7,124	12.6	9,587	13.1
45 to 54 years . . . . .	4,409	7.6	4,230	7.5	5,727	7.8
55 to 64 years . . . . .	2,441	4.2	2,438	4.3	3,218	4.4
65 years and over . . . . .	1,816	3.1	1,970	3.5	2,581	3.5
<b>SEX</b>						
Total . . . . .	58,179	100.0	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0
Male . . . . .	31,380	53.9	29,436	52.2	38,624	52.7
Female . . . . .	26,799	46.1	26,948	47.8	34,669	47.3
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>						
Total . . . . .	58,179	100.0	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0
Married . . . . .	22,322	38.4	22,095	39.2	28,567	39.0
Single . . . . .	32,608	56.0	31,324	55.6	41,022	56.0
Other* . . . . .	3,249	5.6	2,965	5.3	3,704	5.1

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

Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (WRAPS).

**Table 5.****Refugee Arrivals by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2012**

(Ranked by 2012 state of residence)

State of residence	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	58,179	100.0	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0
Texas . . . . .	5,905	10.1	5,627	10.0	7,918	10.8
California . . . . .	5,167	8.9	4,987	8.8	8,577	11.7
New York . . . . .	3,525	6.1	3,529	6.3	4,559	6.2
Pennsylvania . . . . .	2,809	4.8	2,972	5.3	2,632	3.6
Florida . . . . .	2,244	3.9	2,906	5.2	4,216	5.8
Georgia . . . . .	2,516	4.3	2,636	4.7	3,224	4.4
Michigan . . . . .	3,594	6.2	2,588	4.6	3,188	4.3
Arizona . . . . .	2,234	3.8	2,168	3.8	3,400	4.6
Washington . . . . .	2,165	3.7	2,137	3.8	3,004	4.1
North Carolina . . . . .	2,099	3.6	2,120	3.8	2,342	3.2
Other . . . . .	25,921	44.6	24,714	43.8	30,233	41.2

Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (WRAPS).

**State of Residence**

The leading states of residence of refugees admitted to the United States in 2012 were Texas (10 percent), California (8.9 percent), New York (6.1 percent), and Pennsylvania (4.8 percent) (see Table 5). Texas remained the most common destination of refugees, as arrivals increased 4.9 percent from 5,627 in 2011 to 5,905 in 2012. The number of new refugees residing in Florida declined 23 percent while the number of new refugees residing in Michigan increased 39 percent.

**ASYLEES****Filing of Claims**

Generally, any alien present in the United States or arriving at a port of entry may apply for asylum regardless of his or her

immigration status. Asylum may be obtained in one of three ways: affirmatively through a USCIS asylum officer, defensively in removal proceedings before an immigration judge of the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) of the Department of Justice, or 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 21<sup>12</sup> 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 apply for accompanying or following-to-join benefits<sup>13</sup> 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 prior to 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 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.

Individuals granted asylum are 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

<sup>12</sup> See reference to Child Status Protection Act.

<sup>13</sup> In practice, the vast majority of derivative asylum status beneficiaries receive following-to-join benefits.

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 application for asylum 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 follow-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

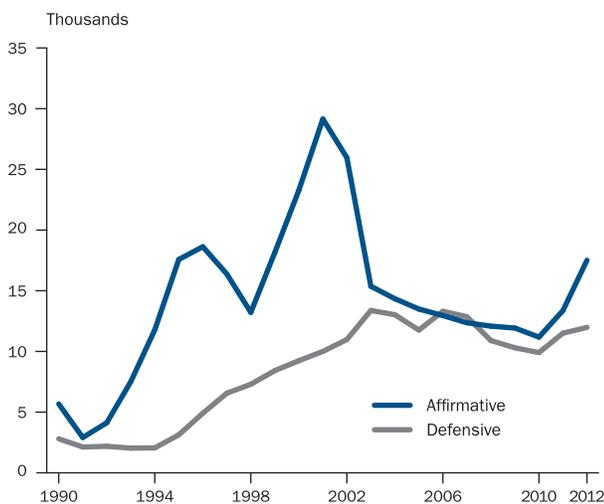
The affirmative asylee data presented in this report were obtained from the Refugee, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS) of USCIS. Defensive asylee data were obtained from EOIR. In 2011, the Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) began receiving data on individuals who were issued travel documents to enter the United

States as follow-to-join asylum derivatives; previously these data were not included in OIS reports. Most follow-to-join 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 follow-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 obtained from the Computer-Linked Application Information Management System (CLAIMS) of USCIS.

## TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ASYLEES

The total number of persons granted either affirmative or defensive asylum in the United States increased from 24,873 in 2011 to 29,484 in 2012. The number of persons who were granted asylum affirmatively through USCIS increased from 13,369 in 2011 to 17,506 in 2012 (see Figure 2), a 31 percent increase. The number of Egyptians granted asylum in this manner more than tripled from 2011 to 2012. The number of persons granted asylum defensively by an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals of EOIR also increased, from 11,504 in 2011 to 11,978 in 2012. The number of persons authorized for travel from abroad to the United States as follow-to-join derivatives increased from 9,550 in 2011 to 13,049 in 2012. The number of individuals who received follow-to-join asylum status while residing in the United States decreased from 1,176 in 2011 to 1,028 in 2012 (See Figure 3).

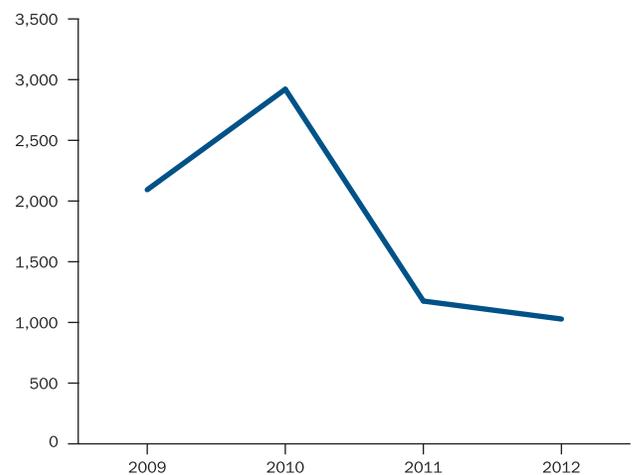
Figure 2.  
**Annual Flow of Affirmative and Defensive Asylees: 1990 to 2012**



Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Refugee, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS), and Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

Figure 3.  
**I-730 Follow-to-Join Asylum Beneficiaries Approved while Residing in the United States: 2009 to 2012**



Source: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Computer-Linked Application Information Management System (CLAIMS).

## Country of Nationality

In 2012, the leading countries of nationality of persons granted either affirmative or defensive asylum were China (34 percent), Egypt (9.8 percent), Ethiopia (3.8 percent), Venezuela (3.7 percent), and Nepal (3.3 percent) (see Table 6). Nationals of these five countries accounted for over half of all persons granted asylum.

In 2012, the top three countries of nationality for affirmative asylees were China (27 percent), Egypt (15 percent), and Venezuela (5.5 percent) (see Table 7). Nationals of these three countries accounted for 48 percent of all persons granted affirmative asylum. The leading countries of nationality for persons granted defensive asylum were China (45 percent), Ethiopia (3.8 percent), and Nepal (3.4 percent) (see Table 8). More than one-half of defensive asylees in 2012 were nationals of these three countries.

The leading countries of nationality for following-to-join asylees authorized for travel to the United States in 2012 were China (38 percent), Haiti (7.1 percent) and Nepal (6.9 percent) (see Table 9). Nationals of these three countries accounted for more than half of 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 2012, 73 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 2012 was 29 years. Fifty-one percent were male, and 46 percent were married.

In 2012, approximately 47 percent of follow-to-join beneficiaries approved overseas were under 18 years of age

**Table 6.**

### All Asylees by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2012

(Ranked by 2012 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	29,484	100.0	24,873	100.0	21,084	100.0
China, People's Republic	10,151	34.4	8,585	34.5	6,693	31.7
Egypt	2,882	9.8	1,026	4.1	531	2.5
Ethiopia	1,122	3.8	1,068	4.3	1,086	5.2
Venezuela	1,099	3.7	1,103	4.4	648	3.1
Nepal	974	3.3	742	3.0	639	3.0
Russia	728	2.5	661	2.7	551	2.6
Iran	716	2.4	474	1.9	481	2.3
Haiti	682	2.3	872	3.5	834	4.0
Guatemala	536	1.8	480	1.9	460	2.2
Eritrea	472	1.6	633	2.5	360	1.7
All other countries, including unknown	10,122	34.3	9,229	37.1	8,801	41.7

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Refugee, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS) and Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

**Table 7.**

### Affirmative Asylees by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2012

(Ranked by 2012 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	17,506	100.0	13,369	100.0	11,178	100.0
China, People's Republic	4,768	27.2	3,885	29.1	2,890	25.9
Egypt	2,576	14.7	752	5.6	315	2.8
Venezuela	969	5.5	898	6.7	467	4.2
Ethiopia	664	3.8	563	4.2	679	6.1
Haiti	633	3.6	816	6.1	666	6.0
Iran	607	3.5	366	2.7	398	3.6
Nepal	571	3.3	419	3.1	408	3.7
Russia	552	3.2	467	3.5	390	3.5
Colombia	340	1.9	325	2.4	358	3.2
Mexico	337	1.9	176	1.3	136	1.2
All other countries, including unknown	5,489	31.4	4,702	35.2	4,471	40.0

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Refugee, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS).

**Table 8.**

### Defensive Asylees by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2012

(Ranked by 2012 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	11,978	100.0	11,504	100.0	9,906	100.0
China, People's Republic	5,383	44.9	4,700	40.9	3,803	38.4
Ethiopia	458	3.8	505	4.4	407	4.1
Nepal	403	3.4	323	2.8	231	2.3
Eritrea	351	2.9	481	4.2	181	1.8
Egypt	306	2.6	274	2.4	216	2.2
India	282	2.4	262	2.3	244	2.5
Soviet Union, former	281	2.3	248	2.2	176	1.8
Guatemala	222	1.9	199	1.7	167	1.7
El Salvador	191	1.6	163	1.4	146	1.5
Pakistan	191	1.6	150	1.3	115	1.2
All other countries, including unknown	3,910	32.6	4,199	36.5	4,220	42.6

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

**Table 9.**

**Follow-to-join Asylee Travel Documents Issued by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2011 to 2012**

Country of nationality	2012		2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	13,049	100.0	9,550	100.0
China, People's Republic	4,959	38.0	3,768	39.5
Haiti	927	7.1	1,020	10.7
Nepal	902	6.9	1,053	11.0
Ethiopia	587	4.5	548	5.7
Cameroon	449	3.4	403	4.2
Burma	390	3.0	128	1.3
Eritrea	308	2.4	138	1.4
Egypt	284	2.2	137	1.4
Congo, Republic	250	1.9	19	0.2
Guatemala	242	1.9	113	1.2
All other countries, including unknown	3,751	28.7	2,223	17.0

Source: U.S. Department of State, Consular Consolidated Database (CCD), U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Case and Activity Management for International Operations (CAMINO).

**Table 10.**

**Affirmative Asylees by Age, Sex, and Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2012**

Characteristic	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total	17,506	100.0	13,369	100.0	11,178	100.0
0 to 17 years	2,465	14.1	1,661	12.4	1,271	11.4
18 to 24 years	3,550	20.3	3,239	24.2	2,526	22.6
25 to 34 years	5,858	33.5	4,385	32.8	3,725	33.3
35 to 44 years	3,443	19.7	2,499	18.7	2,214	19.8
45 to 54 years	1,594	9.1	1,197	9.0	1,040	9.3
55 to 64 years	451	2.6	293	2.2	292	2.6
65 years and over	145	0.8	95	0.7	110	1.0
SEX						
Total	17,506	100.0	13,369	100.0	11,178	100.0
Male	8,897	50.8	6,877	51.4	5,826	52.1
Female	8,609	49.2	6,492	48.6	5,352	47.9
MARITAL STATUS						
Total	17,506	100.0	13,369	100.0	11,178	100.0
Single	8,657	49.5	6,933	51.9	5,590	50.0
Married	7,968	45.5	5,726	42.8	4,960	44.4
Other*	878	5.0	702	5.3	623	5.6
Unknown	3	0.0	8	0.1	5	0.0

\* Includes persons who were divorced, separated, or widowed.

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Refugee, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS).

**Table 12.**

**Affirmative Asylees by State or Territory of Residence: Fiscal Years 2010 to 2012**

(Ranked by 2012 state or territory of residence)

State or territory of residence	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	17,506	100.0	13,369	100.0	11,178	100.0
California	6,817	38.9	5,069	37.9	4,065	36.4
Florida	2,627	15.0	2,224	16.6	1,467	13.1
New York	2,404	13.7	2,027	15.2	1,730	15.5
Virginia	850	4.9	637	4.8	462	4.1
Maryland	718	4.1	525	3.9	398	3.6
Illinois	468	2.7	285	2.1	283	2.5
New Jersey	465	2.7	177	1.3	229	2.0
Texas	366	2.1	263	2.0	284	2.5
Washington	310	1.8	316	2.4	317	2.8
Pennsylvania	240	1.4	118	0.9	115	1.0
Other	2,241	12.8	1,728	12.9	1,828	16.4

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Refugee, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS).

**Table 11.**

**Follow-to-join Asylee Travel Documents Issued by Age and Sex: Fiscal Years 2011 to 2012**

Characteristic	2012		2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE				
Total	13,049	100.0	9,550	100.0
0 to 17 years	6,083	46.6	4,394	46.0
18 to 24 years	2,585	19.8	2,096	21.9
25 to 34 years	1,584	12.1	1,053	11.0
35 to 44 years	1,648	12.6	1,203	12.6
45 to 54 years	857	6.6	619	6.5
55 to 64 years	255	2.0	163	1.7
65 years and over	37	0.3	22	0.2
SEX				
Total	13,049	100.0	9,550	100.0
Male	5,120	39.2	3,848	40.3
Female	6,131	47.0	4,863	50.9
Unknown	1,798	13.8	839	8.8

Source: U.S. Department of State, Consular Consolidated Database (CCD), U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Case and Activity Management for International Operations (CAMINO).

(see Table 11). The median age of follow-to-join beneficiaries was 18 years; this was lower than that of other refugee and asylee populations, as the follow-to-join population is composed of spouses and children under 21 years of age.<sup>14</sup> Forty-seven percent of follow-to-join beneficiaries were identified as female. The marital status of following-to-join beneficiaries was not available in 2012. 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 2012, the leading states of residence for individuals granted asylum affirmatively were California (39 percent), Florida (15 percent), and New York (14 percent) (see Table 12). Approximately two-thirds of individuals granted affirmative asylum resided in these three states.

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

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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

<sup>14</sup> Includes those individuals 21 and older who are protected by provisions of the Child Status Protection Act.