



# Immigration & border security

# Immigration facts

This chapter provides the numbers to understand the foreign-born people who come to the US and the different pathways they follow. It brings together the best public data available from the agencies charged with administering and reporting on different parts of the complex immigration system.

## Incoming authorized immigrants

- About 2.9 million authorized immigrants entered the US in FY 2023, up 15% from FY 2022 and a record high since at least FY 1997.
- Work is the most common reason for authorized immigration to the US (42% of immigrants in FY 2023). Of all authorized work-related entries, 36% were from Mexico.
- More than half of all authorized immigrants come either to join family (27% of all authorized immigration in FY 2023) or for education (27%). More than half of these come from Asian countries.
- Refugee admissions reached 100,000 in FY 2024, the highest level since at least FY 2001. This was 25,000 below the annual refugee cap set by the Biden administration.

## Unauthorized immigration and courts

- Though asylum is a recognized process, asylum seekers are typically counted as unauthorized immigrants until their claims are approved. There were about 945,000 new asylum applications in FY 2023. About 17% of asylum decisions were approvals in FY 2023.
- The number of pending immigration court cases has increased every year since at least FY 2009, reaching a record 3.9 million in FY 2024.
- Border enforcement actions occur when people are deemed inadmissible at ports of entry or are apprehended after illegal crossings. There were 2.9 million of these actions in FY 2024, down from FY 2023's record high of 3.2 million.
- The US removed about 330,000 people in FY 2024, an 86% increase from FY 2023 but still 24% below the FY 2013 peak of 432,000.

## Immigrants in the US

- About 48 million foreign-born individuals lived in the US in 2023, comprising 14.3% of the population. More than half were naturalized citizens.
- An estimated 23% of the foreign-born population were unauthorized immigrants in 2023.

## Immigrants in the workforce

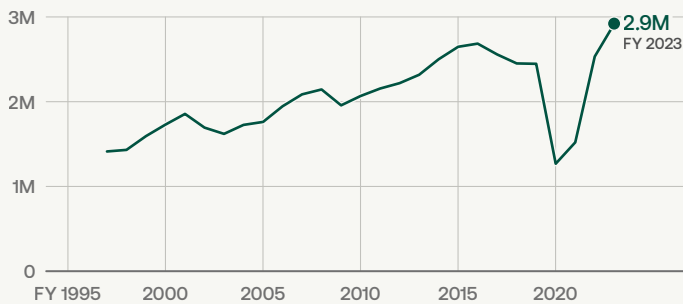
- The share of the US labor force that was foreign-born reached its highest level since at least 2007, at 19.2% of all workers in 2024.
- Foreign-born workers were most common in the construction industry, making up 29% of those employed.
- Work visas granted fell to 1.1 million in FY 2024 from their 25-year peak in FY 2023. Around 29% were for temporary agricultural (H-2A) workers. There were also 220,000 H-1B visas (20% of all work visas) for workers in specialty occupations, a decline of 17% from the record-high numbers of FY 2023.

## How many authorized immigrants come to the US each year?

About 2.9 million new authorized immigrants entered the US in FY 2023. Since FY 1997, about 76% of all new authorized immigrants have entered on non-tourist visas.

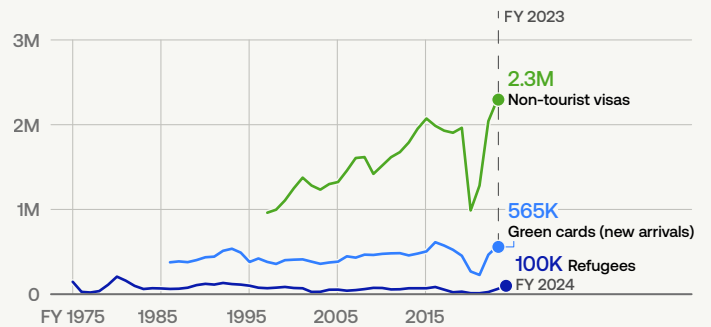
### New authorized immigrant arrivals

Total



Source: Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, Refugee Processing Center

By type

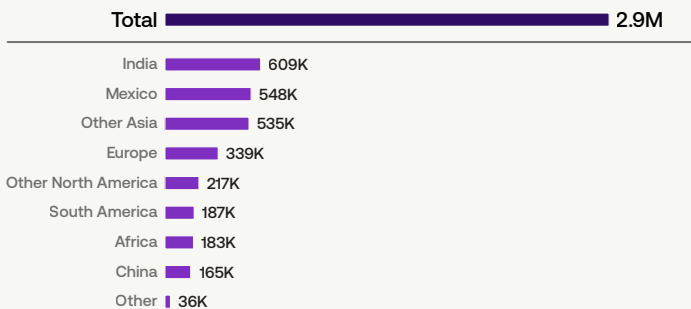


## Where do authorized immigrants come from?

People from Mexico and India accounted for 41% of all authorized arrivals, outnumbering all immigrants from Africa, Europe, and South America combined. A plurality of new authorized immigrants in FY 2023 came to the US for work.

### New authorized immigrant arrivals (FY 2023)

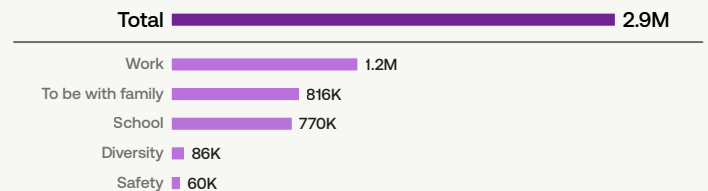
By region of birth/nationality



Source: Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, Refugee Processing Center  
Note: Includes non-tourist visas, new arrival green cards, and refugees. Estimates of country counts do not add to total because detailed new arrival green card data (on which this chart partially relies) for FY 2023 was not released at time of publishing, so FY 2022 values have been used.

### New authorized immigrant arrivals (FY 2023)

By reason for granted entry



Source: Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, Refugee Processing Center  
Note: Includes non-tourist visas, new arrival green cards, and refugees.



**Authorized immigration** includes people coming to the US on temporary visas that offer no path to citizenship and allow time-limited entry for work, school, or to visit family. It also includes people sponsored for visas by a relative or employer, refugees, and winners of the diversity visa lottery. Tourists, while authorized to enter the US, are not immigrants and are excluded from this analysis.

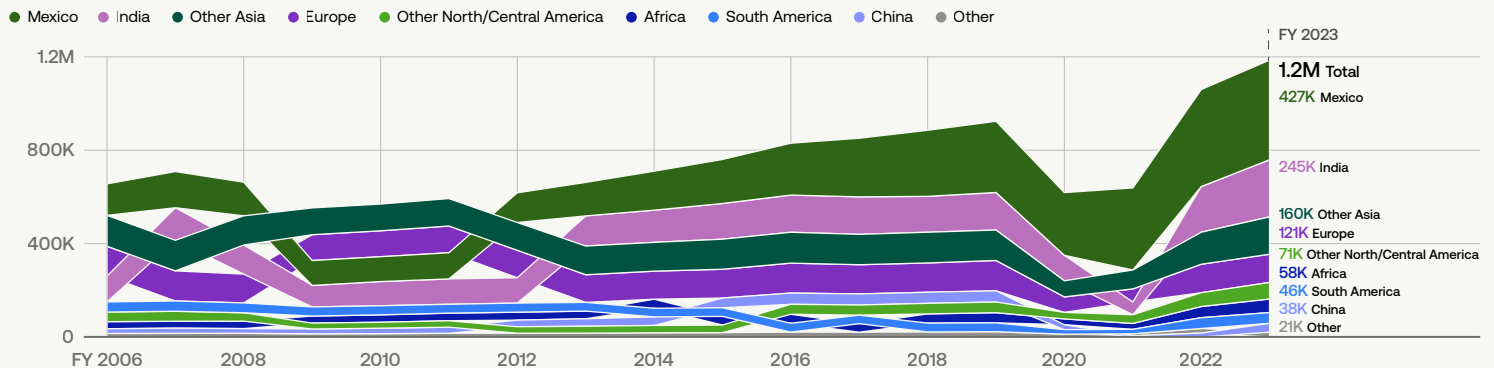
## Where do authorized immigrant workers and students come from?

In FY 2023, 1.2 million people, or 42% of all authorized immigrants, came to the US for work. A plurality of these were of Mexican nationality (36%).<sup>1</sup> The number of workers arriving from Mexico quadrupled between FY 2010 (when they were at a low) and FY 2023, compared to the 64% growth in workers coming from all other countries over the same period.

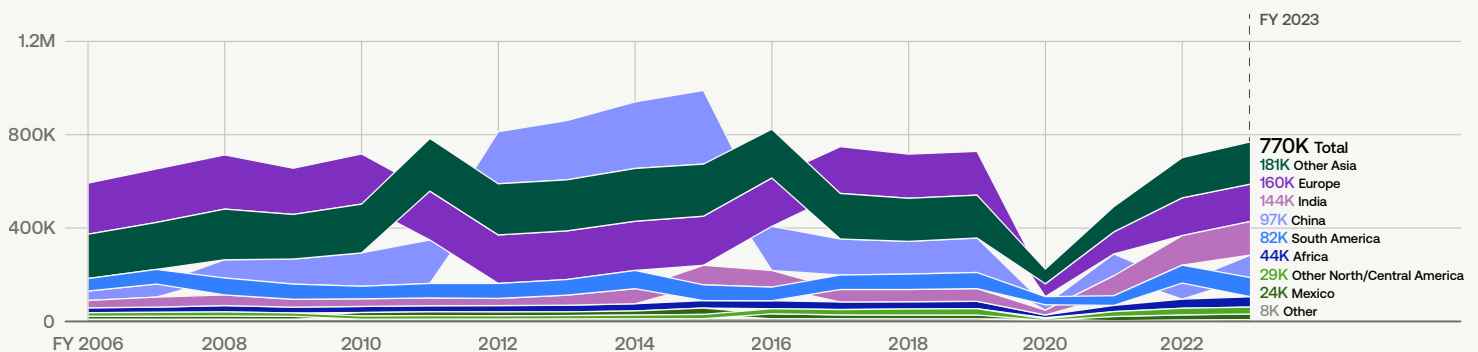
About 27% of all authorized immigrants, or 770,000 people, came to the US to study in FY 2023. The US issued 10% more education visas in FY 2023 than the prior year. Most were issued to people from Asia, who made up 55% of people entering the US to study. Thirty-one percent of education visas were issued to people from just two countries: India (19% of all education visas, up 14% from FY 2022) and China (13%, up 40%).

### New authorized immigrant arrivals, by country of birth/nationality

#### Immigrants coming for work



#### Immigrants coming for school



Source: Department of Homeland Security and Department of State

Note: Data includes non-tourist visas, new arrival green cards, and refugees. A change in policy in 2014 made Chinese students eligible for five-year student visas rather than one.

## How has authorized family immigration changed over time?

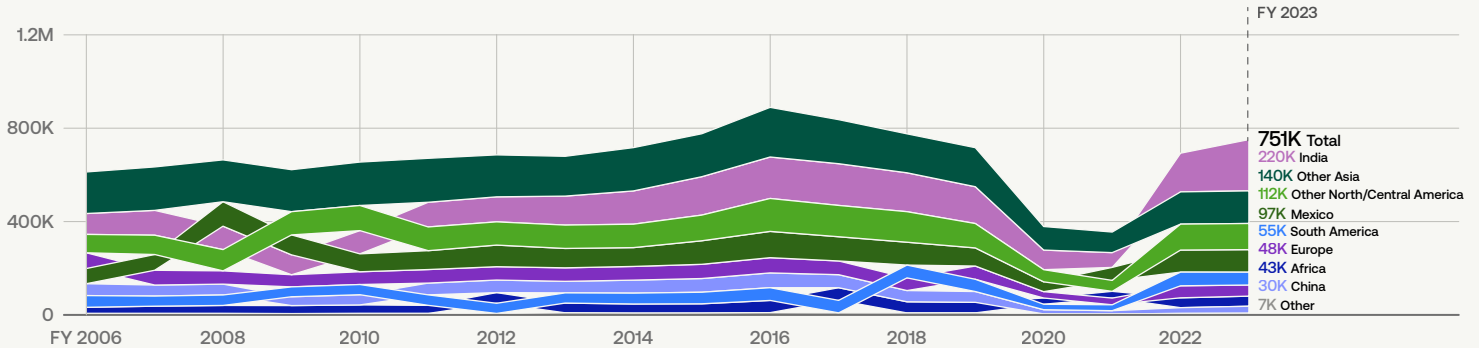
## Why else do immigrants come to the United States via authorized channels, and where do they come from?

In FY 2023, 751,000 people (about 27% of all authorized immigrants) came to the US to be with family, up 8% from FY 2022. Indians accounted for 29% of these immigrants; the 220,000 authorized Indian immigrants were the most of any nationality and up 33% from FY 2022. People from Asian countries besides India and China (19% of all family visas), Mexico (13%), and elsewhere in North and Central America (15%) also came to be with family. Immigrants from Europe and South America fell by 7% and 6%, respectively.

Four percent of all authorized immigrants, or 113,000 people, came to the US for reasons other than work, family, or school in FY 2023. Nearly half came from Asian countries besides China and India and 24% were refugees from this region. African immigrants accounted for a third of this group; 66% came as refugees and 34% entered with diversity visas.

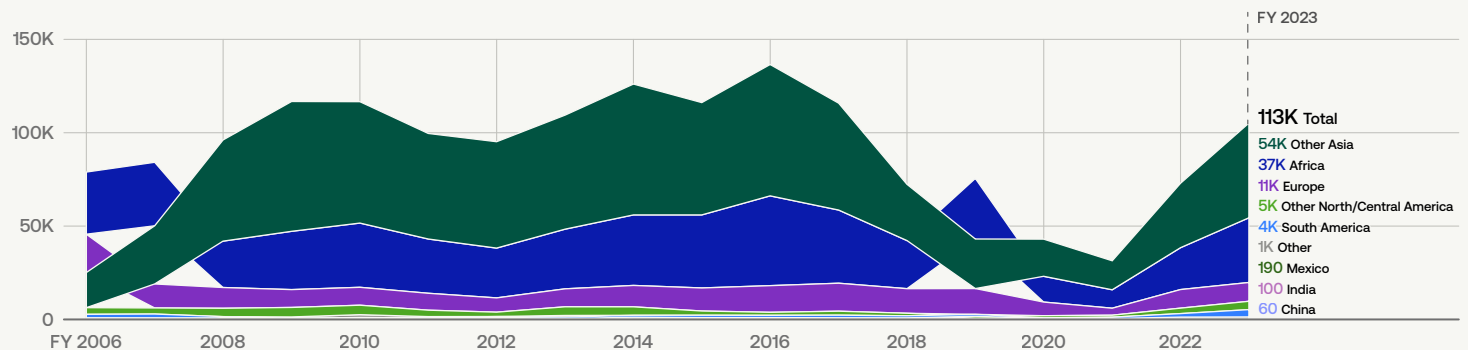
Immigrants coming for family

2023 green card data from the Department of Homeland Security describing new arrivals, countries of origin, and reasons for migration was not available as of publishing in August 2025, so these charts replicate the 2022 data for 2023. See chart notes on page 105 for more detail.



Immigrants coming for reasons other than work, family, or school

Please note difference in chart Y-axis scale (for legibility)

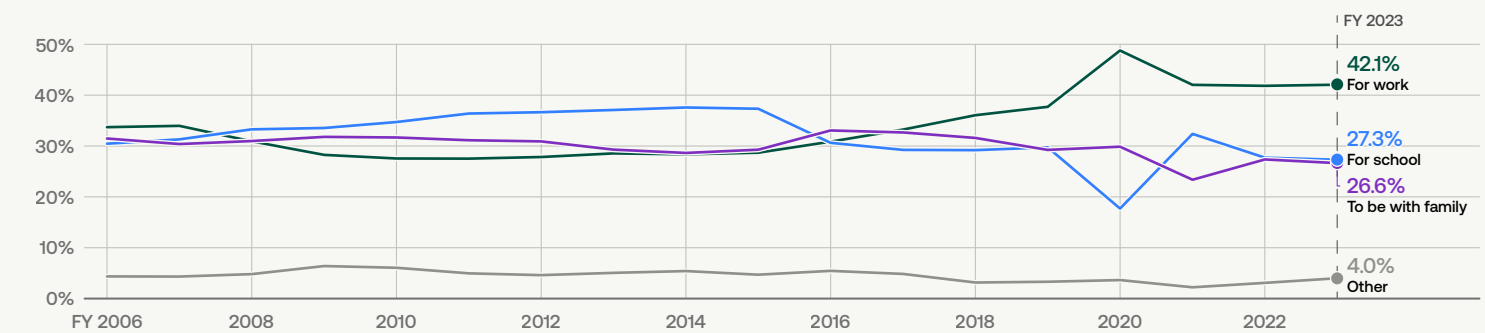


## How have reasons for authorized immigration changed over time?

Employment has been the largest driver of authorized immigration to the US since FY 2017, accounting for 42% of admissions in FY 2023. This hasn't always been the case: from FY 2008 to FY 2015, work was the third most common reason for admission, trailing both entries granted for education and to be with family. A 2014 policy change made Chinese students eligible for five-year (rather than one-year) student visas, which explains at least part of the decline in new student visas issued between 2015 and 2016.

### Reason for authorized immigration

By reason for entry

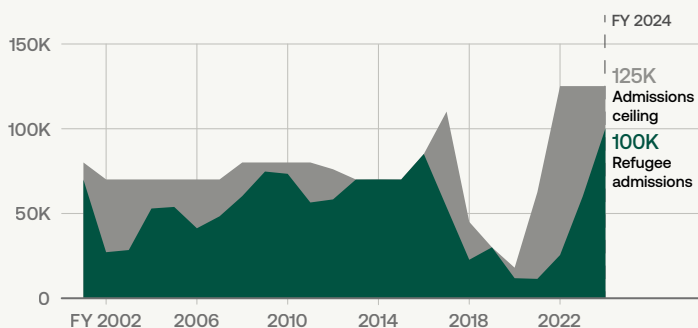


Source: Department of Homeland Security and Department of State  
Note: Data includes non-tourist visas, new arrival green cards, and refugees.

## How many refugees come to the US each year?

About 100,000 refugees were admitted in FY 2024, the most since at least FY 2001. Refugees are people who have left their homes due to persecution or fear of it to seek safety elsewhere; they must apply and be accepted for admission to the US before arrival.<sup>i</sup> In FY 2023, 45% of refugees came from Asia and 41% from Africa. Each year, the president caps the number of refugees who can enter the US. In October 2024, President Biden officially set the refugee ceiling for FY 2025 at 125,000.<sup>ii</sup> However, in January 2025, President Trump issued an executive order temporarily suspending all refugee resettlement.<sup>iv</sup>

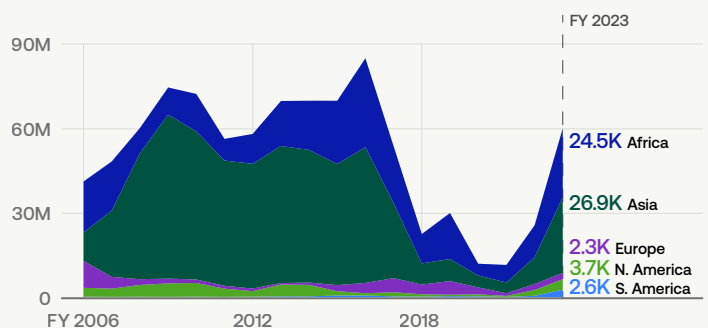
### Refugee ceiling and admissions



Source: Refugee Processing Center

### Refugees admitted

By region



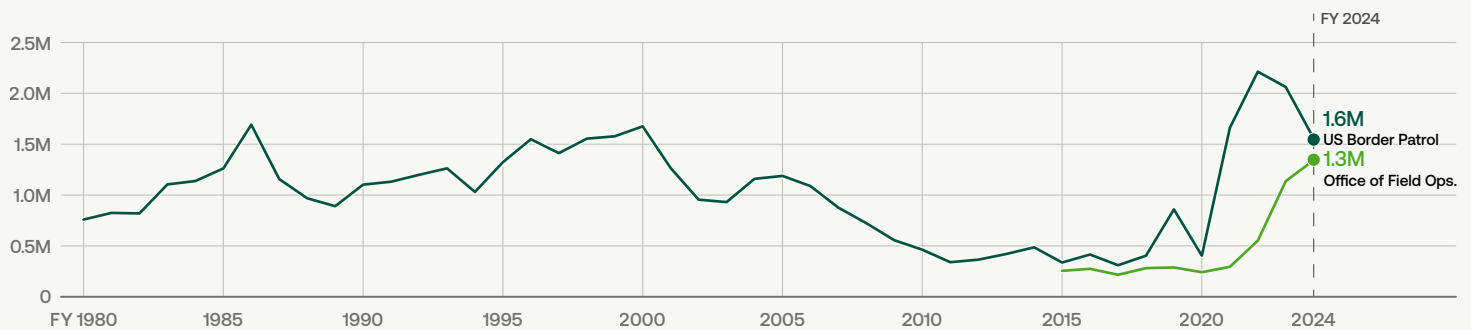
Source: Department of Homeland Security  
Note: Excludes the 931 refugees who arrived during this time whose region of origin is unknown, as well as the 10 refugees from Oceania.

## How many people are encountered by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP)?

Border enforcement actions fell to 2.9 million in FY 2024, down from a record high 3.2 million in FY 2023. In June 2025, there were about 25,000 enforcement actions, down 88% from June 2024. Total enforcement actions are the sum of individuals deemed inadmissible at ports of entry by the Office of Field Operations (OFO) and people who are apprehended after crossing the border between legal ports of entry by US Border Patrol (USBP). Between 2020 and 2023, enforcement also included people expelled during the pandemic under Title 42 of the US code.

### Annual border enforcement actions

By agency

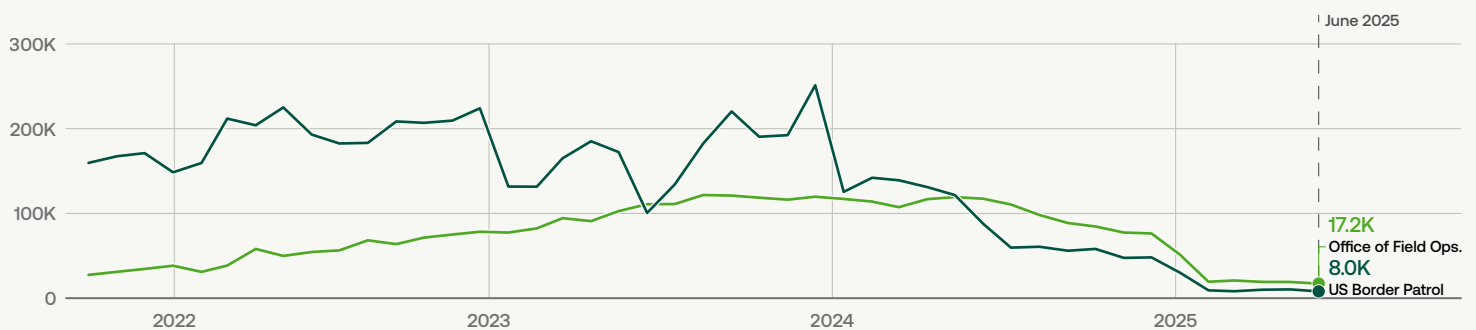


Source: US Customs and Border Protection

Note: Office of Field Operations actions include encounters with people deemed inadmissible at ports of entry. USBP actions include people apprehended while illegally entering the US between ports of entry. Both include people expelled under Title 42.

### Monthly border enforcement actions

By agency (recent months)



Source: US Customs and Border Protection

Note: Office of Field Operations actions include encounters with people deemed inadmissible at ports of entry. USBP actions include people apprehended while illegally entering the US between ports of entry. Both include people expelled under Title 42.

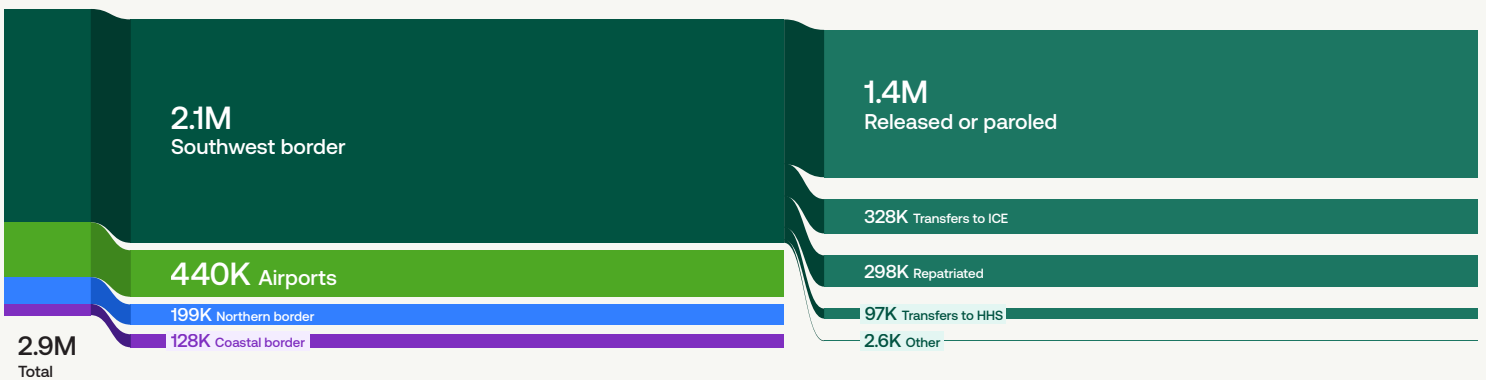


**Unauthorized immigrants** include: 1) Foreign-born people who are here in violation of our laws, like people who have crossed into the US undetected or have overstayed their temporary visas; 2) Noncitizens, referred to as *aliens* in US immigration law, lawfully released into the US while waiting for their asylum cases to be heard; 3) Noncitizens who are not otherwise eligible for admission but are paroled into the country for urgent humanitarian reasons or for the public benefit; and 4) People granted temporary relief from removal under programs like Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

## What happens to unauthorized immigrants encountered by CBP along the southwest border?

In FY 2024, 2.1 million enforcement actions — 74% of the total — happened along the southwest land border. Of the 1.5 million people encountered by USBP and the 600,000 deemed inadmissible by OFO at border posts, 66% were released or paroled<sup>v</sup> into the US and 14% were removed. The remaining 20% were transferred to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or the Department of Health and Human Services for further processing. Enforcement actions away from the southwest border took place at airports (15%), the northern land border (7%), and coastal borders (4%).

### Outcomes of southwest border encounters (FY 2024)



Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics

Note: Repatriations include court-ordered removals, voluntary returns, and withdrawals of applications for admission.

### Why are unauthorized immigrants sometimes permitted to enter the US?

People who would otherwise not be legally permitted to enter the US may sometimes be allowed into the country on a temporary basis and are counted amongst the unauthorized immigrant population. For example, people presenting at ports of entry or encountered at the border who may be eligible for asylum can be released into the country while waiting for their cases to be heard in immigration court.

People may also be let into the US through the parole process. Parolees are permitted to enter for urgent humanitarian reasons (e.g., medical treatment or family reunification); when their presence is a significant public benefit (e.g., testifying in criminal trial proceedings); through special programs offered to certain populations (e.g., the Central American Minors program); or when they're from specially designated countries in turmoil like Ukraine (through the U4U program) or Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela (through the CHNV program).<sup>vi</sup> Parole is granted at the discretion of immigration authorities, typically for a set period, and does not confer legal status (although parolees can pursue legal status through other channels). In January 2025, President Trump issued an executive order requiring a review of existing parole programs and policies.<sup>vii</sup>

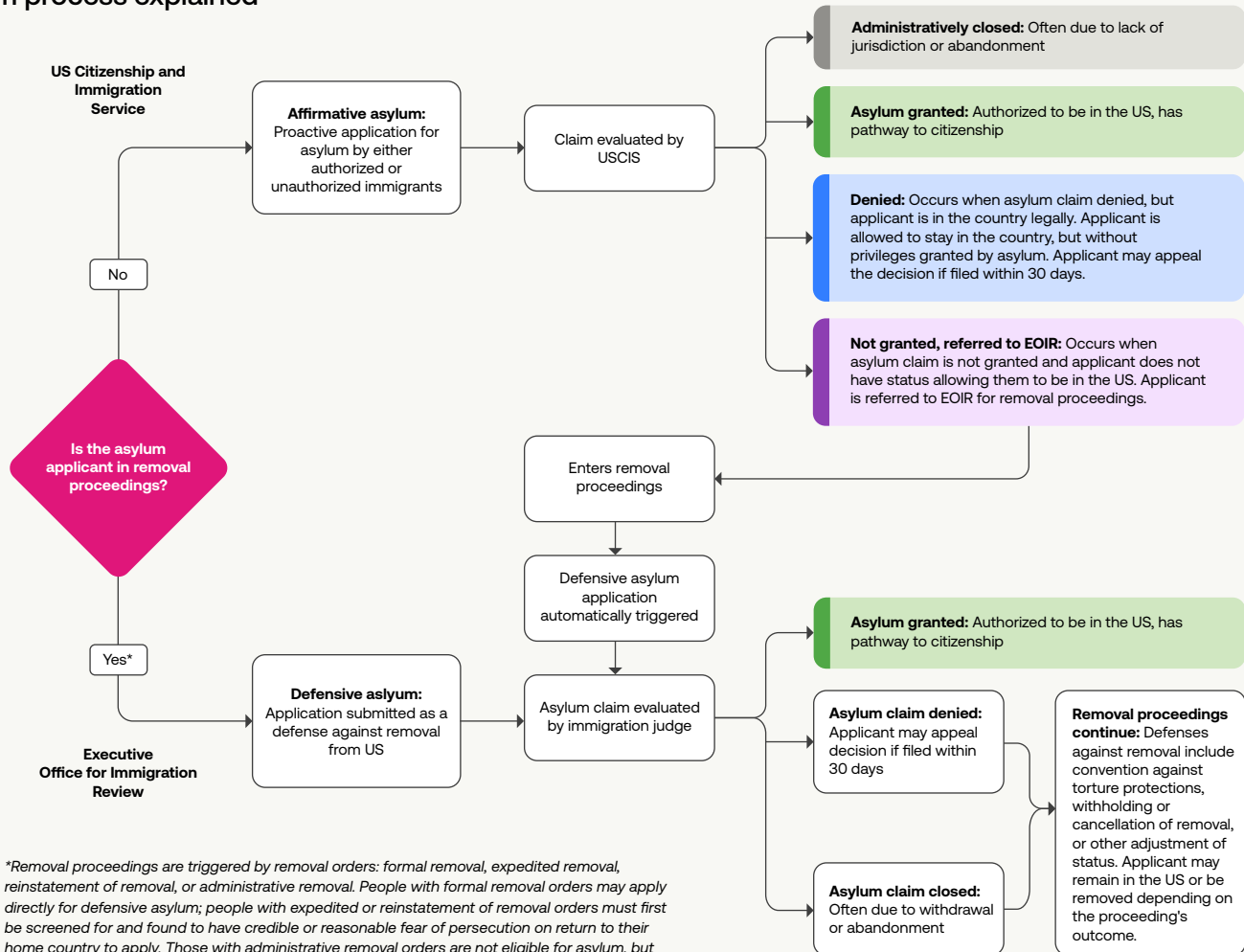


## What is the asylum process?

Asylees are people who are unwilling or unable to return to their country of origin, either due to persecution or fear of it. Unlike refugees who must obtain permission to enter the US before arrival, asylum seekers must already be present in the country or seeking admission at a port of entry and must request asylum within one year of arriving.

There are two kinds of asylum applications: affirmative and defensive.<sup>viii</sup> Affirmative asylum claims are filed proactively by both authorized and unauthorized immigrants who are not in removal proceedings and are handled by US Citizenship and Immigration Services asylum officers. Defensive asylum may be claimed by people in removal proceedings as a defense against deportation. A defensive asylum filer may remain in the US as an unauthorized immigrant while waiting for their case to be resolved in immigration court and can receive a temporary work permit once their application has been pending for 180 days.

### Asylum process explained



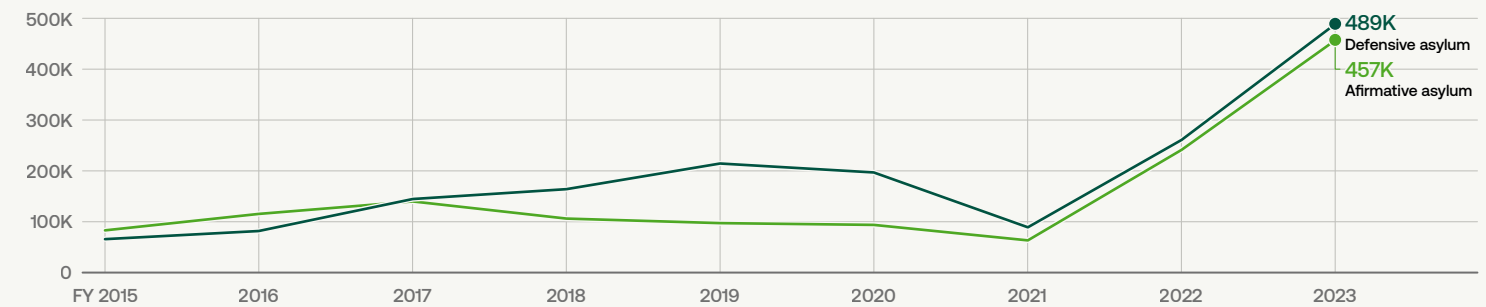
\*Removal proceedings are triggered by removal orders: formal removal, expedited removal, reinstatement of removal, or administrative removal. People with formal removal orders may apply directly for defensive asylum; people with expedited or reinstatement of removal orders must first be screened for and found to have credible or reasonable fear of persecution on return to their home country to apply. Those with administrative removal orders are not eligible for asylum, but may have other defenses available.

## How many asylum applications does the US receive?

FY 2023 asylum applications totaled about 945,000, up 88% from FY 2022 and more than six times higher than in FY 2015, the earliest year of available data from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

### Asylum application cases received

By type



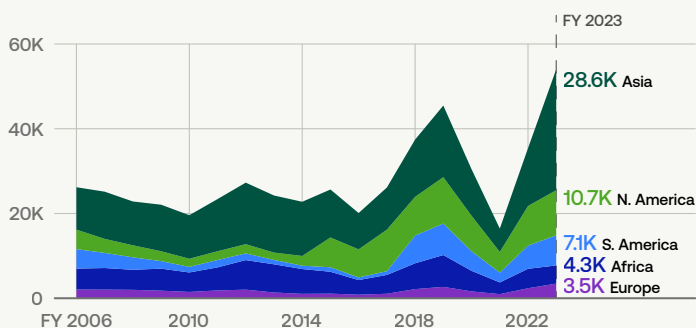
Source: Department of Homeland Security

## How many people are granted asylum?

About 54,000 people were granted asylum in FY 2023, the most of any year since at least FY 2006, and a 52% increase from FY 2022. About 53% of asylees were from Asia, and 20% were from North America. Among countries, the increase in Afghan asylees in the aftermath of the US withdrawal is notable: from 110 asylees in FY 2021 to 1,240 in FY 2022 to 14,470 in FY 2023, the most of any single country and nearly triple the number from China, the second most common country for asylees. Of all asylum applications that were decided in FY 2023, 17% were granted, down from the high of 28% in FY 2014.

### Individuals granted affirmative or defensive asylum

By region

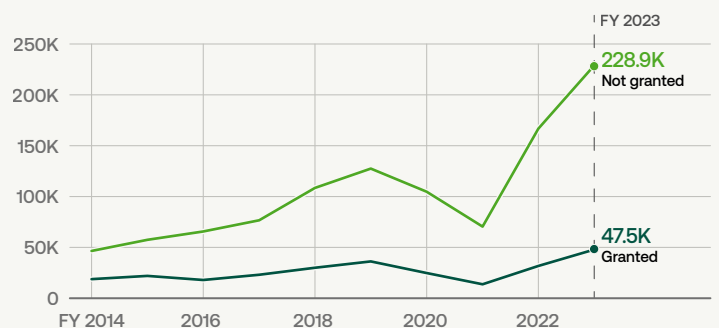


Source: Department of Homeland Security

Note: Excludes 3,768 asylees between 2006 and 2023 whose region of origin was unknown and 396 asylees from Oceania.

### Decisions for asylum cases

Among affirmative and defensive asylum cases closed each year



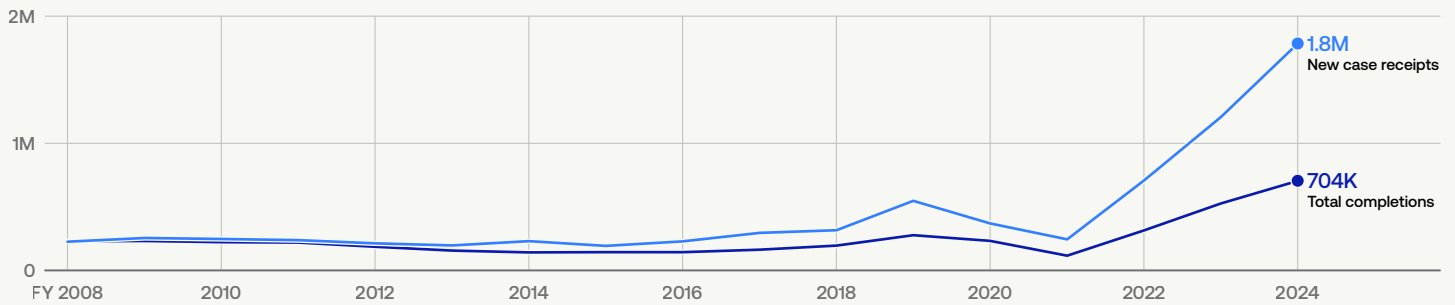
Source: Executive Office for Immigration Review and Department of Homeland Security

Note: Some cases may represent multiple individuals. Initial case completions only. Cases not granted include denials, administrative closures, abandonments, or cases with a closed status of "other".

## How many immigration cases are received and completed?

Starting in FY 2009 and for each year since, immigration courts have received more new cases than they completed. The largest gap was recorded in FY 2024, when 1.1 million more cases were received than completed.

### New case receipts and total case completions



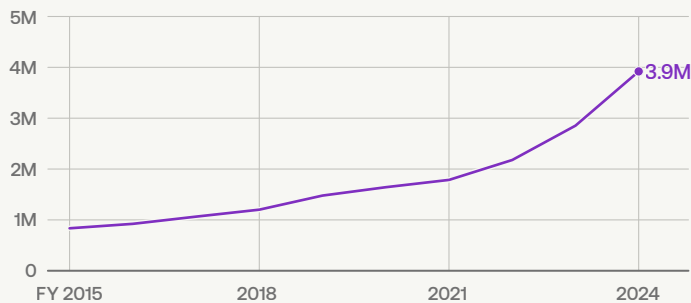
Source: Executive Office of Immigration Review

## Are immigration courts keeping up with their caseloads?

In FY 2024, the backlog of pending immigration court cases grew to 3.9 million, up 40% from the prior year. The number of pending cases per judge reached a record high of 5,331 in FY 2024, more than double the number in FY 2015 (the earliest available data).

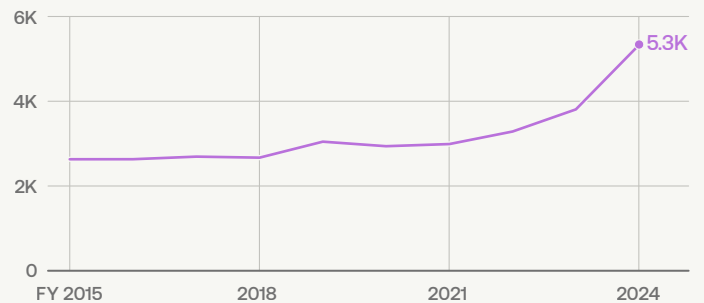
### Pending immigration cases at the end of the fiscal year

Total



Source: Executive Office for Immigration Review

Per judge



**Immigration courts** handle cases of people charged with violating federal immigration law. Their proceedings are civil rather than criminal. The system is administered by the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR). Judges determine whether an immigrant may remain or must leave the US, with cases ranging from asylum protections to credible fear reviews to adjustments of or loss of immigration status to detention and bond decisions.<sup>ix</sup>

## How many people does Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) arrest?

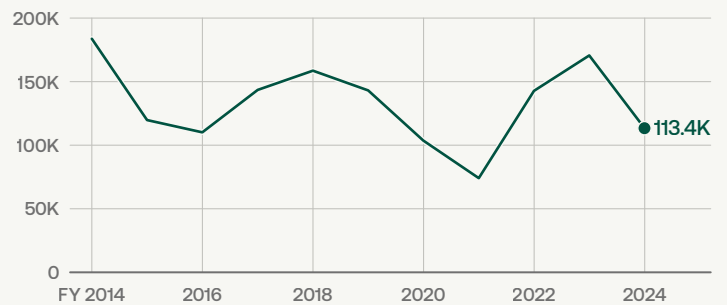
The Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) division of ICE is charged with enforcing immigration law in the US interior. In FY 2024, ERO administratively arrested about 113,000 people for violating immigration law, down 34% from FY 2023. Administrative arrests are based on civil violations of immigration law and are independent of the arrestee's criminal history.

### Administrative arrests by ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations

Monthly



Annual



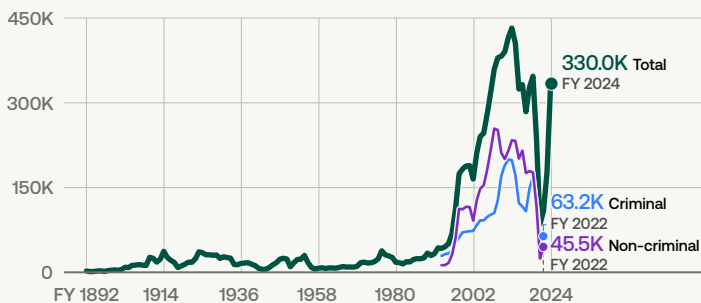
Source: Department of Homeland Security

Note: Administrative arrest data is typically released monthly and is lagged by two months. As of publication of this report in mid-August 2025, the last release was published in January 2025 with data from November 2024.

## How many immigrants are removed or returned from the US?

Removal (also called “deportation”) proceedings occur when a noncitizen, referred to as an *alien* in US immigration law, violates US immigration law and receives a removal order from an immigration judge. About 330,000 people were removed from the US in FY 2024, up 86% from FY 2023 but 24% below the 2013 peak. Returns count people who leave the US voluntarily and do not carry the same legal penalties as removals. Returns increased by less than 1% in FY 2024 to 448,000 after a post-1950 record increase of 70% in 2023, but they remain 73% below the 2000 peak of 1.7 million.

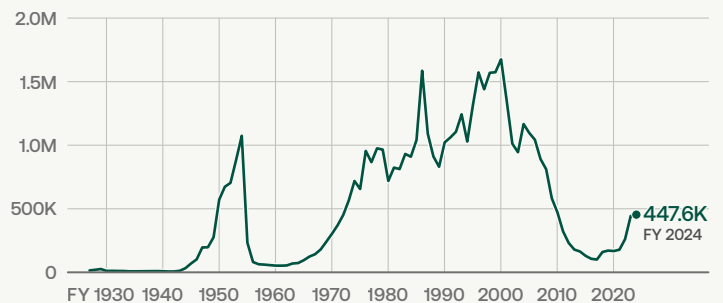
### Noncitizen removals



Source: Department of Homeland Security

Note: Removals are based on an order of removal, and have administrative or criminal consequences placed on subsequent reentry.

### Noncitizen returns



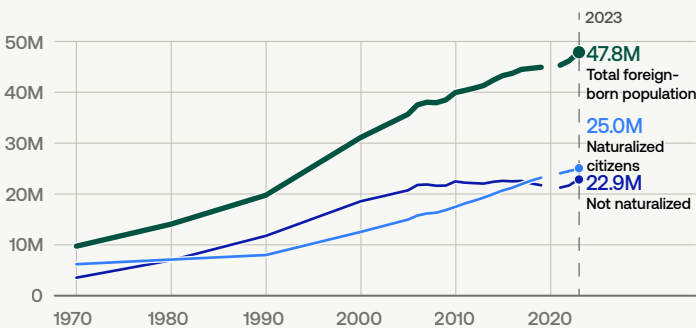
Source: Department of Homeland Security

## How many immigrants live in the US?

In 2023, about 48 million people living in the US had been born in another country. Of these, more than half were naturalized citizens. Numbers on unauthorized immigrants — a subset of the non-naturalized population — are less recent: the Department of Homeland Security estimated 11.0 million unauthorized immigrants lived in the US in 2022.

### Foreign-born population

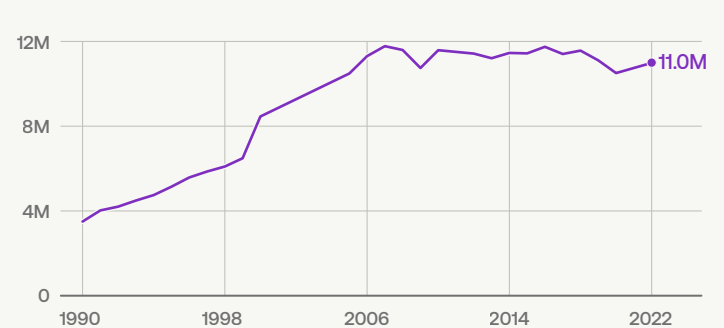
By naturalization status



Source: Census Bureau

Note: Data only available for years ending in "0" until 2005. Data also not produced for 2020.

### Estimated unauthorized immigrant population



Source: Department of Homeland Security

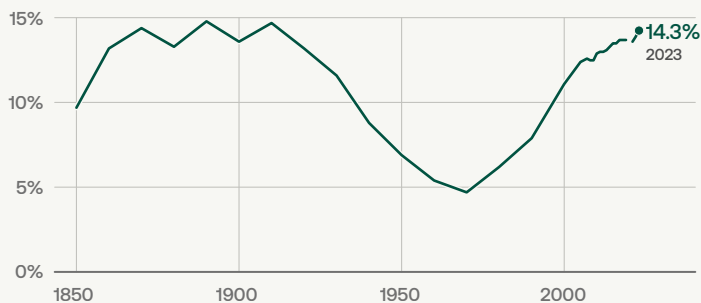
Note: No estimates were produced from 2001 to 2004 or in 2021.

## How does the immigrant population compare to the native-born population?

Immigrants made up 14.3% of the population in 2023. Immigrants were more likely than the native-born population to be of prime working age (25–54), 54.2% to 36.4%, and were less likely to be in school, 11.7% to 25.9%.

### Foreign-born residents

As a share of the population

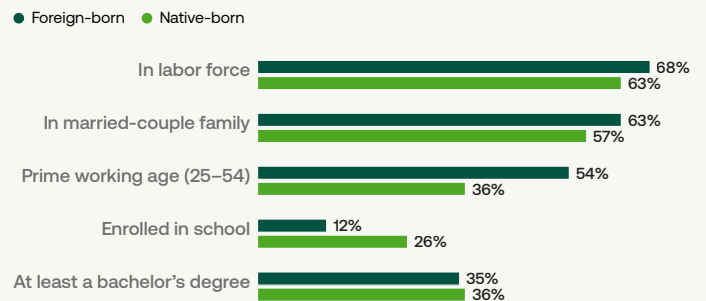


Source: Census Bureau

Note: Data only available for years ending in "0" until 2005. Data also not produced for 2020.

### Selected characteristics of foreign- and native-born populations (2023)

Share of population with each characteristic



Source: Census Bureau

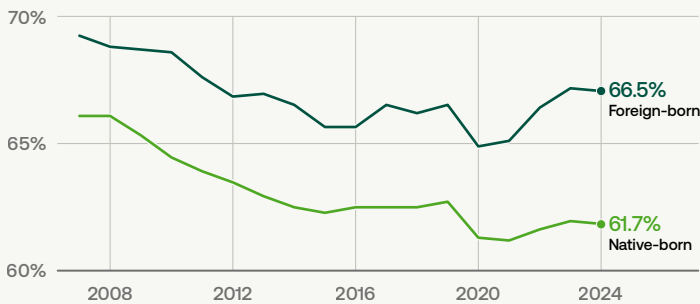
Note: Data for those with at least a bachelor's degree counts adults age 25 and older. Data for those in the labor force counts people age 16 and older.

## How does workforce participation compare between native-born and foreign-born people?

In 2024, the labor force participation rate (the share of people who are employed or looking for work) averaged 66.5% for foreign-born people and 61.7% for native-born people. Unemployment rates have historically been similar — 2024 averages were 4.0% for native-born people and 4.2% for foreign-born people. From January through July 2025, the average unemployment rate for native-born people was 4.3% and 4.1% among foreign-born people.

### Annual average labor force participation rate

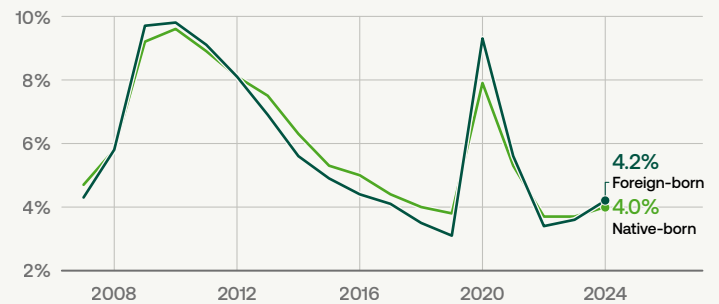
By nativity



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Note: Among population 16 years and older.

### Annual average unemployment rate

By nativity



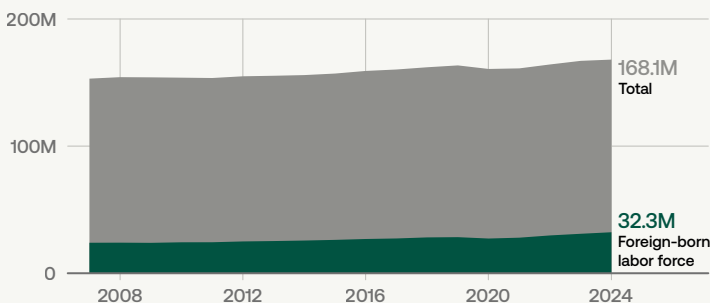
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Note: Among population 16 years and older.

## How many foreign-born workers are there?

The US had about 32 million foreign-born workers in 2024, making up 19.2% of the total labor force, both highs since at least 2007. The share of the labor force that's foreign-born varies across states, from a low of 2.6% in West Virginia to 32.9% in California in 2023.

### Annual average civilian labor force level

Total and foreign-born

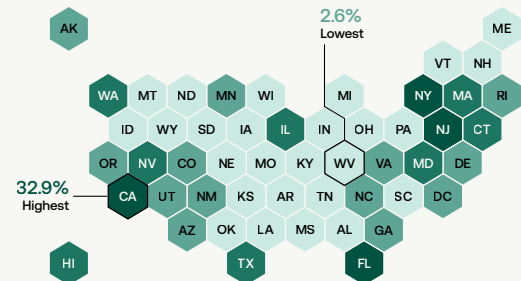


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Note: Among population 16 years and older.

### Percent of the civilian labor force that is foreign-born (2023)

By state

2% 10% 18% 26% 34%



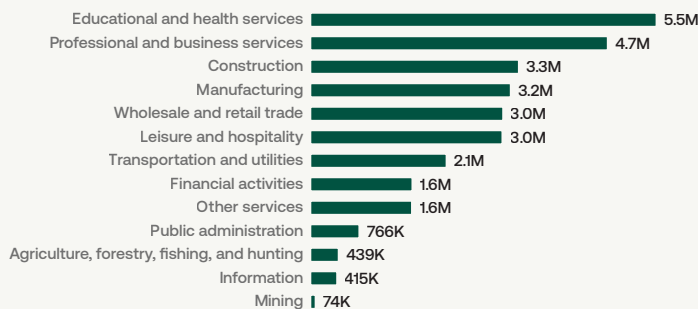
Source: Census Bureau  
Note: Among population 16 years and older.

## What industries rely the most on foreign-born workers?

Educational and health services employed the most foreign-born workers in 2023 — 5.5 million people, accounting for 14.8% of all workers in the sector. The industries with the biggest shares of foreign-born workers were construction (28.6% of the total), professional and business services (22.9%), and “other services,” which spans 11 activities that don’t fit in other sectors, including dry cleaning, ministry, grantmaking, and equipment repair (21.9%).<sup>x</sup> Foreign-born people were least represented in public administration (10.0%).

### Foreign-born employment level (2023)

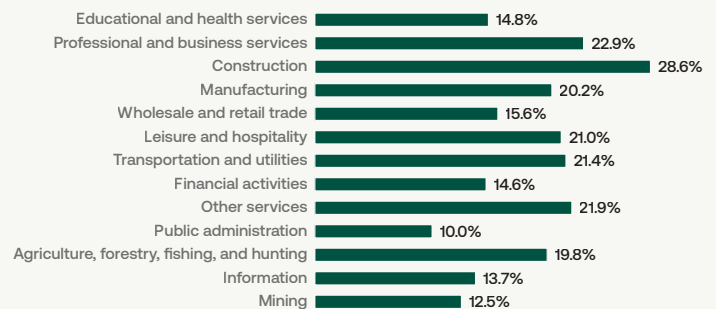
By industry



Source: Census Bureau

### Share of workers that are foreign-born (2023)

By industry



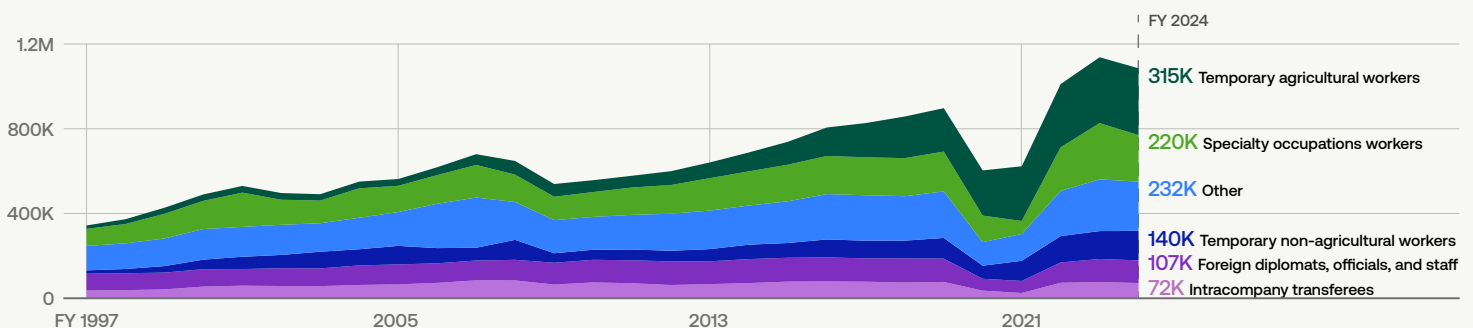
Source: Census Bureau

## How many work visas does the US give and for what types of occupations?

The 1.1 million work visas awarded in FY 2024 (a 5% drop from FY 2023) were the second most since at least FY 1997. Around 29% of FY 2024 work visas were given to temporary agricultural (H-2A) workers, up by about 5,000 people over FY 2023. H-2B visas, which are for temporary non-agricultural workers, rose 6%, and were the only other major class of work visa that grew in FY 2024. H-1B visas for people in specialty occupations made up about 20% (220,000) of issued work visas, down 17% from a record high in FY 2023.

### Work visas granted

By type



Source: Department of State

Note: Some green cards are also awarded each year for employment reasons. In FY 2023, about 49,900 new arrival green cards were given for work, about 4.4% of the number of total work visas granted that year.

# Chapter sources and data timeliness

Publishing agency	Program	Publication name	Release date	Most recent period in the data
Bureau of Consular Affairs (under Department of State)	Nonimmigrant visa statistics	Nonimmigrant worldwide issuance and refusal data by visa category	Not listed	FY 2024
		Nonimmigrant visa issuances by visa class and nationality	Not listed	FY 2024
Bureau of Labor Statistics	Current Population Survey	Employment Situation Summary	Updates monthly for most recently completed month	
Census Bureau	American Community Survey	1-year estimates	Sep. 2024	2023
		Public Use Microdata Sample	Oct. 2024	2023
	Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement	Foreign-born detailed tables	March 2024	2023
Citizenship and Immigration Services (within Department of Homeland Security)	Immigration and citizenship data	All USCIS application and petition form types, quarterly release	June 2025	FY 2025, Q2
Customs and Border Patrol (within Department of Homeland Security)	CBP enforcement statistics	Office of Field Operations inadmissibles	Not listed	July 2025
	Stats and summaries	Nationwide encounters	Not listed	July 2025
Executive Office for Immigration Review (within Department of Justice)	Adjudication statistics	Asylum decisions	July 2025	FY 2025, Q3
		Pending cases, new cases, and total completions	July 2025	FY 2025, Q3
		Immigration judge hiring	July 2025	FY 2025, Q3
Customs and Border Patrol (within Department of Homeland Security)		Annual Report	Dec. 2024	FY 2024
Office of Homeland Security Statistics (within Department of Homeland Security)	Immigration enforcement	Immigration enforcement and legal processes monthly tables	Jan. 2025	Nov. 2024
	Lawful permanent residents (LPRs)	LPR Yearbook tables expanded: Adjustments of status and new arrivals	Aug. 2023	FY 2022
	Refugees and asylees	Annual Flow Report	Oct. 2024	FY 2023
		Asylum workload by top twenty-five nationalities	Nov. 2023	FY 2022
	Illegal aliens	Estimates of the illegal alien population residing in the United States	April 2024	FY 2022



Office of Homeland Security Statistics (within Department of Homeland Security)	Yearbook of Immigration Statistics	Tables 1–12: Lawful permanent residents	Sep. 2024	FY 2023
		Tables 13–15: Refugees	Nov. 2024	FY 2023
		Tables 16–19: Asylees	Oct. 2024	FY 2023
		Tables 33–42: Enforcement actions	Nov. 2023	FY 2022
Refugee Processing Center (within Department of State)	Admissions and arrivals	Cumulative summary of refugee admissions	Jan. 2025	2024

See sources and notes section at the end of this report for detailed citation information.

Data in this chapter comes from nine different agencies, highlighting the diffuse nature of immigration data. The Office of Homeland Security Statistics (OHSS) synthesizes data from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) — which itself brings together data from the Office of Field Operations (OFO) and Border Patrol (USBP) — the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), the Department of State, and US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). OHSS products are dependent on timely and accurate releases from the agencies that generate the source data, and they must reckon with methodological, structural, and semantic differences. In assembling this year’s chapter, we noticed some specific challenges and themes:

- Some OHSS products are delayed. The Yearbook of Immigration Statistics for 2023 is partially released, notably lacking the enforcement actions tables. The asylum workload statistics that allow for disaggregated analysis are similarly delayed, as is data sorting new arrival green cards by country of origin and immigration reason. It’s unclear whether the delays are happening at OHSS or the reporting agencies.
- ICE has not released data since January 2025 (although its dashboard indicates it should update quarterly), which presumably contributes to the delay in the release of the OHSS Immigration Enforcement and Legal Processes Monthly Tables. These were last released in January 2025, and prior to then had been a consistent monthly release.
- Data sources don’t always define or describe populations the same way. Data on where refugees and visa recipients come from provides information by “country of nationality,” and data on new arrival green card holders is given by “country of birth.” To compile the data, we assume that it is equivalent, even though some people receiving green cards may have been born in one country and be a citizen of another.
- Some immigration processes and outcomes are governed by multiple agencies, like asylum (managed by EOIR and USCIS) or noncitizen removals (conducted by ICE and USBP). Understanding them requires looking at fragmented data published with different structures, documentation, and reporting timelines. OHSS often streamlines it, but waiting for OHSS to collect and clean agency data adds more wait time, bringing the source data further out of date.
- Sources across the immigration landscape vary in terms of how many years of data they present. For a given time series, additional data may exist but be difficult to find or not comparable across time, or not exist at all. In general, explanations that clarify how much historical data is available are not offered.

# Endnotes

- i. Immigrant entries by “nationality” includes new arrival green cards given to people born in the specified country. Green card data from DHS does not include breakouts by nationality. In many countries, birth in the country does not automatically provide nationality, and many people can become nationals of a country without having been born there.
- ii. Department of Homeland Security (2024). *Annual Flow Report: Refugees*. <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/refugees-and-asylees/rfa-annual-flow-report>. According to DHS and Title 8 of the US Code, “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.” Refugees are required to apply for Lawful Permanent Resident (“green card”) status one year after being admitted.
- iii. National Archive (2024). *Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2025*. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/10/18/2024-24321/presidential-determination-on-refugee-admissions-for-fiscal-year-2025>.
- iv. The White House (2025). *Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/realigning-the-united-states-refugee-admissions-program/>.
- v. The released and paroled figure includes people paroled into the country for humanitarian reasons, significant public benefit, or on conditional parole. See endnote ix and its corresponding paragraph for more detail.
- vi. Additional parole mechanisms include “advance parole” (for people already in the US with pending adjustments of status to permit travel abroad), “parole in place” (for people already in the US who are close family members of people who are veterans of or in the US military), and “paroled for deferred inspection” (for people presenting to ports of entry who are not preliminarily eligible for admission but will receive a full inspection at a later date). Conditional parole, or temporary release from custody, is a tool used by ICE and USBP to ease capacity constraints at their detention facilities. This is different from the kinds of parole discussed in this section, and is most akin to parole from prison, or supervised, conditional release. For more details, see: <https://www.uscis.gov/policy-manual/volume-7-part-b-chapter-2#footnotelink-50>.
- vii. The White House (2025). *Securing Our Borders*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/securing-our-borders/>.
- viii. US Citizenship and Immigration Services (n.d.). *Obtaining Asylum in the United States*. <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-and-asylum/asylum/obtaining-asylum-in-the-united-states>.
- ix. Executive Office of Immigration Review (2025). *Make a Difference – Apply for an Immigration Judge Position*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20250612091335/https://www.justice.gov/eoir/adjudicators>.
- x. US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024). *Industries at a Glance: Other Services*. <https://www.bls.gov/iag/tgs/iag81.htm#:~:text=Establishments%20in%20this%20sector%20are,pet%20care%20services%2C%20photofinishing%20services%2C>.

# Chart sources and notes

For each **chapter**, all chart names are listed, and additional information is provided for each.

1. Chart sources and notes are structured as follows:

**Chart title:** Source(s)

Note(s):

2. For all population-adjusted data where the source does not provide adjustments, we use intercensal/postcensal estimates from the US Census Bureau, unless otherwise noted. Source details can be found in the citations for the “Population” chart below.
3. Fiscal years (FY) are equivalent to the federal fiscal year, unless otherwise noted. The federal fiscal year begins on October 1 of the previous year and ends on September 30 of the following year. For example, FY 2024 began on October 1, 2023, and ended on September 30, 2024.
4. USAFacts compiles data for government revenue, spending, and debt, as well as on family and individual income and taxes from various government sources, including the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the Federal Reserve. The full citations are not included below; to see detailed descriptions and notes about our methodology for compiling this data, please visit: <https://usafacts.org/methodology>.

## Immigration

**When describing new authorized immigrant arrivals, terms are defined as follows:**

1. New arrival green card data only includes green cards granted to new immigrants to the US. It excludes green cards granted through an adjustment of status to immigrants who are already in the US on a visa.
2. Non-tourist visa data excludes temporary visitors for business or pleasure (including with Border Crossing Cards), transit aliens, and transit crew (airline, cruise ship, etc.).
3. Asylees are excluded. Even though this population becomes “authorized” when they are granted asylum, they may or may not have legal status prior to a grant of asylum. Additionally, they are not new arrivals because they must be in the country to apply for asylum.

**New authorized immigrant arrivals, total and by type:** (1) Green cards: Office of Homeland Security Statistics (OHSS) under US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) (Multiple Years). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Lawful Permanent Residents [Year] Data Tables, Table 6. Persons Obtaining Lawful Permanent Resident Status by Type and Major Class of Admission). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2023>; (2) Visas: US Department of State (State) (2024). *Nonimmigrant Visa Statistics* (Nonimmigrant Visa Issuances by Visa Class and by Nationality, FY1997-2023 NIV Detail Table). <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-law0/visa-statistics/nonimmigrant-visa-statistics.html>; (3) Refugees: Refugee Processing Center (RPC) (2024). *Admissions and Arrivals* (Refugee Admissions Report). US Department of State. <https://www.wrapsnet.org/admissions-and-arrivals/>.

**New authorized immigrant arrivals (FY 2023), by region of birth/nationality:** (1) Green cards: OHSS under DHS (2023). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (LPR Yearbook Tables 8 to 11 Expanded, Table 10. Persons Obtaining Lawful Permanent Resident Status by Type and Broad Class of Admission and Region and Country of Birth). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/lawful-permanent-residents/lpr-yearbook-tables-8-11-expanded>; (2) Visas: State (2023). *Nonimmigrant Visa Statistics* (Nonimmigrant Visa Issuances by Visa Class and by Nationality, FY1997-2023 NIV Detail Table). <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-law0/visa-statistics/nonimmigrant-visa-statistics.html>; (3) Refugees: OHSS under DHS (2024). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Refugees [Multiple years] Data Tables, Table 14. Refugee Arrivals by Region and Country of Nationality). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2023>.

Note(s): Disaggregated 2023 new arrival green card data from OHSS describing new arrivals by country of origin was not available as of report publication, so this chart uses the 2022 data for 2023. This approach is imperfect: totals change each year (466,000 new arrivals in 2022 vs. 558,000 in 2023), but the reasons for migration and countries of origin appear more stable over time.

**New authorized immigrant arrivals (FY 2023), by reason for granted entry:** (1) Green cards: OHSS under DHS (2024). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Lawful Permanent Residents 2023 Data Tables, Table 6. Persons Obtaining Lawful Permanent Resident Status by Type and Major Class of Admission: Fiscal Years 2014 to 2023). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2023/table6>; (2) Visas: State (2023). *Nonimmigrant Visa Statistics* (Nonimmigrant Visa Issuances by Visa Class and by Nationality, FY1997-2023 NIV Detail Table). <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-law0/visa-statistics/nonimmigrant-visa-statistics.html>; (3) Refugees: OHSS under DHS (2024). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Refugees [Multiple years] Data Tables, Table 14. Refugee Arrivals by Region and Country of Nationality). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2023>.

**New authorized immigrant arrivals, by country of birth/nationality:** (1) Green cards: OHSS under DHS (Multiple Years). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (LPR Yearbook Tables 8 to 11 Expanded, Table 10. Persons Obtaining Lawful Permanent Resident Status by Type and Broad Class of Admission and Region and Country of Birth). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/lawful-permanent-residents/lpr-yearbook-tables-8-11-expanded>; (2) Visas: State (2023). *Nonimmigrant Visa Statistics* (Nonimmigrant Visa Issuances by Visa Class and by Nationality, FY1997-2023 NIV Detail Table). <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-law0/visa-statistics/nonimmigrant-visa-statistics.html>; (3) Refugees: OHSS under DHS (2024). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Refugees [Multiple years] Data Tables, Table 14. Refugee Arrivals by Region and Country of Nationality). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2023>.

Note(s): Disaggregated 2023 new arrival green card data from OHSS describing new arrivals by country of origin and reason for migration was not available as of report publication, so this chart uses the 2022 data for 2023. This approach is imperfect: totals change each year (466,000 new arrivals in 2022 vs. 558,000 in 2023), but the reasons for migration and countries of origin appear more stable over time.

**Reasons for authorized immigration, by reason for entry:** Ibid.

Note(s): See notes for chart *New authorized immigrant arrivals (FY 2023), by region of birth/nationality and reason for granted entry*.

**Refugee ceiling and admissions:** RPC (2024). *Admissions and Arrivals* (Refugee Admissions Report). US Department of State. <https://www.wrapsnet.org/admissions-and-arrivals/>.

**Refugees admitted, by region:** OHSS under DHS (2024). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Refugees [Multiple years] Data Tables, Table 14. Refugee Arrivals by Region and Country of Nationality). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2023>.

**Annual border enforcement actions, by agency:** (1) Border Patrol encounters, 2021–2024: US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) (2025). *Nationwide Encounters* (Nationwide Encounters by Area of Responsibility). <https://www.cbp.gov/document/stats/nationwide-encounters>; (2) Border Patrol encounters, 1980–2020: CBP (2021). *Nationwide Encounters*. <https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2021-Aug/U.S.%20Border%20Patrol%20Total%20Apprehensions%20%28FY%201925%20-%20FY%202020%29%20%28508%29.pdf>. Border Patrol Total Apprehensions (FY 1925 - FY 2020) (508).pdf; (3) Office of Field Operations (OFO) inadmissibles, 2017–2024: CBP (2025). *CBP Enforcement Statistics* (Total CBP Enforcement Actions). <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/cbp-enforcement-statistics>; (4) OFO inadmissibles, 2015–2016: CBP (2017). *CBP Enforcement Statistics FY 2017* (Total CBP Enforcement Actions). <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/cbp-enforcement-statistics-fy2017>.

Note(s): Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, between 2020 and 2023, both OFO and USBP expelled certain people at the border without opportunity to seek asylum under Title 42.

**Monthly border enforcement actions, by agency (recent months):** CBP (2025). *Nationwide Encounters* (Nationwide Encounters by Area of Responsibility). <https://www.cbp.gov/document/stats/nationwide-encounters>

Note(s): See notes for chart *Annual border enforcement actions, by agency*.

**Outcomes of southwest border encounters (FY 2024):** OHSS under DHS (2025). *Immigration Enforcement and Legal Processes Monthly Tables* (CBP SW Border Encounters by Agency; Nationwide CBP Encounters by Type and Region; CBP SW Border Book-Outs by Agency). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/immigration-enforcement/monthly-tables>

Note(s): Encounters by OFO are recorded in this chart as inadmissibles and encounters by USBP are apprehensions.

**Asylum application cases received, by type:** OHSS under DHS (2024). *Annual Flow Report* (Asylees: [2023]; Refugees and Asylees: [Multiple years]). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/refugees-and-asylees/rfa-annual-flow-report>.

Note(s): Data is from DHS OHSS, which analyzes data from USCIS (which handles affirmative cases) and EOIR (which handles defensive cases). The EOIR source lists affirmative cases, but this refers only to their origin, i.e., they began as affirmative cases with USCIS which were denied and were subsequently refiled as defensive cases.

**Individuals granted affirmative or defensive asylum, by region:** OHSS under DHS (Multiple Years). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Refugees and Asylees [Year] Data Tables: Table 17, Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Region and Country of Nationality; Table 19, Individuals Granted Asylum Defensively by Region and Country of Nationality). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2023>. Note(s): DHS continues to revise estimates for past years with each new Yearbook of Immigration Statistics. Because of the nature of the reporting, total, affirmative, and defensive asylum claims granted statistics are historically revised through 1990. Meanwhile, asylum claims by region are only revised for the ten years before each year's report. Because of this, regional breakdowns may not sum to the total number of asylum claims granted for years more than 10 years in the past.

**Decisions for asylum cases, among affirmative and defensive asylum cases closed each year:** (1) Defensive case decisions: Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) under DHS (2025). *Workload and Adjudication Statistics* (Asylum Decisions). <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/workload-and-adjudication-statistics>; (2) Affirmative case decisions, 2014–2022: OHSS under DHS (2023). *Asylum Workload by Top Twenty-Five Nationalities* (Fiscal Years 2014 to 2022). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/refugees-and-asylees/asylum-workload>; (3) Affirmative case decisions, 2023: US Customs and Immigration Service (USCIS) under DHS (2023). *All USCIS Application and Petition Form Types, Fiscal Year 2023, Quarter 4* (F-YTD Form I-589). <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-and-studies/immigration-and-citizenship-data>.

Note(s): (1) OHSS has not released the 2023 Asylum Workload by Top Twenty Nationalities data as of publication of this report; the 2022 release provides the data for affirmative claims for FY 2014 through FY 2022. Since affirmative claims are handled by US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), the 2023 data comes from that agency. (2) Cases closed equals total case completions less the sum of grants and denials.

**New case receipts and total case completions:** EOIR under DHS (Multiple Years). *Workload and Adjudication Statistics* (Pending Cases, New Cases, and Total Completions). Retrieved from: (a) For 2015–2024 <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/workload-and-adjudication-statistics>; (b) For 2008–2014: [https://www.justice.gov/d9/pages/attachments/2020/01/31/1\\_pending\\_new\\_receipts\\_and\\_total\\_completions.pdf](https://www.justice.gov/d9/pages/attachments/2020/01/31/1_pending_new_receipts_and_total_completions.pdf). Note(s): Initial case receipts include removal, deportation, exclusion, asylum-only, and withholding-only cases.

**Pending immigration cases at the end of the fiscal year, total and per judge:** (1) EOIR under DHS (2025). *Workload and Adjudication Statistics* (Pending Cases, New Cases, and Total Completions). <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/workload-and-adjudication-statistics>; (2) EOIR under DHS (2025). *Workload and Adjudication Statistics* (Immigration Judge Hiring; Pending Cases, New Cases, and Total Completions). <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/workload-and-adjudication-statistics>. Note(s): (1) Pending case counts include removal, deportation, exclusion, asylum-only, and withholding-only cases. (2) 2024 count reflects the number of immigration judges on board during the last pay period of FY 2024 and accounts for hiring made in anticipation of attrition during the first quarter of FY 2025.

**Administrative arrests by ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations, monthly and annual:** OHSS under DHS (2025). *Immigration Enforcement and Legal Processes Monthly Tables* (ERO Administrative Arrests by Selected Citizenship). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/immigration-enforcement/monthly-tables>.

**Noncitizen removals:** (1) For total removals (1892–2022) and criminal removals (1993–2022): OHSS under DHS (2023). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Immigration Enforcement Actions Data Tables, Table 39). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2022>; (2) For total removals (2023–2024): OHSS under DHS (2025). *Immigration Enforcement and Legal Processes Monthly Tables* (DHS Removals by Criminality). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/immigration-enforcement/monthly-tables>. Note(s): (1) Data for 1976 includes the 15 months from July 1, 1975, to September 30, 1976, because the end date of fiscal years was changed from June 30 to September 30. (2) 2023 and 2024 totals come from the OHSS Immigration Enforcement and Legal Processes Monthly Tables rather than the Yearbook of Immigration Statistics enforcement actions section, the 2023 version of which has not been released as of the publication of this report. The Monthly Tables do provide criminal vs. non-criminal removals but appear to count them differently than in the Yearbook, and are not included in these charts.

**Noncitizen returns:** (1) For 1927–2022: OHSS under DHS (2023). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Immigration Enforcement Actions Data Tables, Table 39). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2022>; (2) For 2023–2024: OHSS under DHS (2025). *Immigration*



*Enforcement and Legal Processes Monthly Tables* (DHS Enforcement Returns by Selected Citizenship; DHS Administrative Returns by Selected Citizenship). <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/immigration-enforcement/monthly-tables>.

Note(s): Data for 1976 includes the 15 months from July 1, 1975 to September 30, 1976 because the end date of fiscal years was changed from June 30 to September 30.

**Foreign-born population, by naturalization status:** (1) For 1970–2000: Gibson, C. and Jung, K. (2006). *Working Paper No. 81, Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850 to 2000* (Table 12. Citizenship Status of the Foreign-Born Population: 1890 to 1950 and 1970 to 2000). US Census Bureau (Census Bureau), Population Division. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2006/demo/POP-twps0081.pdf>; (2) For 2005–2009: Data retrieved from ACS table listed above through ACS API at <https://www.census.gov/data/developers/data-sets/acs-1year/2005.html>; (3) For 2010–2023: Census Bureau (Multiple Years). *ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables* (Table S0501. Selected Characteristics of the Native and Foreign-Born Populations). <https://data.census.gov/table?q=S0501>.

Note(s): This excludes 2020 data that relies on the ACS because of the pandemic’s impact on data collection and quality. For more information, see: <https://usafacts.org/articles/what-low-response-rates-mean-for-2020-acs-data/>.

**Estimated unauthorized immigrant population:** OHSS under DHS (Multiple Years). *Estimates of the Illegal Alien Population Residing in the United States*. <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/illegal/population-estimates>.

Note(s): Estimation methodology changed in 2015, though estimates from 2015–2018 continued to rely on the 2010 Census.

**Foreign-born residents, as a share of the population:** (1) For 1970–2000: Gibson, C. and Jung, K. (2006). *Working Paper No. 81, Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850 to 2000* (Table 12. Citizenship Status of the Foreign-Born Population: 1890 to 1950 and 1970 to 2000). Census Bureau, Population Division. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2006/demo/POP-twps0081.pdf>; (2) For 2005–2009: Data retrieved from ACS table listed above through ACS API at <https://www.census.gov/data/developers/data-sets/acs-1year/2005.html>; (3) For 2010–2023: Census (Multiple Years). *ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables* (Table S0501. Selected Characteristics of the Native and Foreign-Born Populations). <https://data.census.gov/table?q=S0501>.

Note(s): See notes for chart *Foreign-born population, by naturalization status*.

**Selected characteristics of foreign- and native-born populations (2023), share of population with each characteristic:** Census Bureau (2024). *ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables* (Table S0501. Selected Characteristics of the Native and Foreign-Born Populations). <https://data.census.gov/table?q=S0501>.

**Annual average labor force participation rate, by nativity:** (1) Foreign-born: BLS (2025). *FRED* (Labor Force Participation Rate - Foreign Born [LNU01373395]). Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNU01373395>; (2) Native-born: BLS (2025). *FRED* (Labor Force Participation Rate - Native Born [LNU01373413]). Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNU01373413>.

**Annual average unemployment rate, by nativity:** (1) Foreign-born: BLS (2025). *FRED* (Unemployment Rate - Foreign Born [LNU04073395]). Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNU04073395>; (2) Native-born: BLS (2025). *FRED* (Unemployment Rate - Native Born [LNU04073413]). Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNU04073413>.

**Annual average civilian labor force level, total and foreign-born:** (1) Foreign-born: BLS (2025). *FRED* (Civilian Labor Force Level - Foreign Born [LNU01073395]). Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNU01073395>; (2) Native-born: BLS (2025). *FRED* (Civilian Labor Force Level - Native Born [LNU01073413]). Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNU01073413>.

**Percent of the civilian labor force that is foreign-born (2023), by state:** Census Bureau (2024). *ACS 1-Year Estimates Public Use Microdata Sample* (MDAT, Custom Query: PUMS person weight [PWGTP]; all states; ESR; NATIVITY). <https://data.census.gov/app/mdat/ACSPUMS1Y2023>.

**Foreign-born employment level (2023), by industry:** Census Bureau (2024). *Characteristics of the Foreign-Born Population by Nativity and U.S. Citizenship Status* (Table 1.8. Industry of Employed Civilian Workers 16 Years and Over by Sex, Nativity, and U.S. Citizenship Status: 2023). US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Detailed Tables. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2023/demo/foreign-born/cps-2023.html>.

**Share of workers that are foreign-born (2023), by industry:** Ibid.

**Work visas granted, by type:** (1) For 1997–2023: State (2024). *Nonimmigrant Visa Statistics* (Nonimmigrant Visa Issuances by Visa Class and by Nationality, FY1997–2023 NIV Detail Table). <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/visa-law0/visa-statistics/nonimmigrant-visa-statistics.html>; (2) For 2024: State (2025). *Nonimmigrant Worldwide Issuance and Refusal Data by Visa Category* (FY 2024 NIV Workload by Visa Category). <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/Statistics/Non-Immigrant-Statistics/NIVWorkload/FY%202024NIVWorkloadbyVisaCategory.pdf>.

Note(s): “Temporary agricultural workers” is for H-2A visas; “Specialty occupations workers” is for H-1B; “Temporary non-agricultural workers” is for H-2B; “Foreign diplomats, officials, and staff” is for A-1, A-2, or A-3 (A-2 visas were the 4th-largest individual visa category by number of visas granted in 2024); “Intracompany transferees” is for L-1.