

# Refugees and Asylees: 2011

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The United States provides refuge to persons who have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution through two programs: one for refugees (persons outside the U.S. and their immediate relatives) and one for asylees (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 2011.<sup>1</sup>

A total of 56,384 persons<sup>2</sup> were admitted to the United States as refugees during 2011 (see Figure 1). The leading countries of nationality for refugees were Burma, Bhutan, and Iraq. During 2011, 24,988 individuals were granted asylum,<sup>3</sup> including 13,484 who were granted asylum affirmatively by the Department of Homeland Security<sup>4</sup> (DHS) and 11,504 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, Venezuela, and Ethiopia. In addition to these affirmative and defensive asylees, 9,550 individuals were approved for derivative asylum status while located abroad and were issued travel documents to enter the United States. The leading countries of nationality for the recipients of follow-to-join travel documents were China, Nepal, and Haiti.

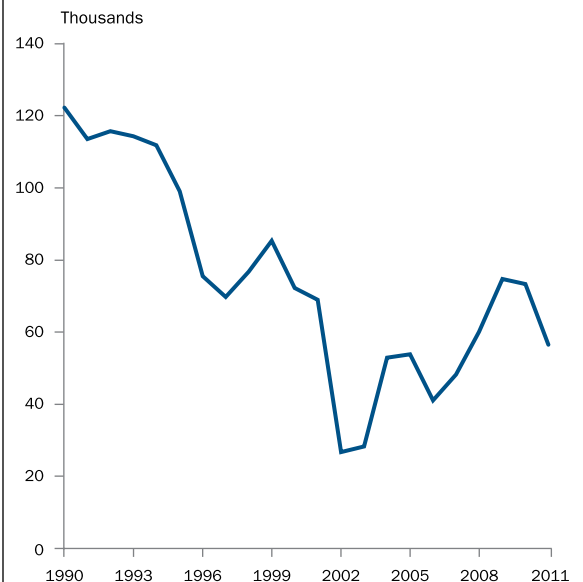
## DEFINING “REFUGEE” AND “ASYLUM” STATUS

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

<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 2011**



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 2012 and differ slightly from fiscal year-end 2011 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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processing). In 2011, certain nationals of Cuba, the 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 legislation to bring U.S. law into compliance with the principles outlined in the Protocol in passing the Refugee Act of 1980, 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 ceiling for refugee admissions in 2011 was 80,000. The largest regional allocation was to the Near East/South Asia region, which accounted for 44 percent of the total ceiling to continue accommodating refugee arrivals from Iraq 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: 2009 to 2011\*

Region	Ceiling		
	2011	2010	2009
Total . . . . .	80,000	80,000	80,000
Africa . . . . .	15,000	15,500	12,000
East Asia . . . . .	19,000	18,000	20,500
Europe/Central Asia . . . . .	2,000	2,500	2,500
Latin America/Caribbean . . . . .	5,500	5,500	5,500
Near East/South Asia . . . . .	35,500	38,000	39,500
Unallocated Reserve . . . . .	3,000	500	0

\* Ceiling numbers reflect revisions made each fiscal year.

Source: U.S. Department of State, Proposed Refugee Admissions for FY 2012—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 requirements to be eligible 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 and determines if the applicant is eligible for refugee resettlement in the United States. Security checks must be completed before an application is approved. Individuals who are found eligible for resettlement by USCIS must undergo a medical exam and 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 by applying for a refugee travel document.

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

<sup>8</sup>Priority Three processing was suspended in October 2008 and remains so until new procedures to identify and deter relationship fraud can be established.

<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).

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 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 refugee admission date.

### 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 2011, 56,384 refugees were admitted to the United States—a 23 percent decrease from 73,293 in 2010 (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 largely 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. Since 2009, refugee admissions have decreased for two consecutive years.

### Category of Admission

Principal refugees accounted for 25,075 (45 percent) of the 56,384 refugees admitted to the United States in 2011 (see Table 2).<sup>10</sup> Dependent children and spouses represented 38 percent and 17 percent, respectively, of refugee admissions. Follow-to-join beneficiaries constituted 2.2 percent of the 56,384 total.

### Country of Nationality

In 2011, the leading countries of nationality for refugee admissions were Burma (30 percent), Bhutan (27 percent), and Iraq (17 percent) (see Table 3). Nearly three-quarters of refugee admissions in 2011 were from these three countries. Other leading countries include Somalia (5.6 percent), Cuba (5.2 percent), Eritrea (3.6 percent), Iran (3.6 percent), and Democratic Republic of Congo (1.7 percent).

<sup>10</sup> As of January 2012.

**Table 2.**  
**Refugee Arrivals by Category of Admission: Fiscal Years 2009 to 2011**

Category of admission	2011		2010		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0	74,602	100.0
Principal Applicant . . . . .	25,075	44.5	32,251	44.0	32,511	43.6
Dependents . . . . .	31,309	55.5	41,042	56.0	42,091	56.4
Spouse . . . . .	9,751	17.3	12,835	17.5	13,440	18.0
Child . . . . .	21,558	38.2	28,207	38.5	28,651	38.4

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 2009 to 2011**  
(Ranked by 2011 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2011		2010		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0	74,602	100.0
Burma . . . . .	16,972	30.1	16,693	22.8	18,202	24.4
Bhutan . . . . .	14,999	26.6	12,363	16.9	13,452	18.0
Iraq . . . . .	9,388	16.7	18,016	24.6	18,838	25.3
Somalia . . . . .	3,161	5.6	4,884	6.7	4,189	5.6
Cuba . . . . .	2,920	5.2	4,818	6.6	4,800	6.4
Eritrea . . . . .	2,032	3.6	2,570	3.5	1,571	2.1
Iran . . . . .	2,032	3.6	3,543	4.8	5,381	7.2
Congo, Democratic Republic . . . . .	977	1.7	3,174	4.3	1,135	1.5
Ethiopia . . . . .	560	1.0	668	0.9	321	0.4
Afghanistan . . . . .	428	0.8	515	0.7	349	0.5
All other countries, including unknown . . . . .	2,915	5.2	6,049	8.3	6,364	8.5

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, Gender, and Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2009 to 2011**

Characteristic	2011		2010		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>AGE</b>						
Total . . . . .	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0	74,602	100.0
0 to 17 years . . . . .	19,232	34.1	25,373	34.6	25,185	33.8
18 to 24 years . . . . .	9,588	17.0	11,853	16.2	11,747	15.7
25 to 34 years . . . . .	11,802	20.9	14,954	20.4	14,842	19.9
35 to 44 years . . . . .	7,124	12.6	9,587	13.1	10,082	13.5
45 to 54 years . . . . .	4,230	7.5	5,727	7.8	5,971	8.0
55 to 64 years . . . . .	2,438	4.3	3,218	4.4	3,649	4.9
65 years and over . . . . .	1,970	3.5	2,581	3.5	3,126	4.2
<b>GENDER</b>						
Total . . . . .	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0	74,602	100.0
Male . . . . .	29,436	52.2	38,624	52.7	38,491	51.6
Female . . . . .	26,948	47.8	34,669	47.3	36,111	48.4
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>						
Total . . . . .	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0	74,602	100.0
Married . . . . .	22,095	39.2	28,567	39.0	29,770	39.9
Single . . . . .	31,324	55.6	41,022	56.0	40,798	54.7
Other* . . . . .	2,965	5.3	3,704	5.1	4,034	5.4

\*Includes persons who were divorced, separated, divorced, widowed, or 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 2009 to 2011**

(Ranked by 2011 state of residence)

State of residence	2011		2010		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	56,384	100.0	73,293	100.0	74,602	100.0
Texas . . . . .	5,627	10.0	7,918	10.8	8,195	11.0
California . . . . .	4,987	8.8	8,577	11.7	11,274	15.1
New York . . . . .	3,529	6.3	4,559	6.2	4,411	5.9
Pennsylvania . . . . .	2,972	5.3	2,632	3.6	2,155	2.9
Florida . . . . .	2,906	5.2	4,216	5.8	4,193	5.6
Georgia . . . . .	2,636	4.7	3,224	4.4	3,270	4.4
Michigan . . . . .	2,588	4.6	3,188	4.3	3,500	4.7
Arizona . . . . .	2,168	3.8	3,400	4.6	4,312	5.8
Washington . . . . .	2,137	3.8	3,004	4.1	2,581	3.5
North Carolina . . . . .	2,120	3.8	2,342	3.2	2,235	3.0
Other . . . . .	24,714	43.8	30,233	41.2	28,476	38.2

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

**Age, Gender, and Marital Status**

Thirty-four percent of refugees admitted to the United States in 2011 were under 18 years of age (see Table 4). Refugees are, on average, younger than the U.S. native-born population. In 2011, the median age of refugees arriving in the United States was 24 years; in contrast, the median age of the native-born population in 2011 was 35 years.<sup>11</sup> A slight majority of refugees were male (52 percent), and 39 percent were married.

<sup>11</sup> Calculated from the March 2011 Current Population Survey public use microdata file from the U.S. Census Bureau.

**State of Residence**

The leading states of residence of refugees admitted to the United States in 2011 were Texas (10 percent), California (8.8 percent), New York (6.3 percent), and Pennsylvania (5.3 percent) (see Table 5). Refugee arrivals in Texas decreased 29 percent from 7,918 in 2010 to 5,627 in 2011. Refugee admissions in California and New York also decreased in 2011 by 42 percent and 23 percent, respectively. This year marked the first year in the time period for which state-level data are available that a state other than California received the greatest number of new refugee arrivals. Of the 10 states that received the most refugees in 2011, Pennsylvania was the only one to witness an increase in refugee arrivals from 2009 to 2011.

**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. Once an I-730 is approved for an individual, 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.

<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.

## Adjudication of Claims

The Asylum Division within USCIS is responsible for the adjudication of asylum claims filed with the agency through the affirmative asylum process. During an asylum interview, an asylum officer determines whether the applicant meets the definition of a refugee, assesses the credibility of the applicant, and determines whether any bars to obtaining asylum apply. Individuals may be barred from obtaining asylum 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 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. Additionally, 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 status at the time of their entry into the United States.

## DATA

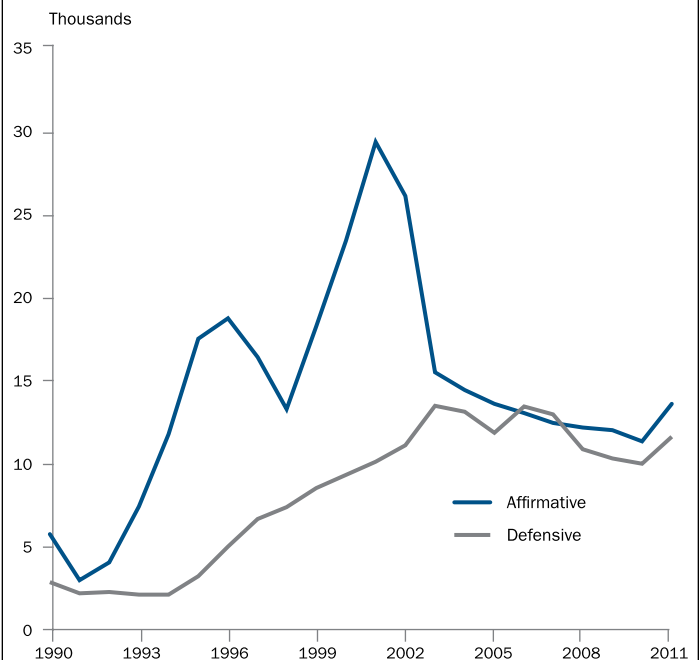
The affirmative asylee data presented in this report were obtained from the Refugee, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS) of USCIS. Defensive asylee data were obtained from EOIR. In 2011, the Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) began receiving data on individuals who were issued travel documents to enter the United States as follow-to-join asylum derivatives; previously these data were not included in OIS reports.<sup>14</sup> 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.

## TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ASYLEES

The total number of persons granted either affirmative or defensive asylum in the United States increased from 21,056 in 2010 to 24,988 in 2011. The number of persons who were granted asylum affirmatively through USCIS increased from 11,187 in 2010 to 13,484 in 2011 (see Figure 2). The number of persons granted asylum defensively by an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals of EOIR also increased, from 9,869 in 2010 to 11,504 in 2011. The number of persons authorized for travel to the United States as follow-to-join derivatives was 9,550.

Figure 2.  
**Annual Flow of Affirmative and Defensive Asylees:  
1990 to 2011**



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).

<sup>14</sup> Although only a single year of follow-to-join asylee data are available and presented in this report, future reports will include multiple years of data.

## Country of Nationality

In 2011, the leading countries of nationality of persons granted either affirmative or defensive asylum were China (34 percent), Venezuela (4.4 percent), Ethiopia (4.3 percent), Egypt (4.1 percent), and Haiti (3.5 percent) (see Table 6). Nationals of these five countries accounted for over half of all persons granted asylum.

In 2011, the top five countries of nationality for affirmative asylees were China (29 percent), Venezuela (6.7 percent), Haiti (6.1 percent), Egypt (5.6 percent), and Ethiopia (4.2 percent) (see Table 7). Nationals of these five countries accounted for over half of all persons granted affirmative asylum. The leading countries of nationality for persons granted defensive asylum were China (41 percent), Ethiopia (4.4 percent), Eritrea (4.2 percent), Nepal (2.8 percent), and Egypt (2.4 percent) (see Table 8). One-half of defensive asylees in 2011 were nationals of these five countries.

The leading countries of nationality for following-to-join asylees authorized for travel to the United States in 2011 were China (39 percent), Nepal (11 percent), Haiti (11 percent), Ethiopia (5.7 percent), and Cameroon (4.2 percent) (see Table 9). Nationals of these five countries accounted for 71 percent of all following-to-join derivative relatives issued travel documents prior to their admission into the United States.

## Age, Gender, and Marital Status

For this report, demographic information was available for affirmative asylees and following-to-join asylees. In 2011, 76 percent of persons granted affirmative asylum were between the ages of 18 and 44 (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 2011 was 28 years. Fifty-one percent were male, and 43 percent were married.

**Table 6.**

### Affirmative and Defensive Asylees by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2009 to 2011

(Ranked by 2011 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2011		2010		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	24,988	100.0	21,056	100.0	22,219	100.0
China, People's Republic . . . . .	8,601	34.4	6,678	31.7	6,159	27.7
Venezuela . . . . .	1,107	4.4	648	3.1	585	2.6
Ethiopia . . . . .	1,076	4.3	1,086	5.2	1,111	5.0
Egypt . . . . .	1,028	4.1	531	2.5	482	2.2
Haiti . . . . .	878	3.5	833	4.0	1,006	4.5
Nepal . . . . .	749	3.0	638	3.0	665	3.0
Russia . . . . .	663	2.7	548	2.6	492	2.2
Eritrea . . . . .	640	2.6	358	1.7	431	1.9
Colombia . . . . .	538	2.2	592	2.8	1,005	4.5
Guatemala . . . . .	484	1.9	464	2.2	508	2.3
All other countries, including unknown . .	9,224	36.9	8,680	41.2	9,775	44.0

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 2009 to 2011

(Ranked by 2011 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2011		2010		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	13,484	100.0	11,187	100.0	11,921	100.0
China, People's Republic . . . . .	3,901	28.9	2,882	25.8	2,710	22.7
Venezuela . . . . .	902	6.7	467	4.2	393	3.3
Haiti . . . . .	822	6.1	666	6.0	596	5.0
Egypt . . . . .	754	5.6	315	2.8	308	2.6
Ethiopia . . . . .	571	4.2	679	6.1	701	5.9
Russia . . . . .	469	3.5	389	3.5	364	3.1
Nepal . . . . .	426	3.2	408	3.6	493	4.1
Iran . . . . .	367	2.7	398	3.6	257	2.2
Colombia . . . . .	325	2.4	358	3.2	637	5.3
Guatemala . . . . .	285	2.1	298	2.7	349	2.9
All other countries, including unknown . .	4,662	34.6	4,327	38.7	5,113	42.9

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 2009 to 2011

(Ranked by 2011 country of nationality)

Country of nationality	2011		2010		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	11,504	100.0	9,869	100.0	10,298	100.0
China, People's Republic . . . . .	4,700	40.9	3,796	38.5	3,449	33.5
Ethiopia . . . . .	505	4.4	407	4.1	410	4.0
Eritrea . . . . .	481	4.2	179	1.8	198	1.9
Nepal . . . . .	323	2.8	230	2.3	172	1.7
Egypt . . . . .	274	2.4	216	2.2	174	1.7
India . . . . .	262	2.3	241	2.4	263	2.6
Soviet Union, former . . . . .	248	2.2	176	1.8	154	1.5
Colombia . . . . .	213	1.9	234	2.4	368	3.6
Somalia . . . . .	213	1.9	208	2.1	168	1.6
Venezuela . . . . .	205	1.8	181	1.8	192	1.9
All other countries, including unknown . .	4,080	35.5	4,001	40.5	4,750	46.1

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 Year 2011**

Country of nationality	2011	
	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	9,550	100.0
China, People's Republic . . . . .	3,770	39.5
Nepal . . . . .	1,053	11.0
Haiti . . . . .	1,020	10.7
Ethiopia . . . . .	548	5.7
Cameroon . . . . .	403	4.2
India . . . . .	163	1.7
Eritrea . . . . .	138	1.4
Egypt . . . . .	137	1.4
Guinea . . . . .	136	1.4
Kenya . . . . .	133	1.4
All other countries, including unknown . . . . .	2,049	21.5

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 11.****Follow-to-join Asylee Travel Documents Issued by Age and Gender: Fiscal Year 2011**

Characteristic	2011	
	Number	Percent
AGE		
Total . . . . .	9,550	100.0
0 to 17 years . . . . .	4,394	46.0
18 to 24 years . . . . .	2,096	21.9
25 to 34 years . . . . .	1,053	11.0
35 to 44 years . . . . .	1,203	12.6
45 to 54 years . . . . .	619	6.5
55 to 64 years . . . . .	163	1.7
65 years and over . . . . .	22	0.2
GENDER		
Total . . . . .	9,550	100.0
Male . . . . .	3,848	40.3
Female . . . . .	4,863	50.9
Unknown . . . . .	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).

In 2011, approximately 46 percent of follow-to-join beneficiaries were under 18 years of age (see Table 11). The median age of follow-to-join beneficiaries was 19 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>15</sup> Fifty-one percent of follow-to-join beneficiaries were female. The marital status of follow-to-join beneficiaries was not available in 2011.

**State of Residence**

In 2011, the leading states of residence for individuals granted asylum affirmatively were California (38 percent), Florida (17 percent), and New York (15 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/immigrationstatistics>.

<sup>15</sup> Includes those individuals 21 and older who are protected by provisions of the Child Status Protection Act.

**Table 10.****Affirmative Asylees by Age, Gender, and Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2009 to 2011**

Characteristic	2011		2010		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total . . . . .	13,484	100.0	11,187	100.0	11,921	100.0
0 to 17 years . . . . .	1,683	12.5	1,280	11.4	1,392	11.7
18 to 24 years . . . . .	3,258	24.2	2,521	22.5	2,414	20.2
25 to 34 years . . . . .	4,425	32.8	3,727	33.3	3,689	30.9
35 to 44 years . . . . .	2,516	18.7	2,217	19.8	2,578	21.6
45 to 54 years . . . . .	1,206	8.9	1,040	9.3	1,319	11.1
55 to 64 years . . . . .	299	2.2	292	2.6	382	3.2
65 years and over . . . . .	97	0.7	110	1.0	147	1.2
GENDER						
Total . . . . .	13,484	100.0	11,187	100.0	11,921	100.0
Male . . . . .	6,936	51.4	5,830	52.1	6,389	53.6
Female . . . . .	6,548	48.6	5,357	47.9	5,532	46.4
MARITAL STATUS						
Total . . . . .	13,484	100.0	11,187	100.0	11,921	100.0
Single . . . . .	6,999	51.9	5,599	50.0	5,616	47.1
Married . . . . .	5,770	42.8	4,961	44.3	5,661	47.5
Other* . . . . .	707	5.2	623	5.6	624	5.2
Unknown . . . . .	8	0.1	4	0.0	20	0.2

\* 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 2009 to 2011**

(Ranked by 2011 state or territory of residence)

State or territory of residence	2011		2010		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	13,484	100.0	11,187	100.0	11,921	100.0
California . . . . .	5,153	38.2	4,101	36.7	4,364	36.6
Florida . . . . .	2,240	16.6	1,474	13.2	1,648	13.8
New York . . . . .	2,019	15.0	1,731	15.5	1,790	15.0
Virginia . . . . .	643	4.8	454	4.1	426	3.6
Maryland . . . . .	528	3.9	395	3.5	408	3.4
Washington . . . . .	325	2.4	327	2.9	350	2.9
Illinois . . . . .	286	2.1	289	2.6	202	1.7
Texas . . . . .	261	1.9	266	2.4	251	2.1
U.S. Virgin Islands . . . . .	174	1.3	183	1.6	45	0.4
New Jersey . . . . .	171	1.3	217	1.9	172	1.4
Other . . . . .	1,684	12.5	1,750	15.6	2,265	19.0

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

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