

# U.S. Lawful Permanent Residents: 2015

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A lawful permanent resident (LPR) or “green card” recipient is defined by immigration law as a person who has been granted lawful permanent residence in the United States. LPRs may live and work permanently anywhere in the United States; own property; and attend public schools, colleges, and universities. They may also join the Armed Forces and apply to become U.S. citizens if they meet certain eligibility and admissibility requirements. This Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) *Annual Flow Report* presents information obtained from applications for LPR status on the number and characteristics of persons who became LPRs in the United States during 2015.<sup>1,2</sup>

A total of 1,051,031 persons became LPRs in 2015 (see Table 1). Over half of the new LPRs (52 percent) already lived in the United States when they were granted lawful permanent residence. Sixty-five percent of the new LPRs were granted LPR status based on a family relationship with a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States. The leading countries of birth of new LPRs were Mexico (15 percent), China (7.1 percent), and India (6.1 percent).

## THE LAWFUL IMMIGRATION PROCESS

There are two paths to LPR status, depending on whether the applicant is living in the United States or abroad at the time of application. Eligible foreign nationals living abroad apply for an immigrant visa at a Department of State consular office. Once issued a visa, a foreign national may seek admission to the United States and become an LPR when admitted at a port of entry. These LPRs are referred to as new arrivals in this report. Eligible individuals who are living in the United States (e.g., refugees, asylees, certain temporary workers, certain family members of U.S. citizens or LPRs, etc.) file a Form I-485, *Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status*, with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). These applicants may apply for permission to work while their Form I-485 is pending. If their applications are approved, they generally are granted LPR

status at the time of approval.<sup>3</sup> These LPRs are referred to as adjustments of status in this report.

The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and its amendments are the basis of most immigration laws in effect today. The INA gives priority for LPR status to foreign nationals who are sponsored by a close family member who is a U.S. citizen or LPR, are sponsored by an employer or make investments that create a certain number of U.S. jobs, are from countries with relatively low levels of immigration to the United States, or are granted refugee or asylee status. Everyone seeking LPR status is subject to a background check as part of the application adjudication.

## Immediate Relatives of U.S. Citizens

The largest category of new LPRs consists of immediate relatives of U.S. citizens (spouses, children, including orphans and Hague adoptees adopted abroad (or coming to the United States to be adopted), and parents of U.S. citizens age 21 and older). Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens are not subject to numerical limits and typically account for more than 40 percent of new LPRs annually.

## Preference Immigration

The term *preference* is used in immigration law to designate numerically-limited family- and employment-based priority categories for LPR status. As specified by the INA, the

<sup>1</sup>In this report, years refer to fiscal years (October 1 to September 30).

<sup>2</sup>Additional context may be found in the 2015 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics and other OIS reports. Not all numbers reported are contained in the tables.

<sup>3</sup>Upon approval, certain classes of admission, such as refugees and asylees, receive credit for additional time in LPR status prior to approval, affecting when they are eligible to naturalize.

**Table 1.**  
**New Lawful Permanent Residents: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2015**

Category of admission	2015		2014		2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,051,031	100.0	1,016,518	100.0	990,553	100.0
New arrivals . . . . .	508,716	48.4	481,392	47.4	459,751	46.4
Adjustments of status . .	542,315	51.6	535,126	52.6	530,802	53.6

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.



**Homeland Security**

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worldwide level of immigration in these two groupings is limited to between 366,000 and 620,000 new LPRs. (See **APPENDIX** for more details on the limit calculations).

*Family-sponsored preferences* consist of four categories: first preference unmarried sons and daughters of U.S. citizens and their children; second preference spouses, children, and unmarried sons and daughters of LPRs and their children; third preference married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens and their spouses and children; and fourth preference brothers and sisters (and their spouses and children) of U.S. citizens age 21 years and older. The annual limit for family-sponsored preferences ranges from 226,000 to 480,000, depending on the previous year's immigration levels.

Family-preference LPRs and immediate relatives are collectively referred to as family-based immigrants. All family-based immigrants must be petitioned by their U.S. citizen or LPR relative. Generally, that relative must financially sponsor the immigrant and sign an affidavit of support, agreeing to make reimbursement should the sponsored relative receive any means-tested public-benefits while in LPR status and before they can be credited with 40 quarters of work.

*Employment-based preferences* consist of five categories of workers (and their spouses and children): EB-1 priority workers (e.g., outstanding professors and researchers); EB-2 professionals with advanced degrees or aliens of exceptional ability; EB-3 skilled workers, professionals (without advanced degrees), and needed unskilled workers; EB-4 "special" immigrants (e.g., ministers, religious workers, and employees of the U.S. Government abroad); and EB-5 employment creation immigrants or "investors." The employment-based preference limit is equal to 140,000 plus any unused visas in the family-sponsored preference categories from the previous year. EB-2 and EB-3 immigrants must be sponsored for a visa by a U.S. employer (subject to waivers in the case of certain EB-2 workers), and they are generally inadmissible unless the Secretary of Labor certifies that there are not sufficient workers who are able, willing, qualified, and available at the destination and that their employment does not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of workers in the United States similarly employed. The other three types of employment-based immigrants may initiate their own visa applications and are not subject to the labor certification process. In general, investor immigrants must invest \$1,000,000 into a new commercial enterprise which will create at least ten full time jobs for U.S. citizens or immigrants authorized to work. In certain areas with high unemployment, the investment amount may be as low as \$500,000, and in areas of very low unemployment, the required investment may be up to \$3,000,000.

In 2015, the limit on preference immigration was 370,796 which included 226,000 in the family-sponsored preference categories and 144,796 in the employment-based preference categories (see **APPENDIX**). The INA also specifies per-country limits equal to seven percent of the combined total number of visas allotted to family- and employment-based preferences. Dependent areas of foreign states are limited to two percent of this combined total.<sup>4</sup> In 2015, these limits amounted to 25,956 immigrants from any single country and 7,416 immigrants from any single dependent area.

<sup>4</sup>For more information regarding independent states, dependent areas, and visa allocations, see 9 Foreign Affairs Manual 503.2 at the Department of State's website.

## Diversity Visas

The Diversity Immigrant Visa Program is designed to allow immigration from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States, defined by the INA as countries with fewer than 50,000 persons granted LPR status within family- and employment-based categories during the preceding five years. The INA establishes an overall diversity visa limit of 55,000 per fiscal year, which has been reduced to 50,000 since 1999 under the provisions of the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). The INA further sets per-country limits at seven percent of the worldwide total, or 3,500 in 2015, and limits the number of diversity visas across six broad world regions based on regional migration levels during the preceding five years so that high-admission regions are eligible for fewer diversity visas. Nationals of eligible countries with a high school degree or its equivalent or with qualifying work experience may apply to the diversity visa program, and visas are distributed to successful applicants through a random selection, or lottery, system, and based on the allocations described above.

## Refugee and Asylee Adjustments of Status

The United States provides refuge to persons who have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution through two programs: a refugee program for persons outside the United States and their immediate relatives, and an asylum program for persons in the United States and their immediate relatives.

The number of persons who may be admitted to the United States as refugees each year, as defined by the Refugee Act of 1980, is established by the President in consultation with Congress. The ceiling on refugee admissions was set at 70,000 from 2003 to 2007, 80,000 from 2008 to 2011, 76,000 for 2012, and back to 70,000 through 2015.

There is no numerical limit on the number of persons who can be granted asylum each year.

Refugees are required by the INA to apply for adjustment to LPR status after one year of residence in the United States. Asylees are eligible to apply one year after they are granted asylum. Refugee and asylee adjustments of status are not subject to numerical limits.<sup>5</sup>

## Other Admission Categories

Remaining admission categories, generally limited to persons admitted under special legislation, have remained fairly steady for the last several years, with the exception of a sharp increase in new arrivals of certain Iraqis and Afghans employed by the U.S. Government and their family members, as well as an increase in adjustment of status by T and U nonimmigrant visa holders, mostly from Mexico and Central America, who have been the victims of human trafficking and other criminal activities, and their family members.

## Eligibility for Naturalization

Most LPRs who are at least 18 years of age are eligible to apply for citizenship after meeting certain requirements. These requirements generally include five years of LPR status in the United States (or three years for those married to a United States citizen) and successfully

<sup>5</sup>Until 2005, an annual limit of 10,000 existed on the number of persons authorized to adjust status as asylees. The REAL ID Act removed that cap.

passing English language and civics tests (unless an exemption or waiver applies for one or both tests). Children in LPR status and under the age of 18 may automatically acquire citizenship through a parent if that parent naturalizes.

## DATA

This report uses data from the Computer Linked Application Information Management System (CLAIMS) and the Electronic Immigration System (ELIS)<sup>6</sup> of USCIS. CLAIMS maintains information from applications for LPR status: the DS-230 *Application for Immigrant Visa and Alien Registration* or the DS-260 *Electronic Application for Immigrant Visa and Alien Registration* of the Department of State (both used by applicants living abroad) and the I-485 *Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status* of USCIS (used by applicants living in the United States).

The data fields in both CLAIMS and ELIS include class of admission, date the applicant was granted LPR status, country of birth, country of last residence, date of birth, marital status, location of residence within the United States, occupation, and, for adjustments of status, prior nonimmigrant status and date of most recent entry as a nonimmigrant.

The size and demographic composition of new LPR cohorts are affected by many factors including changes to immigration law and procedure, variation in application volume, and other factors related to application processing. For these reasons, caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions about the propensity to immigrate from the data presented in this report.

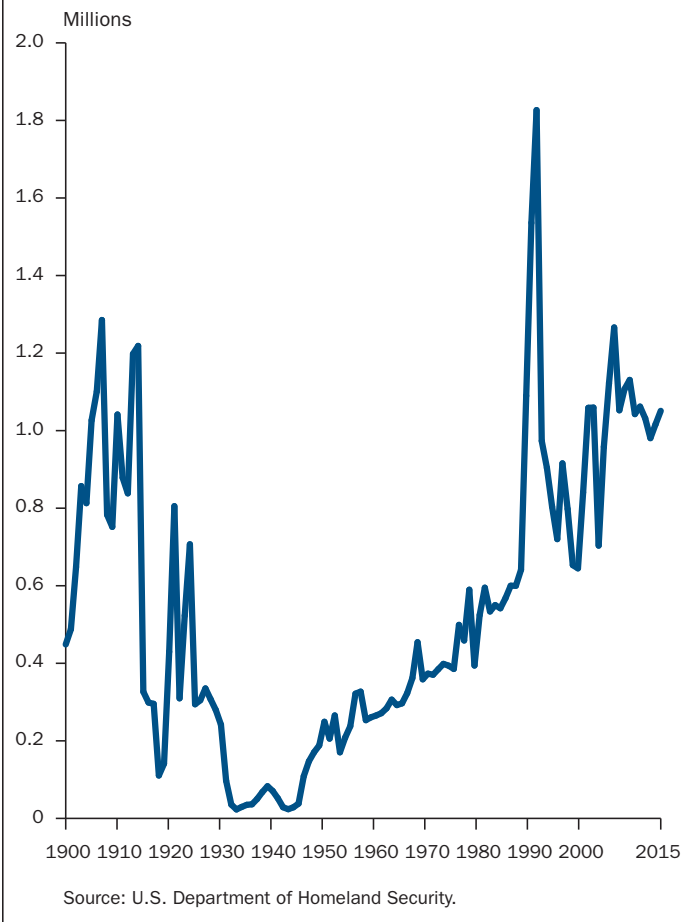
## TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENTS

A total of 1,051,031 individuals were granted LPR status in 2015, an increase of 3.4 percent from 1,016,518 in 2014. LPR new arrivals increased from 481,392 in 2014 to 508,716 in 2015. LPRs adjusting status increased slightly from 535,126 in 2014 to 542,315 in 2015, though they decreased as a percent of total LPRs. The number of new LPRs admitted under an employment-based preference declined five percent between 2014 and 2015, partially because of a decrease in the annual limit for the employment preferences. The number of immediate relatives of U.S. citizens becoming LPRs increased 12 percent from 2014 to 2015. The number of individuals born in Mexico becoming LPRs increased 18 percent from 2014 to 2015. Demographic characteristics, such as age and marital status, and intended destinations of settlement remain largely unchanged. The proportion of new LPRs who adjusted status, as compared to the number of new arrivals, has decreased fairly steadily from 66 percent in 2005 to 52 percent in 2015.

### Historical Trends

The annual LPR flow has exhibited a general upward trend since 1945, increasing from an average of 250,000 new LPRs per year during the 1950s to over 1,000,000 since 1999 (see Figure 1). These increases are partly explained by changes in immigration law, including the elimination in 1965 of quotas limiting immigration to match

Figure 1.  
New Lawful Permanent Residents: 1900 to 2015



the national origins proportions of the U.S. population in 1920 and increases in annual immigration ceilings in 1986 and 1990. The spike in lawful immigration from 1989 to 1991 reflected the legalization of 2,700,000 unauthorized immigrants under the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986. Increases in the number of new LPRs in 2005 and 2006 (primarily in the employment preferences) were due largely to the American Competitiveness in the 21st Century Act (AC21), the Real ID Act, and backlog reductions at USCIS (see U.S. Legal Permanent Residents: 2006 Annual Flow Report).

### Category of Admission

Family-sponsored immigrants (including immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and family-sponsored preference classes of admission) represented 65 percent of the total LPR flow in 2015 (see Table 2 and Figure 2). The largest share of these (44 percent of total new LPRs in 2015) were immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, including spouses of U.S. citizens (25 percent of new LPRs), parents of adult U.S. citizens (13 percent), and children of U.S. citizens, including adopted orphans (6.3 percent).

Twenty percent of new LPRs in 2015 were admitted under a family-sponsored preference class. The second preference class (spouses and children of alien residents) accounted for 49 percent of family-sponsored preference LPRs. The fourth preference class (siblings of U.S. citizens) accounted for 28 percent.

<sup>6</sup> ELIS replaced CLAIMS as the system maintaining biographic information for new arrivals admitted during or after April of 2013. Data elements were missing more frequently in 2013 – the first year of implementation – than any other year, due to incomplete records in ELIS.

Immigrants admitted under an employment-based preference class constituted 14 percent of the total LPR flow in 2015. The annual limit declined for the second consecutive year due to decreases in unused family-preference visas between 2012 and 2014.<sup>7</sup> The second preference class (professionals with advanced degrees) and the first preference class (priority workers) accounted for 31 percent and 29 percent of new employment-based LPRs, respectively, in 2015. The second preference was the only employment-based category that decreased relative to other employment categories between 2013 and 2015.

Between 2014 and 2015, refugee adjustments increased by 23 percent while asylee adjustments decreased by 12 percent. These changes in the numbers of refugees and asylees adjusting status to LPRs were very similar to changes between 2013 and 2014. Refugee adjustments are higher than refugee admissions partially because certain populations, such as Cuban refugees, are counted as refugees when adjusting status to LPR but not when being admitted to the United States.<sup>8</sup> Refugee and asylee adjustments represented 11 and 3.2 percent, respectively, of new LPRs in 2015. In the five-year period from 2010 to 2014, they accounted for 9.4 and 4.4 percent of new LPRs, respectively.

Diversity immigrant classes of admission accounted for 4.6 percent of new LPRs in 2015. The number of individuals gaining LPR status as diversity immigrants in 2015 was within 100 persons of the preceding five year average.

### Region and Country of Birth

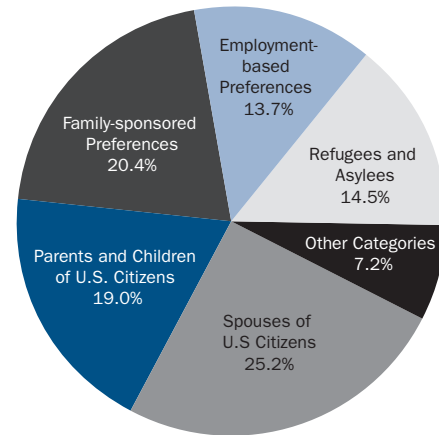
The leading regions of birth of new LPRs in 2015 were Asia (40 percent) and North America (35 percent) (see Table 3). Together, Asia and North America have accounted for at least 70 percent of the LPR flow each year since 2009.

In 2015, 15 percent of all persons granted LPR status were born in Mexico, which has been the leading source of new LPRs each year since 1978. Other prominent countries of birth were China (7.1 percent), India (6.1 percent), the Philippines (5.4 percent), and Cuba (5.2 percent). These five countries

<sup>7</sup> On November 20, 2014, the President announced executive action directing USCIS to work with the Department of State (DOS) to develop a method to allocate immigrant visas to ensure that all immigrant visas authorized by Congress are issued to eligible individuals when there is sufficient demand for such visas.

<sup>8</sup> See Table 13: Refugee Arrivals in the 2015 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics for refugee admissions.

Figure 2.  
New Lawful Permanent Residents by Selected Class of Admission



Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Table 2.

New Lawful Permanent Residents by Major Category of Admission: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2015

Category of admission	2015		2014		2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	1,051,031	100.0	1,016,518	100.0	990,553	100.0
Family-sponsored immigrants	678,978	64.6	645,560	63.5	649,763	65.6
Family-sponsored preferences	213,910	20.4	229,104	22.5	210,303	21.2
Unmarried sons/daughters of U.S. citizens	24,533	2.3	25,686	2.5	24,358	2.5
Spouses and children of alien residents	104,892	10.0	105,641	10.4	99,115	10.0
Married sons/daughters of U.S. citizens	24,271	2.3	25,830	2.5	21,294	2.1
Siblings of U.S. citizens	60,214	5.7	71,947	7.1	65,536	6.6
Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens	465,068	44.2	416,456	41.0	439,460	44.4
Spouses	265,367	25.2	238,852	23.5	248,332	25.1
Parents	132,961	12.7	116,387	11.4	119,746	12.1
Children*	66,740	6.3	61,217	6.0	71,382	7.2
Employment-based preferences	144,047	13.7	151,596	14.9	161,110	16.3
Priority workers	41,688	4.0	40,554	4.0	38,978	3.9
Professionals with advanced degrees	44,344	4.2	48,801	4.8	63,026	6.4
Skilled workers, professionals, unskilled workers	37,243	3.5	43,156	4.2	43,632	4.4
Special immigrants	10,584	1.0	8,362	0.8	6,931	0.7
Investors	10,188	1.0	10,723	1.1	8,543	0.9
Diversity programs	47,934	4.6	53,490	5.3	45,618	4.6
Refugees and Asylees	151,995	14.5	134,242	13.2	119,630	12.1
Refugee adjustments	118,431	11.3	96,066	9.5	77,395	7.8
Asylee adjustments	33,564	3.2	38,176	3.8	42,235	4.3
Parolees	23	—	95	—	556	0.1
Other categories	28,054	2.7	31,535	3.1	13,876	1.4
Children born abroad to alien residents	403	—	594	0.1	643	0.1
NACARA <sup>†</sup> Section 202	49	—	70	—	138	—
Cancellation of removal	4,713	0.4	5,248	0.5	5,763	0.6
Subject to annual limit	3,720	0.4	3,592	0.4	4,156	0.4
Not subject to limit (NACARA <sup>†</sup> Section 203)	993	0.1	1,656	0.2	1,607	0.2
Haitian Refugee Immigrant Fairness Act	9	—	22	—	62	—
Other <sup>‡</sup>	22,880	2.2	25,601	2.5	7,270	0.7

\*Includes orphans.

<sup>†</sup>Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act of 1997.

<sup>‡</sup>Primarily consists of those admitted or adjusted under special legislation.

— Figures round to 0.0.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**Table 3.****New Lawful Permanent Residents by Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2015**

(Countries ranked by 2015 LPR flow)

Region and country of birth	2015		2014		2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>REGION</b>						
Total . . . . .	1,051,031	100.0	1,016,518	100.0	990,553	100.0
Africa . . . . .	101,415	9.6	98,413	9.7	98,304	9.9
Asia . . . . .	419,297	39.9	430,508	42.4	400,548	40.4
Europe . . . . .	85,803	8.2	83,266	8.2	86,556	8.7
North America . . . . .	366,126	34.8	324,354	31.9	315,660	31.9
Caribbean . . . . .	146,753	14.0	133,952	13.2	122,406	12.4
Central America . . . . .	47,711	4.5	44,403	4.4	44,724	4.5
Other North America . . . . .	171,662	16.3	145,999	14.4	148,530	15.0
Oceania . . . . .	5,404	0.5	5,112	0.5	5,277	0.5
South America . . . . .	72,309	6.9	73,715	7.3	80,945	8.2
Unknown . . . . .	677	0.1	1,150	0.1	3,263	0.3
<b>COUNTRY</b>						
Total . . . . .	1,051,031	100.0	1,016,518	100.0	990,553	100.0
Mexico . . . . .	158,619	15.1	134,052	13.2	135,028	13.6
China, People's Republic . . . . .	74,558	7.1	76,089	7.5	71,798	7.2
India . . . . .	64,116	6.1	77,908	7.7	68,458	6.9
Philippines . . . . .	56,478	5.4	49,996	4.9	54,446	5.5
Cuba . . . . .	54,396	5.2	46,679	4.6	32,219	3.3
Dominican Republic . . . . .	50,610	4.8	44,577	4.4	41,311	4.2
Vietnam . . . . .	30,832	2.9	30,283	3.0	27,101	2.7
Iraq . . . . .	21,107	2.0	19,153	1.9	9,552	1.0
El Salvador . . . . .	19,487	1.9	19,273	1.9	18,260	1.8
Pakistan . . . . .	18,057	1.7	18,612	1.8	13,251	1.3
Jamaica . . . . .	17,642	1.7	19,026	1.9	19,400	2.0
Colombia . . . . .	17,316	1.6	18,175	1.8	21,131	2.1
Korea, South . . . . .	17,138	1.6	20,423	2.0	23,166	2.3
Haiti . . . . .	16,967	1.6	15,274	1.5	20,351	2.1
Bangladesh . . . . .	13,570	1.3	14,645	1.4	12,099	1.2
Iran . . . . .	13,114	1.2	11,615	1.1	12,863	1.3
Nepal . . . . .	12,926	1.2	12,357	1.2	13,046	1.3
Burma . . . . .	12,808	1.2	11,144	1.1	12,565	1.3
Canada . . . . .	12,673	1.2	11,586	1.1	13,181	1.3
United Kingdom . . . . .	12,592	1.2	12,225	1.2	12,984	1.3
All other countries . . . . .	356,025	33.9	353,426	34.8	358,343	36.2

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**Table 4.****New Lawful Permanent Residents by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2015**

(Ranked by 2015 LPR flow)

State of residence	2015		2014		2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,051,031	100.0	1,016,518	100.0	990,553	100.0
California . . . . .	209,568	19.9	198,379	19.5	191,806	19.4
New York . . . . .	130,010	12.4	141,406	13.9	133,601	13.5
Florida . . . . .	118,873	11.3	109,310	10.8	102,939	10.4
Texas . . . . .	99,727	9.5	95,295	9.4	92,674	9.4
New Jersey . . . . .	49,801	4.7	51,609	5.1	53,082	5.4
Illinois . . . . .	40,482	3.9	36,535	3.6	35,988	3.6
Massachusetts . . . . .	28,535	2.7	29,776	2.9	29,482	3.0
Virginia . . . . .	27,622	2.6	28,477	2.8	27,861	2.8
Georgia . . . . .	25,919	2.5	23,792	2.3	24,387	2.5
Pennsylvania . . . . .	24,969	2.4	23,944	2.4	24,720	2.5
Other* . . . . .	295,525	28.1	277,995	27.3	274,013	27.7

\*Includes unknown, U.S. territories, and armed forces posts.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

accounted for 39 percent of all new LPRs in 2015. Between 2000 and 2015, the proportions of new LPRs from Asia and Africa have increased by 7.7 and 4.4 percentage points, respectively, while Europe and North America have respectively decreased as a proportion of new LPRs by 6.6 and 5.5 percentage points.

**State and Metropolitan Area of Residence**

California was the state of residence of nearly one-fifth (20 percent) of persons granted LPR status in 2015 (see Table 4). Other leading states of residence included New York (12 percent), Florida (11 percent), Texas (9.5 percent), and New Jersey (4.7 percent). Fifty-eight percent of new LPRs resided in these five states in 2015. These states, along with Illinois, have been the top six destination states for LPRs every year since 1971. However, the proportion of LPRs settling in these six states has fairly steadily decreased from 82 percent of all new LPRs in 1990 to 62 percent in 2015. This, along with the fact that between 2000 and 2015, 16 states saw decreases in their relative proportion of new LPRs while 34 states saw relative increases, indicates increasing dispersal of new immigrants. Between 2000 and 2015, California went from the residence or intended residence of 26 percent of new LPRs to only 20 percent, while Illinois dropped from 43 percent in 2000 to 39 percent in 2015. North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Indiana, Alabama, and North Carolina all doubled their absolute numbers of new LPRs in the same time period. Only Vermont, Connecticut, California, and New Mexico saw absolute decreases in new LPRs.

The leading metropolitan area of residence for new LPRs in 2015 was New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (15 percent) (see Table 5).<sup>9</sup> Other prominent metropolitan areas of residence included Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA (7.9 percent); Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL (7.4 percent); Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV (3.6 percent); Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI (3.5 percent); and Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX (3.3 percent). These six metropolitan areas accounted for the residence of 41 percent of new LPRs in 2015.

**Age, Sex, and Marital Status**

New LPRs have historically been younger than the native population of the United States. In 2015, the median age for new LPRs was 32 years, compared to 35 for the U.S. native population (see Table 6).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The most current CBSA definitions are available from OMB at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/bulletins/2013/b13-01.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Calculated from the March 2015 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) from the U.S. Census Bureau.

**Table 5.****New Lawful Permanent Residents by Metropolitan Area of Residence: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2015**

(Ranked by 2015 LPR flow)

Metropolitan area of residence	2015		2014		2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,051,031	100.0	1,016,518	100.0	990,553	100.0
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA . . . . .	162,175	15.4	174,727	17.2	168,734	17.0
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA . . . . .	82,979	7.9	80,527	7.9	79,892	8.1
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL . . . . .	77,647	7.4	72,038	7.1	66,634	6.7
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV . . . . .	37,340	3.6	39,532	3.9	39,232	4.0
Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI . . . . .	36,658	3.5	33,038	3.3	32,819	3.3
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX . . . . .	34,591	3.3	33,856	3.3	31,949	3.2
San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA . . . . .	34,152	3.2	32,904	3.2	30,600	3.1
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX . . . . .	29,660	2.8	28,780	2.8	26,810	2.7
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH . . . . .	22,836	2.2	24,026	2.4	23,868	2.4
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA . . . . .	20,875	2.0	19,626	1.9	20,065	2.0
Other . . . . .	512,118	48.7	477,464	47.0	469,950	47.4

Notes: Metropolitan areas defined based on the 2013 update of Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs) definitions. Numbers from previous years may differ from previously published figures.  
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

New LPRs are more likely to be female (54 percent) than the native U.S. population (51 percent) (see Table 7). The majority (59 percent) of new LPRs were married, compared with 38 percent of the native population (see Table 8).<sup>11</sup>

**APPENDIX****PREFERENCE IMMIGRATION LIMITS<sup>12</sup>****Family-sponsored Preference Limit**

The annual limit for family-sponsored preference immigration is calculated as 480,000 people minus the number of aliens who were issued visas or who

adjusted to LPR status in the previous year as 1) immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, 2) children born subsequent to the issuance of a visa to an accompanying parent, 3) children born abroad to LPRs on temporary trips abroad, and 4) certain categories of aliens paroled into the United States in the second preceding year, and plus 5) unused visas in the employment-preference classes in the preceding year.

The family-sponsored preference limit may not fall below a minimum of 226,000 in any year. A total of 423,827 new LPRs were issued visas or adjusted status in 2014 under categories (1) through (4). At the same time, visa issuance in the employment-preference classes exceeded their annual limit by 1,119 in 2014 (less than one percent of the total annual limit), possibly as a result of fewer than usual visas returned unused to consular offices within the year. Thus, the calculated limit for family-sponsored preference classes in 2015 was 55,054 (480,000 minus 423,827 minus 1,119), and since this number was below 226,000, the family-sponsored preferences limit was set at 226,000. The limit for each category is shown in Table A1.

**Table 6.****New Lawful Permanent Residents by Age: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2015**

Age	2015		2014		2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,051,031	100.0	1,016,518	100.0	990,553	100.0
Under 5 years . . . . .	37,267	3.5	37,578	3.7	33,750	3.4
5 to 14 years . . . . .	112,674	10.7	106,180	10.4	103,191	10.4
15 to 24 years . . . . .	172,766	16.4	169,844	16.7	165,893	16.7
25 to 34 years . . . . .	258,528	24.6	255,148	25.1	234,690	23.7
35 to 44 years . . . . .	201,674	19.2	196,709	19.4	186,102	18.8
45 to 54 years . . . . .	127,551	12.1	121,747	12.0	113,819	11.5
55 to 64 years . . . . .	81,870	7.8	75,830	7.5	71,724	7.2
65 years and over . . . . .	58,696	5.6	53,080	5.2	48,875	4.9
Unknown age . . . . .	5	—	402	—	32,509	3.3
Median age (years) . . . . .	32	X	32	X	32	X

X Not applicable.  
— Figure rounds to 0.0.  
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**Table 7.****New Lawful Permanent Residents by Sex: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2015**

Sex	2015		2014		2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,051,031	100.0	1,016,518	100.0	990,553	100.0
Female . . . . .	569,536	54.2	547,361	53.8	513,736	51.9
Male . . . . .	481,485	45.8	468,653	46.1	434,284	43.8
Unknown . . . . .	10	—	504	—	42,533	4.3

— Figure rounds to 0.0.  
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**Table 8.****New Lawful Permanent Residents by Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2013 to 2015**

Marital status	2015		2014		2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	1,051,031	100.0	1,016,518	100.0	990,553	100.0
Married . . . . .	615,259	58.5	594,216	58.5	579,295	58.5
Single . . . . .	363,590	34.6	365,309	35.9	355,199	35.9
Other* . . . . .	68,824	6.5	53,306	5.2	51,671	5.2
Unknown . . . . .	3,358	0.3	3,687	0.4	4,388	0.4

\*Includes persons who are widowed, divorced, or separated.  
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**Employment-based Preference Limit**

The annual limit for employment-based preference immigration is equal to 140,000 plus unused numbers in the family-sponsored preference classes in the previous year. With 4,796 unused numbers in the family-sponsored preference classes in 2014, the 2015 employment-based preference limit was 144,796. The limit is 28.6 percent

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> The Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, is responsible for determining these limits. See the monthly Visa Bulletin for more information on the limits.

of this total for each of the first three employment-preference classes and 7.1 percent for each of the last two preference classes. In 2015, these limits were 41,412 and 10,281.

### Per Country and Dependent Area Limits

A limit of seven percent of the combined total visa limits for family-sponsored and employment-based preference classes is set for independent countries, and a limit of two percent is set for dependent areas. The 2015 per country limit for independent foreign states was 25,956 (seven percent of 370,796) — the sum of the 2015 employment-based and family-based preference limits), and the limit for dependencies was 7,416 (two percent of 370,796).

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about immigration and immigration statistics, visit the Office of Immigration Statistics website at [www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics](http://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics).

**Table A1.**

### Annual Limits for Preference and Diversity Immigrants: Fiscal Year 2015

Preference/description	Limit
Family-sponsored preferences . . . . .	226,000
First: Unmarried sons and daughters of U.S. citizens and their children . . . . .	23,400*
Second: Spouses, children, and unmarried sons and daughters of permanent resident aliens . . . . .	114,200†
Third: Married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens . . . . .	23,400†
Fourth: Brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens (at least 21 years of age) . . . . .	65,000†
Employment-based preferences . . . . .	144,796
First: Priority workers . . . . .	41,412‡
Second: Professionals with advanced degrees or aliens of exceptional ability . . . . .	41,412‡
Third: Skilled workers, professionals, and needed unskilled workers . . . . .	41,412‡
Fourth: Certain special immigrants . . . . .	10,281
Fifth: Employment creation (“investors”) . . . . .	10,281
Diversity . . . . .	50,000

\*Plus unused family 4th preference visas.

†Plus unused higher preference visas.

‡Plus unused employment 4th and 5th preference visas.

Source: U.S. Department of State.