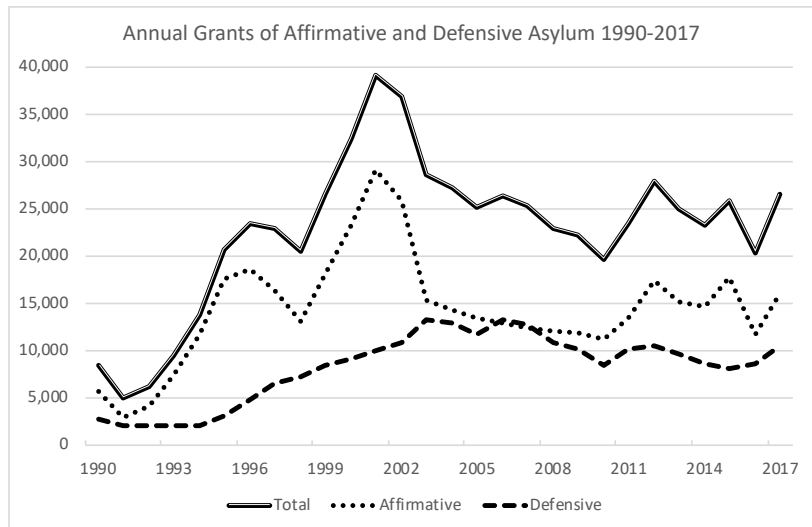


Eligibility

To be eligible for refugee or asylum status, the applicant must meet the requirements in section 101(a)(42) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which states that a person is “unwilling or unable to return to his or her country of nationality 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.”



Source: U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security and U.S. Dept. of Justice.

Asylees

Applicants seeking asylum either file a claim when they arrive at a U.S. port of entry or when they are already in the United States. In 2017, the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security granted asylum affirmatively to 16,045 people. The U.S. Department of Justice granted asylum defensively to 10,523 individuals in 2017.

Top 5 Countries of Origin of Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively or Defensively: 2015–2017

Country of Origin	2017	2016	2015
Total	26,568	20,340	26,011
China, People's Republic	5,567	4,476	6,155
El Salvador	3,471	2,148	2,164
Guatemala	2,954	1,916	2,059
Honduras	2,048	1,482	1,407
Egypt	1,109	799	1,588

Source: "Annual Flow Report, Refugees and Asylees: 2017," Office of Immigration Statistics, Department of Homeland Security, March 2019.

Trends in Asylum Cases from Central America

The number of affirmative asylum *applications* by individuals from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras increased nearly 800% from 2012–2017, from 3,523 in 2012 to 31,066 in 2017. Unaccompanied children from these countries made up 66 percent of 2015 applications and 56 percent in 2016 and 2017.

Source: "Annual Flow Report, Refugees and Asylees: 2017," Office of Immigration Statistics, Department of Homeland Security, March 2019.

Age of Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively: 2015–2017

Age	2017	2016	2015
Total	16,045	11,582	17,818
0 to 17 years	5,004	3,645	5,264
18 to 24 years	3,130	2,054	3,206
25 to 34 years	3,488	2,708	4,489
35 to 44 years	2,664	1,853	3,026
45 to 54 years	1,230	864	1,223
55 to 64 years	373	294	390
65 years and older	156	164	220

Source: "Annual Flow Report, Refugees and Asylees: 2017," Office of Immigration Statistics, Department of Homeland Security, March 2019.