

**Annual Report of Immigrant Visa Applicants in the Family-sponsored and
Employment-based preferences Registered at the National Visa Center
as of November 1, 2014**

Most prospective immigrant visa applicants qualify for status under the law on the basis of family relationships or employer sponsorship. Entitlement to visa processing in these classes is established ordinarily through approval by Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) of a petition filed on the applicant's behalf. The petitions of applicants who will be processed at an overseas post are forwarded by CIS to the Department of State; applicants in categories subject to numerical limit are registered on the visa waiting list. Each case is assigned a priority (i.e., registration) date based on the filing date accorded to the petition. Visa issuance within each numerically limited category is possible only if the applicant's priority date is within the applicable cut-off dates which are published each month by the Department of State in the Visa Bulletin. Family and Employment preference applicants compete for visa numbers within their respective categories on a worldwide basis according to priority date; a per-country limit on such preference immigrants set by INA 202 places a maximum on the amount of visas which may be issued in a single year to applicants from any one country, however.

In October, the Department of State asked the National Visa Center (NVC) at Portsmouth, New Hampshire to report the totals of applicants on the waiting list in the various numerically-limited immigrant categories. Applications for adjustment of status under INA 245 which are pending at CIS Offices are not included in the tabulation of the immigrant waiting list data which is being provided at this time. As such, the following figures ONLY reflect petitions which the Department of State has received, and do not include the significant number of applications held with the CIS Offices.

The following figures have been compiled from the NVC report submitted to the Department on November 1, 2014, and show the number of immigrant visa applicants on the waiting list in the various preferences and subcategories subject to numerical limit. All figures reflect persons registered under each respective numerical limitation, i.e., the totals represent not only principal applicants or petition beneficiaries, but their spouses and children entitled to derivative status under INA 203(d) as well.

Family-sponsored Preferences

<u>Category</u>	<u>as of Nov. 1, 2013</u>	<u>as of Nov. 1, 2014</u>	<u>% of Change From 2013 Totals</u>
FAMILY FIRST	279,693	314,527	(+12.5%)
FAMILY SECOND TOTAL	706,059	755,632	(+7.0%)
2A-Spouses/Children:	238,417	257,355	(+7.9%)
2B- Adult Sons/Daughters:	467,642	498,277	(+6.6%)
FAMILY THIRD	804,242	805,627	(+0.2%)
FAMILY FOURTH	2,420,977	2,455,964	(+1.4%)
TOTAL	4,210,971	4,331,750	(+2.9%)

Employment-based Preferences

<u>Category</u>	<u>as of Nov. 1, 2013</u>	<u>as of Nov. 1, 2014</u>	<u>% of Change From 2013 Totals</u>
EMPLOYMENT FIRST	2,691	2,733	(+1.6%)
EMPLOYMENT SECOND	15,866	8,380	(-47.2%)
EMPLOYMENT THIRD TOTAL	87,937	73,064	(-16.9%)
Skilled Workers:	76,742	65,580	(-14.5%)
Other Workers:	11,195	7,484	(-33.1%)
EMPLOYMENT FOURTH TOTAL	362	315	(-13.0%)
EMPLOYMENT FIFTH TOTAL	4,748	6,418	(+35.2%)
TOTAL	111,604	90,910	(-18.5%)
GRAND TOTAL	4,322,575	4,422,660	(+2.3%)

Immigrant Waiting List By Country

Immigrant visa issuances during fiscal year 2015 will be limited by the terms of INA 201 to no more than 226,000 in the family-sponsored preferences and approximately 144,000 in the employment-based preferences. (Visas for "Immediate Relatives" - i.e., spouses, unmarried children under the age of 21 years, and parents of U.S. citizens - are not subject to numerical limitation, however.)

It should by no means be assumed that once an applicant is registered, the case is then continually included in the waiting list totals unless and until a visa is issued. The consular procedures mandate a regular culling of visa cases to remove from the count those unlikely to see further action, so that totals are not unreasonably inflated.

The sixteen countries with the highest number of waiting list registrants in FY 2015 are listed below; together these represent 82% of the total. This list includes all countries with at least 50,000 persons on the waiting list. There is a seven percent per-country limit, which visa issuances to any single country may not exceed. This limit serves to avoid the potential monopolization of virtually all the annual limitation by applicants from only a few countries. That limitation is not a quota to which any particular country is entitled, however. For FY 2015 the per-country limit will be approximately 25,900.

<u>Country</u>	<u>Applicants</u>
Mexico	1,323,978
Philippines	428,765
India	323,089
Vietnam	259,030
China-mainland born	243,440
Dominican Republic	197,351
Bangladesh	170,739
Cuba	122,088
Haiti	117,489
Pakistan	116,766
El Salvador	77,301
Jamaica	58,984
Korea, South	53,360
Peru	52,284
Colombia	51,154
Iran	50,326
<u>All Others</u>	<u>776,516</u>
Worldwide Total	4,422,660

**Immigrant Waiting List
By Preference Category**

FAMILY-SPONSORED PREFERENCES

Family FIRST Preference:

The worldwide Family FIRST preference numerical limitation is 23,400. The top ten countries with the highest F1 waiting list totals are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Family First Preference Total</u>	<u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u>
Mexico	103,957	33.1%
Dominican Republic	25,664	8.2%
Philippines	22,650	7.2%
Haiti	18,678	5.9%
Jamaica	17,733	5.6%
El Salvador	10,177	3.2%
Cuba	9,308	3.0%
Vietnam	7,362	2.3%
Guyana	7,269	2.3%
Colombia	6,621	2.1%
All Others	85,108	27.1%
Total	314,527	100%

Cases are being added to the waiting list in this category not only by the approval of new FIRST preference petitions, but also through automatic conversion of pending 2B cases into FIRST preference upon the naturalization of the petitioner.

Given the 498,277 Family 2B waiting list and the several years' interval between 2B petition filing and visa issuance, it is likely that increasing numbers of petitioners will be naturalized and the petitions converted to Family FIRST preference before 2B visas become available. The prospect for increasing future demand in the FIRST preference could result in slower advances in the worldwide cut-off date as a consequence. Only two countries, Mexico and Philippines, have FIRST preference cut-off dates which are earlier than the worldwide date. (NOTE: A Family 2B petition automatically converts to a Family FIRST petition if the petitioner naturalizes. However, Section 6 of the Child Status Protection Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-208, provides relief for Family 2B applicants who would be disadvantaged by a conversion to Family FIRST status due to a less favorable Family FIRST cut-off date).

Family SECOND Preference:

The total Family SECOND preference waiting list figure is 755,632. Of these, 257,355 (34.1%) are spouses and children of permanent residents of the United States (the 2A class), and 498,277 (65.9%) are adult unmarried sons/daughters of permanent residents (the 2B class). The Family SECOND preference represents 17.4% of the total Family preference waiting list. It will receive 114,200 visa numbers for FY 2015, just over half of the 226,000 family preference total; 77% of SECOND preference numbers are provided to 2A applicants, while the remaining 23% go to the 2B class.

2A: About 87,900 visa numbers are expected to be available during FY 2015. The top five countries with the highest 2A waiting list totals are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Family 2A Preference Total</u>	<u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u>
Mexico	97,262	37.8%
Dominican Republic	33,436	13.0%
Cuba	13,024	5.1%
Philippines	12,687	4.9%
Haiti	10,105	3.9%
All Others	90,841	35.3%
Total	257,355	100%

Upon naturalization of the petitioner, a pending 2A case is converted automatically into the “Immediate Relative” visa category, which is not subject to numerical limit and therefore has no visa waiting period. As a result, the amount of cases being processed in the “Immediate Relative” category may increase and partially offset new F2A filings.

2B: Visa numbers for this class of adult sons and daughters will be approximately 26,260 during FY 2015. The waiting list far exceeds the annual limit. The top ten countries with the highest 2B waiting list totals are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Family 2B Preference Total</u>	<u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u>
Mexico	189,123	38.0%
Dominican Republic	60,588	12.2%
Philippines	59,596	12.0%
Haiti	23,637	4.7%
Cuba	20,253	4.1%
El Salvador	15,541	3.1%
China-mainland born	15,473	3.1%
Vietnam	11,971	2.4%
Jamaica	7,194	1.4%
Guatemala	7,111	1.4%
<u>All Others</u>	<u>87,790</u>	<u>17.6%</u>
Total	498,277	100%

Some of the 2B applicants were formerly counted in the 2A waiting list and have since turned 21.

Family THIRD Preference:

The annual visa limit is 23,400. Two oversubscribed countries (Mexico and Philippines) have sufficiently heavy demand in this preference to require a cut-off date substantially earlier than the worldwide date. The top ten countries with the highest F3 waiting list totals are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Family Third Preference Total</u>	<u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u>
Mexico	189,794	23.6%
Philippines	144,590	17.9%
India	59,850	7.4%
Vietnam	59,116	7.3%
Cuba	29,422	3.7%
China-mainland born	29,302	3.6%
Dominican Republic	17,489	2.2%
Pakistan	15,874	2.0%
Haiti	14,570	1.8%
Jamaica	13,625	1.7%
<u>All Others</u>	<u>231,995</u>	<u>28.8%</u>
Total	805,627	100%

Family FOURTH Preference:

Applicants registered in the Family FOURTH preference total 2,455,964. Annual visa issuances are limited to 65,000. The waiting period for the Family FOURTH preference is longer than any other category because the demand significantly exceeds the number of available visas. The countries listed below have the largest number of FOURTH preference applicants:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Family Fourth Preference Total</u>	<u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u>
Mexico	741,233	30.2%
India	224,813	9.2%
China-mainland born	175,485	7.1%
Vietnam	174,111	7.1%
Philippines	159,538	6.5%
Bangladesh	159,071	6.5%
Pakistan	93,427	3.8%
Dominican Republic	60,131	2.4%
Haiti	50,487	2.1%
Cuba	50,077	2.0%
All Others	567,591	23.1%
Total	2,455,964	100%

The steadily growing waiting period in this preference is now more than twelve years for countries of most favorable visa availability and even longer for some oversubscribed countries.

EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCES

It is important to note that eighty-six percent of all Employment preference immigrants were processed as adjustment of status cases at CIS offices during FY 2014. Cases pending with CIS are not counted in the consular waiting list tally which is presented below. Therefore, in several Employment categories the waiting list totals being provided below significantly understate real immigrant demand. The Employment waiting list counts not only prospective workers, but also their spouses and children entitled under the law to derivative preference status.

Employment FIRST Preference:

Top countries are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Employment First Preference</u>	<u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u>
China-mainland born	602	22.0%
India	264	9.7%
Great Britain and Northern Ireland	239	8.8%
Canada	185	6.8%
Iran	145	5.3%
Korea, South	142	5.2%
Venezuela	90	3.3%
France	80	2.9%
Russia	64	2.3%
Mexico	60	2.2%
All Others	862	31.5%
Worldwide Total	2,733	100%

Visa availability is "current" for all countries.

Employment SECOND Preference:

Top countries are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Employment Second Preference</u>	<u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u>
India	5,499	65.6%
China-mainland born	796	9.5%
Korea, South	511	6.1%
Philippines	267	3.2%
Canada	145	1.7%
All Others	1,162	13.9%
Worldwide Total	8,380	100%

This category is "current" at present for all but two countries.

Employment THIRD Preference:

Top countries are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Employment Third Preference</u>	<u>Percent of Category Waiting List</u>
Philippines	28,578	43.6%
India	21,351	32.5%
China-mainland born	2,305	3.5%
Korea, South	1,687	2.6%
Great Britain and Northern Ireland	1,245	1.9%
<u>All Others</u>	<u>10,414</u>	<u>15.9%</u>
Worldwide Total	65,580	100%

Employment Third “Other Workers”:

Top Countries are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Employment Third Preference: Skilled Worker/ Professional Components</u>	<u>Percent of Waiting List in These Classes</u>
China-mainland born	2,798	37.4%
Mexico	1,296	17.3%
Korea, South	908	12.2%
Philippines	810	10.8%
India	547	7.3%
<u>All Others</u>	<u>1,125</u>	<u>15.0%</u>
Worldwide Total	7,484	100%

Two oversubscribed countries (China-mainland born and India) have sufficiently heavy demand in the Employment Third and Third “Other Worker” Preferences to require cut-off dates substantially earlier than the worldwide dates.

Employment FOURTH Preference:

Top countries are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Employment Fourth Preference</u>	<u>Percent of Waiting List in These Classes</u>
India	76	24.1%
Nigeria	26	8.3%
Korea, South	19	6.0%
Romania	15	4.8%
Cambodia	13	4.1%
Mexico	13	4.1%
All Others	153	48.6%
Worldwide Total	315	100%

Visa availability is “current” at present for all countries.

Employment FIFTH Preference:

Top countries are:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Employment Fifth Preference</u>	<u>Percent of Waiting List in These Classes</u>
China-mainland born	5,169	80.5%
Vietnam	185	2.9%
Hong Kong S.A.R.	101	1.6%
China-Taiwan born	97	1.5%
India	95	1.5%
Russia	70	1.1%
All Others	701	10.9%
Worldwide Total	6,418	100%

Visa availability is “current” at present for all countries.

**Family
Immigrant Waiting List
By Country**

The ten countries with the highest number of Family-sponsored waiting list registrants are listed below; together these represent 74.6% of the total. This list includes all countries with at least 100,000 persons on the waiting list. (The per-country limit in INA 202 sets an annual maximum on the amount of Family preference visas which may be issued to applicants from any one country; the FY 2015 per-country limit will be 15,820.)

Family Preferences

Country	Total
Mexico	1,321,369
Philippines	399,061
India	295,257
Vietnam	258,750
China-mainland born	231,768
Dominican Republic	197,308
Bangladesh	170,652
Cuba	122,084
Haiti	117,477
Pakistan	116,204
All Others	1,101,820
Worldwide Total	4,331,750

**Family
Immigrant Waiting List
By Region**

A breakdown of the NVC waiting list by region is:

Region	Total
Africa	126,778
Asia	1,786,612
Europe	151,484
N. America*	2,028,679
Oceania	10,453
S. America	227,744
Family Total	4,331,750

*North America includes Canada, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

**Employment
Immigrant Waiting List
By Country**

The five countries with the highest number of Employment-based waiting list registrants are listed below; together these represent 82.7% of the total. This list includes all countries with at least 2,500 persons on the waiting list. (The per-country limit in INA 202 sets an annual maximum on the amount of Employment preference visas which may be issued to applicants from any one country; the FY 2015 per-country limit will be approximately 10,080.)

Employment Preferences

Country	Total
Philippines	29,704
India	27,832
China-mainland born	11,672
Korea, South	3,328
Mexico	2,609
All Others	15,765
Worldwide Total	90,910

**Employment
Immigrant Waiting List
By Region**

A breakdown of the NVC waiting list by region is:

Region	Total
Africa	1,476
Asia	78,466
Europe	4,074
N. America*	4,687
Oceania	214
S. America	1,993
Employment Total	90,910

*North America includes Canada, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.