



Glossary

Asylee: A foreign-born person already in the United States who is found to have been persecuted or to have a well-founded fear of persecution upon return to his or her home country. Asylees are eligible to become lawful permanent residents, or LPRs, one year after receiving asylum.

Foreign-born: An individual who was not a U.S. citizen at birth or who was born outside the United States, Puerto Rico, or other U.S. territories and whose parents are not U.S. citizens. The terms “foreign-born” and “immigrant” are used interchangeably.

Immediate relatives: Spouses, unmarried minor children, and parents of U.S. citizens. Immediate relatives are exempt from annual numerical limits on immigration.

Lawful permanent resident, or LPR: A foreign-born person who has been granted permission to live and work indefinitely in the United States. Also known as a green-card holder.

Naturalized citizen: A person who has become a U.S. citizen through the naturalization process.

Noncitizen: Any person who is not a citizen of the United States.

Nonimmigrant: A noncitizen who has permission to reside temporarily in the United States for a specific purpose.

Permanent resident visa: Permission to live and work indefinitely in the United States. Also known as a green card.

Refugee: A person from outside the United States who is admitted to this country based on an inability to return to his or her home country because of a well-founded fear of persecution due to race, membership in a social group, political opinion, religion, or national origin. Refugees are eligible to become lawful permanent residents one year after admission to the United States.

Unauthorized immigrants: A foreign-born person residing in the United States who is not a U.S. citizen, has not been admitted for permanent residence, and is not in a set of specific authorized temporary statuses permitting longer-term residence and work. The vast majority of unauthorized immigrants entered the country without valid documents or arrived with valid visas but stayed past their visa expiration dates or otherwise violated the terms of their admission.

U.S.-born: An individual who is a U.S. citizen at birth, including people born in the United States, Puerto Rico, or other U.S. territories, as well as those born abroad to parents who are U.S. citizens.

Contact: Sarah Leiseca

Email: sleiseca@pewtrusts.org

Project website: pewstates.org/immigration

The Pew Charitable Trusts is driven by the power of knowledge to solve today's most challenging problems. Pew applies a rigorous, analytical approach to improve public policy, inform the public, and stimulate civic life.