



Asylees: 2023

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The United States provides asylum to certain eligible persons, along with their eligible relatives, who have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution and who are physically present or arriving in the United States at the time they apply for protection.¹ The 2023 Asylees Annual Flow Report, authored by the Office of Homeland Security Statistics (OHSS), presents information on persons who applied for asylum and those granted asylum in Fiscal Year 2023.²

SUMMARY

The United States provided protection to 54,350 asylees during 2023,³ including 22,300 individuals who were granted asylum affirmatively by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) within DHS,⁴ and 32,050 individuals who were granted asylum defensively by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR). An additional 4,790 individuals received derivative asylum status while residing in the United States based on a relative's asylum grant.⁵ In addition, 13,930 individuals abroad were approved as follow-to-join asylees and issued travel documents to enter the United States.⁶ The leading countries of nationality for persons granted either affirmative or defensive asylum were Afghanistan, the People's Republic of China (China), and Venezuela.

DEFINING "ASYLUM" STATUS

To be eligible for asylum status, a principal applicant must, among other requirements, meet the definition of a refugee set forth in Section 101(a)(42) of INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(42), which states in part that a refugee is a person who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of nationality (or country of last habitual residence, if stateless) 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.⁷ Applicants for asylum are either within the United States or arriving at a U.S. port of entry (POE), while applicants for refugee status are outside the United States.⁸

¹ See INA § 208, 8 U.S.C. § 1158. In addition to providing protection through refugee and asylum status, U.S. law generally bars removing individuals to a country where their "life or freedom would be threatened ... because of the [noncitizen]'s race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion." INA § 241(b)(3)(A), 8 U.S.C. § 1231(b)(3)(A). This is known as statutory withholding of removal. See 8 CFR § 208.16(a)-(b). Pursuant to regulations implementing the United States' obligations under Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture (CAT) and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the United States is obligated not to remove individuals to a country where it is more likely than not that they would be tortured. Individuals may seek withholding or deferral of removal under these regulations. See 8 CFR §§ 208.16(c)-18, 1208.16(c)-18. Data on withholding and deferral of removal are not included in this report.

² This report was prepared by OHSS, which replaced the Office of Immigration Statistics in September 2023. Led by the DHS Statistical Official, OHSS' mission is to foster transparency and data-driven homeland security decision-making by analyzing and disseminating timely, objective DHS data and statistics. This report includes OHSS' analysis of relevant statutes, policy, and processes to provide background and context for DHS statistical data. DHS Component statistical officials have reviewed this report for accuracy. In this report, "years" refer to fiscal years, which run from October 1 to September 30. Fiscal Year 2023 ran from October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023. The 2023 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics and other OHSS reports contain additional context and are available at <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook>. Not all numbers cited in this report are contained in this report's tables. To protect privacy, table cells and numbers in this report are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding.

³ These asylum grants were based upon a principal asylum applicant's application, which may also include an accompanying spouse and unmarried children under 21 years of age. They do not include individuals who were approved for follow-to-join asylum status while residing in the United States or abroad.

⁴ Affirmative asylum data for 2023 were retrieved by OHSS March 5, 2024. Data in this report may differ slightly from year-end 2023 numbers retrieved and reported at different times by USCIS' Asylum Division.

⁵ Of these, 4,790 were based on a principal asylee's grant, and 20 were based on a principal refugee's admission to the United States.

⁶ OHSS does not currently receive data on how many of those issued travel documents reached the United States and actually obtained asylum status.

⁷ Congress expanded this definition in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, providing that 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 shall be deemed to have been persecuted on account of political opinion.

⁸ See Refugees: 2023 at <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/refugees-and-asylees/rfa-annual-flow-report>.

(这是之后 Asylum) 统计数据

Table 2.**Grants of Affirmative Asylum by Basis of Claim: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2023**

(Ranked by 2023 Basis of Claim)

Basis of Claim	2021		2022		2023	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	5,880	100.0	8,340	100.0	12,910	100.0
Political Opinion	2,600	44.2	4,290	51.4	8,750	67.8
Particular Social Group	1,900	32.3	2,230	26.7	2,100	16.3
<u>Religion</u>	<u>880</u>	<u>15.0</u>	<u>1,070</u>	<u>12.8</u>	<u>1,050</u>	<u>8.1</u>
Race	200	3.4	340	4.1	600	4.6
Multiple Bases	150	2.6	220	2.6	220	1.7
Coercive Family Planning	100	1.7	120	1.4	140	1.1
Nationality	50	0.9	80	1.0	50	0.4
Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	0.1

Notes: To protect privacy, table cells are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding. Data exclude follow-to-join asylees and derivative asylees. Data are as of March 5, 2024.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

144 percent from 2021 levels. EOIR immigration judges granted defensive asylum to 32,050 people in 2023, an increase of 42 percent from 2022 levels and an over four-fold increase from 2021 levels (Figure 1).

Of those who applied for affirmative asylum and received grants in the last 10 years, 93 percent self-reported their entry status.²⁰ Of those who reported a status, 39 percent of those who received grants of asylum reportedly entered on B-2 visas (tourists), 18 percent as EWI (unauthorized immigrants), and 9.2 percent as F-1 visa holders (students). In 2023, about 96 percent of applicants granted asylum self-reported their entry status. Of those, 60 percent applied as Operation Allies Refuge/Welcome parolees (OAR),²¹ 20 percent as B-2 visa holders, and 4.4 percent as F-1 visa holders.

Basis of Asylum Claims

USCIS collects data on the specific bases under which individuals are granted asylum. Of those principal applicants who successfully received asylum in 2023, the majority were granted asylum based on political opinion

(68 percent), followed by membership in a particular social group (16 percent) and religion (8.1 percent). These three bases of claim were also the top three reasons for asylum grants in 2021 and 2022 (Table 2).

Affirmative Asylum Case Processing Capacity

This section examines USCIS processing capacity relative to affirmative asylum applications filed, i.e., the asylum processing backlog.²²

While the number of asylum applications filed fluctuates widely year to year, making it difficult to anticipate processing needs, the number of asylum applications has consistently outpaced adjudications, driving a growing processing backlog.^{23, 24} The number of applications adjudicated has also varied with changes in USCIS's broader workload, resources, and dedicated funding available to asylum processing.²⁵ In the past decade, USCIS processed a low of approximately 27,000 applicants in 2014 and a high of nearly 74,000 applicants in 2018. Yet as Figure 2 shows, the number of applications filed in the same decade ranged from almost 57,000 to just under

²⁰ Data in this paragraph are limited to grants for affirmative asylum principal applicants. Microdata for defensive asylees are not available.

²¹ On August 29, 2021, President Biden directed DHS to lead the implementation of efforts across the Federal Government to support vulnerable Afghans; these coordinated efforts became known as Operation Allies Refuge/Welcome. Section 212(d)(5)(A) of INA authorizes the Secretary of Homeland Security, at the Secretary's discretion, to "parole into the United States temporarily under such conditions as he [or she] may prescribe only on a case-by-case basis for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit any alien applying for admission into the United States."

²² Data in this section are limited to affirmative asylum principal applicants. Data for defensive asylees are not available.

²³ "Adjudications" and "processing" here mean the application received an outcome from USCIS (e.g., grant of asylum, denial of asylum).

²⁴ Notably, an individual's application may not be processed the same year as its submission; comparisons here are made between the number of applications filed and the number of applications that completed processing within the same year for workload purposes.

²⁵ USCIS is fee-funded, but asylum filings do not have a fee, so USCIS relies on funding from other fee-funded filings and any congressional appropriations to fund its humanitarian portfolio.

Table 3.

Total Individuals Granted Asylum (Affirmatively or Defensively) by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2023
(Ranked by 2023 Country of Nationality)

Country of Nationality	2021		2022		2023	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	16,550	100.0	35,720	100.0	54,350	100.0
Afghanistan	110	0.7	1,240	3.5	14,470	26.6
China, People's Republic	1,870	11.3	4,540	12.7	4,870	9.0
Venezuela	1,910	11.5	3,650	10.2	3,760	6.9
El Salvador	1,420	8.6	2,640	7.4	2,990	5.5
India	700	4.2	2,180	6.1	2,710	5.0
Guatemala	1,300	7.9	2,300	6.4	2,580	4.7
Honduras	990	6.0	1,820	5.1	2,120	3.9
Russia	550	3.3	1,140	3.2	2,070	3.8
Turkey	900	5.4	1,160	3.2	1,490	2.7
Colombia	180	1.1	600	1.7	1,140	2.1
All other countries, including unknown	6,630	40.1	14,470	40.5	16,160	29.7

Notes: To protect privacy, table cells are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding. Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Defensive asylum includes I-862 and asylum-only initial case completions with an asylum grant. Defensive asylum data are as of February 1, 2024; affirmative asylum data are as of March 5, 2024.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS and DOJ data.

Country of Nationality

The three leading countries of nationality of persons granted asylum (affirmatively or defensively) in 2023 were Afghanistan (27 percent), China (9.0 percent), and Venezuela (6.9 percent) (Table 3). Nationals of these three countries accounted for more than 40 percent of all persons granted asylum in 2023. China and Venezuela have been in the top three leading countries for 2021–2023 and comprised 29 percent of asylum grants in both 2021 and 2022. While the number of people granted asylum from each of the top three countries of nationality increased, Afghanistan experienced an over 11-fold increase between 2022 and 2023. The large proportional increase for Afghan asylees is most likely due to the stand up of OAR in 2020, an effort that permitted eligible Afghans into the United States as parolees for a period of up to two years.^{27,28}

The leading countries of nationality for persons granted affirmative asylum in 2023 were Afghanistan

(64 percent), China (6.1 percent), and Turkey (4.6 percent) (Table 4). Seventy-five percent of those granted asylum affirmatively in 2023 were nationals of these three countries, up from 27 percent in 2022.

The leading countries of nationality for persons granted defensive asylum in 2023 were China (11 percent), Venezuela (9.2 percent), and El Salvador (8.9 percent) (Table 5). Twenty-nine percent of those granted asylum defensively in 2023 were nationals of these countries, about the same level as in 2022 (31 percent).

The leading countries of nationality for follow-to-join asylees authorized for travel to the United States in 2023 were China (22 percent), India (18 percent), and Cameroon (6.5 percent) (Table 6). Nationals of these countries accounted for just under half (46 percent) of all follow-to-join derivative asylees issued travel documents allowing their travel to the United States. Additionally, 4,790 individuals were approved for derivative asylum while residing in the United States based on a relative's asylum grant.

Age, Sex, and Marital Status

In 2023, 62 percent of persons granted affirmative asylum were between the ages of 18 and 44 (Table 7), and the median age of affirmative asylees was 23. Fifty-five percent of all persons granted affirmative asylum were male, and 60 percent of the adults granted affirmative asylum were married. The median age of follow-to-join

China affirmative 第2, defensive 第1

Table 4.
Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2023
(Ranked by 2023 Country of Nationality)

Country of Nationality	2021		2022		2023	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	9,130	100.0	13,170	100.0	22,300	100.0
Afghanistan	100	1.1	1,180	9.0	14,330	64.3
China, People's Republic	1,080	11.8	1,480	11.2	1,360	6.1
Turkey	850	9.3	910	6.9		
Venezuela	1,430	15.7	2,180	16.6	1,020	4.6
Iran	160	1.8	180	1.4	830	3.7
Egypt	590	6.5	660	5.0	480	2.2
Ethiopia	250	2.7	560	4.3	470	2.1
Russia	390	4.3	430	3.3	280	1.3
Syria	210	2.3	210	1.6	260	1.2
Guatemala	410	4.5	300	2.3	250	1.1
All other countries, including unknown	3,660	40.1	5,090	38.6	2,810	12.6

Notes: To protect privacy, table cells are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding. Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data are as of March 5, 2024.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

Table 5.
Individuals Granted Asylum Defensively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2023
(Ranked by 2023 Country of Nationality)

Country of Nationality	2021		2022		2023	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	7,420	100.0	22,550	100.0	32,050	100.0
China, People's Republic	780	10.5	3,060	13.6	3,510	11.0
Venezuela	480	6.5	1,470	6.5	2,940	9.2
El Salvador	1,160	15.6	2,350	10.4	2,850	8.9
India	630	8.5	2,080	9.2	2,630	8.2
Guatemala	890	12.0	2,010	8.9	2,370	7.4
Honduras	610	8.2	1,540	6.8	1,970	6.1
Russia	160	2.2	710	3.1	1,800	5.6
Nicaragua	160	2.2	850	3.8	1,020	3.2
Ecuador	50	0.7	750	3.3	1,010	3.2
Colombia	50	0.7	160	0.7	970	3.0
All other countries, including unknown	2,460	33.2	7,570	33.6	10,980	34.3

Notes: To protect privacy, table cells are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding. Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Includes I-862 and asylum-only initial case completions with an asylum grant. Data are as of February 1, 2024.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOJ data.

beneficiaries was 17 years, meaning more than half were minors (Table 8). Data on marital status are not available for follow-to-join beneficiaries.

State of Residence

In 2023, the leading states of residence for individuals granted asylum affirmatively were California (23 percent), Texas (12 percent), and Virginia (10 percent).

(Table 9). Forty-four percent of individuals granted affirmative asylum in 2023 resided in these three states, up from 37 percent in 2022.

In 2023, the leading states of residence for individuals granted asylum defensively were California (28 percent), New York (27 percent), and Maryland (4.4 percent) (Table 10). Fifty-nine percent of individuals granted

Table 6.
Follow-to-Join Asylee Travel Documents Issued by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2023
(Ranked by 2023 Country of Nationality)

Country of Nationality	2021		2022		2023	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	2,290	100.0	8,580	100.1	13,930	100.0
China, People's Republic	320	14.0	2,280	26.6	3,060	22.0
India	30	1.3	1,790	20.9	2,460	17.7
Cameroon	290	12.7	360	4.2	900	6.5
Guatemala	50	2.2	290	3.4	640	4.6
Ethiopia	50	2.2	140	1.6	580	4.2
Cuba	0	0.0	10	0.1	470	3.4
El Salvador	50	2.2	370	4.3	460	3.3
Bangladesh	50	2.2	160	1.9	440	3.2
Nepal	30	1.3	360	4.2	400	2.9
Egypt	140	6.1	430	5.0	370	2.7
All other countries, including unknown	1,280	55.9	2,400	28.0	4,150	29.8

Notes: To protect privacy, table cells are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding. Data are as of February 13, 2024 from the CAMINO system and as of March 1, 2024 from CCD.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS and DOS data.

Table 7.
Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by Age, Sex, and Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2023

Characteristic	2021		2022		2023	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total	9,130	100.0	13,170	100.0	22,300	100.0
0 to 17 years	1,800	19.7	2,450	18.6	5,680	25.5
18 to 24 years	1,340	14.7	1,770	13.4	3,690	16.5
25 to 34 years	2,130	23.3	3,270	24.8	6,160	27.6
35 to 44 years	2,230	24.4	3,210	24.4	3,900	17.5
45 to 54 years	1,120	12.3	1,690	12.8	1,810	8.1
55 to 64 years	350	3.8	570	4.3	760	3.4
65 and over	160	1.8	220	1.7	310	1.4
SEX						
Total	9,130	100.0	13,170	100.0	22,300	100.0
Female	4,400	48.2	6,330	48.1	9,910	44.4
Male	4,730	51.8	6,830	51.9	12,320	55.2
Unknown	0	0.0	10	0.1	70	0.3
MARITAL STATUS						
Total	9,130	100.0	13,170	100.0	22,300	100.0
Married	3,870	42.4	5,740	43.6	9,580	43.0
Single	4,790	52.5	6,720	51.0	11,940	53.5
Other ¹	470	5.1	720	5.5	770	3.5

¹ Includes persons who were divorced, separated, widowed, or of unknown marital status.

Notes: To protect privacy, table cells are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding. Age is the individual's age at grant. Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data are as of March 5, 2024.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

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defensive asylum in 2023 resided in these three states, down from 65 percent in 2022.

State of residence data are not available for follow-to-join asylees.

Lawful Permanent Residence and Naturalization of Asylees

One year after being admitted to the United States, asylees may apply for LPR status, but are not required to do so. Of the nearly 109,000 adults granted affirmative asylum from 2014 to 2021, 88 percent have gained LPR status.²⁹ Rates of attaining LPR status are not available for defensive asylees.

Similar to refugees, asylees have some of the highest naturalization rates of all immigrants. Of the nearly

582,000 adults who obtained LPR status from 2000 to 2017 based on a prior grant of asylum (affirmative or defensive), 56 percent naturalized within a six-year window.³⁰ These rates varied slightly across sex, with a six-year naturalization rate of 57 percent for female adult asylees who obtained LPR status and 55 percent for adult males. Rates varied more considerably by age group, with a six-year naturalization rate of 63 percent for those asylees who gained LPR status between 18 and 34 years of age, 49 percent for those between 35 and 54 years of age, and 53 percent for those who became LPRs at 55 years of age or older. Rates also varied considerably by world region, with a six-year naturalization rate of 47 percent for adult affirmative asylees from Asia, 27 percent for those from Africa, and 9 percent or less for those from other regions.

²⁹ Here, 2021 is used as an end year due to it being one year of waiting to be eligible for LPR status plus one additional year to file paperwork and undergo processing before the end of the current 2023 data; in other words, this allows a full two years for asylees to gain green card status. The data were restricted to individuals who were at least 18 years of age when LPR status was obtained, indicating a choice to adjust status was made.

³⁰ Here, 2017 is used as an end year due to it being five years of waiting to be eligible for naturalization plus one additional year to file paperwork and undergo processing before the end of the current 2023 data; in other words, allowing a full six years for asylees to naturalize. The data were restricted to individuals who were at least 18 years of age when LPR status was obtained, indicating a choice to adjust status was made.

Table 8.
Follow-to-join Asylee Travel Documents Issued by Age and Sex: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2023

Characteristic	2021		2022		2023	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
AGE						
Total	2,220	100.0	8,580	100.0	13,930	100.0
0 to 17 years	1,140	51.4	4,240	49.4	6,970	50.0
18 to 24 years	410	18.5	1,530	17.8	2,580	18.5
25 to 34 years	230	10.4	900	10.5	1,460	10.5
35 to 44 years	250	11.3	1,130	13.2	1,750	12.6
45 to 54 years	130	5.9	570	6.6	880	6.3
55 to 64 years	50	2.3	180	2.1	250	1.8
65 and over	10	0.5	30	0.3	50	0.4
SEX						
Total	2,220	100.0	8,580	100.0	13,930	100.0
Female	1,210	54.5	4,820	56.2	7,900	56.7
Male	1,010	45.5	3,710	43.2	5,990	43.0
Unknown	0	0.0	60	0.7	40	0.3

Notes: To protect privacy, table cells are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding. Data are as of February 13, 2024 from the CAMINO system and as of March 1, 2024 from CCD.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS and DOS data.

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Table 9.

Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2023

(Ranked by 2023 State of Residence)

State of Residence	2021		2022		2023	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	9,130	100.0	13,170	100.0	22,300	100.0
California	2,670	29.2	3,180	24.1	5,030	22.6
Texas	580	6.4	740	5.6	2,570	11.5
Virginia	400	4.4	1,000	7.6	2,310	10.4
Florida	570	6.2	1,640	12.5	1,650	7.4
New York	640	7.0	770	5.8	1,120	5.0
Arizona	30	0.3	220	1.7	830	3.7
Colorado	10	0.1	80	0.6	700	3.1
Maryland	360	3.9	650	4.9	690	3.1
New Jersey	320	3.5	480	3.6	600	2.7
Illinois	830	9.1	1,090	8.3	600	2.7
Other, including unknown	2,730	29.9	3,340	25.4	6,210	27.8

Notes: To protect privacy, table cells are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding. Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data are as of March 5, 2024.
Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of USCIS data.

Table 10.

Individuals Granted Asylum Defensively by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2021 to 2023

(Ranked by 2023 State of Residence)

State of Residence	2021		2022		2023	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	7,420	100.0	22,550	100.0	32,050	100.0
California	2,320	31.3	6,200	27.5	8,860	27.6
New York	1,170	15.8	7,410	32.9	8,740	27.3
Maryland	740	10.0	930	4.1	1,400	4.4
Texas	170	2.3	920	4.1	1,320	4.1
Massachusetts	320	4.3	840	3.7	1,280	4.0
Virginia	250	3.4	710	3.1	1,270	4.0
New Jersey	210	2.8	530	2.4	1,110	3.5
Utah	200	2.7	360	1.6	1,070	3.3
Florida	250	3.4	660	2.9	990	3.1
Illinois	210	2.8	440	2.0	650	2.0
Other, including unknown	1,580	21.3	3,550	15.7	5,350	16.7

Notes: To protect privacy, table cells are rounded to the nearest ten. The totals may not sum due to rounding. Data exclude follow-to-join asylees. Data include I-862 and asylum-only initial case completions with an asylum grant. Data are as of February 1, 2024.

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics analysis of DOJ data.

DATA

The affirmative asylee data presented in this report were obtained from Global, a cloud-based platform of USCIS that has replaced the Refugees, Asylum, and Parole System (RAPS) mainframe system for storing and managing asylum-related data.³¹ Defensive asylee data were obtained from EOIR. Follow-to-join asylum derivative data for

people residing outside the United States at the time of their admission were obtained from the CLAIMS system of USCIS and the Consular Consolidated Database (CCD) of DOS. These data reflect travel documents issued, not admissions. Follow-to-join data for people residing within the United States at the time of the approval of their Form I-730 petition were obtained from CLAIMS.

For more information, visit the Office of Homeland Security Statistics web page at <https://ohss.dhs.gov>.

³¹ Data migration from RAPS to Global caused slight changes in historical numbers.