



U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Visa Services

Visa Bulletin

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IMMIGRANT NUMBERS FOR MAY 2003

A. STATUTORY NUMBERS

1. This bulletin summarizes the availability of immigrant numbers during April. Consular officers are required to report to the Department of State documentarily qualified applicants for numerically limited visas; the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services in the Department of Homeland Security reports applicants for adjustment of status. Allocations were made, to the extent possible under the numerical limitations, for the demand received by April **8th** in the chronological order of the reported priority dates. If the demand could not be satisfied within the statutory or regulatory limits, the category or foreign state in which demand was excessive was deemed oversubscribed. The cut-off date for an oversubscribed category is the priority date of the first applicant who could not be reached within the numerical limits. Only applicants who have a priority date **earlier than** the cut-off date may be allotted a number. Immediately that it becomes necessary during the monthly allocation process to retrogress a cut-off date, supplemental requests for numbers will be honored only if the priority date falls within the new cut-off date.

2. Section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) sets an annual minimum family-sponsored preference limit of 226,000. The worldwide level for annual employment-based preference immigrants is at least 140,000. Section 202 prescribes that the per-country limit for preference immigrants is set at 7% of the total annual family-sponsored and employment-based preference limits, i.e., 25,620. The dependent area limit is set at 2%, or 7,320

3. Section 203 of the INA prescribes preference classes for allotment of immigrant visas as follows:

FAMILY-SPONSORED PREFERENCES

First: Unmarried Sons and Daughters of Citizens: 23,400 plus any numbers not required for fourth preference.

Second: Spouses and Children, and Unmarried Sons and Daughters of Permanent Residents: 114,200, plus the number (if any) by which the worldwide family preference level exceeds 226,000, and any unused first preference numbers:

A. Spouses and Children: 77% of the overall second preference limitation, of which 75% are exempt from the per-country limit;

B. Unmarried Sons and Daughters (21 years of age or older): 23% of the overall second preference limitation.

Third: Married Sons and Daughters of Citizens: 23,400, plus any numbers not required by first and second preferences.

Fourth: Brothers and Sisters of Adult Citizens: 65,000, plus any numbers not required by first three preferences.

EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCES

First: Priority Workers: 28.6% of the worldwide employment-based preference level, plus any numbers not required for fourth and fifth preferences.

Second: Members of the Professions Holding Advanced Degrees or Persons of Exceptional Ability: 28.6% of the worldwide employment-based preference level, plus any numbers not required by first preference.

Third: Skilled Workers, Professionals, and Other Workers: 28.6% of the worldwide level, plus any numbers not required by first and second preferences, not more than 10,000 of which to "Other Workers."

Fourth: Certain Special Immigrants: 7.1% of the worldwide level.

Fifth: Employment Creation: 7.1% of the worldwide level, not less than 3,000 of which reserved for investors in a targeted rural or high-unemployment area, and 3,000 set aside for investors in regional centers by Sec. 610 of P.L. 102-395.

4. INA Section 203(e) provides that family-sponsored and employment-based preference visas be issued to eligible immigrants in the order in which a petition in behalf of each has been filed. Section 203(d) provides that

spouses and children of preference immigrants are entitled to the same status, and the same order of consideration, if accompanying or following to join the principal. The visa prorating provisions of Section 202(e)

apply to allocations for a foreign state or dependent area when visa demand exceeds the per-country limit. These provisions apply at present to the following oversubscribed chargeability areas: MEXICO and PHILIPPINES.

5. On the chart below, the listing of a date for any class indicates that the class is oversubscribed (see paragraph 1); "C" means current, i.e., numbers are available for all qualified applicants; and "U" means unavailable, i.e., no numbers are available. (NOTE: Numbers are available only for applicants whose priority date is **earlier** than the cut-off date listed below.)

Priority Dates for Family Based Immigrant Visas

	All Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed	MEXICO	PHILIPPINES
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Family			
1st	01OCT99	01JAN94	01JUN90
2A*	15MAR98	01OCT95	15MAR98
2B	01OCT94	15NOV91	01OCT94
3rd	15MAR97	01JUL93	15JAN90
4th	01JUN91	01JUN91	15JAN82

*NOTE: For May 2A numbers **EXEMPT from per-country limit** are available to applicants from all countries with priority dates **earlier** than 01OCT95. 2A numbers **SUBJECT to per-country limit** are available to applicants chargeable to all countries **EXCEPT MEXICO** with priority dates beginning 01OCT95 and earlier than 15MAR98. (All 2A numbers provided for MEXICO are exempt from the per-country limit; there are no 2A numbers for MEXICO subject to per-country limit.)

Priority Dates for Employment-Based Immigrant Visas

	All Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed	MEXICO	PHILIPPINES
Employment-Based			
1st	C	C	C
2nd	C	C	C
3rd	C	C	C
Other Workers	C	C	C
4th	C	C	C
Certain Religious Workers	C	C	C
5th	C	C	C
Targeted Employment Areas/Regional Centers	C	C	C

The Department of State has available a recorded message with visa availability information which can be heard at: (202) 663-1541. This recording will be updated in the middle of each month with information on cut-off dates for the following month.

B. DIVERSITY IMMIGRANT (DV) CATEGORY

Section 203(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act provides a maximum of up to 55,000 immigrant visas each fiscal year to permit immigration opportunities for persons from countries other than the principal sources of current immigration to the United States. The Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act (NCARA) passed by Congress in November 1997 stipulates that beginning with DV-99, and for as long as necessary, up to 5,000 of the 55,000 annually-allocated diversity visas will be made available for use under the NCARA program. **This reduction has resulted in the DV-2003 annual limit being reduced to 50,000.** DV visas are divided among six geographic regions. No one country can receive more than seven percent of the available diversity visas in any one year.

For **May**, immigrant numbers in the DV category are available to qualified DV-2003 applicants chargeable to all regions/eligible countries as follows. When an allocation cut-off number is shown, visas are available only for applicants with DV regional lottery rank numbers **BELOW** the specified allocation cut-off number:

All DV Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed Separately

Region

AFRICA: AF 19,880

ASIA: AS 13,400

EUROPE: EU 29,550

NORTH AMERICA (BAHAMAS): NA 14

OCEANIA: OC 470

SOUTH AMERICA, and the CARIBBEAN: SA 1,340

Entitlement to immigrant status in the DV category lasts only through the end of the fiscal (visa) year for which the applicant is selected in the lottery. The year of entitlement for all applicants registered for the DV-2003 program ends as of September 30, 2003. DV visas may not be issued to DV-2003 applicants after that date. Similarly, spouses and children accompanying or following to join DV-2003 principals are only entitled to derivative DV status until September 30, 2003. DV visa availability through the very end of FY-2003 cannot be taken for granted. Numbers could be exhausted prior to September 30. **Once all numbers provided by law for the DV-2003 program have been used, no further issuances will be possible.**

C. ADVANCE NOTIFICATION OF THE DIVERSITY (DV) IMMIGRANT CATEGORY RANK CUT-OFFS WHICH WILL APPLY IN JUNE

For **June**, immigrant numbers in the DV category are available to qualified DV-2003 applicants chargeable to all regions/eligible countries as follows. When an allocation cut-off number is shown, visas are available only for applicants with DV regional lottery rank numbers **BELOW** the specified allocation cut-off number:

All DV Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed Separately

Region

AFRICA: AF 26,100

ASIA: AS 16,450

EUROPE: EU 29,550

NORTH AMERICA (BAHAMAS): NA 15
OCEANIA: OC 530
SOUTH AMERICA, and the CARIBBEAN: SA 1,600

D. PHILIPPINES VISA AVAILABILITY IN THE COMING MONTHS

Continued heavy applicant demand for numbers in the PHILIPPINES Family First, Third, and Fourth preference categories could require the retrogression of those cut-off dates later in the year. This action would be necessary to hold visa issuance within the annual numerical limits.

E. OBTAINING THE MONTHLY VISA BULLETIN

The Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs offers the monthly *Visa Bulletin* on the INTERNET'S WORLDWIDE WEB. The INTERNET Web address to access the *Bulletin* is:

<http://travel.state.gov>

From the home page, select the VISA section which contains the *Visa Bulletin*.

Individuals may also obtain the *Visa Bulletin* by FAX. From a FAX phone, dial (202) 647-3000. Follow the prompts and enter in the code 1522 to have each *Bulletin* FAXED.

To be placed on the Department of State's E-mail subscription list for the *Visa Bulletin*, please provide your E-mail information to the following E-mail address:

VISABULLETIN@STATE.GOV

The Department of State also has available a recorded message with visa cut-off dates which can be heard at (202) 663-1541. The recording is normally updated by the middle of each month with information on cut-off dates for the following month.

The *Visa Bulletin* can also be contacted by e-mail at the following address:

VISABULLETIN@STATE.GOV

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