

# Recent Trends in Asylum

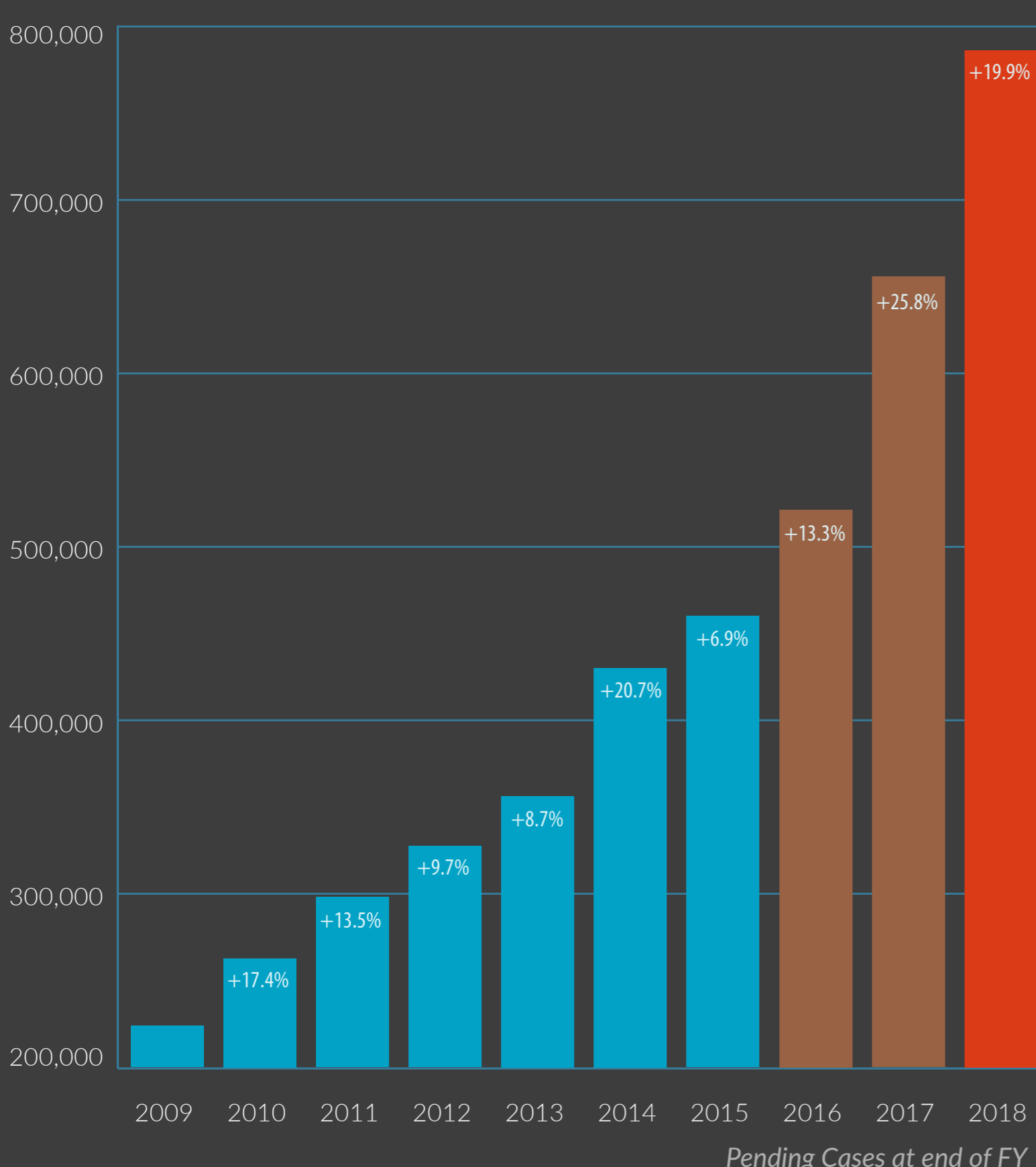
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As part of the Allen Matkins *pro bono* program, our attorneys have represented a number of individuals and families seeking asylum to the United States. We often partner with Human Rights First in these cases. Given the increase in number of asylum cases the Allen Matkins *pro bono* program has handled over the last few years, and the growing number of asylum seekers looking to come to the U.S., Human Rights First partnered with us to create this infographic report on recent trends.

While the majority of facts and figures reported on are for affirmative asylum seekers (those who are already in the U.S., or a port of entry and are not facing deportation), others are for defensive asylum seekers (those who are facing deportation, but qualified for a credible fear interview and are seeking asylum) and are noted as such.

## Pending Asylum Cases

A marked increase in pending asylum applications nationwide to close out fiscal year 2018.<sup>1</sup>



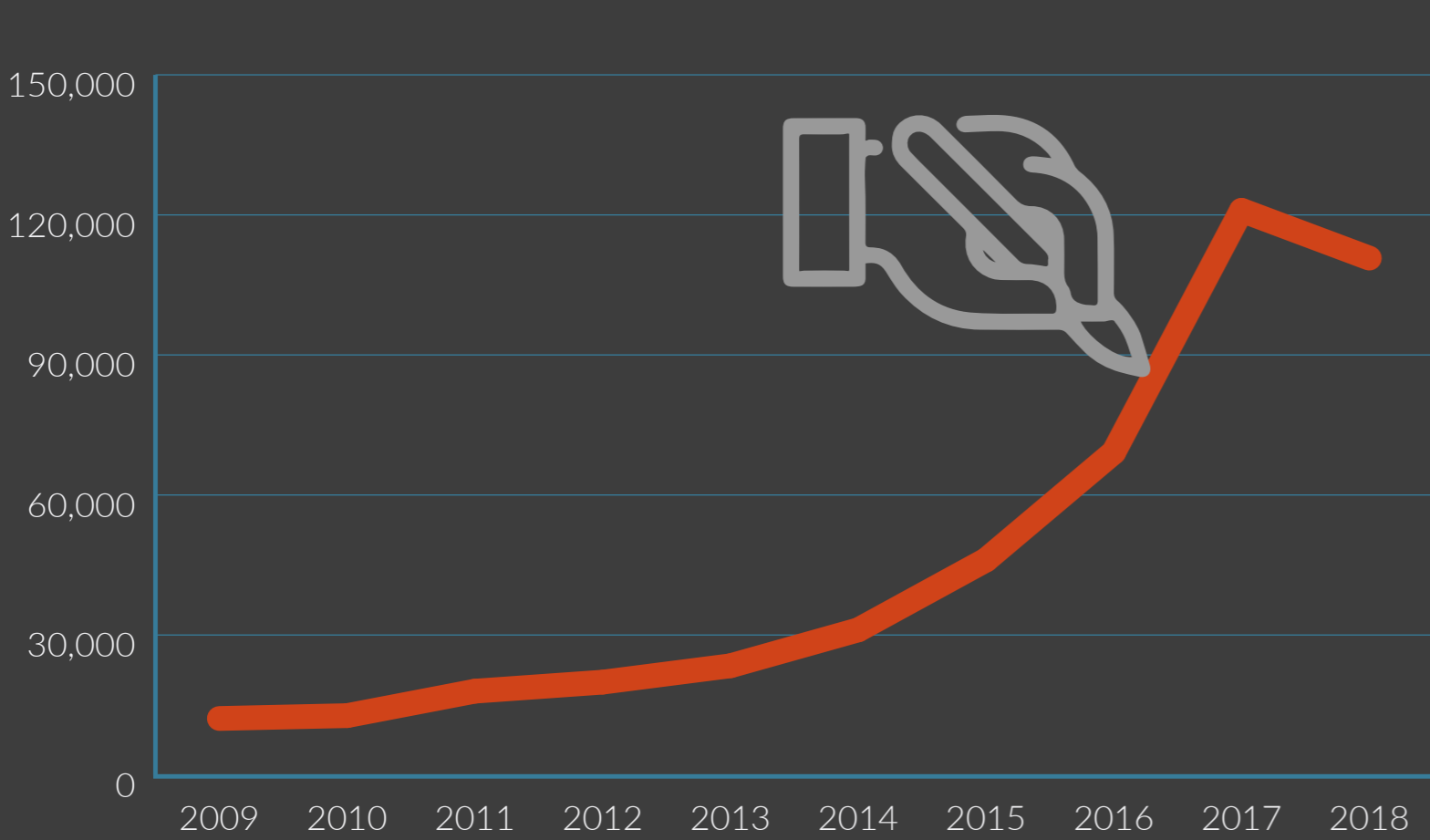
## Affirmative Asylum Applications by Country of Origin – Top Countries<sup>2</sup>

January 2013 to September 2018 Totals



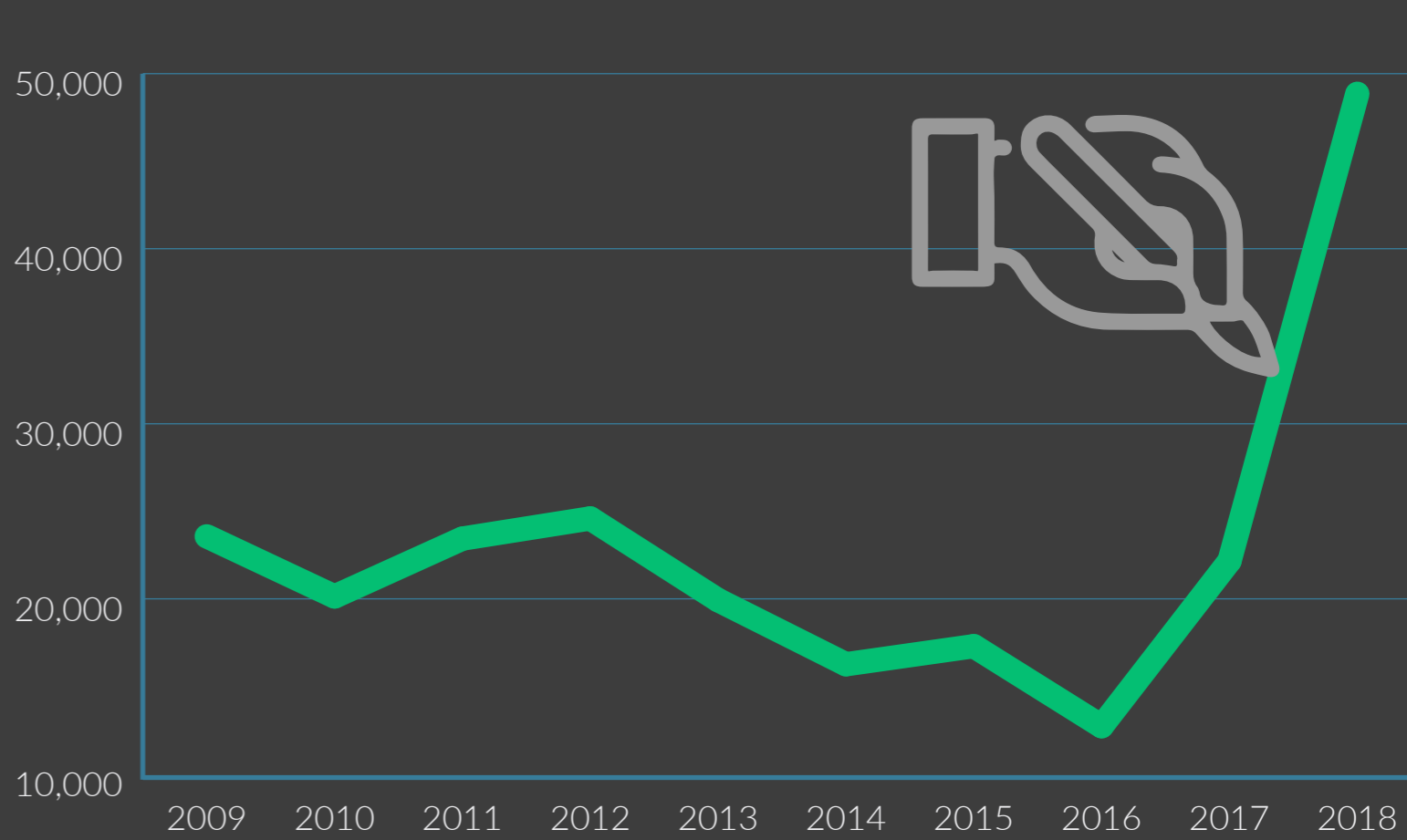
## Defensive Asylum Application Trends

Number of defensive asylum applications filed decreased for the first time in 10 years after a strong upward trend.<sup>1</sup>

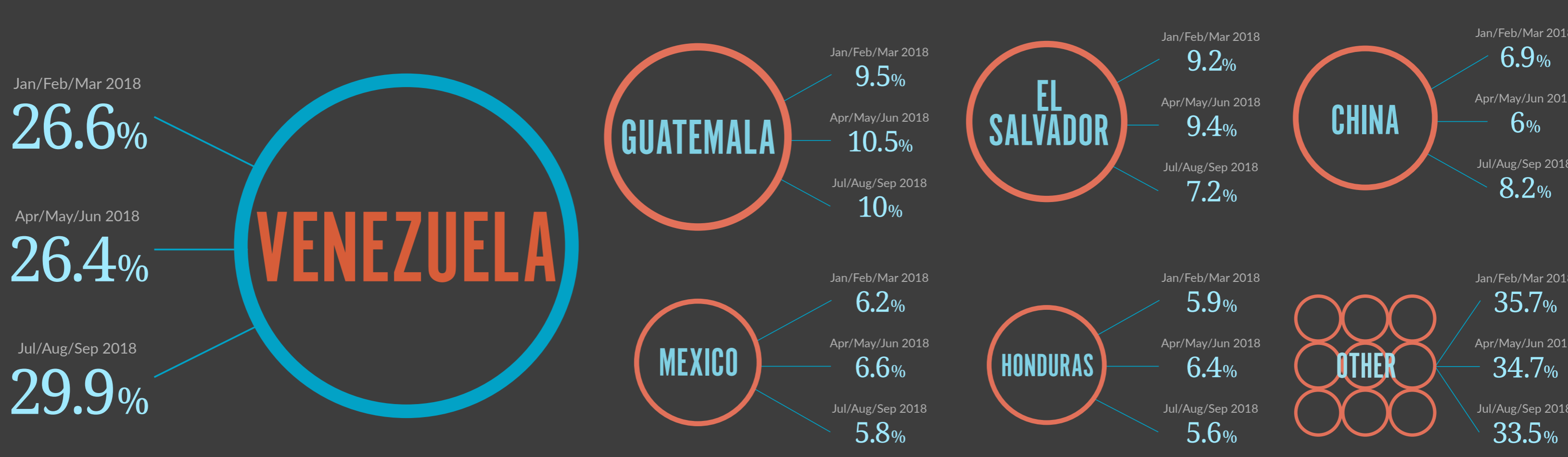


## Affirmative Asylum Application Trends

Number of affirmative asylum applications more than doubled from 2017 to 2018.<sup>1</sup>



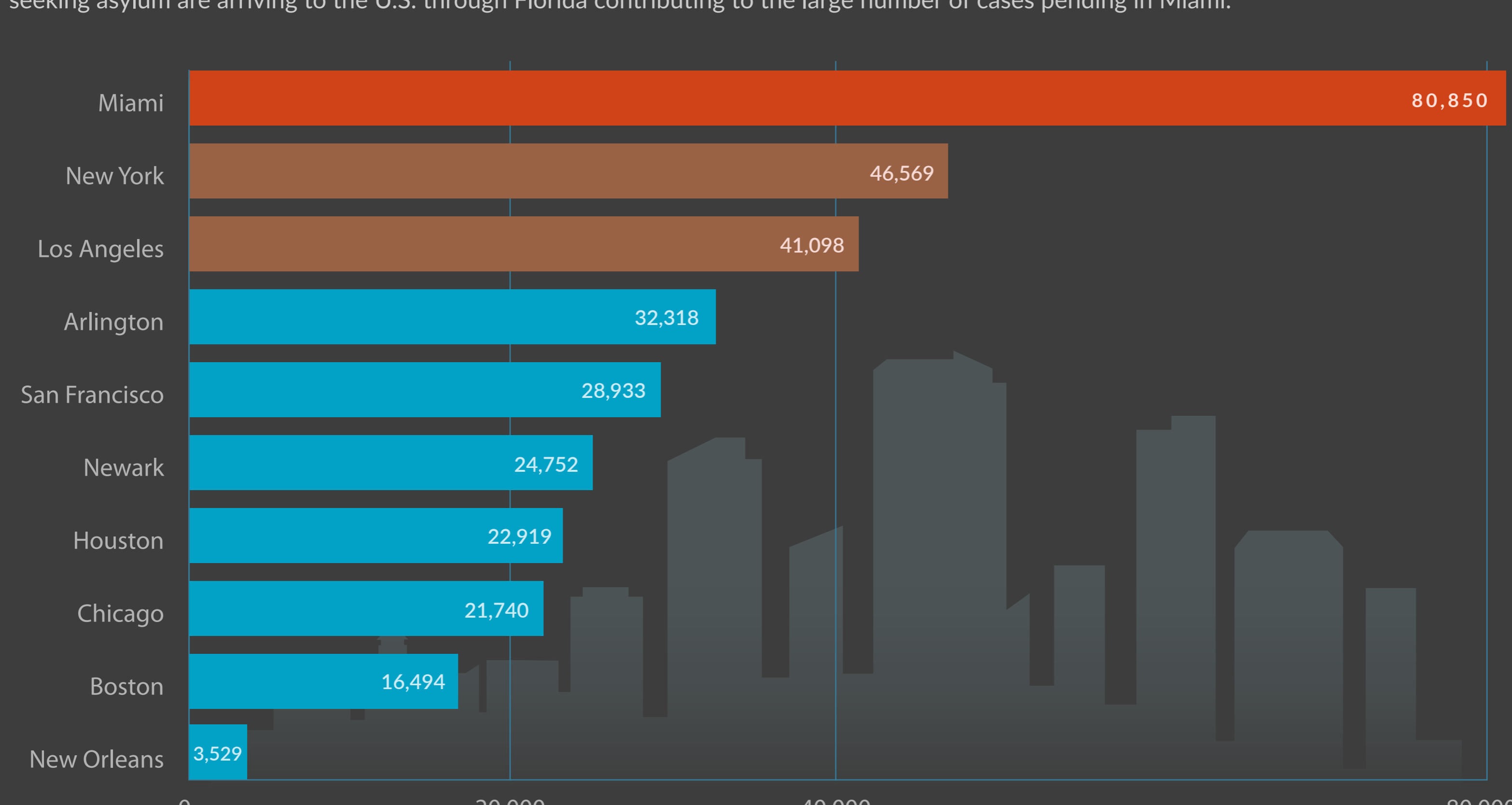
China and Mexico had filed the most affirmative asylum applications for many years until **Venezuela** rose to the top of the list in 2017, a trend that continued in 2018.<sup>2</sup>



Venezuelans are seeking asylum due to economic instability from socialist policies, government mismanagement and corruption all contributing to an increase in poverty rates and other issues. Venezuelans represented the largest group of asylum applicants every month, exceeding the next closest country by at least 15% from January 2018 through September 2018.

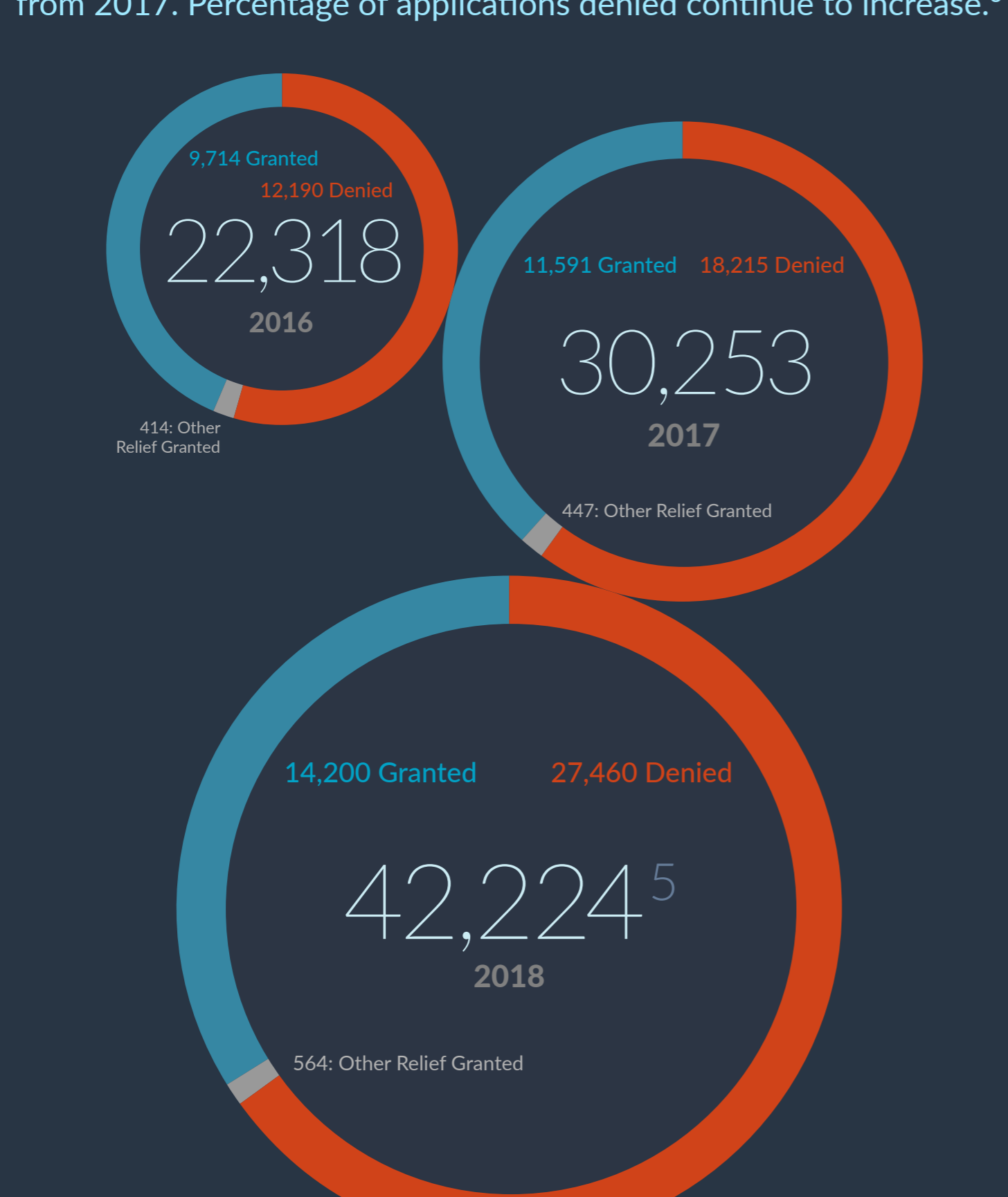
## Pending Asylum Cases by Office

Miami, New York, and Los Angeles Asylum Offices had the most cases pending. The majority of Venezuelans seeking asylum are arriving to the U.S. through Florida contributing to the large number of cases pending in Miami.<sup>2</sup>



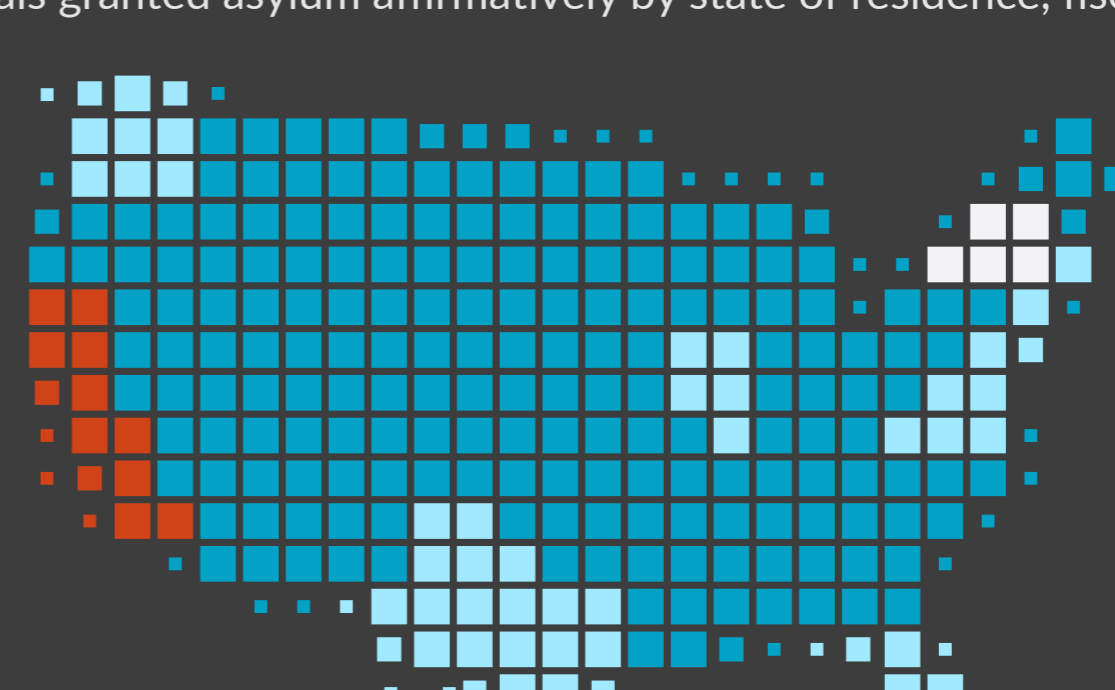
## Trends in Asylum Decisions

Number of asylum decisions made by immigration judges have increased nearly 90% since 2016 and showed a 40 percent jump from 2017. Percentage of applications denied continue to increase.<sup>3</sup>



## Where Do Asylees Live?<sup>4</sup>

Individuals granted asylum affirmatively by state of residence, fiscal year 2016.



- California: 5,143 (43.8%)
- New York: 1,270 (10.8%)
- Florida: 913 (7.8%)
- New Jersey: 654 (5.6%)
- Texas: 500 (4.3%)
- Virginia: 486 (4.1%)
- Maryland: 347 (3%)
- Washington: 224 (1.9%)
- Massachusetts: 204 (1.7%)
- Illinois: 188 (1.6%)

(Ranked by 2016 state of residence. Data does not include follow-to-join asylees.)

## Value of Legal Representation

Asylum seekers with access to legal representation in fiscal year 2018 were **four times more likely to win asylum** than those appearing in court *pro se*.<sup>5</sup>

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SOURCES:

- U.S. Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review.
- Affirmative Asylum Statistics Report, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services - Asylum Division.
- "Asylum Decisions and Denials Jump in 2018"; TRAC, Syracuse University (November 29, 2018).
- Annual Flow Report - United States Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics (January 2018).
- Human Rights First (January 2019).