

City:  Judge:  Report Series:

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

## Judge Lisa Ehrens FY 2020 - 2025\*, New York Immigration Court

\*data covers the first 11 months of fiscal year 2025

Published Nov 7, 2025

Attorney General William Barr appointed L. Batya Schwartz Ehrens to begin hearing cases in October 2019. Judge Schwartz Ehrens earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1999 from Emory University, a Juris Doctor in 2003 from American University Washington College of Law, and a Master of Business Administration in 2004 from American University Kogod School of Business. From 2012 to 2019, she was the founder and principal attorney at Schwartz Ehrens Immigration Law PLLC, in New York. From 2006 to 2012, she was an immigration attorney in private practice in New York. Judge Schwartz Ehrens is a member of the New Jersey State Bar and New York State Bar.

### Deciding Asylum Cases

Detailed data on decisions by Judge Ehrens were examined for the period covering fiscal years 2020 through the first 11 months of 2025. During this period, court records show that Judge Ehrens decided 762 asylum claims on their merits. Of these, she granted asylum for 523, granted 19 other types of relief, and denied relief to 220. Converted to percentage terms, Ehrens denied 28.9 percent and granted 71.1 percent of asylum cases (including forms of relief other than asylum).

Figure 1 provides a comparison of Judge Ehrens's denial rate each fiscal year over this recent period. (Rates for years with less than 25 decisions are not shown.)

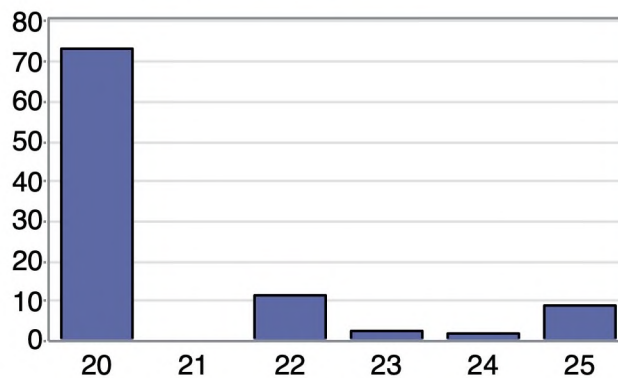


Figure 1: Percent of Asylum Matters Denied

### Nationwide Comparisons

Compared to Judge Ehrens's denial rate of 28.9 percent, Immigration Court judges across the country denied 58.9 percent of asylum claims during this same period. Judges at the New York Immigration Court

where Judge Ehrens decided these cases denied asylum 39 percent of the time. See Figure 2.

Judge Ehrens's asylum grant and denial rates are compared with other judges serving on the same court [in this table](#). Note that when an Immigration Judge serves on more than one court during the same period, separate Immigration Judge reports are created for any Court in which the judge rendered at least 100 asylum decisions.

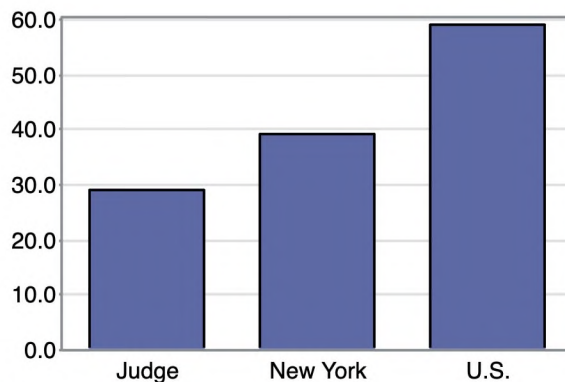


Figure 2: Comparing Denial Rates (percents)

### Why Do Denial Rates Vary Among Judges?

Although denial rates are shaped by each Judge's judicial philosophy, denial rates are also shaped by other factors, such as the types of cases on the Judge's docket, the detained status of immigrant respondents, current immigration policies, and other factors beyond an individual Judge's control. For example, TRAC has previously found that legal representation and the nationality of the asylum seeker are just two factors that appear to impact asylum decision outcomes.

The composition of cases may differ significantly between Immigration Courts in the country. Within a single Court when cases are randomly assigned to judges sitting on that Court, each Judge should have roughly a similar composition of cases given a sufficient number of asylum cases. Then variations in asylum decisions among Judges on the same Immigration Court would appear to reflect, at least in part, the judicial philosophy that the Judge brings to the bench. However, if judges within a Court are assigned to specialized dockets or hearing locations, then case compositions are likely to continue to differ and can contribute to differences in asylum denial rates.

### Representation

When asylum seekers are not represented by an attorney, almost all of them (77%) are denied asylum. In contrast, a significantly higher proportion of represented asylum seekers are successful. In the case of Judge Ehrens, 3.8% were not represented by an attorney. See Figure 3. For the nation as a whole, about 17.1% of asylum seekers are not represented.

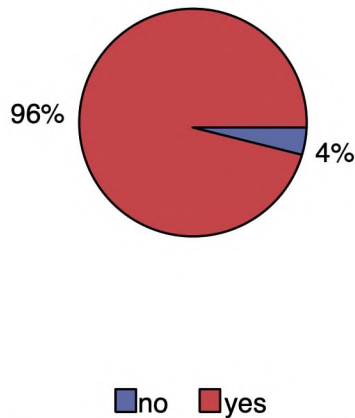


Figure 3: Asylum Seeker Had Representation

### Nationality

Asylum seekers are a diverse group. Over one hundred different nationalities had at least one hundred individuals claiming asylum decided during this period. As might be expected, immigration courts located in different parts of the country tend to have proportionately larger shares from some countries than from others. And, given the required legal grounds for a successful asylum claim, asylum seekers from some nations tend to be more successful than others.

The largest group of asylum seekers appearing before Judge Ehrens came from Guatemala. Individuals from this country made up 15.2% of her caseload. Other nationalities in descending order of frequency appearing before Judge Ehrens were: Honduras (14.4%), China (12.9%), El Salvador (11.2%), Uzbekistan (7.0%). See Figure 4.

In the nation as a whole during this same period, major nationalities of asylum seekers, in descending order of frequency, were Honduras (11.2%), Guatemala (11.2%), El Salvador (10.9%), Mexico (8.2%), China (5.2%), Venezuela (5.2%), India (5.1%), Ecuador (4.5%), Nicaragua (4.4%), Colombia (4.4%), Brazil (3.1%), Russia (3.1%), Cuba (2.8%).

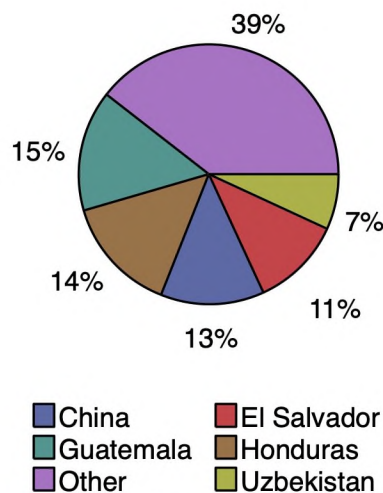


Figure 4: Asylum Decisions by Nationality



Transactional  
Records  
Access  
Clearinghouse

Email Sign Up

