

# The Consular Relationship with Vietnam



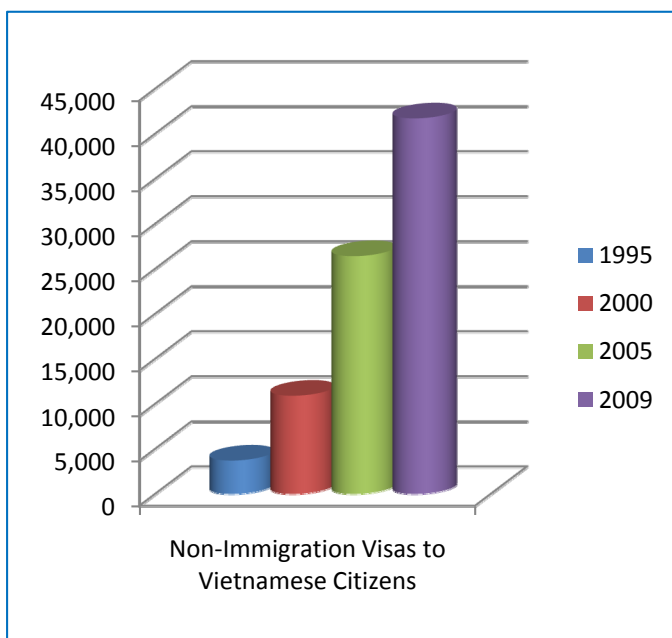
**Secure Borders and Open Doors – We are committed to balancing border security needs with welcoming and encouraging travel to the United States.**

Like other aspects of the U.S.–Vietnam relationship, the growth and change in our consular relationship over the last 15 years has been dramatic.

## Non-Immigrant Visas

The first year after the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries in 1995, the Embassy in Hanoi issued about **3,700 non-immigrant visas** to Vietnamese citizens annually (in FY-1996). This number jumped to about **10,900 per year** in FY-2000, the first year after opening the Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City. By the middle of the decade (FY-2005), the combined number of non-immigrant visas issued by both posts more than doubled, to **26,400 per year**. Last year, FY-2009, the combined number of non-immigrant visas issued annually in Vietnam **topped 41,700**.

**Since 1995, both posts combined have issued nearly 290,000 non-immigrant visas.**



## Student Visas

Over the years the number of student visas issued in Vietnam has increased dramatically. In FY-1996 (the first full year after establishing relations) the Embassy in Hanoi issued **558 student visas**. By the middle of the decade (FY-2005), the combined number of student visas issued annually by the Embassy and the Consulate had **increased to 2,378**. From the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1995, the Embassy and Consulate have issued nearly **39,000 student visas to Vietnamese students**.

## Immigrant Visas

The U.S. and Vietnam share a unique immigration history. Today nearly 2 million people of Vietnamese heritage call the United States their home, and this number continues to grow. Although most Vietnamese-Americans trace their immigration to the U.S. from before 1995

(refugees, “boat people”, Amerasians, Orderly Departure Program beneficiaries, etc.), **today Vietnam is the 6th largest source of legal immigration to the United States in the world** (after Mexico, Dominican Republic, Philippines, India and China). Since the opening of the Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City in 1999, **over 240,000 Vietnamese have legally immigrated to the United States, primarily as spouses, fiancés/fiancées, children, parents and siblings of U.S. citizens.** The number of immigrant visa applications processed at the Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City continues to **grow annually by about 5 to 6 percent.** Although the U.S. has suspended our bilateral international adoption agreement with Vietnam, **between 2005 and 2009 over 2,200 immigrant visas were issued to Vietnamese children adopted by U.S. citizens.**

### **American Citizen Services**

When relations were established in 1995, very few U.S. citizens resided in Vietnam and tourism to the country was limited. In the intervening 15 years, this situation has changed dramatically. Although it is difficult to determine exactly how many Americans now call Vietnam home, we estimate that **20,000 U.S. citizens live in Vietnam** and, according to GVN sources, about **430,000 Americans visited the country last year.** Another measure of how the number of Americans in Vietnam has increased over the years is to look at U.S. passport applications processed at the Embassy and Consulate. In FY-1996 (the first full year after establishing relations) the Embassy in Hanoi processed **230 passport applications.** In FY-2009, the Embassy and Consulate processed nearly 2,800 U.S. passport applications. **Since 1995 over 14,000 U.S. passport applications have been processed at both posts.**