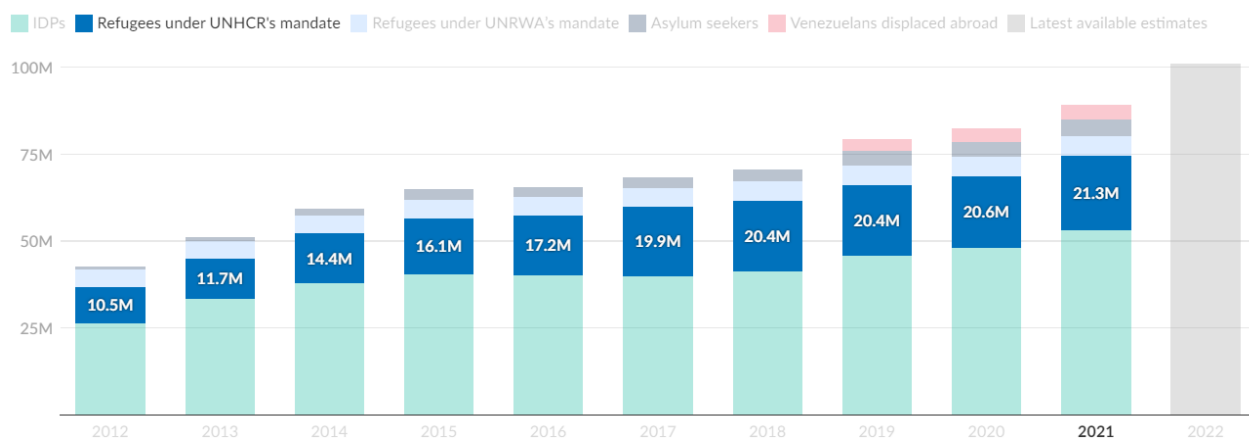


## Who is a Refugee?

A refugee is an individual who has fled their home country and cannot return due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on religion, race, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.



By end of 2021, the number of refugees under the mandate of the [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#) (UNHCR) had surpassed 21.3 million, which is roughly 600,000 people more than at the end of 2020. According to available demographic data, over 70 percent of refugees came from five countries: Syria (6.8 million), Afghanistan (2.4 million), South Sudan (2.4 million), Myanmar (1.1 million), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (900,000). Furthermore, the latest UNHCR figures indicate that the number of people who have fled Ukraine since the start of the war in February 2022 has surpassed 6.8 million.



Under the United Nations' *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, eligibility for refugee protection requires a current or future fear of persecution. However, "persecution" is not defined as a concept but rather as an inferred threat to life or physical freedom. An individual may qualify for refugee status under the Convention's terms only if they fear persecution on one or more of the five grounds listed above.

An individual is deemed ineligible for refugee protection if they have committed a crime against peace, a war crime, a crime against humanity, a serious non-political crime outside the country of refuge prior to their admission to the country of refuge, or is guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

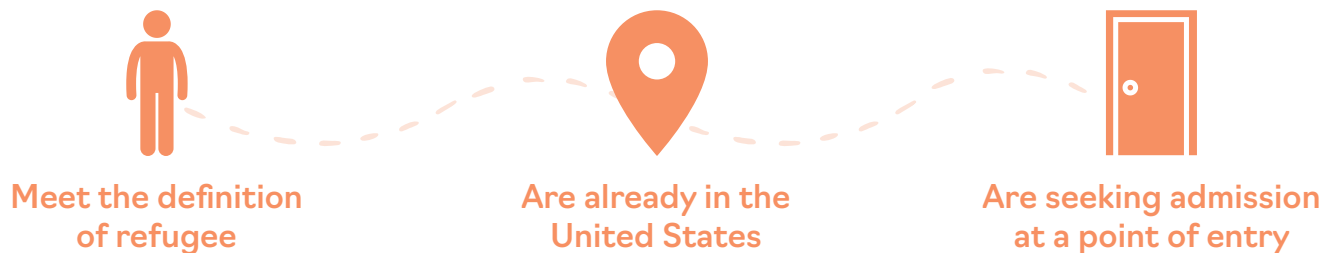
### Additional Links

- [Article 1F of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees](#)
- [U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act Definitions](#)

## Who is an Asylum-Seeker?

An asylum-seeker is a person who has left their country and is seeking protection from persecution and serious human rights violations in another country, but who hasn't yet been legally recognized as a refugee and is waiting to receive a decision on their asylum claim.<sup>1</sup>

In the U.S., [asylum status](#) is granted to people who:



## Who is a Humanitarian Parolee?

This status is used sparingly to allow someone, who may be inadmissible or otherwise ineligible for admission into the United States, to be formally admitted into the U.S. for a temporary period, usually in response to an emergency. Determining who is authorized parole is subject to discretionary factors. There is no statutory or regulatory definition of "urgent humanitarian reasons." [USCIS](#) officers look at all the circumstances, considering factors such as (but not limited to):

- Whether or not the circumstances are pressing
- The effect of the circumstances on the individual's welfare and well-being
- The degree of suffering that may result if parole is not authorized

## Who is an Afghan Evacuee?

Around 75,000 Afghans have been evacuated to the U.S. through [Operation Allies Welcome](#), a federal program to coordinate efforts to support vulnerable Afghans, including those who worked alongside U.S. forces in Afghanistan for the past two decades, as they safely resettle in the country.

### Additional Resources

[About Refugee Populations \(CORE\)](#)

[Refugee Facts: Refugees in America \(UNHCR\)](#)

[The U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program Explained \(UNHCR\)](#)

[U.S. Refugee Admissions Program \(USRAP\) Flowchart \(USCIS\)](#)

<sup>1</sup> [Refugees, Asylum-Seekers, and Migrants \(Amnesty International\)](#)