Refugees

Fast Facts

What is a refugee? Here are some helpful terms to understand different groups.

**Refugee**
A refugee is a person who has fled their country of origin and is unable or unwilling to return because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

**Asylum seeker**
An asylum seeker is an individual who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualised procedures, an asylum seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. Not every asylum seeker will ultimately be recognised as a refugee, but every refugee is initially an asylum seeker.

**Economic migrant**
An economic migrant is someone who leaves his or her country of origin purely for financial and/or economic reasons. Economic migrants choose to move in order to find a better life and they do not flee because of persecution. Therefore they do not fall within the criteria for refugee status and are not entitled to receive international protection.

**Stateless person**
A stateless person is a person who, under national laws, does not have the legal bond of nationality with any State. Article 1 of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons indicates that a person not considered a national (or citizen) automatically under the laws of any State, is stateless.


“To immigrate is to settle in a new country or region. To emigrate is to leave a native country or region to settle elsewhere.”


You may not know:
- World Refugee Day is June 20 each year (www.holidayscalendar.com/event/world-refugee-day)
- As of June 2018, there were 68.5 million people forcibly displaced worldwide. 25.4 million of those were refugees, 10 million were stateless people and 3.1 million were asylum seekers. 44,400 people each day were forced to flee their homes because of persecution. 57% of those came from three countries: South Sudan, Syria, and Afghanistan. (https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html)
- The Department of State has cooperative agreements with nine domestic resettlement agencies to resettle refugees. Those agencies place refugees in approximately 190 communities around the U.S. (https://www.state.gov/j/prm/ra/receptionplacement/index.htm)