

**PROPOSED REFUGEE ADMISSIONS  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021**

**REPORT TO CONGRESS**

**SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
TO THE  
COMMITTEES ON THE JUDICIARY  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
AND  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF  
SECTIONS 207(d)(1) AND (e)  
OF THE  
IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**INTRODUCTION**..... 4

*Who is a Refugee?*..... 4

*Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic* ..... 4

*Rising Protection Claims and Backlog* ..... 5

*Security Vetting in Refugee Admissions*..... 6

*DHS/USCIS Credible Fear Caseload FY 2011-2020* ..... 7

*DOJ/EOIR Immigration Court Asylum Caseload FY 2011-2020*..... 8

*Refugee Admissions and Asylum Grants Since 1980* ..... 9

**STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**..... 10

**I. DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE OF THE REFUGEE SITUATION**..... 11

**II. DESCRIPTION OF THE NUMBER AND ALLOCATION OF THE REFUGEES TO BE ADMITTED AND AN ANALYSIS OF CONDITIONS WITHIN THE COUNTRIES FROM WHICH THEY CAME** ..... 13

*Proposed FY 2021 Allocations* ..... 13

*Country Conditions*..... 13

*Religious Freedom*..... 14

**III. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PLANS FOR THEIR MOVEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT AND THE ESTIMATED COST OF THEIR MOVEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT** ..... 15

*Overseas Processing*..... 15

*Adjudication*..... 15

*Post-Adjudication Processing*..... 15

*Transportation* ..... 15

*Cultural Orientation* ..... 15

*Reception and Placement (R&P)* ..... 16

*Where are Refugees Resettled?*..... 16

*Executive Order 13888 on Enhancing State and Local Participation in Refugee Resettlement* ..... 17

*What Do the Resettlement Agencies Do?*..... 17

*What Happens When Refugees Arrive?* ..... 17

*Beyond Reception and Placement*..... 18

*Estimated Cost for Refugee Processing and Resettlement*..... 19

**IV. ANALYSIS OF THE ANTICIPATED SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND DEMOGRAPHIC IMPACT OF THEIR ADMISSION TO THE UNITED STATES** ..... 20

**V. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES WILL ADMIT AND ASSIST IN THE RESETTLEMENT OF SUCH REFUGEES..... 21**

**VI. ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF THE PARTICIPATION OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE RESETTLEMENT OF SUCH REFUGEES ON THE FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES ..... 23**

**VII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION..... 24**

*FY 2019 USRAP Admissions by Country of Origin..... 24*

*FY 2019 USRAP Arrivals by State of Initial Resettlement..... 26*

**ANNEX 1: USRAP ACCESS CATEGORIES ..... 28**

*Priority 1 (P-1): Individual Referrals..... 28*

*Priority 2 (P-2): Group Referrals..... 28*

*Priority 3 (P-3): Family Reunification ..... 29*

*Following-to-Join Family Reunification Petitions ..... 30*

## INTRODUCTION

**The United States anticipates receiving more than 300,000 new asylum claimants and refugees in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021. Pursuant to Section 207(d) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), the President proposes resettling up to 15,000 refugees under the FY 2021 refugee admissions ceiling, and anticipates receiving new asylum claims that include more than 290,000 individuals. This proposed refugee admissions ceiling reflects the continuing backlog of over 1.1 million asylum-seekers who are awaiting adjudication of their claims inside the United States, and it accounts for the arrival of refugees whose resettlement in the United States was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

### *Who is a Refugee?*

Under Section 101(a)(42) of the INA, a refugee is an alien who, generally, has experienced past persecution or has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Individuals who meet the statutory definition may be considered for either refugee status under Section 207 of the INA if they are outside the United States, or asylum status under Section 208 of the INA, if they are already in the United States or present themselves at a U.S. port of entry. Both refugee and asylum status are forms of humanitarian protection offered by the United States.

Individuals outside the United States seeking admission as a refugee under Section 207 of the INA are processed through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), which is managed by the Department of State in cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Those admitted as refugees are eligible for U.S. government-funded resettlement assistance, which is discussed in section III. Individuals in the United States seeking asylum status under Section 208 of the INA are processed by DHS and, in certain cases, by the Department of Justice (DOJ)'s Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR, also known as the immigration court system). Asylum applicants are not eligible for resettlement assistance through USRAP but are eligible for certain other forms of assistance and services run by state, private, and non-profit agencies, and they may apply for discretionary employment authorization under certain conditions.

Since the passage of the Refugee Act in 1980, which incorporated this definition of refugee into the INA, the United States has accepted more than 3.8 million refugees and asylees. In FY 2020, the United States anticipates admitting approximately 11,000 refugees for resettlement and granting asylum to approximately 31,000 individuals.

### *Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Refugee resettlement in the United States decreased significantly in FY 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to travel restrictions in and out of refugee processing sites worldwide, USRAP suspended refugee arrivals from March 19 to July 29, 2020 except for emergency cases. USRAP resumed general refugee arrivals July 30, 2020 with additional health measures specified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). However, reduced flight availability due to the general decrease in demand for international travel meant a slow pace of

refugee resettlement in the United States through the rest of FY 2020. Almost 7,000 of the 18,000 refugee numbers available under the FY 2020 Presidential Determination went unused. The President's proposed refugee admissions ceiling for FY 2021 incorporates these places that might have been used if not for the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic also decreased the number of aliens seeking humanitarian protection at the U.S. southern border. In order to protect public health, CDC issued an order March 20, 2020 temporarily suspending the introduction of persons into the United States, subject to certain exceptions, who would otherwise be introduced into a congregate setting in a land Port of Entry or Border Patrol station at or near the U.S. borders with Canada and Mexico. Since then, credible fear<sup>1</sup> receipts dropped significantly, from over 4,500 per month in January and February to approximately 500 to 700 per month in April through August 2020.

The decreased number of aliens seeking humanitarian protection at the U.S. southern border due to COVID-19 pandemic has increased USCIS's capacity to address its case backlog. However, the COVID-19 pandemic also required USCIS to close its asylum offices to in-person services for nearly three months. When they re-opened to in-person services, it was with procedural changes and administrative controls to protect the health of the public and staff. These necessary measures have reduced asylum interview capacity, which may affect the number of asylum cases that can be completed.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the assimilation of resettled refugees and approved asylees into American society and their progress towards self-sufficiency. Widespread hiring freezes, layoffs, and reduced hours, wages, and benefits in the hospitality and transportation industries hit many refugees, who often find their first jobs in these sectors. The closure of schools and childcare centers has also affected working refugees, who now must stay home to care for their children. In April 2020, HHS issued several policy letters and program guidelines allowing for various waiver and program flexibilities to address the impact of the pandemic. HHS also expanded the eligibility period for certain forms of assistance to refugees and provided additional funding to for emergency assistance needs.

### *Rising Protection Claims and Backlog*

Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in the number of aliens encountered along or near the U.S. southern border with Mexico. (Although the number of such encounters dipped at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has now returned to its pre-pandemic level.) This trend has corresponded with a sharp increase in the number and percentage of those who claim fear of persecution or torture when apprehended or encountered by DHS, as shown in the tables below.

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<sup>1</sup> Asylum Officers of DHS's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) conduct a credible fear of persecution or torture interview when a person who is subject to expedited removal expresses an intention to apply for asylum, expresses a fear of persecution or torture, or expresses a fear of return to his or her country. An individual will be found to have a credible fear of persecution if he or she establishes that there is a "significant possibility" that he or she could establish in a full hearing before an Immigration Judge that he or she has been persecuted or has a well-founded fear of persecution or harm on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion if returned to his or her country.

In FY 2019, DHS received and completed more than 100,000 new credible fear cases, a record high since the credible fear process was introduced more than 20 years ago, and an increase of more than 113 percent since FY 2015. DHS also received over 148,000 new affirmative asylum<sup>2</sup> cases, while the immigration courts<sup>3</sup> received 213,320 new asylum filings. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United States led the world in the number of new asylum applications received in calendar years 2017, 2018, and 2019.

These new cases added to the lengthy backlog of pending claims, undermining the integrity of the asylum system. They delay the grant of asylum to individuals who are legitimately fleeing persecution and have valid claims. Further, such delays are a pull factor for illegal immigration. By providing protection from removal, they create an incentive for those without lawful status to enter and remain in the United States.

The increasing number of asylum claims also represents a cost to U.S. government benefits programs. While asylum *applicants* are not eligible for the Reception & Placement assistance offered to refugees and discussed in section III, those who have been granted asylum status under Section 208 of the INA are eligible for other assistance and services funded by the HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). This is in addition to mainstream federal means-tested public benefits for which refugees and asylees are eligible, even ones otherwise unavailable to lawful permanent residents, as well as any other assistance they might receive under state law. For FY 2021, ORR predicts 45,600 asylees will be eligible.

To address this backlog, DHS has introduced efficiency measures to maximize case processing; undertaken regulatory, policy, and procedural changes to deter and screen for non-meritorious filings; and increased the USCIS Asylum Division's adjudicative capacity by expanding its field office workforce and facilities.

DOJ continues to hire new immigration judges and support staff to reduce the case backlog in the immigration court system, which will include approximately 575,000 pending asylum cases at the end of FY 2020. It has hired 274 new immigration judges since the beginning of FY 2018, and it continues to seek additional courtroom space to increase its adjudicatory capacity. It has also implemented process improvements, such as the use of video conferencing, to maximize its existing adjudicatory capacity and ensure that the pending caseload does not increase at an even faster rate.

### *Security Vetting in Refugee Admissions*

The December 2017 National Security Strategy says the United States “will enhance vetting of prospective immigrants, refugees, and other foreign visitors to identify individuals who might pose a risk to national security or public safety” and “will set higher security standards to ensure that we keep dangerous people out of the United States.”

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<sup>2</sup> Affirmative asylum applications are filed by asylum-seekers who are *not* in removal proceedings in the immigration court system. USCIS's Asylum Division is responsible for processing affirmative asylum applications.

<sup>3</sup> The DOJ/EOIR immigration court system handles asylum applications filed by aliens who are in removal proceedings and asylum applications referred by USCIS.

Refugees admitted to the United States are similar to individuals traveling on immigrant visas insofar as they are resettling here permanently and are afforded a pathway to U.S. citizenship. Refugees may pose an additional risk to the security of the United States because, if it is determined after admission that they present a threat to national security or public safety, it is extremely difficult to remove certain refugees in immigration proceedings for lack of a country to which they can be removed without the possibility of persecution. Due to limits on the maximum amount of time such aliens can be held, it is likely that a refugee without a country to return to would be released into the interior of the United States.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13780, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Director of National Intelligence, developed a model to assess national security and public-safety threats for foreign nationals seeking to enter the United States. Among the risk factors considered is “whether the country is a known or potential terrorist safe haven.” Using that model, which has been updated and refined, the Secretary of Homeland Security has recommended, and the President has taken action, to restrict the travel of nationals from a number of countries due to, among other factors, a high risk relative to other countries in the world of terrorist travel to the United States. Among the countries whose nationals are subject to travel restrictions are Somalia, Syria, and Yemen.<sup>4</sup>

The threat to U.S. national security and public safety posed by the admission of refugees from high-risk areas of terrorist presence or control is significant and cannot be fully mitigated at this time. As a result, the President proposes not admitting any refugees from such areas, including Somalia, Syria, and Yemen, except those refugees of special humanitarian concern listed in the proposed FY 2021 allocations, such as those who have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution on account of religion. These narrowly-tailored exceptions are appropriate in order to promote family unity and to promote U.S. humanitarian and foreign policy interests.

*DHS/USCIS Credible Fear Caseload FY 2011-2020*

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>New Receipts</b>	<b>Fear Found</b>	<b>Fear Not Found</b>	<b>Closed</b>	<b>Pending at end of FY</b>
2011	11,217	9,423	1,054	1,052	295
2012	13,880	10,838	1,187	1,554	1,488
2013	36,035	30,393	2,587	3,194	890
2014	51,001	35,456	8,977	4,204	787
2015	48,052	33,988	8,097	6,330	3,045
2016	94,048	73,081	9,697	10,212	4,420
2017	78,564	60,566	8,245	10,899	1,658
2018	98,078	74,287	9,176	13,298	1,317
2019	105,300	92,623	16,600	10,663	4,683
2020 <sup>5</sup>	30,113	12,611	16,028	4,520	913

<sup>4</sup> See Presidential Proclamation 9645, *Enhancing Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry into the United States by Terrorists or Other Public-Safety Threats*, and Presidential Proclamation 9983, *Improving Enhanced Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry*.

<sup>5</sup> As of August 31, 2020.

*DHS/USCIS Asylum Caseload FY 2011-2020*

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>New receipts (individuals)</b>	<b>Receipts Pending at end of FY (individuals)</b>
2011	44,617	11,520
2012	54,852	19,475
2013	60,829	42,452
2014	80,011	83,071
2015	117,679	154,552
2016	167,867	297,363
2017	208,509	456,816
2018	160,561	507,957
2019	148,956	549,290
2020 <sup>6</sup>	130,132	598,692

*DOJ/EOIR Immigration Court Asylum Caseload FY 2011-2020*

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>New filings (individuals)</b>	<b>Pending at end of FY (individuals)</b>
2011	41,468	94,307
2012	44,589	103,739
2013	43,507	107,095
2014	47,610	116,915
2015	63,746	139,207
2016	82,773	170,890
2017	145,285	267,515
2018	164,381	368,995
2019	213,335	479,662
2020 <sup>7</sup>	155,029	549,724

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<sup>6</sup> As of August 31, 2020.

<sup>7</sup> As of June 30, 2020.



*Refugee Admissions and Asylum Grants Since 1980*

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Refugee Arrivals</b>	<b>Individual Asylum Grants<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>Annual Totals</b>
1980	207,116	1,104	208,220
1981	159,252	1,175	160,427
1982	98,096	3,909	102,005
1983	61,218	7,215	68,433
1984	70,393	8,278	78,671
1985	67,704	4,585	72,289
1986	62,146	3,359	65,505
1987	64,528	4,062	68,590
1988	76,483	5,531	82,014
1989	107,070	6,942	114,012
1990	122,066	8,472	130,538
1991	113,389	5,035	118,424
1992	132,531	6,307	138,838
1993	119,448	9,543	128,991
1994	112,981	13,828	126,809
1995	99,974	20,703	120,677
1996	76,403	23,532	99,935
1997	70,488	22,939	93,427
1998	77,080	20,507	97,587
1999	85,525	26,571	112,096
2000	73,147	32,514	105,661
2001	69,304	39,148	108,452
2002	27,110	36,937	64,047
2003	28,422	28,743	57,165
2004	52,868	27,376	80,244
2005	53,813	25,304	79,117
2006	41,279	26,352	67,631
2007	48,281	25,318	73,599
2008	60,192	23,022	83,214
2009	74,654	22,303	96,957
2010	73,311	19,771	93,082
2011	56,424	23,569	79,993
2012	58,238	27,948	86,186
2013	69,925	24,996	94,921
2014	69,987	23,369	93,356
2015	69,933	26,011	95,944
2016	84,994	20,340	105,334
2017	53,716	26,568	80,284
2018	22,491	38,687	61,178
2019	30,000	46,203	76,203
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,101,980</b>	<b>768,076</b>	<b>3,870,056</b>

<sup>8</sup> 1980-1989 figures exclude grants of asylum by DOJ/EOIR.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

This Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2021 Report to the Congress is submitted in compliance with Sections 207(d)(1) and (e) of the INA. This report provides the following information required by those sections:

- (1) A description of the nature of the refugee situation;
- (2) A description of the number and allocation of the refugees to be admitted, and an analysis of conditions within the countries from which they came;
- (3) A description of the plans for their movement and resettlement and the estimated cost of their movement and resettlement;
- (4) An analysis of the anticipated social, economic, and demographic impact of their admission to the United States;
- (5) A description of the extent to which other countries will admit and assist in the resettlement of such refugees;
- (6) An analysis of the impact of the participation of the United States in the resettlement of such refugees on the foreign policy interests of the United States; and
- (7) Such additional information as may be appropriate or requested by such members.

This report also contains information as required by Section 602(d) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-292, October 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2787) (IRFA), as amended, about religious persecution of refugee populations eligible for consideration for admission to the United States.

This report also meets the reporting requirements of Section 305(b) of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-333, October 18, 2004, 118 Stat. 1287), as amended, by providing information about specific measures taken to facilitate access to the United States refugee program for individuals who have fled “countries of particular concern” for violations of religious freedoms, identified pursuant to Section 402(b) of the IRFA.

## I. DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE OF THE REFUGEE SITUATION

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there were 26 million refugees around the world at the end of calendar year 2019.<sup>9</sup> This figure includes 5.6 million Palestinians under the mandate of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). It also includes an unknown number of individuals who qualify as refugees under UNHCR's mandate but would not qualify as refugees under U.S. law.<sup>10</sup>

**Africa:** According to UNHCR, the refugee population in sub-Saharan Africa totaled 6.4 million at the end of 2019. South Sudanese are still the largest refugee population in the region, with more than 2.3 million. Most refugees from South Sudan were in Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Kenya. The number of Somali refugees declined from about 774,000 to about 762,000; Ethiopia, Kenya, and Yemen, were the main host countries. There were nearly 917,000 refugees and asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), an increase from 720,000 the previous year; Uganda hosted the vast majority, with smaller populations in Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania. Refugees from Burundi in neighboring countries totaled about 334,000, mainly in Tanzania and Rwanda. The number of refugees from the Central African Republic increased from 591,000 to over 600,000, almost all of them in neighboring Chad, Cameroon, the DRC and the Republic of Congo.

**Asia:** UNHCR reports there were 4.1 million refugees in Asia at the end of 2019, a decrease of almost 4,000 from the end of 2018. Refugees from Afghanistan have been a significant population since the 1980s. Despite the voluntary repatriation of millions of Afghan refugees since 2002, they are the third-largest group of refugees in the world at 2.7 million. Most were in Pakistan, about 1.4 million, while Iran hosted another 951,000. More than 1.1 million people from Burma, including more than 710,000 Rohingya fleeing violence and atrocities, have left Burma; about the same as last year. The vast majority are in Bangladesh, while India, Malaysia, and Thailand host smaller populations.

**Europe:** According to UNHCR, the refugee population in Europe increased by approximately 100,000 during 2019, to nearly 6.6 million. The vast majority came from outside the region, particularly Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Turkey hosted the largest refugee population in the world: approximately 3.9 million, up from 3.7 million. Most were Syrians (3.6 million), with much smaller numbers of Afghans, Iraqis, Iranians, and other nationalities.

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<sup>9</sup> Unless noted otherwise, all figures in this section come from the UNHCR Report *Global Trends: Forced Displacement 2019*. Note that UNHCR counts on a calendar year basis.

<sup>10</sup> The definition of refugee at Section 101(a)(42) of the INA is consistent with the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. The United States is a party to the 1967 Protocol. However, UNHCR uses a broader definition, and not all of the individuals it counts would qualify as refugees under the INA. UNHCR's figures also include individuals who are recognized under other instruments, such as the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa; recognized in accordance with the UNHCR Statute; granted complementary and temporary forms of protection; and, in 15 Latin American countries, covered by the criteria in the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees. UNHCR's figure also includes individuals "in refugee-like situations that includes groups of people who are outside their country or territory of origin and who face protection risks similar to those of refugees but for whom refugee status has, for practical or other reasons, not been ascertained."

**Latin America and the Caribbean:** UNHCR reports there were about 150,000 refugees in the Americas outside of the United States and Canada at the end of 2019. Over the last few years, Venezuela has gone from becoming a refuge for displaced Colombians to becoming a source of displaced people itself, as more than five million Venezuelans have fled political repression and economic decline. In addition, poor economic conditions and high levels of generalized violence, factors that are not the basis for refugee or asylum status, continued to contribute to hundreds of thousands of Central Americans leaving their home countries. At the end of 2019, the number of individuals seeking refugee or asylum status included more than 178,000 from El Salvador, more than 142,000 from Guatemala, and more than 149,000 from Honduras. The vast majority sought protection in the United States. In addition, nearly 100,000 Nicaraguans have left their home country since political unrest and economic trouble started there in April 2018.

**Near East and North Africa:** According to UNHCR, there were about 2.6 million refugees in the Middle East and North Africa at the end of 2019, a slight decrease from the end of 2018. Syria remained the main country of origin of refugees worldwide due to the ongoing civil war that began in 2011; the number of Syrian refugees remained around 6.7 million at end-2019. In addition to those in Turkey, Germany, and Sweden, who are counted as part of the Europe figure above, there were nearly 915,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon, nearly 655,000 in Jordan, nearly 247,000 in Iraq, and 129,200 in Egypt.

**II. DESCRIPTION OF THE NUMBER AND ALLOCATION OF THE REFUGEES TO BE ADMITTED AND AN ANALYSIS OF CONDITIONS WITHIN THE COUNTRIES FROM WHICH THEY CAME**

*Proposed FY 2021 Allocations*

<i>Population of special humanitarian concern</i>	<i>Admit up to</i>
Refugees who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution on account of religion; or</li> <li>• who are within a category of aliens established under subsection (b) of Section 599D of Title V, P.L. 101-167, as amended (the Lautenberg and Specter Amendments).</li> </ul>	5,000
Refugees who are within a category of aliens listed in Section 1243(a) of the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act of 2007, Title XII, Div. A, P.L. 110-181, as amended.	4,000
Refugees who are nationals or habitual residents of El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras.	1,000
Other refugees in the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those referred to the USRAP by a U.S. embassy in any location.</li> <li>• Those who will be admitted through a Form I-730 following-to-join petition or who gain access to the USRAP for family reunification through the P-3 process.</li> <li>• Those currently located in Australia, Nauru, or Papua New Guinea who gain access to USRAP pursuant to an arrangement between the United States and Australia.</li> <li>• Those who are nationals or habitual residents of Hong Kong, Venezuela, or Cuba.</li> <li>• Those in the USRAP who were in “Ready for Departure” status as of September 30, 2019.</li> </ul>	5,000
<b><i>Total proposed refugee admissions in FY 2021</i></b>	<b>15,000</b>

*Country Conditions*

The Department of State’s annual Country Reports on Human Right Practices ([www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/](http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/)) and annual Report to Congress on International Religious Freedom ([www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/](http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/)) include information about conditions in every country in the world, including those from which the United States resettles refugees. It is important to note, however, that not all the practices described in these reports would be recognized as “persecution” under Section 101(a)(42) of the INA.

## *Religious Freedom*

The United States is committed to advancing international religious freedom, including the protection of religious minority groups, across the globe. To this end, the Administration proposes a dedicated allocation for refugees who suffered or fear persecution on account of religion and refugees who are within the categories established through the Lautenberg and Specter amendments.

On December 18, 2019, Secretary of State Pompeo designated Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan as Countries of Particular Concern (CPCs) under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 for engaging in or tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom. The Secretary also placed Comoros, Cuba, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Russia, Sudan, and Uzbekistan on a Special Watch List for governments that have engaged in or tolerated severe violations of religious freedom.

The USRAP provides access in various ways to refugees who suffer religious persecution, including from CPC countries:

- **Priority 1, Individual Referrals:** Nationals of any country, including CPCs and Special Watch List countries, may be referred to the USRAP through a Priority 1 referral for reasons of religious persecution.
- **Priority 2, Groups of Special Concern:** Under the Lautenberg and Specter Amendments, religious minorities designated as Priority 2 category members, including from Iran, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, are considered under a reduced evidentiary standard for establishing a well-founded fear of persecution.
- **Priority 3, Family Reunification:** Refugees from certain countries listed in Annex 1 with certain refugee or asylee family members in the United States have access to the USRAP through Priority 3.

### **III. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PLANS FOR THEIR MOVEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT AND THE ESTIMATED COST OF THEIR MOVEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT**

#### *Overseas Processing*

The Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) works closely with U.S. diplomatic missions, UNHCR, and other partners to identify candidates for resettlement through USRAP. When an applicant is referred to USRAP for consideration, the case is received and processed by a Resettlement Support Center (RSC). PRM funds seven RSCs around the world operated by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or international organizations.

#### *Adjudication*

Under PRM's guidance, RSCs collect biographic and other information from the applicants to prepare cases for security screening, interview, and adjudication by DHS's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The Secretary of Homeland Security has delegated to USCIS the authority to determine eligibility for refugee status under the INA. Refugee determinations under the INA are entirely discretionary. USCIS officers review the information that the RSC has collected and the results of security screening processes and conduct an in-person interview with each refugee applicant before deciding whether to approve him or her for classification as a refugee.

#### *Post-Adjudication Processing*

If an applicant is conditionally approved for resettlement by USCIS, RSC staff guide the refugee applicant through post-adjudication steps, including a health screening to identify medical needs and to ensure that those with a contagious disease do not enter the United States. The RSC also obtains a "sponsorship assurance" from a U.S.-based resettlement agency that receives funding from PRM for Reception and Placement (R&P) assistance. Once all required steps are completed, the RSC refers the case to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for transportation to the United States.

#### *Transportation*

The Department of State funds the international transportation of refugees resettled in the United States through a program administered by IOM. The cost of transportation is provided to refugees in the form of a no-interest loan. Refugees are responsible for repaying these loans over time through their R&P providers, beginning six months after their arrival.

#### *Cultural Orientation*

The Department of State strives to ensure that refugees admitted to the United States are prepared for the changes they will experience by providing cultural orientation programs prior to

departure. Every refugee family is offered a copy of “Welcome to the United States,” a book developed with contributions from refugee resettlement workers, resettled refugees, and government officials that provides accurate information about initial resettlement. In addition, the Department of State funds one- to five-day pre-departure orientation classes for eligible refugees at sites throughout the world. Refugees may also access cultural orientation information through a website that is translated into eight languages and provides information in numerous modes to meet all literacy levels, as well as a mobile application.

In order to reach Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders, a population that does not routinely have access to pre-departure classroom cultural orientation, the Department of State also created a series of four videos in Dari and Arabic.

In addition, the Department of State offers a curriculum for cultural orientation after refugees’ arrival in the United States. This includes a model assessment tool for domestic orientation providers to assess refugee understanding of orientation topics during the R&P period.

### *Reception and Placement (R&P)*

Unlike asylees, who arrive in the United States on their own, refugees selected for resettlement through USRAP are eligible for R&P assistance. Each refugee approved for admission to the United States is sponsored by a resettlement agency. Nine non-profit resettlement agencies currently participate in the R&P Program under a cooperative agreement with the Department of State.

### *Where are Refugees Resettled?*

Representatives from the resettlement agencies meet frequently to review the biographic information and other case records sent by the RSC, seeking to match the particular needs of each incoming refugee with the specific resources available in U.S. communities. Through this process, they determine which resettlement agency will sponsor and where each refugee will be initially resettled in the United States.

Many refugees have family or close friends already in the United States, and resettlement agencies make every effort to reunite them. Those without U.S. ties are placed where they have the best opportunity for success through employment with the assistance of strong community services. Agencies place refugees throughout the United States. Through its local affiliates, each agency monitors the resources that each community offers (e.g., interpreters who speak various languages, the size and special features of available housing, the availability of schools with special services, medical care, English classes, employment services, etc.).

Information about the states where refugees admitted to the United States in FY 2019 were initially resettled is available in section VII.



## *Executive Order 13888 on Enhancing State and Local Participation in Refugee Resettlement*

On September 26, 2019, President Trump signed Executive Order 13888 on Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement, which provides that refugees should be resettled only in U.S. jurisdictions where both the state and local governments have provided their consent. Close cooperation with state and local governments ensures that refugees are resettled in communities that are eager and equipped to support their successful integration into American society. Implementation of Executive Order 13888 currently is enjoined due to a January 15, 2020 preliminary injunction issued by the U.S. District Court in *HIAS v. Trump*, PJM 19-3346. The Administration has appealed the court's decision and, if successful on appeal, will implement Executive Order 13888 swiftly thereafter.

### *What Do the Resettlement Agencies Do?*

The sponsoring resettlement agency is responsible for placing refugees with one of its local affiliates and for providing initial services. The Department of State's standard cooperative agreement with each of the resettlement agencies specifies the services the agency must provide, which include housing, essential furnishings, food, necessary clothing, orientation, and assistance with access to other social, medical, and employment services. The R&P Program provides resettlement agencies a one-time payment per refugee to assist with expenses during a refugee's first three months in the United States, but the program anticipates that sponsoring agencies will contribute significant cash or in-kind resources to supplement U.S. government funding.

### *What Happens When Refugees Arrive?*

Upon arrival in the United States, all refugees are met by someone from the local resettlement affiliate or a family member or friend. They are taken to their housing, which has basic furnishings, appliances, climate-appropriate clothing, and some food typical of the refugee's culture. Shortly after arrival, refugees are helped to start their lives in the United States. This includes applying for a Social Security card, registering children in school, arranging medical appointments, and connecting refugees with necessary social, employment, and language services.

Under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, refugees are eligible for public assistance when they first arrive. Nevertheless, the U.S. government seeks to promote early economic self-sufficiency through employment to speed integration into American society.<sup>11</sup> Refugees receive employment authorization upon arrival and are encouraged to become employed as soon as possible.

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<sup>11</sup> Economic self-sufficiency is defined at 45 CFR 400.2 as "earning a total family income at a level that enables a family unit to support itself without receipt of a cash assistance grant." Cash assistance includes Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), refugee cash assistance, and general assistance, but not other forms of public assistance, such as housing and medical assistance.

## *Beyond Reception and Placement*

Beginning with arrival in the United States, and continuing after the R&P period ends, refugees, approved asylees, and other eligible groups benefit from special programs funded by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement (HHS/ORR) and administered by the states, resettlement agencies, or community organizations.<sup>12</sup>

Up to eight months of Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) is available for refugees, approved asylees, and other ORR-eligible groups who are not eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Refugees not eligible for Medicaid can receive up to eight months of Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) upon arrival. In addition, each refugee receives a medical screening within the initial resettlement period. ORR also provides health and mental health services through the Survivors of Torture and Refugee Health Promotion grant programs.

The Matching Grant Program through the R&P resettlement agencies is an alternative to public cash assistance. It aims to enable certain refugees, approved asylees, and other ORR-eligible groups to become economically self-sufficient within six months of eligibility. Participating agencies provide case management, employment services, maintenance assistance, and cash allowance.

ORR distributes Refugee Support Services (RSS) grants based on arrival numbers of ORR-eligible populations in each state. Refugees, approved asylees, and other ORR-eligible groups can access RSS services up to five years after arrival. These services may include employment services, on-the-job training, English language instruction, vocational training, case management, translation, social adjustment services, health-related services, childcare, and transportation. Citizenship and naturalization services provided under RSS may be provided to eligible populations who have been in the United States for more than five years.

Refugee School Impact grants are available to support regions with high concentrations of refugees and other ORR-eligible children in local schools. This program funds activities that aim to strengthen academic performance and facilitate social adjustment. Set-aside funds also support youth mentoring activities and specialized services for elderly refugees.

ORR also funds non-profit agencies to carry out special initiatives or programs for refugees, approved asylees, and other ORR-eligible groups including: case management, ethnic community development, career pathways, individual development accounts, microenterprise development, and agricultural projects.

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<sup>12</sup> HHS/ORR refugee benefits and services are available to refugees, approved asylees, Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders and their spouses and unmarried children under the age of 21, Cuban and Haitian entrants, certain Amerasians immigrants from Vietnam, victims of a severe form of trafficking who have received certification or eligibility letters from ORR, trafficking victims family members with "T" nonimmigrant visas, and some victims of torture.

*Estimated Cost for Refugee Processing and Resettlement*

<b>Agency</b>	<b>FY 2020 Availability (in millions)</b>	<b>FY 2021 Estimated Availability (in millions)</b>
DHS/USCIS USRAP processing <sup>13</sup>	\$38	\$41
Department of State/PRM USRAP admissions <sup>14</sup>	\$333	\$343
HHS/ORR benefits and services <sup>15</sup>	\$561	\$430
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$932</b>	<b>\$814</b>

<sup>13</sup> These FY 2020 and 2021 figures include cost factors to reflect Headquarters facilities rent related to the refugee resettlement program, staffing, general expense and following-to-join refugee processing, in addition to certain International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) and Capital Security Cost Sharing (CSCS) costs. The figures also include personnel salary and benefits for refugee officers detailed to the Asylum Division or assigned to Asylum workloads.

<sup>14</sup> This FY 2020 figure includes FY 2020 Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) appropriation of \$251 million, \$25.3 million in MRA carryover from FY 2019, \$50.7 million in projected IOM loan collections/carryover, and an estimate of \$6 million in prior-year MRA recoveries. A portion of these funds will be carried over into FY 2021. This FY 2021 figure includes FY 2021 MRA budget request of \$253.8 million, \$41.5 million projected MRA carryover from FY 2020, \$42 million in projected IOM loan collections/carryover, and an estimate of \$6 million in prior-year MRA recoveries.

<sup>15</sup> HHS/ORR refugee benefits and services are available to refugees asylees, Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders and their spouses and unmarried children under the age of 21, Cuban and Haitian entrants, certain Amerasian immigrants from Vietnam, victims of a severe form of trafficking who have received certification or eligibility letters from ORR, trafficking victims family members with “T” nonimmigrant visas, and victims of torture. The estimated funding for these groups is included here. None of these additional groups is included in the refugee admissions ceiling. This category does not include costs associated with the Unaccompanied Alien Children’s Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs, or the Victims of Trafficking or Survivors of Torture. These estimates do not include any prior year carryover funding. The estimated FY 2021 figures above reflect the President’s FY 2021 Budget request.

#### **IV. ANALYSIS OF THE ANTICIPATED SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND DEMOGRAPHIC IMPACT OF THEIR ADMISSION TO THE UNITED STATES**

In accordance with the Refugee Act of 1980, ORR produces an Annual Report to Congress that presents ORR's activities, expenditures, policies, and information about the individuals receiving ORR benefits and services, which addresses this issue in greater detail. The Annual Report to Congress also includes data from the Annual Survey of Refugees (ASR), which tracks the progress refugees make towards integration during their first five years in the United States and thus provides insight into the social, economic, and demographic impact of refugee admissions. The ASR collects basic demographic information such as age, level of education, English language proficiency and training, job training, labor force participation, work experience, and barriers to employment. It collects other data by family unit, including information on housing, income, and public benefits use.

ORR published the results of the most recent ASR in the 2017 Annual Report to Congress, covering refugee arrivals FY 2012 to FY 2016. Its findings include:

**Education level:** Respondents age 25 or older averaged 8.4 years of education before arrival; about half did not have a high school diploma upon arrival; and 31 percent of refugees age 25 or older listed their prior educational attainment as "none." Among respondents age 18 and older, 17 percent were pursuing a degree of some kind, with most seeking high school equivalency.

**English language proficiency:** Respondents improved their English over time, but deficits remained. Among refugees age 18 or older who had lived in the United States between 4.5 and 6.5 years, 45 percent spoke English "not well" or "not at all," based on self-assessments.

**Employment:** Among respondents ages 16 to 64, 66.2 percent were in the labor force, of whom 88.8 percent were employed; this is slightly lower than the comparable rates for native-born members of the U.S. population: 73.9 percent in labor force, of whom 94.1 percent were employed. However, male respondents were employed at a rate roughly on par with that of the U.S. population after being in the United States for only two years. Employed refugees age 18 or older earned \$12.27 per hour on average.

**Public benefits use:** Two percent of respondent households reported public assistance as their only source of income; 29 percent received cash welfare of some kind, most often Supplemental Security Income (SSI); and 56 percent received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Among respondents age 18 or older, 61 percent reported having health coverage throughout the previous year, while 29 percent reported no health coverage. Among those with coverage, about half received Medicaid or Refugee Medical Assistance.

ORR is overseeing a multi-year review of the data collected through the ASR, including revisions that improved the design of the 2016 ASR, to ensure the survey offers representative data on the refugee population. ORR will release the results of the most recent Annual Survey of Refugees in its forthcoming 2018 Annual Report to Congress.

## V. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES WILL ADMIT AND ASSIST IN THE RESETTLEMENT OF SUCH REFUGEES

The number of individuals forcibly displaced worldwide, over 79 million, vastly exceeds the number that could be resettled or granted asylum in host countries each year. The United States and UNHCR recognize that most desire safe, voluntary return to their homes. Therefore, the United States seeks to promote this durable solution for displaced people, including refugees. When safe and voluntary return is not possible, the United States promotes self-sufficiency and local integration in countries of first asylum. Supporting refugees as close to their homes as possible facilitates their return when conditions permit. The United States encourages host governments to protect refugees and to allow them to integrate into local communities, as appropriate; in many cases, we also provide financial support, through contributions to humanitarian organizations, to support and encourage host countries in these activities.

**Africa:** A number of African countries were among the top ten refugee-hosting countries worldwide.<sup>16</sup> According to UNHCR, Uganda hosted about 1.4 million refugees as of June 2020, mostly from South Sudan, but also sizable populations from the DRC, Burundi, Somalia, and Rwanda. The refugee population in Sudan exceeded 1 million; most were South Sudanese, with an additional population of Eritreans. Ethiopia hosted over 700,000 refugees, most from South Sudan, with additional populations from Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan.

**East Asia:** Countries in the region traditionally have been reluctant to integrate refugees, and the vast majority do not have asylum systems, although Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Thailand host nearly 1.1 million Burmese refugees. According to UNHCR, Bangladesh hosted over 780,000 refugees at the end of 2019, most of them Rohingya fleeing violence and atrocities in Burma's Rakhine State. Thousands more refugees of other nationalities are in the regional capitals of Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, and Jakarta, including Afghanis, Iranians, Iraqis, Pakistanis, Somalis, Syrians, and Yemenis. UNHCR and international partners continue to encourage Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Thailand to expand humanitarian protection and assistance for refugees and asylum seekers, and those countries have made efforts to improve refugee self-reliance and inclusion.

**Europe:** According to UNHCR, at the end of 2019, Turkey hosted more refugees than any other country in the world – about 3.9 million, the vast majority from Syria. Syrians in Turkey receive “Temporary Protection” status, which does not normally include a path to citizenship or permanent residence. Non-Syrian asylum-seekers receive “International Protection,” which does not provide a pathway to long-term residency, citizenship, or protection from deportation. Germany hosted 1.1 million refugees, most from Syria, while other major sources were Iraq and Afghanistan. Other European countries host hundreds of thousands of refugees, including France (408,000), Italy (208,000), the Netherlands (94,000), Spain (58,000), Sweden (254,000), and the United Kingdom (133,000).

**Latin America and the Caribbean:** According to UNHCR, a number of countries in the region have provided asylum and alternative legal forms of stay for over 2.4 million Venezuelans,

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<sup>16</sup> Unless noted otherwise, all figures in this section come from the UNHCR Report *Global Trends: Forced Displacement 2019*. Note that UNHCR counts on a calendar year basis.

mostly in Colombia but also in Chile, Ecuador, Panama, Argentina, Peru, Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica, and Uruguay. Peru was the second largest recipient of asylum applications globally in 2019, with nearly all claims (almost 260,000) submitted by Venezuelans.

With support from the United States, provided through UNHCR and other partners, Mexico is improving its ability to adjudicate asylum claims and support asylum-seekers, including those from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, and hosted nearly 102,000 asylum-seekers at the end of 2019. The U.S. government also has increased support through UNHCR to strengthen asylum capacity in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. Furthermore, in addition to the United States, other countries such as Canada, Australia, Uruguay, and Brazil have resettled small numbers of refugees from the Northern Triangle via the Protection Transfer Arrangement.<sup>17</sup>

**Near East and South Asia:** At the end of 2019, Lebanon hosted almost 1 million refugees overall,<sup>18</sup> including over 914,000 Syrians, the second-highest number after Turkey. In addition, Lebanon provided protection to thousands of non-Syrian refugees and asylum seekers, mostly from Iraq and Sudan. Jordan had the eleventh-largest refugee and asylum seeker population in the world at nearly 745,000; the vast majority of the refugees were from Syria, while more than 67,000 were from Iraq. Neither Jordan's nor Lebanon's laws provide for the granting of asylum or refugee status, and both lack a formal system for protecting refugees. By agreement with UNHCR, Jordan allows recognized refugees a maximum stay of one year, during which period UNHCR must find a durable solution. This period is renewable, however, and Jordan generally does not force refugees to return to their countries of origin. By contrast, Lebanon does not automatically grant legal stay to UNHCR-registered refugees, who generally must apply for Lebanese residency on a recurring basis under Lebanon's immigration law. According to UNHCR, Pakistan hosted the world's third-largest refugee population at the end of 2019: 1.4 million refugees, almost all of them Afghans. Iran ranked seventh among refugee-hosting countries worldwide, with 979,000, the vast majority of them Afghans.

**Third-Country Resettlement:** Third-country resettlement is an option for certain individuals who cannot return to their home countries or remain in the countries of first asylum. According to UNHCR, 26 countries admitted 107,800 refugees for resettlement during 2019. Other than the United States, the top resettlement countries were Canada (30,100 resettled) and Australia (18,200 resettled). Among European countries, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom resettled the highest number of refugees, with over 22,000 resettled to these five countries in 2019.

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<sup>17</sup> In 2016, Costa Rica entered into a Protection Transfer Arrangement (PTA) with UNHCR and IOM. After pre-screening in the refugee applicant's home countries, the PTA allows UNHCR and IOM to transfer applicants from the Northern Triangle in need of immediate protection to Costa Rica, where they undergo refugee processing before being resettled to a third country.

<sup>18</sup> Current numbers for Lebanon only include refugees registered prior to 2015, at which point the Government of Lebanon restricted UNHCR from registering new refugees.

## **VI. ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF THE PARTICIPATION OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE RESETTLEMENT OF SUCH REFUGEES ON THE FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES**

The United States seeks to enable the safe and voluntary return of refugees to their home countries – the solution that most refugees prefer. This reflects our commitment to achieving the best humanitarian outcomes while advancing the foreign policy interests of the United States. To this end, the U.S. National Security Strategy says that we will continue to lead the world in humanitarian assistance, that we will continue to catalyze responses to man-made and natural disasters, and that we will support displaced people as close to their homes as possible to help meet their needs until they can safely and voluntarily return home.

By focusing on ending the conflicts that drive displacement in the first place, and by providing assistance overseas to prevent further displacement, we can help prevent the destabilizing effects of such displacement on affected countries and their neighbors. This is why we pursue diplomatic efforts around the world to find solutions to crises, like our support for the legitimate government in Venezuela against Maduro’s tyranny.

Also, the United States is the largest single provider of humanitarian assistance worldwide, funding the programs of UNHCR, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), IOM, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the World Food Programme (WFP), and a number of other international and non-governmental organizations. Total U.S. humanitarian assistance was nearly \$9.3 billion in FY 2019, including funding from PRM and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

U.S. humanitarian assistance reaches tens of millions of displaced and crisis-affected people worldwide, including those who will never be considered or qualify for resettlement in a third country. It provides urgent, life-saving support and services, including food, shelter, health care, education, and access to safe drinking water. U.S. support for host countries, provided through contributions to humanitarian organizations, encourages those countries to continue sheltering those fleeing persecution and increases their access to work, education, and public services.

The U.S. approach allows us to help many more vulnerable people, and do so much more rapidly, than we could ever hope to help through resettlement in the United States. In addition, helping displaced people in areas close to their homes facilitates their return when conditions allow. This enables them to participate in rebuilding their homelands, promoting recovery and long-term stability of those countries and their neighbors – which also serves long-term U.S. foreign policy and national security interests.

Even as we remain the world’s largest humanitarian contributor, the United States expects other governments to share in the burden. We will use our diplomatic influence to expand the number of donors and increase global contributions to humanitarian appeals and responses. We will work to better target the application of our humanitarian assistance funds. Also, as part of our broader UN reform agenda, we will seek to maximize the value of U.S. contributions to humanitarian organizations by driving reforms to make such organizations more effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable.

## VII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### *FY 2019 USRAP Admissions by Country of Origin*

<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Individual Arrivals</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Arrivals</b>
Dem. Rep. Congo	12,958	43.19 %
Burma	4,932	16.44 %
Ukraine	4,451	14.84 %
Eritrea	1,757	5.86 %
Afghanistan	1,198	3.99 %
Syria	563	1.88 %
Iraq	465	1.55 %
Sudan	382	1.27 %
El Salvador	311	1.04 %
Colombia	298	0.99 %
Pakistan	264	0.88 %
Ethiopia	247	0.82 %
Central African Republic	244	0.81 %
Somalia	231	0.77 %
Iran	199	0.66 %
Burundi	196	0.65 %
Russia	184	0.61 %
Moldova	120	0.40 %
Guatemala	118	0.39 %
Belarus	96	0.32 %
Vietnam	94	0.31 %
Rwanda	91	0.30 %
Honduras	74	0.25 %
Ivory Coast	62	0.21 %
Kyrgyzstan	46	0.15 %
Republic of South Sudan	42	0.14 %
Liberia	37	0.12 %
Armenia	33	0.11 %
Bhutan	32	0.11 %
Palestine	30	0.10 %
Cameroon	28	0.09 %
Georgia	26	0.09 %
Uganda	24	0.08 %
Turkmenistan	18	0.06 %
Kenya	17	0.06 %
Sri Lanka (Ceylon)	17	0.06 %



Senegal	14	0.05 %
Nepal	13	0.04 %
Uzbekistan	12	0.04 %
Guinea	10	0.03 %
Chad	8	0.03 %
Kazakhstan	8	0.03 %
Jamaica	6	0.02 %
Jordan	5	0.02 %
Egypt	4	0.01 %
Bangladesh	3	0.01 %
Benin	3	0.01 %
Congo	3	0.01 %
Mali	3	0.01 %
Yemen	3	0.01 %
Cuba	2	0.01 %
Ghana	2	0.01 %
Sierra Leone	2	0.01 %
Zimbabwe	2	0.01 %
Cambodia	1	0.00 %
China	1	0.00 %
Gambia	1	0.00 %
Indonesia	1	0.00 %
Israel	1	0.00 %
Korea, North	1	0.00 %
Kuwait	1	0.00 %
Lebanon	1	0.00 %
Malawi	1	0.00 %
Togo	1	0.00 %
Turkey	1	0.00 %
United Arab Emirates	1	0.00 %
<b>Totals</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*FY 2019 USRAP Arrivals by State of Initial Resettlement*

<b>State</b>	<b>Total Refugees Arrivals</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Arrivals</b>
Texas	2,456	8.19%
Washington	1,947	6.49%
New York	1,845	6.15%
California	1,841	6.14%
Ohio	1,426	4.75%
Kentucky	1,421	4.74%
North Carolina	1,256	4.19%
Arizona	1,216	4.05%
Georgia	1,189	3.96%
Michigan	1,146	3.82%
Pennsylvania	1,092	3.64%
Illinois	1,005	3.35%
Indiana	865	2.88%
Minnesota	848	2.83%
Maryland	764	2.55%
Iowa	747	2.49%
Missouri	680	2.27%
Florida	666	2.22%
Tennessee	653	2.18%
Colorado	635	2.12%
Wisconsin	596	1.99%
Oregon	556	1.85%
Virginia	548	1.83%
Idaho	523	1.74%
Massachusetts	515	1.72%
Utah	463	1.54%
Nebraska	443	1.48%
Kansas	407	1.36%
New Jersey	250	0.83%
New Hampshire	248	0.83%
Nevada	224	0.75%
Oklahoma	223	0.74%
South Carolina	189	0.63%
Connecticut	142	0.47%
Maine	140	0.47%
New Mexico	132	0.44%
South Dakota	129	0.43%
North Dakota	127	0.42%
Vermont	114	0.38%

Montana	97	0.32%
Rhode Island	89	0.30%
Alaska	47	0.16%
Arkansas	46	0.15%
Alabama	22	0.07%
Louisiana	12	0.04%
Mississippi	10	0.03%
Delaware	4	0.01%
District of Columbia	4	0.01%
West Virginia	2	0.01%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>

## ANNEX 1: USRAP ACCESS CATEGORIES

Section 207(a)(3) of the INA says that USRAP shall allocate admissions among refugees “of special humanitarian concern to the United States in accordance with a determination made by the President after appropriate consultation.” There are three categories of individuals eligible to enter USRAP, known as “priorities”<sup>19</sup>:

- Priority 1: Individual cases referred by designated entities to the program by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement.
- Priority 2: Groups of special concern designated by the Department of State as having access to the program by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement.
- Priority 3: Individual cases from designated nationalities granted access for purposes of reunification with family members already in the United States.

### *Priority 1 (P-1): Individual Referrals*

P-1 allows consideration of refugee claims from persons of any nationality, usually with compelling protection needs, for whom resettlement appears to be the appropriate durable solution. P-1 cases are identified and referred to the USRAP by a U.S. embassy, UNHCR, or a designated non-governmental organization (NGO). UNHCR has historically referred the vast majority of P-1 cases; however, USRAP will no longer request or accept referrals from UNHCR except in the categories listed in this year’s Presidential Determination. Some NGOs providing humanitarian assistance in locations where there are large concentrations of refugees are eligible to provide P-1 referrals. A U.S. ambassador may make a P-1 referral for persons still in their country of origin if the ambassador determines that such cases are in need of exceptional treatment, and the Department of State and DHS concur.

### *Priority 2 (P-2): Group Referrals*

P-2 includes specific groups identified by U.S. law. The open-access model allows individuals to access the program directly, on the basis of certain criteria. The Resettlement Support Centers (RSCs) responsible for handling open-access P-2 applications, working under the direction of PRM, make a preliminary determination as to whether individual applicants qualify for access and should be presented to DHS for interview. Applicants who clearly do not meet the access requirements are “screened out” before the DHS interview.

Once an individual gains access to USRAP processing via a P-2 designation, all other processing steps are the same as for those referred by P-1, including individual pre-screening and DHS interviews, and all security and medical checks.

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<sup>19</sup> Entering USRAP under a certain “priority” does not establish precedence in the order in which cases will be processed. Once cases are established as eligible for access under one of the three processing priorities, they all undergo the same processing steps.

### **Open-access P-2s inside their country of origin:**

- *Certain Members of Religious Minority Groups in Eurasia and the Baltics:* Jews, Evangelical Christians, and Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox religious adherents identified in the Lautenberg Amendment, Section 599D of Title V, P. L. 101-167, as amended (the Lautenberg Amendment), with close family in the United States. Based on the annual statutory renewal of the Lautenberg Amendment, these individuals are considered under a reduced evidentiary standard for establishing a well-founded fear of persecution.
- *Certain Iraqis Associated with the United States:* Employees of the U.S. government, U.S. government-funded contractors or grantees, U.S. media, or U.S. NGOs working in Iraq, and certain family members of such employees eligible under Section 1243(a) of the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act of 2007, Title XII, Div. A, P. L. 110-181, as amended.

### **Open-access P-2s outside their country of origin:**

- *Certain Members of Religious Minority Groups in Iran:* Jews, Christians, Baha'is, Sabaeen-Mandaeans, and Zoroastrians are considered under a reduced evidentiary standard for establishing a well-founded fear of persecution pursuant to the annual renewal of the Lautenberg Amendment, as amended in 2004 by Section 213 of Title II, Division E, of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004, P. L. 108-199 (the Specter Amendment).
- *Certain Iraqis Associated with the United States:* Employees of the U.S. government, U.S. government-funded contractors or grantees, U.S. media, or U.S. NGOs working in Iraq, and certain family members of such employees eligible under Section 1243(a) of the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act of 2007, Title XII, Div. A, P. L. 110-181, as amended. This program operates in Jordan and Egypt in addition to the in-country program in Iraq.

### *Priority 3 (P-3): Family Reunification*

P-3 provides USRAP access to members of designated nationalities who have immediate family members in the United States who entered as refugees or were granted asylum (even if they subsequently gained LPR status or naturalized as U.S. citizens). Parents, spouses, and unmarried children under the age of 21 of the U.S.-based asylee or refugee can participate. For FY 2021, P-3 processing is available to individuals of the following nationalities:

- Afghanistan
- Burundi
- Central African Republic
- Cuba
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)
- Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
- El Salvador
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Iran

- Iraq
- Mali
- Somalia
- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Syria

*Following-to-Join Family Reunification Petitions*

A refugee admitted to the United States may request “following-to-join benefits” for his or her spouse and/or unmarried children under the age of 21 who were not previously granted refugee status. Within two years of admission, the refugee may file a Form I-730 Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition with DHS for each eligible family member.

Individuals who gain access to the USRAP through the Form I-730 petition process are interviewed by DHS or Department of State consular officers to verify the relationships claimed in the petition, as well as to examine any applicable bars to status and admissibility. Beneficiaries of I-730 petitions are not required to establish past persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution, as they derive their status from the petitioner. Beneficiaries of I-730 petitions may be processed within their country of origin or in other locations.

Certain relatives in the United States may file an I-730 petition and simultaneously seek Priority 3 access for their qualifying family members (if eligible). In some cases, the I-730 petition will be the only option as the family members are still in their country of origin. Unlike the P-3 process, the I-730 process does not allow the relative in the United States to petition for parents.