

Refugees and Asylum Seekers Worldwide

Stats and definitions:

Definition: According to the UNHCR, a refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.

Those who obtain refugee status are given protections under international laws and conventions and lifesaving support from aid agencies, including the International Rescue Committee. Refugees in the U.S. also have the opportunity to become lawful permanent residents and eventually citizens.

Refugee vs. asylum seeker:

An asylum seeker is someone who is also seeking international protection from dangers in his or her home country, but whose claim for refugee status hasn't been determined legally. Asylum seekers must apply for protection in the country of destination—meaning they must arrive at or cross a border in order to apply. Then, they must be able to prove to authorities there that they meet the criteria to be covered by refugee protections. Not every asylum seeker will be recognized as a refugee.

Two-thirds of all refugees worldwide come from just five countries: **Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Myanmar and Somalia.**

Today, there are 68.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations. This includes:

- 25.9 million refugees in the world—the highest ever seen;
- 41.3 million internally displaced people; and
- 3.5 million asylum-seekers

In the US:

- The maximum number of refugees resettled in the U.S. in a given year, which is referred to as the ceiling for refugee admissions, is determined by the annual Presidential Determination. For more than a decade, the annual ceiling was set at 70,000, which includes both Syrian refugees and refugees from all other countries.
- Former President Obama's administration raised the ceiling to 110,000 in 2017.
- In September 2018, the Trump administration announced that the Presidential Determination for fiscal year 2019 would be 30,000, the lowest number ever set by any president since the Refugee Act became law in 1980.

Take Action:

- Include refugee stories in your Passover celebrations this year
- Donate goods to a newly arrived refugee family through the [EDCJCC Refugee Resettlement Team](#)
- **Talk about** this issue with family and friends

Want more? Visit our partners working for refugees and asylum seekers:

[HIAS](#)

[The Asylum Seeker Assistance Project \(DC-based\)](#)

[Lutheran Social Services](#)

HIAS
HAGGADAH

IN EVERY GENERATION SEE YOURSELF AS THOUGH YOU LEFT EGYPT

[Download](#) the beautifully written and illustrated HIAS Hagaddah to bring the struggles and stories of the over 68 million displaced persons around the globe to your Passover tables this week.

For more information and ways to get involved, visit

edcjcc.org/volunteer

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