



How to talk to your family about refugees & asylees this holiday season

America's proud legacy as a safe haven for people fleeing persecution is under threat, both from unprecedented anti-refugee and anti-asylum policies as well as from false and harmful rhetoric about these people who want nothing more than a chance to live their lives in safety.

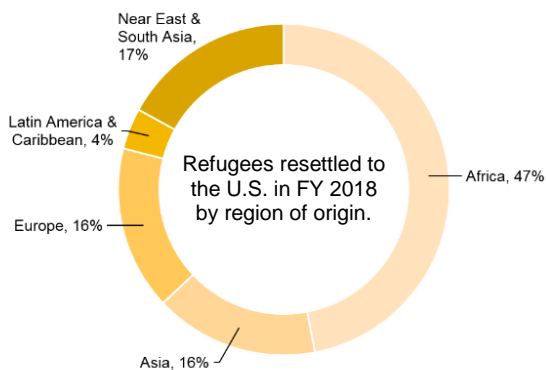
As you gather together with family and friends to celebrate this holiday season, take the opportunity to share important facts about resettlement and asylum.

This guide is intended to help facilitate positive conversations and educate your friends and family about refugees and asylees.

6 Fast Facts About refugees

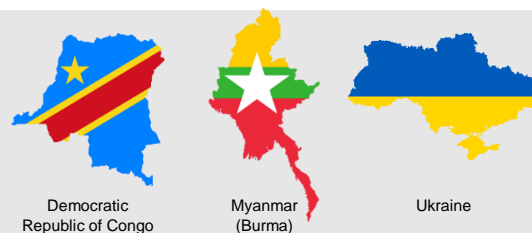
- 1 To obtain refugee status individuals must prove that they have a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.
- 2 Right now there are nearly 26 million refugees in the world. Over half of all refugees are children.
- 3 Only the most vulnerable refugees are referred for resettlement. Vulnerable categories include those with urgent medical needs, women and children at risk and survivors of violence and torture.
- 4 Refugees are vetted more intensively than any other group seeking to enter the U.S. It takes an average of 2+ years to go through the U.S. security process.
- 5 Refugees arrive in the U.S. eager and able to start businesses, pay taxes and contribute to their communities and local economies. The vast majority quickly find jobs and become productive members of their new communities.
- 6 The U.S. has a long, bi-partisan, tradition of welcoming refugees and has, on average, set a goal of welcoming 95k refugees each fiscal year.

Who are refugees and why are they fleeing?



- Refugees are men, women and children forced to flee from war, persecution and political upheaval who have crossed borders to seek safety in another country. Resettlement is a solution of last resort for less than one percent of the world's refugees who cannot safely remain in the country to which they fled or return home.

Top countries of origin for refugees resettled to the U.S. in FY 2018



How are refugees vetted?

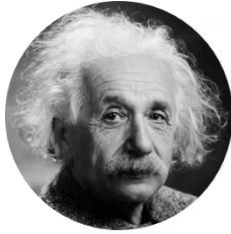
Refugees are vetted more intensively than any other group seeking to enter the U.S. The screening process involves the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the U.S. Intelligence Community. Refugees undergo biographic and biometric checks, medical screenings, forensic document testing, and in-person interviews.



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Five famous refugees

Meet some of the artists, scientists and other luminaries who were once refugees.



< Albert Einstein

Physicist, Nobel laureate & humanitarian



Sergey Brin >

Google co-founder



< Freddie Mercury

Frontman of the rock band Queen

M.I.A.>

Rapper & activist



^ Marc Chagall

Artist & a pioneer of modernism



Refugees and asylees. Is there a difference?

In truth, there's no difference—both groups have fled home seeking safety. In the eyes of U.S. law, the primary difference between refugees and asylees is where their status is determined. For refugees, their status is determined overseas before they travel to the U.S. Asylum seekers must be present in the U.S. when they ask for protection—meaning they must arrive at or cross a border in order to apply. When asylum seekers are granted refugee status, they are known as asylees.

A crucial aspect of international refugee law is that people have the right to seek asylum without being turned away or forced to return to countries where they could be persecuted.

Did You Know ?

- Seeking asylum is legal.
- Turning away asylum seekers is not legal.
- Asylum seekers must go through a lengthy process to receive legal protection in the U.S.
- Asylum seekers must prove that they have suffered persecution or have a well-founded fear of persecution.
- The right to seek asylum was incorporated into international law following World War II.

Visit [Rescue.org/Act](https://www.rescue.org/act) to learn more about how you and your family can show your support for refugees and asylees.