



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

FINDING SOLUTIONS FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

Resettlement, Humanitarian Admission, and Family Reunification

“Providing solutions in the form of resettlement or relocation to safe third countries is a critical and often life-saving intervention for refugees having urgent protection needs and compelling vulnerabilities. Such solutions form an important component of the protection strategy for Syrian refugees. These interventions, in addition to providing solutions for vulnerable individuals and families, are also an expression of solidarity and burden sharing with countries in the region currently hosting more than two million Syrian refugees.”

- Strategic Overview, 2014 Syria Regional Response Plan, United Nations

As the conflict in Syria deepens and the violence worsens, UNHCR expects that growing numbers of civilians will continue to seek safety and assistance across international borders. Likewise, as the number of displaced people grows, so does the strain on the capacities of communities in the region. UNHCR has encouraged the international community to show solidarity with countries hosting Syrian refugees in the region by offering opportunities for resettlement, humanitarian admission, and family reunification or other forms of admission for Syrian refugees. These interventions are critical for the most vulnerable refugees who are in urgent need of safety and protection.

What are resettlement and humanitarian admission?

Resettlement involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection to a third State which has agreed to admit them as refugees with permanent residence status.

Humanitarian admission is a similar, but expedited, process providing protection in a third country for refugees in greatest need in the region. Residence under humanitarian admission may be either permanent or temporary depending upon State legislation.

From which countries does UNHCR carry out resettlement and humanitarian admission?

The programmes are implemented in countries neighbouring Syria and in the wider region hosting the largest numbers of Syrian refugees who have fled the conflict, including Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, as well as other countries in the region and beyond as needed.

Who can benefit from resettlement and humanitarian admission?

UNHCR is working closely with resettlement and humanitarian admission countries to prioritize the most vulnerable, including women and girls at risk, survivors of violence and/or torture, refugees with medical needs or disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex refugees at risk, vulnerable older adults, and refugees in need of family reunification. Refugees who face serious

threats to their physical security, particularly due to political opinion or belonging to an ethnic or religious minority group, may also be prioritized. Vulnerable refugees are identified through registration data and community outreach by UNHCR and its partners. UNHCR is enhancing its capacity to identify vulnerable refugees and to streamline procedures for referral. As the programmes continue to grow, additional personnel, equipment, and resources are needed.

What are UNHCR's resettlement and humanitarian admission goals?

UNHCR is proposing that countries admit up to 30,000 Syrian refugees on resettlement, humanitarian admission, or other programmes by the end of 2014, with a focus on protecting the most vulnerable. States are encouraged to offer places for Syrian refugees *in addition to their current resettlement quotas* to ensure that resettlement opportunities also continue to be available for refugees from the rest of the world.

Which countries are participating in the resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes of Syrian refugees so far?

To date, 20 countries have indicated their interest in receiving refugees on humanitarian admission or resettlement for 2013/2014, and the total official and unconfirmed pledges for resettlement and humanitarian admission now stands at some 18,300 places plus an open-ended number to the United States of America. An unprecedented majority of these pledges comes from European States.

The following countries have so far confirmed that they will receive refugees on humanitarian admission or resettlement for 2013/2014: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America.

What other steps have been taken in addition to participating in the resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes?

To pave the way for further State commitments and support, a Core Group on Syrian Resettlement, comprised of resettlement States and chaired by Sweden, has been established and held its inaugural meeting on 12 December 2013 in Geneva.

UNHCR is coordinating a Resettlement Working Group with the host countries neighbouring Syria and in the wider region to regularly exchange information and feedback on the implementation of the resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes for Syrian refugees.

Countries have also offered other forms of admission, such as simplified and expedited family reunion and the extension of student or employment-related visas, which are very welcome. UNHCR hopes that other States will follow suit through flexible application of family reunification criteria and procedures, as well as dispensing with certain visa requirements and facilitating entry of Syrians for work, study, family, or humanitarian purposes under national programmes.