

PROPOSED REFUGEE ADMISSIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

Report to the 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 REPRESENTATIVE

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

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INTRODUCTION

This Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2024 Report to the Congress is submitted in compliance with Sections 207(d)(1) and (e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), 8 U.S.C. 1157(d)(1), (e). This report provides the information required by those sections, including:

- 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 proposed 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 (P.L. 105-292) (IRFA), as amended, 22 U.S.C. 6472(d), 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 (P.L. 108-333), as amended, 22 U.S.C. 7845(b), by providing information about specific measures taken to facilitate access to the

United States refugee admissions program for individuals who have fled “countries of particular concern” for violations of religious freedoms, identified pursuant to Section 402(b) of the IRFA, 22 U.S.C. 6442(b).

FOREWORD

Last year, the Biden-Harris Administration reaffirmed the United States' humanitarian leadership and commitment to welcoming refugees by maintaining a target of 125,000 refugee arrivals in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions, the highest target in several decades. As a result of intensive efforts to restore, strengthen, and modernize the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), we have made significant progress toward fulfilling the President's aspirational target for resettling refugees from around the world as part of the Administration's robust response to humanitarian crises globally. As the end of the fiscal year approaches, the total number of refugee arrivals in FY 2023 has already more than doubled FY 2022 refugee arrivals. For FY 2024, the President has again set an ambitious goal of 125,000 refugees to be resettled in the United States. Refugee admissions now are nearing a monthly pace that will, if sustained over the course of a year, enable arrival of 125,000 refugees, a 30-year high. The hard work of U.S. government partners across the interagency, in partnership with communities and organizations across the country and world, have put the FY 2024 goal within reach.

In FY 2024, the Administration aims to build on the momentum of the last year and affirm refugee resettlement as a core component of the United States' global humanitarian response. The USRAP is part of U.S. efforts to extend hope and relieve suffering globally as record numbers of people around the world have been forced to flee war, persecution, and instability. Nearly 110 million people are now forcibly displaced worldwide, more than at any other time in history. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2.4 million refugees are now in need of protection through third-country resettlement. Through resettlement, the United States provides an opportunity for refugees to pursue a life of safety and dignity without fear of persecution. In

turn, the United States benefits from the meaningful economic, social, and cultural contributions of refugees in the communities where they are resettled.

Resettling refugees through the USRAP reflects our proud history as a nation welcoming of immigrants from every corner of the world. The USRAP projects our core values, upholds our global humanitarian commitments, and supports U.S. foreign policy. Together with other countries who provide third-country resettlement, it provides durable solutions for people facing persecution around the world. By facilitating resettlement as a life-saving and lasting solution for vulnerable refugees, the USRAP represents an enduring expression of our commitment to save lives and alleviate human suffering. It demonstrates the U.S. commitment to uphold human rights, including freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression. Critically, resettlement is an important example of the United States' steadfast commitment to solidarity and responsibility-sharing with affected countries who continue to host the majority of refugees around the world.

The USRAP not only serves as an expression of our highest values, it also is a vital tool of broader U.S. foreign policy that strategically advances both U.S. interests and national security objectives, including expanding lawful pathways for safe, orderly, and humane migration. Alongside robust U.S. humanitarian assistance and diplomacy, refugee resettlement helps promote stability in regions experiencing displacement crises. It facilitates U.S. negotiations on additional humanitarian protections with host countries – such as granting access to lawful work, education, and lawful status for most refugees who remain in countries of first asylum, who may never be able to return to their country of origin, and who will never be resettled.

Effective refugee resettlement through the USRAP requires close cooperation among U.S. government agencies, U.S. state and local governments, non-profit and private resettlement partners, foreign governments, UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and of course, the refugees themselves. Crucially, the success and sustainability of the USRAP is shaped by the strong partnership and investment the American public and the U.S. Congress have made in ensuring this life-saving program can thrive, enabling continued protection opportunities for refugees the world over who go on to become contributing residents and citizens in their new communities.

Innovations and efficiencies made this year will provide new hope and opportunities to all refugee applicants in the USRAP, including those displaced anew inside Ethiopia, Venezuelans and Iranians in need of protection, and Burmese Rohingya facing increased threats and dwindling assistance, among many others. The Administration remains focused on expanding the resettlement of key populations of concern, including vulnerable people from the Western Hemisphere; Afghan allies; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) individuals; and individuals persecuted for their religious beliefs.

USRAP in FY 2024: Building on Progress to Strengthen the Program for the Future

The Departments of State, Homeland Security (DHS), and Health and Human Services (HHS), alongside other U.S. government agencies involved in refugee resettlement, continue to implement and expand on the President's vision to rebuild and enhance the USRAP as outlined in Executive Order 14013, Rebuilding and Enhancing Programs to Resettle Refugees and Planning for the Impact of Climate Change on Migration. The Biden-Harris Administration has prioritized rebuilding the USRAP's global overseas refugee processing infrastructure and

domestic reception capacity to warmly welcome significantly greater numbers of refugees. We have done so while strengthening the program's policies, processes, and procedures to respond to evolving needs and position the program on a durable foundation for the future. The following section highlights the Administration's priority objectives and innovations in FY 2024, building on activities and progress made in FY 2023.

The Welcome Corps:

In January 2023, the Department of State rolled out the Welcome Corps, a groundbreaking private sponsorship program to empower everyday Americans to welcome refugees and support their resettlement and integration as they build new lives in the United States. The Welcome Corps builds on Americans' generosity by creating a durable program in communities across the country to privately sponsor refugees from around the world. It is the boldest innovation in the U.S. approach to refugee resettlement in four decades. By tapping into the goodwill of American communities, the Welcome Corps will expand our country's capacity to provide a warm welcome to refugees and broaden our geographic resettlement landscape. The first privately sponsored refugees arrived in June 2023. Later in 2023, the Department of State will expand the Welcome Corps to enable private sponsors to identify specific refugees they wish to support and to refer those refugees for consideration to the USRAP. Throughout FY 2024, the Department of State will also implement targeted pilot programs that facilitate education and labor mobility pathways under the umbrella of the Welcome Corps.

Historic Increases in Processing in the Western Hemisphere:

As forced displacement in the Western Hemisphere reaches historic highs, the United States is committed to expanding access to resettlement of refugees from the Western Hemisphere. As a demonstration of this commitment, the past two years has resulted in the most significant increase of operations in the Americas in the 43-year history of the USRAP. FY 2023 refugee arrivals from Latin America and the Caribbean will represent more than a 1,400 percent increase over FY 2021 arrivals. Thanks to the expansion of resettlement operations from four Western Hemisphere countries two years ago to nearly two dozen today, since February 2021, UNHCR has referred more than twice as many individuals from the Americas as in the previous three decades combined. To amplify this progress, the United States is leading regional efforts to promote a shared responsibility framework. In June 2023, the United States announced the establishment of Safe Mobility Offices (SMOs) in the Western Hemisphere which will refer migrants with protection needs to the USRAP for resettlement.

Afghan Resettlement:

The United States continues to fulfill our commitment to the brave Afghans who supported the U.S. mission in Afghanistan over the past two decades, serving alongside American diplomats, development professionals, and military service members. U.S. communities, resettlement agencies, and their affiliates have welcomed over 117,000 Afghan refugees, Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders, and humanitarian parolees since August 2021, most notably in Texas, California, Virginia, Washington, and Pennsylvania. The United States government has transitioned from Operation Allies Welcome to the Administration's longer-term, sustainable resettlement program called "Enduring Welcome." This multi-year program will rely on all durable immigration pathways—including Priority 1 and

Priority 2 refugee referrals and family reunification pathways—to welcome our Afghan allies, whom the Department of State and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) continue to process in 85 countries.

Rohingya in Bangladesh:

Around one million stateless Rohingya have been forced to seek refuge in Bangladesh and the surrounding region after the Burmese military committed genocide and crimes against humanity against them beginning in 2017, following ethnic cleansing and human rights abuses. In FY 2024, the United States and our partners will expand resettlement of Rohingya refugees from the region, including from Bangladesh, so they can start new lives in the United States and elsewhere. The United States also will continue to work with other states and international partners to seek increased resettlement opportunities for Rohingya globally in the coming months and years. In addition to increasing resettlement opportunities for Rohingya refugees, the United States is also working to address livelihood, security, and humanitarian concerns, including rising food insecurity, in Rohingya camps in Bangladesh.

LGBTQI+ Persons:

The Department of State is making significant progress in our efforts to expand access to resettlement as a durable solution for vulnerable LGBTQI+ refugees. This includes through increased direct referrals by designated non-governmental organization (NGO) partners who prioritize refugee populations that have been historically neglected, marginalized, or otherwise difficult to access through traditional resettlement services, including LGBTQI+ refugees. In FY 2024, these NGO partners will provide greater access to durable solutions for LGBTQI+ refugees who face persecution in their current location and are unable to integrate in their current country of asylum. The Department of State is working

to facilitate support for LGBTQI+ refugees through the Welcome Corps, which will enable U.S.-based groups to identify and refer specific LGBTQI+ refugees for resettlement consideration through the USRAP and serve as private sponsors for those refugees in communities across the United States.

Domestic Resettlement Capacity:

In FY 2024, the Department of State and HHS will continue to build on the policy innovations and program adaptations that have enabled our domestic resettlement system to rapidly expand over the past two years, undertake a historic effort to resettle over 117,000 Afghan nationals who arrived in the United States since August 2021, and build back domestic infrastructure that had been cut back significantly in previous years due to low refugee arrivals and the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of this effort, the Department of State and HHS worked closely with federal agencies and resettlement partners to identify creative solutions and provide targeted technical assistance to address the most significant needs linked to increased resettlement capacity, including provision of temporary and permanent housing for refugees and addressing local and national staffing gaps at resettlement agencies. The Department of State and HHS also expanded capacity by prioritizing engagement with new resettlement partners. This included expanding the traditional resettlement agency network from nine to ten agencies with the addition of Bethany Christian Services (the first addition in a decade) and launching the “Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement,” initiative to involve U.S. higher education institutions more directly in resettlement. We are also continuing to expand our domestic resettlement network, up from 199 local resettlement office at the start of 2021. In FY 2023, the ten national resettlement agencies collectively have 298 local resettlement offices throughout the United States. An additional 51 local offices will open during the remainder of this fiscal year and into the next year, bringing

our total soon to 349. This is the highest number of local resettlement offices in recent history. We expect that the national resettlement agencies will continue to explore opening additional local offices in the future.

As the Biden-Harris Administration works to strengthen overseas operations to facilitate increased refugee arrivals in FY 2024, the U.S. government will continue to ramp up efforts to expand domestic capacity to welcome and meet the needs of refugees being resettled in the United States.

Security Vetting:

The safety and security of the American people remain at the forefront of our efforts to rebuild the USRAP. Vetting support agencies within the USRAP continue to streamline refugee vetting checks to create greater efficiencies while preserving program integrity. In FY 2024, the Department of State and DHS, alongside U.S. vetting support agencies, will further consolidate steps of the vetting process under the National Vetting Center to leverage technology to enable increased screening and vetting capacity, while not diminishing the integrity and thoroughness of refugee applicant vetting.

Resettlement Diplomacy:

To leverage our role as the largest resettlement country in the world and galvanize global action on resettlement, the U.S. government launched the Resettlement Diplomacy Network (RDN) as a new high-level multilateral platform aimed at advancing strategic, shared policy priorities for increasing third-country solutions for refugees through collective action with other countries. Through the RDN, the United States is engaging other resettlement countries to drive forward an ambitious shared agenda around the global expansion of resettlement programs, strengthening of global resettlement infrastructure, and strategic

solidarity on protection pathways to support refugees, including complementary pathways and humanitarian admissions programs. The RDN also builds on the rapid response mechanisms and lessons learned around global efforts to stand up new protection pathways in response to the Taliban's take-over of Afghanistan and Russia's war against Ukraine.

In May 2023, the United States chaired the first Senior Officials' Meeting of the RDN with participation from the European Commission alongside the governments of Australia, Canada, Italy, New Zealand, Spain, and the United Kingdom, plus observer governments. In September 2023, Secretary Blinken convened the first ministerial meeting of the RDN on the margins of the 78th UN General Assembly. During the ministerial, members endorsed the initial workplan of the RDN organized around three pillars: (1) strengthening the global resettlement infrastructure; (2) enhancing international cooperation in support of shared commitments to bring at-risk Afghans to safety; and (3) demonstrating strategic solidarity to address specific regions or populations of concern, particularly in the Americas, the Central Mediterranean, and Southeast Asia. In FY 2024, the United States will continue to conduct collective diplomacy to address shared RDN resettlement processing challenges across multiple regions, collaborate on referral mechanisms and deepen cooperation on emergency resettlement responses.

OVERVIEW OF U.S. REFUGEE POLICY

Who is a Refugee?

Under Section 101(a)(42) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(42), a refugee is a person who is outside their country of nationality (or, if no nationality, country of last habitual residence) and who 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, 8 U.S.C. 1157, if they are outside the United States, or asylum status under Section 208 of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1158, if they are already in the United States or present themselves at a U.S. port of entry. Both refugee and asylum statuses are forms of humanitarian protection offered by the United States.

Additionally, under Section 101(a)(42)(B) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(42)(B), the President may specify circumstances under which individuals who are within their countries of nationality (or, if no nationality, within their country of last habitual residence) may be considered a refugee for purposes of admission to the United States. Persons for whom resettlement is requested by a U.S. ambassador in any location in the world may also be considered, with the understanding that those within their countries of nationality or last habitual residence will only be referred to the USRAP following Department of State consultation with USCIS.

Individuals outside the United States seeking admission as a refugee under Section 207 of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1157, are processed through the USRAP, which is managed by the Department of State in cooperation with DHS and HHS. Those admitted as refugees are eligible for U.S. government-funded resettlement assistance, which is discussed below in the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)

section. Individuals in the United States seeking asylum under Section 208 of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1158, 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 the 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. Individuals who have been granted asylum are eligible for ORR-funded benefits and services.

Since the enactment of the Refugee Act in 1980, which incorporated this definition of refugee into the INA, the United States has welcomed more than 3.1 million refugees through the USRAP.

PROPOSED CEILINGS FOR FY 2024

Table I: Projected Refugee Admissions for FY 2023 and Proposed Refugee Admissions for FY 2024 by Region

Region	FY 2023 Ceiling	FY 2023 projected Arrivals	Proposed FY.2024 Allocation
Africa	40,000	24,500	30,000-50,000
East Asia	15,000	6,260	10,000-20,000
Europe and Central Asia	15,000	2,765	2,000-3,000
Latin America/Caribbean	15,000	6,250	35,000-50,000
Near East/South Asia	35,000	20,325	30,000-45,000
Regional Subtotal	120,000	60,100	125,000
Unallocated Reserve	5,000	0	0
Total	125,000	60,100	125,000

The proposed FY 2024 regional allocation ranges reflect the Administration's ambition to significantly expand refugee processing in priority regions, while providing flexibility as needs arise and as operational capacity grows. The total admissions among all of the regions will not exceed 125,000. In FY 2024, the U.S. government will continue to prioritize: Afghan arrivals through Enduring Welcome and the U.S. government's ongoing commitment to our Afghan allies; vulnerable individuals in the Western Hemisphere, consistent with the United States' commitments under the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection; Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh; backlogged cases in Africa and other regions; and efforts to expand safe and legal pathways, including resettlement, for vulnerable refugees worldwide. More detail about each region is provided below in the Regional Refugee Admissions section. Furthermore, the President may, as in the past, authorize the Secretary of State, upon notification to the Judiciary Committees of the Congress, to transfer unused allocations to a particular region to one or more other regions with a need for greater allocations.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

Eligibility Criteria

The Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) is responsible for coordinating and managing the USRAP. A critical part of this responsibility is determining which individuals or groups from among the millions of refugees worldwide will have access to the USRAP. PRM coordinates within the Department of State, as well as with DHS USCIS and other agencies, in carrying out this responsibility.

Section 207(a)(3) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1157(a)(3), provides that “[a]dmissions shall be allocated among refugees of special humanitarian concern to the United States in accordance with a determination made by the President after appropriate consultation.” Which individuals are “of special humanitarian concern” to the United States for the purpose of refugee resettlement consideration is determined through the USRAP priority system. There will be four priority categories in FY 2024.

1. **Priority 1:** Individual cases referred by designated entities to the program by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement.
2. **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.
3. **Priority 3:** Individual cases granted access for purposes of reunification with family members already in the United States.
4. **Priority 4:** Individual cases from all nationalities who have been referred by private sponsors in the United States and who receive post-arrival support and services from those sponsors.

(Note: Refugees resettled in the United States may also seek the admission of their spouses and unmarried children under 21 who are still abroad or are located domestically but did not accompany the principal refugee by filing a Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Petition, known as a “following-to-join” petition, which does not require a separate refugee adjudication for these family members overseas. This option is described in more detail in the discussion of following-to-join cases below.)

Access to the USRAP under one of the above-listed processing priorities does not necessarily mean an applicant meets the statutory definition of a “refugee” or is admissible to the United States under the INA. Applicants granted access to the USRAP within the established priorities present to USCIS officers for interview and adjudication. The determination as to whether an applicant can be admitted as a refugee is made by USCIS in accordance with criteria set forth in the INA and various security protocols.

Although the access categories to the USRAP are referred to as “processing priorities,” it is important to note that entering the program under a certain priority does not establish precedence in the order in which cases will be processed or the likelihood of success of being admitted to the United States as a refugee. Once cases are established as eligible for access under one of the processing priorities, they all undergo the same processing steps.

Priority 1 (P-1) – Individual Referrals

Priority 1 (P-1) allows the USRAP to consider refugee claims from persons of any or no 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 program by UNHCR, a U.S. embassy, a U.S. government agency senior official granted referral authority by PRM, or a designated NGO. UNHCR, which has the international mandate to provide protection to refugees worldwide, has historically referred the vast majority of cases to the United States under this priority. A U.S. ambassador or designated embassy representative may also make a P-1 referral for vulnerable individuals and are encouraged to do so. Such referrals include those still in their country of origin, if the ambassador or designate determines that such persons warrant exceptional treatment and PRM and USCIS concur.

The Department of State has also taken additional measures to facilitate protection and access to the USRAP for our Afghan allies. For example, in certain cases, other U.S. government and U.S. military officials are permitted to provide P-1 referrals for Afghan individuals who worked with the United States in Afghanistan.

Over the past year, PRM approved two new P-1 processes by which senior government officials have been designated with referral authority. The first is the U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons who may refer both individuals who face persecution as a result of their work promoting respect for LGBTQI+ rights and individuals who face persecution on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or sex characteristics. The second is a pilot project to expand access to the USRAP for individuals identified by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

and referred by the DRL Assistant Secretary (or Senior Bureau Official). These recently approved processes remain under development. PRM anticipates receiving refugee referrals through these mechanisms in early FY 2024.

PRM also has designated certain NGOs that assist refugees as eligible to provide P-1 referrals directly. As directed in Executive Order 14013, PRM is working to expand NGO referrals to the USRAP to provide greater access to refugees in need of resettlement. In October 2022, PRM formalized a partnership with the Equitable Resettlement Access Consortium (ERAC), led by HIAS alongside Refuge Point and the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP), to generate NGO referrals directly to the USRAP. This project seeks to reach highly vulnerable refugees in need of resettlement who lack access to the USRAP through traditional referral mechanisms and for whom resettlement may be the only durable solution. In addition, the project is designed to grow the network of NGOs that refer individuals to the USRAP and to address the coordination gap among resettlement stakeholders to ensure a coherent and streamlined approach to NGO referrals. This model for refugee referrals expands equitable access to resettlement while establishing global partnerships with UNHCR, refugee-led organizations, organizations serving LGBTQI+ refugees, and other stakeholders in the field of refugee protection.

P-1 UNHCR referrals inside their country of origin:

Persons in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras:

In El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, UNHCR refers to the USRAP cases of vulnerable individuals identified by a consortium of NGOs. Cases with the most extreme protection needs may be transferred to Costa Rica for refugee processing under a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of

Costa Rica, UNHCR, and IOM; all other cases are eligible for in-country processing for resettlement to the United States.

Priority 2 (P-2) – Group Referrals

P-2 includes specific groups whose members warrant resettlement as identified by the Department of State in consultation with USCIS, NGOs, UNHCR, and other experts. P-2 designations reflect the determination that a group is of special humanitarian concern to the United States and that individual members of the group will likely qualify for admission as refugees under U.S. law.

There are two distinct models of P-2 access to the program: predefined group access and direct access. Under both models, P-2 designations are made based on shared characteristics that define the group. In general, these characteristics are the reason that members of the group have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution in the future.

A predefined group designation is usually based on a UNHCR recommendation that lays out eligibility criteria for individuals in a specific location. In recent years, predefined groups have included certain Burmese in Thailand, certain Bhutanese in Nepal, and certain Congolese in Tanzania, Burundi, and Rwanda. In August 2021, PRM announced a P-2 designation for certain Afghan nationals and their eligible family members. In June 2023, PRM designated a P-2 group for nationals of Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela present in Mexico on or before a certain date. In May 2023, PRM designated a P-2 group for certain Rohingya refugees who reside in Bangladesh and in July 2023, PRM designated a P-2 group for certain registered Burmese refugees who reside in temporary shelters along the Thailand-Burma border that supersedes a previous designation. In August 2023 PRM designated a P-2 group for Eritrean, Sudanese, and South Sudanese

individuals located in Ethiopia who were displaced within Ethiopia following violence in the Tigray, Afar, and Benishangul-Gumuz regions.

Once PRM, in consultation with USCIS, establishes the access eligibility criteria for the group, the referring entity (usually UNHCR) provides the biographical data of eligible refugee applicants for processing. This type of group enables efficient processing because it identifies groups of people with very similar persecution claims, can avoid labor-intensive individual referrals, and prevents delays to applicants.

In special circumstances, the direct access model for P-2 group referrals enables individuals to apply for access to the program based on meeting designated criteria. The direct access model has operated largely for in-country programs, historically including refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cuba, Eurasia and the Baltics, and Vietnam. To establish a direct access P-2 group, PRM, in consultation with USCIS, defines the specific criteria and procedures for access. Applicants may then apply according to that process. Applicants who clearly do not meet the access requirements do not proceed to USCIS interviews.

Once an individual gains access to 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 USCIS interviews, and all security and medical checks.

Pre-defined Group Access P-2s:

Ethnic Minorities from Burma in Malaysia:

Under this P-2 designation, members of ethnic minorities from Burma who were recognized by UNHCR as refugees in Malaysia, registered by August 17, 2010, and identified as needing resettlement, are eligible for resettlement processing.

Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh:

Under this P-2 designation, Rohingya who are registered with UNHCR in Bangladesh and defined by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and UNHCR as part of the registered caseload/1992 refugees and who participated in the registration data re-verification exercise of 2023 are eligible for resettlement consideration. The spouse, dependent children and other close family members of the 1992 registered refugee, irrespective of the dependents' date of registration, are eligible to be referred on the same case as the eligible 1992 Rohingya refugee.

Registered Refugees Residing in the Nine Temporary Shelters in

Thailand:

Under this P-2 designation, refugees from Burma who (1) currently reside in one of the nine temporary shelters in Thailand and (2) were verified by UNHCR in its 2015 verification exercise or by the Thailand Ministry of the Interior in its 2019-2020 verification exercise are eligible for resettlement consideration. The previous P-2 for registered refugees from Burma in camps in Thailand is superseded by this new designation.

Congolese in the Great Lakes:

Under this P-2 designation, Congolese refugees in Rwanda, Tanzania, and Burundi who arrived in the countries of asylum within certain designated years are eligible for resettlement processing in these countries.

Refugees “Twice Displaced” in Ethiopia:

Under this P-2 designation, Eritrean, Sudanese, and South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia who were displaced from refugee camps in Ethiopia as a result of the violence in Tigray, Afar, and Benishangul-Gumuz regions are eligible for resettlement processing.

Certain Afghan Nationals:

Under this P-2 designation, certain Afghans who do not meet the minimum time-in-service for an SIV but who work/worked as employees of contractors*, Locally Employed Staff, interpreters or translators for the U.S. government, including United States Forces Afghanistan, International Security Assistance Force, or Resolute Support; certain Afghans who work/worked for a U.S. government-funded program or project in Afghanistan supported through a U.S. government grant or cooperative agreement*; and certain Afghans who are/were employed in Afghanistan by a U.S.-based media organization or non-governmental organization are eligible for resettlement processing. U.S.-based media organizations may also refer Afghan nationals who worked for them under stringer, freelance, and comparable arrangements.

Afghan nationals eligible for a P-2 referral must be referred by an American citizen who works for a U.S. government agency or by the senior-most U.S. citizen employee of a U.S.-based NGO or media organization. Afghan nationals may not submit self-referrals.

*Note: Afghans who work/worked for sub-contractors and sub-grantees do not qualify for the P-2 designation, though they may qualify for P-1 referrals.

Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans in Mexico:

Under this P-2 designation, Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans who were physically present in Mexico on or before a certain date are eligible for P-2 processing in Mexico.

Direct Access Model P-2s:

Lautenberg Program for Certain Members of Religious Minority

Groups in Eurasia, the Baltics, and Iran:

Under this P-2 designation, Jews, Evangelical Christians, and Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox religious adherents identified in the Lautenberg Amendment, Section 599D of Title V., P.L. 101-167 (1989), as amended (the Lautenberg Amendment) with close family in the United States are considered for refugee resettlement in their countries of origin under a reduced standard for establishing a well-founded fear of persecution.

Iranian members of certain religious minorities are also eligible for processing under the Lautenberg Amendment pursuant to 2004 by Section 213 of Title II, Division E, of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-199).

Certain Iraqis Associated with the United States:

Under various P-2 designations, including those set forth in Section 1243(a) of the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act of 2007, Title XII, Div. A, P. L. 110-181, as amended, employees of the U.S. government, a U.S. government-funded contractor or grantee, U.S. media, or U.S. NGOs working in Iraq, and certain family members of such employees, as well as beneficiaries of approved Forms I-130, Petition for

Alien Relative, are eligible for in-country refugee processing in Iraq as well as in several countries in the region, including Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon. After a 13-month suspension, the program was restarted on March 1, 2022.

Syrian Beneficiaries of Approved Form I-130 petitions:

Under this P-2 designation, Syrian beneficiaries of approved Form I-130 petitions for whom immigrant visas have not yet been issued, are eligible for consideration for refugee processing.

Certain Persons in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras:

Under the Central American Minors (CAM) P-2 designation, certain qualifying parents and legal guardians in the United States may request access to the USRAP for their unmarried child(ren) under the age of 21. In some instances, other in-country relatives may be eligible when accompanying the qualifying child.

Certain Persons in Cuba:

Under this P-2 designation, human rights activists, members of persecuted religious minorities, former political prisoners, and persons deprived of their professional credentials or subjected to other disproportionately harsh or discriminatory treatment resulting from their perceived or actual political or religious beliefs were eligible for resettlement processing. *As of September 2023, this program remains suspended.*

Priority 3 (P-3) – Family Reunification

P-3 provides USRAP access to individuals of special humanitarian concern who have immediate family members in the United States who were admitted in certain humanitarian immigrant statuses. The immediate family members in the United States can initiate an application for their relatives even if they

subsequently gained lawful permanent resident status or naturalized as U.S. citizens. Parents, spouses, and unmarried children under the age of 21 of the U.S.-based relative can benefit from P-3 referrals.

To qualify for access under the P-3 category, an applicant must generally be outside their country of origin, be registered or have legal status in the country of asylum, have had an Affidavit of Relationship (AOR) filed on their behalf by an eligible family member in the United States, and have been cleared for onward processing by USCIS.

PRM designates which U.S.-based relatives can initiate P-3 processing based on their admission status. For FY 2024, AOR filers can include those admitted as asylees, refugees, or Afghan and Iraqi special immigrants (admitted under Section 1059 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (Title X, Div. A, P.L. 109-163), Section 1244 of the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act of 2007 (Title XII, Div. A, P. L. 110-181, as amended), and Section 602 of the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009 (Div. F, Title VI, P.L. 111-8, as amended)). This includes persons who are lawful permanent residents of the United States or U.S. citizens who initially were admitted to the United States in the designated status. The U.S.-based filer must be at least 18 years of age at the time the AOR is filed. The filer must file the AOR within five years of the date they were admitted as an asylee, refugee, or special immigrant and the USRAP may reject any AOR for a relationship that does not comport with U.S. law, such as under-age or plural marriages.

The USRAP recognizes that many refugee families face legal and practical obstacles to legal marriage or marriage registration. The United States will allow a qualifying individual to file for P-3 access for a partner of any gender if the filer considers that person to be their spouse or life partner and can provide evidence of an ongoing relationship with the partner for at least one year overseas prior to

the submission of the AOR and evidence that legal marriage could not be obtained due to social and/or legal prohibitions.

On a case-by-case basis, an individual may be added to a qualifying family member's P-3 case if that individual:

- Lived in the same household as the qualifying family member in the country of nationality or, if stateless, last habitual residence; AND
- Was part of the same economic unit as the qualifying family member in the country of nationality or, if stateless, last habitual residence; AND
- Demonstrates exceptional and compelling humanitarian circumstances that justify inclusion on the qualifying family member's case.

These individuals are not "spouse[s]" or "child[ren]", under Section 207(c)(2)(A) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1157(c)(2)(A), and thus cannot derive their refugee status from the principal applicant. They must, therefore, independently establish that they qualify as a refugee.

Because of the importance of reuniting immediate refugee families who have been separated while fleeing from persecution, the USRAP will continue to make P-3 processing available to individuals of all nationalities, including stateless individuals.

In-country processing for eligible family members will occur in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Iraq.

Priority 4 (P-4) – Privately sponsored refugees

On January 19, 2023, the Department of State launched the Welcome Corps, a new private sponsorship program that creates opportunities for Americans to directly sponsor refugees from around the world arriving through the USRAP. The

program is designed to strengthen and expand the country's capacity to resettle refugees by harnessing the energy of private sponsors across American society, including members of faith and civic groups, veterans, diaspora communities, businesses, colleges and universities, and other community organizations. The program is intended to complement the reception and placement program (R&P) provided pursuant to 8 USC 1552(b) by creating new, additional opportunities for individuals and organizations nationwide to directly support refugee resettlement.

Like the R&P program, groups of private sponsors will help refugees find housing and employment, enroll children in school, connect with other essential services, and raise funds to support refugees during the initial resettlement period. These services are provided according to standards of care within a framework of outcomes and indicators developed jointly by the NGO community, state refugee coordinators, and U.S. government agencies.

The Welcome Corps is being rolled out in two phases. In the first phase, launched in January 2023, known as the matching phase, groups of five or more Americans can apply to form a private sponsor group, and PRM will match them with refugees whose USRAP cases are already approved. This matching between private sponsors and approved USRAP cases will remain an ongoing component of the USRAP. The second phase of the Welcome Corps, known as the naming phase, will launch in fall 2023. In this phase, groups can identify the refugees they would like to sponsor and refer them for consideration by the USRAP through the P-4 category. Once approved, the sponsors will support the refugees' resettlement.

The P-4 category is intended to provide access to the USRAP globally for refugees of any nationality who have U.S.-based private sponsors. However, the ability of

the United States to accept and effectively process P-4 referrals is subject to the specific requirements imposed by host governments and the operational constraints of conducting refugee processing in certain country contexts. To qualify for access to the USRAP through the P-4 category, an applicant must generally be outside of their country of origin, be registered in the country of asylum as of an established cut-off date, and have a P-4 referral filed on their behalf by an eligible private sponsor group in the United States that is approved through the Welcome Corps. Additional eligibility criteria may apply for applicants in certain locations to comply with the specific requirements of host governments. Refugees must still be found eligible for the USRAP and approved by USCIS, consistent with all other refugee cases.

Utilizing the end-to-end infrastructure built for private sponsorship, the Department of State will launch two specialized pathway pilot programs which will operate under the broader Welcome Corps program. One is a higher education sponsorship program called Welcome Corps on Campus, which was launched in July 2023. Through Welcome Corps on Campus, refugee students who have been offered academic scholarships will be sponsored by private sponsor groups at U.S. colleges and universities, who will provide academic, social, and integration support, with the first cohort to arrive in the fall 2024 academic year. The second is a labor mobility program called Welcome Corps at Work. Through Welcome Corps at Work, skilled refugees will be matched to job offers in the United States in the healthcare, aged/elder care, and technology industries. Upon arrival, these refugees will receive resettlement support from private sponsor groups.

PRM continues to work closely with the HHS to connect refugees being resettled through Welcome Corps with the long-term integration and support services

funded by ORR. ORR continues to support states as they build infrastructure and outreach capacity to welcome and serve these new arrivals.

Following-to-Join Family Reunification Petitions

Under Section 207(c)(2) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1157(c)(2), a principal refugee admitted to the United States may request following-to-join benefits for their spouse and/or unmarried children under the age of 21 who were not previously granted refugee status. Once in the United States, and within two years of admission, the principal refugee may file a Form I-730 Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition¹ with USCIS for each eligible family member.² Following-to-join refugee petitions are initially processed domestically by USCIS' Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations Directorate (RAIO). Once USCIS has completed initial processing of the Form I-730 petition, if the beneficiary appears eligible, the case is sent to the appropriate office depending on the beneficiary's location to interview the qualifying spouse and/or child(ren) and to complete processing. If the beneficiary is located within the United States, the petition is forwarded to the USCIS domestic field office with jurisdiction over the beneficiary's residence. If the beneficiary is located outside of the United States, the petition is forwarded through the Department of State's National Visa Center to either the USCIS, international field office or Department of State consular post with jurisdiction over the beneficiary's location. By regulation, all Form I-730 petitions must be filed with and adjudicated by USCIS. However, in locations where USCIS does not have a presence, USCIS partners with the Department of State to have consular

¹ This petition is used to file for the relatives of both refugees and asylees, also known as Visa 93 and Visa 92 cases, respectively. The USRAP handles only Visa 93 cases, which are counted within the annual refugee admissions ceiling. Visa 92 cases are not considered to be refugee admissions cases and are not counted in the number of refugees admitted annually.

² USCIS may grant a waiver of the two-year filing deadline for humanitarian reasons.

officers conduct interviews and determine the beneficiary's eligibility to travel to the United States.

Individuals who gain access to the USRAP through the Form I-730 petition are interviewed by USCIS or consular officers to verify the relationship claimed in the petition, as well as to examine any applicable bars to asylee or refugee status and/or admissibility to the United States. Beneficiaries are not required to establish past persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution, as they derive their status from the refugee relative in the United States who filed the petition. Beneficiaries of Form I-730 petitions may be processed within their country of origin or in other locations.

Certain principal refugees in the United States may file a Form I-730 Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition and seek P-3 access for their qualifying family members (if eligible) simultaneously. In some cases, the Form I-730 petition will be the only option, as the family members are still in their country of origin. It is also important to note that unlike the P-3 process, the Form I-730 or following-to-join process does not allow the relative in the United States to petition for parents.

DHS/USCIS REFUGEE ADJUDICATIONS

Pursuant to Section 207(c)(1) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1157(c)(1), the Secretary of Homeland Security may admit, at the Secretary's discretion, any refugee who is not firmly resettled in a third country, who is determined to be of special humanitarian concern, and who is admissible to the United States as an immigrant. The authority to determine eligibility for refugee status has been delegated to USCIS (*See* 6 U.S.C. § 271(b)(3)). USCIS also devotes substantial resources to security vetting, fraud prevention and detection, and training related to refugee processing, and it has strong partnerships with the law enforcement,

national security, and intelligence communities to maintain and promote the integrity of the USRAP.

The Eligibility Determination

To be approved for classification as a refugee, an applicant must meet the refugee definition in Section 101(a)(42) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(42). That section provides that a refugee is a person who is outside his or her country of nationality or, if stateless, last habitual residence and is unable or unwilling to return to that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. As mentioned above, the President may specify special circumstances under which a person can meet the refugee definition when still within their country of origin or, if stateless, within their country of habitual residence. The refugee definition excludes a person who has ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Further, an applicant who has been “firmly resettled” in a third country may not be admitted as a refugee under Section 207 of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1157. Applicants are also subject to various statutory grounds of inadmissibility, including criminal, security, and public health grounds, some of which may be waived or from which applicants may be exempted. Finally, an applicant must establish that a positive exercise of discretion is merited.

A USCIS officer conducts an interview of each principal refugee applicant designed to elicit information about the applicant’s claim for refugee status, any grounds of inadmissibility, and factors related to the exercise of discretion. The officer asks questions about the applicant’s experiences in the country of origin, including problems and fears about returning (or remaining), as well as questions

concerning the applicant's activities, background, and criminal history. The officer also considers evidence about conditions in the country of origin and assesses the applicant's credibility and claim. For derivative applicants, the officer also asks questions to inform the decision of eligibility based on family relationships.

Background Security Checks

The safety and security of the American people remains the first and foremost consideration in refugee admissions processing. Refugees are among the most thoroughly screened and vetted groups to enter the United States. Refugee applicants of all nationalities are required to undergo rigorous background security checks. Security checks include biographic name checks for all refugee applicants and biometric (fingerprint) checks for refugee applicants within certain age limits. Biographic and biometric information is vetted against a broad array of law enforcement, intelligence community, and other relevant databases to help confirm identity, to check for any national security, criminal or other derogatory information (including watchlist information), and to identify information that could inform lines of questioning during the interview. Refugee applicants must have all required security checks completed and fully addressed prior to an applicant's admission to the United States as a refugee.

In addition, PRM and USCIS work continually with interagency partners to identify opportunities to enhance and refine security screening for refugee applicants. This includes increasing the efficacy, efficiency, and fairness of security screening without diminishing the rigorous security measures that ensure the safety and security of the American people.

PROCESSING ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Overseas Processing Services

In most processing locations, PRM funds an NGO or an international organization to manage a Resettlement Support Center (RSC) that assists in the processing of refugee applicants for admission to the United States. RSC staff pre-screen applicants for eligibility for one of the applicable processing priorities and prepare cases for USCIS adjudication. The RSCs assist applicants in completing documentary requirements and schedule USCIS refugee eligibility interviews. If an applicant is conditionally approved for resettlement by USCIS, RSC staff guide the refugee through post-adjudication steps, including completing medical screening exams and attending cultural orientation programs. The RSC obtains domestic sponsorship assurances, and once all required steps are completed, including all necessary security clearances, refers the case to IOM for transportation to the United States.

In FY 2023, four NGOs worked under cooperative agreements with PRM to operate RSCs based in Austria covering Austria and Israel (HIAS), Kenya covering sub-Saharan Africa (Church World Service), Turkey covering Turkey and Lebanon (International Catholic Migration Commission), and Thailand covering Asia (International Rescue Committee). The Department of State also funded IOM to operate RSCs based in El Salvador covering Latin America and the Caribbean, Jordan covering the Middle East and North Africa, and Ukraine (temporarily in Poland) covering Europe and Central Asia.

Cultural Orientation

PRM strives to ensure that refugees who are accepted for admission to the United States are prepared for the profound life changes they will experience as part of

the resettlement process. Pre-departure and post-arrival cultural orientation aim to provide refugees with the vital knowledge, skills, and insights they need to adapt to their new lives and be well positioned to achieve self-sufficiency.

PRM supports a robust technical assistance program, [the Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange](#)), which works to ensure that refugees receive consistent messages in pre-departure and post-arrival cultural orientation and trains resettlement staff to deliver effective cultural orientation. In addition, the Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange (CORE) helps providers respond to unforeseen events that impact resettlement and require rapid adaptation and critical communication to resettling refugees, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic. CORE also develops and manages refugee-facing resources and digital channels to augment instructor-led classes, support refugee self-learning, and build the digital skills that will help them achieve self-sufficiency.

RSCs offer pre-departure cultural orientation, usually one week to three months before departure. The orientation generally lasts from one to five days and is provided by trained educators using appropriate teaching methodologies.

Cultural Orientation programming is guided by objectives and indicators that cover 14 topics. Each RSC over many years has established its own curriculum that is customized as needed to the populations receiving it, based on these objectives and indicators. RSCs regularly review and update their curriculum and incorporate new materials and activities from the CORE as needed. The RSCs have specific Cultural Orientation trainers who deliver the sessions. Resettlement Agencies (RAs) have supplemental lesson plans available through [CORE's website](#) [Making Your Way](#), and additional activities from an [activity bank, which can be used to develop their curriculum](#).

Staff at local resettlement agencies provide the post-arrival cultural orientation, beginning right after arrival in the United States. As part of the resettlement cultural orientation continuum, post-arrival cultural orientation reviews and builds upon pre-departure cultural orientation by grounding lessons in the local context. For example, state health care coverage is explained as refugees learn how to access and pay for health services; refugees are introduced to the local public school system and learn about customary student behavior and expectations of parental involvement; and refugees learn about the amenities and services available in their new communities. Cultural adjustment is also addressed including gender dynamics, child rearing, and changing family roles. Laws and responsibilities are also a focus. In many locations, local partners, such as representatives from health care facilities, banks, and local police stations, are invited to attend cultural orientation to break down barriers and build trust. Volunteers in many communities also help with cultural orientation by, for example, accompanying refugees to neighborhood grocery stores or the library or by showing them how public transportation works in their cities.

Transportation

The cost of transportation to the United States is provided to refugees in the form of an interest-free loan from IOM. Refugees are responsible for repaying these loans over time, beginning six months after their arrival, although it is possible to request a deferral based on inability to begin paying at that time. The underlying principle of the IOM Travel Loan Program is that refugees' financial participation in making repayments against their debt will not only defray U.S. resettlement costs but also strengthen the refugees' determination to make a success of their migration and may help establish their credit rating in the United States. IOM billing and credit reporting policies are designed to encourage repayment of these

interest-free loans without placing undue hardship on refugees as they adjust to their new lives in the United States.

Reception and Placement (R&P)

In FY 2023, PRM funded cooperative agreements with ten non-profit resettlement agencies to provide initial resettlement services to refugees arriving in the United States pursuant to the authority in 8 U.S.C. 1522(b). The R&P agencies are responsible for providing initial reception and core services (including housing, furnishings, clothing, and food, as well as assistance with access to medical, employment, educational, and social services) to arriving refugees. These services are provided according to standards of care within a framework of outcomes and indicators developed jointly by the NGO community, state refugee coordinators, and U.S. government agencies. These national resettlement organizations maintain a nationwide network of approximately 300 affiliated offices in 202 communities to provide services. Two of the organizations also maintain a network of 28 affiliated offices through which they place unaccompanied refugee minors into foster care, a program administered and funded by ORR.

Using R&P funds from PRM, supplemented by funds and in-kind contributions from private and other sources, the participating agencies provide the following services, consistent with the terms of the R&P cooperative agreement:

- Agreement to accept cases for management by local resettlement affiliates (a process known as “assurance”);
- Pre-arrival resettlement planning, including placement;
- Reception on arrival;
- Basic needs support (including housing, furnishings, food, and clothing) for at least 30 days;

- Cultural orientation;
- Assistance with access to health, employment, education, and other services, as needed; and
- Development and implementation of an initial service plan for each refugee.

In FY 2023, PRM expanded the number of organizations participating in the R&P program from nine to ten resettlement agencies. Additionally, PRM funded a total of six capacity development and technical assistance projects focusing on housing, community sponsorship, and university engagement.

OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT (ORR)

Section 412(a) of the INA, as amended, 8 USC 1522(a), directs ORR, to the extent of available appropriations, to provide refugees with resettlement assistance that includes employment training, English language training, cash assistance (in a manner that promotes early self-sufficiency), and job placement – including providing women with equal opportunities to employment as men. ORR’s mission is to help refugees transition into the United States by providing benefits and assistance to achieve integration as soon as possible. To this end, ORR funds and administers various programs, some of which are highlighted below.

Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance

Refugees not eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or those pending receipt of Supplemental Security Income are eligible to receive Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) upon arrival. Refugees not eligible for Medicaid are eligible to receive Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) upon arrival. While refugees are statutorily authorized to receive RCA and RMA for up to 36 months from arrival, funding limitations have historically limited RCA and RMA to eight months of benefits. In FY 2022, ORR announced an expansion of RCA and RMA to up to 12 months of assistance for those whose date of eligibility for ORR benefits is on or after October 1, 2021. ORR is exploring options to better support refugees during this timeframe given rising housing costs and the desire to better match employment with skill level. RCA and RMA are administered by states and replacement designees, who are private entities designated by ORR to administer the refugee program in a state that has withdrawn from administration of the program. In state-administered programs that operate a publicly administered RCA program, RCA benefits are based on cash-benefit levels established by state TANF programs. In states that operate their RCA program through a public-

private program, the RCA benefit is based on the higher of the RCA rates outlined in the ORR regulations or the state TANF rates. RMA benefits are generally designed to mirror those provided through the state's Medicaid program.

Refugee Support Services

ORR Refugee Support Services program (RSS) provides states and replacement designees with RSS funds. ORR distributes this funding by a formula based on the arrived and served ORR-eligible populations for up to the previous three years. Funding is time-limited, and refugees can only access RSS services up to five years after arrival. These services include employment services, on-the-job training, English language instruction, vocational training, case management, translation/interpreter services, social adjustment services, health-related services, home management, childcare, and transportation.

Additionally, to assist specific groups of refugees or to target specific needs, ORR administers specialized RSS "set-aside" programs, which includes the following: Services to Older Refugees (SOR) to support integration and wellness for refugees aged 60 and older; Refugee School Impact (RSI), which also includes "Early RSI", to support effective integration and education for children from birth to age 18 and their families; Youth Mentoring (YM) to foster mentorships in support of positive civic and social engagement and educational and vocational advancement; and Refugee Health Promotion (RHP), including the Refugee Mental Health Initiative, to support physical and emotional wellness and to build capacity within communities to address the mental health needs of refugee populations, including helping to overcome stigmas associated with mental health care and creating opportunities for social engagement to reduce isolation.

ORR Matching Grant Program

The ORR Matching Grant program (MG) is an alternative to traditional cash assistance provided through the national resettlement agencies that provide R&P services and their resettlement affiliates in 42 states and 223 service locations. The objective of MG is to guide newly arrived refugee households toward economic self-sufficiency through employment within eight months of program eligibility (which usually begins on the date of arrival in the United States). In MG, self-sufficiency is defined as total household income from employment that (1) would exceed the established state income threshold for TANF eligibility, and (2) enables a family unit to support itself without relying on cash assistance. For each MG participant, ORR awards a per-capita grant to participating national resettlement agencies, which then allocate funds to their networks of local affiliates for direct services and administrative expenses. Agencies provide a 50 percent match to every federal dollar awarded. While enrolled in MG, refugees may not access RCA but can still access RMA.

Through MG, local service providers ensure core support services for a minimum of 240 days which include housing, transportation, food, and a cash allowance. Clients also receive intensive case management and employment services throughout the 240-day service period. Refugees who are unable to attain self-sufficiency by day 240 may access RCA for the remainder of the eligibility period, which is currently up to 12 months.

ORR Refugee Health

ORR services focus on providing technical assistance on domestic medical screening guidelines and refugee medical assistance, assessment, and follow-up for contagious or communicable diseases, mental health awareness and linkages, suicide prevention, emergency preparedness, and other health and mental health initiatives. Specifically, ORR funds RMA, medical screening, and refugee health promotion to support refugee populations. ORR also funds the Survivors of Torture program to provide culturally competent and strengths-based services, as well as client-centered treatment plans to restore dignity, enhance resilience, and rebuild the lives of all survivors of torture, regardless of immigration status. ORR also conducts mental-health first aid trainings to refugee-serving program staff and refugee community leaders to help them identify and assist refugees in emotional distress.

ORR Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program

ORR provides funding to 15 states and the District of Columbia and replacement designees to administer 26 Unaccompanied Refugee Minors programs (URM).

The URM is separate and distinct from ORR's Unaccompanied Children Program, although children who become eligible for the URM while in the care and custody of ORR may be referred for placement into the URM. States and replacement designees contract with local licensed foster care agencies that provide specialized placements and services to unaccompanied refugee minors.

Unaccompanied refugee minors live in various placements including traditional and therapeutic foster homes, group homes, semi-independent and independent living, and residential treatment centers. The youth receive various services including English language training, educational and vocational training, cultural preservation, social integration, family tracing, permanency planning, independent living, medical care, and mental health care. ORR requires states to provide services to unaccompanied refugee minors in parity with the state's Title IV-B and Title IV-E foster care plans.

Preferred Communities Program

ORR's Preferred Communities program (PC) provides intensive case management to particularly vulnerable refugees. PC supports a network of sites nationwide specializing in a variety of programs supporting particularly vulnerable populations. The program builds resettlement agencies' capacity for placement of the most vulnerable refugees and provides long-term intensive case management to those with acute vulnerabilities, such as health or mental health needs, family strengthening needs, and single-headed households. It also helps meet the unmet needs of unexpected arrivals.

Specialty Programs

ORR administers several specialty programs that promote economic mobility and pathways to self-sufficiency. Funded through grants to ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs), these programs help refugees advance their careers and obtain certifications, open small businesses, build community gardens, and save to purchase homes or cars or to pay for tuition. An ethnic community self-help program helps build the capacity of local ECBOs to offer ongoing support and services in a culturally competent manner.

ORR Refugee Technical Assistance

ORR's Refugee Technical Assistance Program provides technical assistance to resettlement stakeholders to enhance services, strengthen organizational capacity, and increase community engagement. Switchboard, a project of the International Rescue Committee, is funded by ORR and makes its resources, trainings, and expertise available to all ORR grantees and sub-grantees.

ORR also funds a technical assistance provider to support grantees in its Survivors of Torture program. The Center for Victims of Torture's National Capacity Building project supports ORR Survivor of Torture grantees by building capacity to provide holistic, sustainable, and integrated services and evaluating and strengthening the quality and sustainability of these programs and organizations.

Lived Experience

In recognition of the value of lived experience, ORR has prioritized creating opportunities to hear directly from individuals who have come to the United States as newcomers.

One such opportunity is the National Youth Leadership Council, which launched as a new component of the Youth Mentoring program. The opportunity allows

refugees and newcomer youths to share their experiences directly with ORR. ORR will host guided listening sessions and roundtable discussions on topics such as community support and resilience, civic engagement, leadership, professional development, mental health, addressing systemic racism, prejudice, and discrimination. Except for the inaugural year where youths will serve for six months, youths will participate for one year.

ORR is working to engage Ethnic Community Self-Help (ECSH) grantees more proactively on the topic of integration. These are community-based grantees that comprise leadership from refugee and immigrant groups and are closely connected to their communities' challenges and strengths.

ECBOs play an important role in refugee resettlement, including linguistic and cultural understanding and filling the gaps in service provision. Through expanded engagement and regular listening sessions, ORR hopes to build additional capacity to support the Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions.

REGIONAL REFUGEE ADMISSIONS³

Africa

The proposed FY 2024 allocation for African refugees is 30,000-50,000 individuals.

There are currently more than 7.6 million refugees and asylum seekers across the African continent, constituting roughly 26 percent of the global refugee population. Refugee numbers in Africa increased in 2023 due to new or intensified conflicts across the continent. According to UNHCR, Uganda, Sudan,

³ Note that refugees count against a regional allocation based on nationality, not the processing location.

and Ethiopia alone hosted over two-thirds of the refugees in Africa. The East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region hosted more than 4.9 million refugees at the end of 2022 including nearly 2.3 million South Sudanese refugees in neighboring countries. The current conflict in Sudan has displaced hundreds of thousands of people and continues to drive them to seek refuge in neighboring countries struggling to cope with the sudden humanitarian crisis.

The November 2022 cessation of hostilities agreement in Ethiopia has enabled humanitarian access to much of the conflict region, but immense humanitarian needs remain, particularly for refugees who were displaced within Ethiopia during the conflict. The deepening crisis in the Sahel region of Africa, including violence in Burkina Faso and Mali as well as an uptick in violent conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have caused the largest increase in the number of new refugees on the continent since 2022.

In 2023, UNHCR estimated resettlement needs in Africa would be the highest globally and that trend is expected to continue into 2024. While voluntary repatriation and local integration may be possible in small numbers, resettlement remains an important durable solution for refugees across the continent. UNHCR estimates that over 600,000 refugees in sub-Saharan Africa need resettlement. To address these needs, the United States plans to maintain robust resettlement activities in Africa. We will continue processing Congolese, Eritrean, Sudanese, and Somali refugees, as well as building resettlement programs for populations that the USRAP has so far only processed in small numbers, including refugees from South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

Due to the continued conflict in the DRC, a sizable number of Congolese refugees remain in the USRAP pipeline. Congolese refugees will continue to constitute one of the largest arrival populations. The United States will increase the Ethiopian

refugee admissions target for FY 2024 to provide urgent resettlement to displaced Eritrean and other refugees within Ethiopia, those Ethiopians who have fled as refugees to neighboring countries as a result of processing activities from the previous year, and a new P-2 designation for certain refugees in Ethiopia covered by a new “Twice Displaced” in Ethiopia P-2 designation.

The United States intends to increase resettlement numbers for refugees from the Central African Republic who are located throughout Central Africa, but primarily in Chad and Cameroon. Additionally, the United States has increased interviews of Sudanese refugees in Chad.

The United States will continue to be a key partner in the resettlement of unaccompanied refugee minors from Africa. As one of the few countries with the domestic capacity to resettle unaccompanied minors, the United States plans to increase the number of emergency unaccompanied refugee minor cases processed throughout the continent. PRM will continue to focus on unaccompanied refugee minors who have been evacuated from Libya by UNHCR to transit points in Niger and Rwanda, as well as minors facing persecution in Ethiopia and elsewhere.

PRM seeks to increase referrals of LGBTQI+ individuals throughout the continent of Africa.

East Asia

The proposed FY 2024 ceiling for refugees from East Asia is 10,000-20,000 individuals.

According to UNHCR, there are 13.3 million people of concern across Asia and the Pacific, including 6.6 million refugees, 215,000 asylum-seekers, 4.6 million internally displaced persons, and 2.4 million stateless persons. Thailand,

Bangladesh, and Malaysia continue to host large numbers of Burmese refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as Afghan, Iraqi, Pakistani, Somali, Sri Lankan, Sudanese, and Syrian refugees. Tens of thousands of refugees are in the capital cities of Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, and Jakarta. Malaysia and Bangladesh currently host 90 percent of all Rohingya refugees in the region. The United States considers Rohingya a priority refugee population whose resettlement is an essential component of an international, comprehensive humanitarian response to Rohingya in need.

The three primary countries for UNHCR referrals from East Asia are Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, with a smaller number of referrals from other countries in the region. More than 12,000 Rohingya have resettled to the United States since 2009, primarily from Malaysia. We will continue to focus on Rohingya resettlement from the region, including Bangladesh. The new P-2 designations for certain Rohingya in Bangladesh and registered refugees from Burma in Thailand should significantly increase refugee arrivals from Bangladesh and Thailand in FY2024. In Malaysia, PRM continues to work through the residual caseload of the P-2 urban Burmese refugees. UNHCR's focus for new referrals will be from these diverse urban refugee populations.

For members of ethnic and religious minority groups and others from Burma in temporary shelters in Thailand, there is a new P-2 designation which supersedes the original P-2 designation for Thailand. Under the new P-2 designation, refugees from Burma in Thailand who

- 1) currently reside in one of the nine temporary shelters in Thailand and
- 2) were verified by UNHCR in its 2015 verification exercise or by the Thailand

Ministry of the Interior (Moi) in its 2019-2020 verification exercise, are eligible for resettlement consideration. In addition, for members of ethnic and religious

minority groups from Burma who are in Malaysia, there is a P-2 designation for those who were recognized by UNHCR as refugees in Malaysia, registered by August 17, 2010, and identified as needing resettlement. Such individuals are eligible for resettlement consideration.

Europe and Central Asia

The proposed FY 2024 ceiling for refugees from Europe and Central Asia is 2,000-3,000 individuals.

Europe hosts large refugee populations, particularly now as a result of Russia's continued war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as significant numbers of asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, and stateless persons. According to UNHCR, European countries are hosting approximately six million refugees from Ukraine as of June 2023. Many other refugees have sought refuge in Europe by fleeing conflicts outside the region, particularly in Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The estimate also includes persons claiming persecution within Eurasia, including hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons in the Balkans and South Caucasus. There are also Russians seeking protection who are fleeing the increased crackdown on dissent inside Russia since February 2022.

Much of the refugee caseload within Eurasia falls under the direct access P-2 Lautenberg Program, a family reunification program whereby individuals who were citizens and residents of the former Soviet Union are eligible for the USRAP if they belong to certain religious minorities and can show a qualifying relationship with individuals legally residing in the United States. P-2 applicants may include Ukrainians who fled Russia's full-scale invasion.

Our commitment to helping refugees, including Ukrainians, from the former Soviet Union is unwavering. While we have resettled some Ukrainians through

the USRAP, the majority in the United States have come on temporary status because many Ukrainians do not want to resettle permanently. This regional ceiling reflects the complicated realities across the region. Martial law restricts male Ukrainian applicants from leaving Ukraine and families choose to remain nearby. Russian and Belarusian applicants must travel to the Caucasus or Central Asia to be processed and interviewed.

Turkey continues to host the largest refugee population in the world. According to UNHCR, there were over four million refugees in Turkey in 2022, the vast majority of whom are Syrians (3.7 million), with smaller numbers of Afghans, Iraqis, Iranians, and other nationalities. Refugees from a wide array of nationalities are processed in Turkey and are counted against the corresponding regional allocation of their country of origin.

Over the course of sixteen years, the United States resettled 32,000 Iranian refugees suffering religious persecution through a unique partnership with the Government of Austria as a component of the P-2 Lautenberg Program. After a six-year suspension, Iranian Lautenberg cases are again being processed. These refugees are counted against the Near East/South Asia regional allocation.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The proposed FY 2024 allocation for refugees from Latin America and the Caribbean is 35,000-50,000 individuals. This range reflects historic, exponential growth in the regional program, commensurate with the need, our foreign policy priorities, and our responsibility to our own region.

According to UNHCR, countries in Latin America and the Caribbean host more than 18 million asylum-seekers, refugees, stateless persons, and internally displaced persons. In addition to the continued human rights crisis in Venezuela

that has displaced more than 6 million of its citizens throughout the Americas, democratic backsliding has exacerbated broader displacement challenges in the hemisphere. Beyond the protracted violence by organized criminal gangs in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador that has uprooted more than a million people from those three countries since 2015, the combination of economic insecurity and warring gang factions in Haiti have further exacerbated the flight of migrants from that country.

In FY 2022, UNHCR submitted an all-time high number of referrals from the region to the USRAP and stands poised to roughly double that number by the end of FY 2023. Though refugee resettlement in the Americas between 2016 and 2021 focused primarily on Colombians in Ecuador and Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Hondurans within Northern Central America (NCA), that focus has continued to expand to current processing efforts in 22 countries. Venezuelans, who accounted for relatively few cases two years ago, have since surpassed the NCA countries as the most-referred nationality to USRAP operations in the Americas. In support of President Biden's commitment in connection with the adoption of the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection in July 2022 to expand refugee resettlement out of the Western Hemisphere, U.S. government resettlement efforts are underway in 22 countries. During FY 2023, the first Haitian and Nicaraguan cases began to arrive to the United States, and PRM expects increased referrals and arrivals of these nationalities to trend upward.

In June 2023, the United States announced an initial six-month phase of the Safe Mobility initiative (or known by the Spanish name *Movilidad Segura*), which will facilitate access to protection and other lawful pathways to the United States and other countries via the MovilidadSegura.org website and SMOs. During this initial phase, SMOs are facilitating access to expedited refugee processing via the USRAP and will also provide information and/or referrals to individual humanitarian

parole, family reunification programs, and labor pathways to the United States and third countries.

The Safe Mobility initiative builds on the strong cooperation between the United States and partner countries to manage the historic irregular migration challenge in the Western Hemisphere within the framework of the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection as well as building on other regional mechanisms such as the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), the Regional Conference on Migration, the South American Conference on Migration, and the Quito Process. The Safe Mobility initiative complements the wide range of existing services available for refugees and migrants in SMO host countries.

USRAP resettled more than 6,000 from the region in FY 2023 —an eighteen-year high and a 1,400 percent increase over the fiscal year 2021 total. With the establishment of SMOs, the USRAP will significantly increase the number of individuals processed for refugee resettlement in the coming months and years. Once fully operational, USRAP anticipates receiving over 3,000 UNHCR referrals per month as part of the SMO initiative.

Near East and South Asia

The proposed FY 2024 ceiling for refugees from the Near East and South Asia is 30,000-45,000 individuals.

The Near East and South Asia region continues to host more than 8 million refugees, primarily Afghans, Iranians, Iraqis, Palestinians, Rohingya, Sri Lankans, Syrians, and Tibetans. The humanitarian situation in Syria remains dire. Over the past 10 years more than 13 million Syrians have been displaced from their homes, and more than 5.6 million are now refugees hosted in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan,

and Egypt. Within Syria, inflation, food insecurity, water scarcity, and armed clashes are expected to continue contributing to vulnerabilities in 2024. Across the region, Syrian refugees remain highly vulnerable as the economic situation in the region is at its worst, and humanitarian needs are at their highest levels since the conflict began. UNHCR reports that Syrian nationals have the highest resettlement needs globally and estimates that more than 610,000 Syrians will need resettlement as part of an ongoing multi-year targeted program. In Iraq, the political and security environment is likely to remain challenging, while the situation in Libya is expected to continue to have a wider impact in North Africa. Over four million people have been displaced by the civil conflict in Yemen, and the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate as the conflict endures.

The situation in Afghanistan deteriorated in 2021, resulting in the displacement of 774,400 Afghan nationals due to increasing instability and violence. By the end of 2021, there were 3.5 million Afghan refugees in neighboring countries in addition to the 3.5 million internally displaced since the Taliban takeover. Thousands continue to attempt to leave.

Since August 2021, PRM and its network of resettlement agencies, affiliates, and community partners have resettled over 117,000 Afghan refugees, SIVs, and parolees. As of mid-March 2023, PRM has accepted 27,667 P-1 and P-2 referrals for Afghan principal applicants and continues to process refugee cases for Afghan nationals in third countries around the globe. The United States remains committed to providing refuge, through a range of legal pathways, for those Afghans who supported the U.S. mission in Afghanistan. In July 2023, the State Department began processing applications of Afghan refugees on a limited scale in Pakistan, and the State Department continues to work to expand that processing capacity.

International Religious Freedom Act Reporting

FY 2023 Countries of Particular Concern

The USRAP continues to be available through P-1 referrals to persons of any or no nationality who have been persecuted or fear persecution on account of religion. In addition, P-3 provides USRAP access to individuals of special humanitarian concern who have immediate family members in the United States who were admitted in certain humanitarian immigrant statuses. As of November 30, 2022, the Secretary of State designated the following countries as Countries of Particular Concern pursuant to Section 402(b) of the IRFA, 22 U.S.C. 6442(b), as amended.

Africa: Eritrea

In Eritrea, the government is engaging in or tolerating systematic and ongoing violations of religious freedom. The Eritrean government only recognized four officially registered religious groups: the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church, Sunni Islam, the Catholic Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Eritrea. The Eritrean government continues to imprison individuals on the basis of their religion. NGOs estimate between 130 to 1,000 people are detained for their faith. At least 20 Jehovah's Witnesses continue to be imprisoned for their refusal to participate in military service or renounce their faith. Also, the government of Eritrea continues to deny citizenship to Jehovah's Witnesses after stripping of them of citizenship in 1994 for refusing to participate in the referendum that created the independent state of Eritrea.

East Asia: Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), People’s Republic of China (PRC), and Burma

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK otherwise known as North Korea) severely restricts religious freedom, including all government-organized religious activity, and reportedly continues to execute, torture, arrest, and physically abuse individuals for religious activities. While the constitutions of the DPRK, People’s Republic of China (PRC), and Burma provide for freedom of religion or religious belief, in practice and in law, these governments heavily restrict or repress religious activities and freedom. Furthermore, a military coup in Burma in February 2021 has further undermined those human rights enshrined in Burma’s constitution and laws and resulted in further repression of religious freedom and related human rights. In March 2022, the Secretary of State determined the military of Burma committed genocide and crimes against humanity against the majority Muslim Rohingya. In January 2021, the Secretary of State determined that, since at least March 2017, the PRC has committed genocide and crimes against humanity against predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang.

Europe and Central Asia: Russia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan

Tajikistan law prohibits persons under the age of 18 from participating in public religious activities, and the government-supported highest Islamic religious body bans Hanafi Sunni women from attending mosques. The government of Turkmenistan has imprisoned an unknown number of Muslims for their religious beliefs. Turkmenistan law prohibits all activity by unregistered religious groups, and the grounds for approval of registration remains arbitrary. The Russian

government misuses the law on extremism to restrict the peaceful activities of members of religious minority groups, including Muslim and Christian groups. In both Russia and Russia-occupied areas of Ukraine, the Russian government has harassed, tortured, or imprisoned hundreds for their faith.

Near East and South Asia: Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia

In Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, the governments use blasphemy and defamation of religion laws to restrict religious freedom, constrain the rights of religious minorities and limit freedom of expression, and imprison those accused.

Western Hemisphere: Cuba and Nicaragua

In Cuba and Nicaragua, the governments used forced exile, unjust arrests, violence and intimidation, and prolonged detention without charges of religious actors, who were expressing their religious beliefs, to stamp out any perceived dissent.

Pursuant to Section 402(b) the IRFA, 22 U.S.C. 6442(b), as amended, the Secretary also designated the following countries to the Special Watch List:

Africa: Central African Republic and Comoros

In Central African Republic, security actors, including the Forces Armées Centrafricaines (FACA), police, and gendarmes, used violence, discrimination, and threats to target individuals and communities based on their actual or perceived religious affiliation.

In Comoros, the constitution defines national identity based on one official state religion, Sunni Islam, but proclaims equality of rights and obligations for all, regardless of religious belief. However, this is understood to be freedom of belief for foreigners. The constitution also specifies that Shafi'i Sunni Islam regulates worship and social life. Proselytizing any religion other than Sunni Islam is illegal, and the law prohibits performance of non-Sunni rituals based on the principle of "affronting society's cohesion and endangering national unity." Individuals who convert from Sunni Islam to Christianity or Shia Islam are often shunned.

Near East: Algeria

The Algerian government has increasingly restricted religious freedom, often punitively or violently, through numerous government agencies for religious minority communities. The government most often uses the 2006 and 2012 laws

governing practices of religion and association to target the Protestant Church of Algeria, other Protestant churches, and the Ahmadi Muslim community. Because these churches and religious communities are not allowed to register as religious groups, their gatherings, worship services, and other religious and administrative activities are deemed illegal by the government.

East Asia: Vietnam

In Vietnam, the government maintains significant control over religious practices in the stated interest of national security, including mandating registration of groups under government-sponsored religious organizations. Authorities in certain provinces frequently force individuals not registered under state-sponsored organizations to renounce their faith, as well as harass, intimidate, threaten, arrest, and detain those who peacefully advocate for freedom of religion or belief.

North Korean Human Rights Act Reporting

As reflected in the North Korean Human Rights Act, 22 U.S.C. 7845(b), as amended, the United States remains deeply concerned about the human rights situation of North Koreans both inside the DPRK and in other countries around the world. The United States began resettling interested, eligible North Korean refugees and their family members in 2006 and remains committed to continuing this program.

REFUGEE ADMISSIONS TO THE UNITED STATES

In FY 2022, the USRAP admitted 25,465 refugees from 56 countries. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syria, Burma, and Sudan collectively comprised more than half of total admissions (See Table IV.)

The demographic characteristics of refugee arrivals from the 20 largest source countries (representing close to 100 percent of total arrivals) in FY 2022 illustrate the variation among refugee groups. The median age of all FY 2022 arrivals was 26 years, ranging from a median age of 17 years for arrivals from Syria to 35 years of age for arrivals from Iran. In FY.2022, 47.7 percent of all arriving refugees were female, and 50.2 percent of all arriving refugees were male. Males predominated most among refugees from Somalia (58.1 percent), Ethiopia (57.9 percent), and Iran (56.4 percent). (See Table V.)

Of the total arrivals in FY 2022, roughly 9.5 percent were under the age of five, 34.6 percent were of school age, 53.8 percent were of working age, and 1.9 percent were of retirement age. (See Table VI.) Considerable variation among refugee groups can be seen among specific age categories. During FY 2022, 53.99 percent of all arriving refugees resettled in 10 states: California (8.55 percent), Texas (8.3 percent), New York (5.47 percent), Kentucky (5.14 percent), Washington (4.79 percent), North Carolina (4.52 percent), Michigan (4.46 percent), Ohio (4.39 percent), Pennsylvania (4.32 percent), and Arizona (4.05 percent). (See Table VII.)

ADMISSIONS TABLES AND STATISTICS

Table II: USRAP Projected Arrivals by Region, FY 2023

Region	FY 2023 Ceiling	FY 2023 projected Arrivals
Africa	40,000	24,500
East Asia	15,000	6,260
Europe and Central Asia	15,000	2,765
Latin America/Caribbean	15,000	6,250
Near East/South Asia	35,000	20,325
Regional Subtotal	120,000	60,100
Unallocated Reserve	5,000	0
Total	125,000	60,100

Table III: USRAP Admissions, FY 2022

Region	Revised FY 2022 Ceiling	FY 2022 Actual Arrivals
Africa	40,000	11,358
East Asia	15,000	2,215
Europe and Central Asia	10,000	2,351
Latin America/Caribbean	15,000	2,485
Near East/South Asia	35,000	7,056
Regional Subtotal	115,000	25,465
Unallocated Reserve	10,000	0
Total	125,000	25,465

Table IV: USRAP Admissions by Country of Origin, FY 2022

Country of Origin	Individual Arrivals	Percentage of Total Arrivals
Democratic Republic of the Congo	7,810	30.67%
Syria	4,556	17.89%
Burma	2,156	8.47%
Sudan	1,669	6.55%
Afghanistan	1,618	6.35%
Ukraine	1,610	6.32%
Guatemala	1,085	4.26%
El Salvador	519	2.04%
Moldova	507	1.99%
Iraq	498	1.96%
Somalia	456	1.79%
Honduras	450	1.77%
Eritrea	325	1.28%
Republic of South Sudan	293	1.15%
Colombia	261	1.02%
Iran	255	1.00%
Ethiopia	252	0.99%
Armenia	200	0.79%
Burundi	185	0.73%
Central African Republic	181	0.71%
Venezuela	163	0.64%
Rwanda	88	0.35%
Uganda	63	0.25%
Pakistan	36	0.14%
Cambodia	32	0.13%
Sri Lanka (Ceylon)	19	0.07%
Russia	19	0.07%
Palestinian Territories	16	0.06%

Country of Origin	Individual Arrivals	Percentage of Total Arrivals
Yemen	15	0.06%
Vietnam	14	0.05%
Bhutan	14	0.05%
Liberia	10	0.04%
Kazakhstan	10	0.04%
People's Republic of China	8	0.03%
Nicaragua	7	0.03%
Libya	7	0.03%
Nepal	6	0.02%
Egypt	6	0.02%
Chad	6	0.02%
Jordan	5	0.02%
Mali	4	0.02%
Republic of Korea	4	0.02%
Uzbekistan	3	0.01%
Turkey	3	0.01%
Ivory Coast	3	0.01%
Congo	3	0.01%
Zimbabwe	2	0.01%
Senegal	2	0.01%
India	2	0.01%
Djibouti	2	0.01%
Cameroon	2	0.01%
Turkmenistan	1	0.00%
Tanzania	1	0.00%
Indonesia	1	0.00%
Guinea	1	0.00%
Belarus	1	0.00%
TOTAL	25,465	100.00%

Source: Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration,
Refugee Processing Center

Table V: Sex and Median Age of Refugee Arrivals, FY 2022

Rank	Country of Origin	Refugee Admitted	Median Age	%Females	% Males
1	Dem. Rep. Congo	7,810	18	50.49%	49.51%
2	Syria	4,556	17	47.52%	52.48%
3	Burma	2,156	24	48.19%	51.81%
4	Sudan	1,669	19	44.64%	55.36%
5	Afghanistan	1,618	22	56.00%	44.00%
6	Ukraine	1,610	25	51.99%	48.01%
7	Guatemala	1,085	22	53.64%	46.36%
8	El Salvador	519	23	58.77%	41.23%
9	Moldova	507	28	50.30%	49.70%
10	Iraq	498	24	48.59%	51.41%
11	Somalia	456	27	41.89%	58.11%
12	Honduras	450	24	55.56%	44.44%
13	Eritrea	325	22	49.23%	50.77%
14	Rep. of South Sudan	293	19	47.10%	52.90%
15	Colombia	261	21	51.34%	48.66%
16	Iran	255	35	43.53%	56.47%
17	Ethiopia	252	27	42.06%	57.94%
18	Armenia	200	31	53.00%	47.00%
19	Burundi	185	21	51.35%	48.65%
20	Central African Rep.	181	21	52.49%	47.51%
21	All Other Countries	579	27	46.29%	53.71%
Total	0	25,465	20	49.77%	50.23%

Source: Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration,
Refugee Processing Center

Table VI: Select Age Categories of Refugee Arrivals, FY 2022

Rank	Country of Origin	Under 5 Years	School Age (5-17)	Working Age (16-64)	Retirement Age (=or > 65)
1	Dem. Rep. Congo	11.49%	37.29%	48.82%	2.41%
2	Syria	7.33%	44.58%	47.43%	0.66%
3	Burma	11.32%	30.38%	57.10%	1.21%
4	Sudan	9.05%	37.57%	52.79%	0.60%
5	Afghanistan	11.80%	25.34%	60.82%	2.04%
6	Ukraine	11.74%	30.12%	53.60%	4.53%
7	Guatemala	9.31%	28.11%	61.29%	1.29%
8	El Salvador	9.63%	26.01%	62.81%	1.54%
9	Moldova	10.85%	21.70%	60.16%	7.30%
10	Iraq	2.81%	33.73%	59.24%	4.22%
11	Somalia	2.19%	25.00%	71.27%	1.54%
12	Honduras	10.44%	28.00%	60.22%	1.33%
13	Eritrea	2.77%	32.00%	63.38%	1.85%
14	Republic of South Sudan	4.78%	42.66%	51.88%	0.68%
15	Colombia	8.43%	35.25%	56.32%	0.00%
16	Iran	1.96%	17.65%	79.61%	0.78%
17	Ethiopia	5.56%	26.19%	66.67%	1.59%
18	Armenia	7.50%	22.00%	63.50%	7.00%
19	Burundi	8.65%	31.35%	60.00%	0.00%
20	Central African Republic	6.08%	35.91%	56.91%	1.10%
21	All other countries	5.18%	26.60%	66.15%	2.07%
Total	N/A	9.50%	34.68%	53.88%	1.94

Note on Tabel VI: Totals may exceed 100 percent due to overlapping age categories. Source: Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Refugee Processing Center

Source: Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Refugee Processing Center.

TABLE VII: Refugee Arrivals by State of Initial Resettlement, FY 2022

State	Total Refugees Arrivals	Percentage of Total Arrivals
California	2,178	8.55
Texas	2,114	8.30
New York	1,394	5.47
Kentucky	1,308	5.14
Washington	1,219	4.79
North Carolina	1,152	4.52
Michigan	1,135	4.46
Ohio	1,119	4.39
Pennsylvania	1,100	4.32
Arizona	1,032	4.05
Illinois	907	3.56
Georgia	820	3.22
Florida	749	2.94
Wisconsin	646	2.54
Virginia	637	2.50
Colorado	625	2.45
Missouri	606	2.38
Minnesota	541	2.12
Indiana	538	2.11
Massachusetts	507	1.99
Iowa	501	1.97
Tennessee	500	1.96
Maryland	495	1.94
Idaho	453	1.78

Utah	451	1.77
Kansas	345	1.35
Nebraska	324	1.27
South Carolina	318	1.25
Oregon	306	1.20
New Jersey	248	.97
Nevada	157	.62
Connecticut	142	.56
New Mexico	105	.41
Maine	103	.40
Vermont	91	.36
New Hampshire	86	.34
Rhode Island	72	.28
Oklahoma	70	.27
Arkansas	65	.26
South Dakota	61	.24
North Dakota	57	.22
Montana	47	.18
Delaware	46	.18
Alabama	36	.14
Louisiana	22	.09
Alaska	21	.08
West Virginia	13	0.05
Mississippi	3	0.01
TOTAL	25,465	100%

Note: Arrival figures do not reflect secondary migration.

Source: Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Refugee Processing Center.

**Table VIII: Funding for Refugee Processing and Resettlement
FY 2023 and FY 2024**

Agency	FY 2023 AVAILABILITY (in millions)	Estimated FY 2024 Availability (in millions)
Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Refugee Processing ⁴	\$113.8	\$126.5
Department of State and the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration Refugee Admissions ^{5 6 7}	\$858.0	\$980.0
Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement ⁸	\$1,246.2	\$1,686.0
Totals	\$2,218.0	2,792.5

⁴ FY 2023 projected costs are based on payroll and general expenses that support USCIS refugee processing activities, reimbursement for following-to-join refugee processing conducted by Department of State on behalf of USCIS, and certain International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) and Capital Security Cost Sharing (CSCS) costs and other international operations costs related to USCIS international offices that support refugee processing. The projection reported last year for FY 2023 has been slightly revised to reflect new projections based on actual activities to date. FY 2024 projections reflect the assumption that funding levels match the President's FY 2024 budget request amount submitted to Congress, which is subject to Congressional budget action. All figures are estimates.

⁵ FY 2023: Equals the sum of FY 2023 Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) appropriation of \$773.9 million, \$48.6 million in MRA carryover from FY 2022, \$29.5 million in projected IOM loan collections/carryover, and an estimate of \$6 million in prior year MRA recoveries. Some FY 2023 funds will be carried forward into FY 2024.

⁶ FY 2024: Equals the sum of FY 2024 MRA budget request of \$930 million, \$44 million in projected IOM loan collections/carryover, and an estimate of \$6 million in prior year MRA recoveries. Because the FY 2024 MRA budget request was built prior to the announcement of the SMO and Mexico initiatives, this \$980 million figure does not include additional funding needed for these programs. With the inclusion of funding for these initiatives, the MRA required will be higher. The President requested that Congress appropriate \$532 million to support the SMO and Mexico P-2 initiatives. The actual cost to operate the USRAP including these two new programs will be higher.

⁷ Funding in FY 2023 and FY 2024 does not include ERMA funding which covers costs associated with Enduring Welcome.

⁸ FY 2023 and FY 2024: ORR refugee benefits and services are also provided to asylees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, certain Amerasians from Vietnam, victims of a severe form of trafficking who have received certification or eligibility letters from ORR, Iraqi and Afghan SIV holders and certain Afghan and Ukrainian parolees. However, only refugees are included in the refugee admissions ceiling; there is no admissions target for the other ORR-eligible populations. The estimated funding to provide cash and medical assistance, domestic medical screenings, and refugee social services for these populations, as well as services for unaccompanied refugee minors are included here. ORR received \$871 million in regular FY 2023 appropriations, as well as \$375 million in emergency appropriations to support the Refugee Program. These amounts are reflected in the above funding chart. ORR also received a special supplemental appropriation of \$2.4 billion in FY 2023 to support all Refugee and Entrant Assistance (REA) account activities, including to serve the increase in Cuban and Haitian entrants as well as to meet the needs of ORR's Unaccompanied Children's program. ORR estimates do not include any prior year carryover funding and do not include all supplemental funds provided in FY 2023. Funding estimates to support all ORR-eligible populations in mainstream services such as TANF, Medicaid, and Supplemental Security Income are also not included, as they are not appropriated to ORR. These estimates do not include any prior year carryover funding. The estimated FY 2024 figures above reflect the President's FY 2024 budget request. In addition to base funding requested to support the Transitional and Medical Services and Refugee Support Services line items, the President's FY 2024 budget request includes a \$2.776 billion contingency fund which would support both unaccompanied children and humanitarian event triggers.

Table IX: UNHCR Resettlement Referrals Submitted by Resettlement Country – CY 2022^{9 10 11 12 13}

Resettlement Country	UNHCR Refugee Referral Targets by Country	Actual Number of UNHCR Refugees Referred to Each Country	Percent of Total Number of UNHCR Refugees Actually Referred Globally
United States	76,555	80,553	69.16%
Canada	5,850	6,173	5.30%
Germany	5,510	5,772	4.96%
Sweden	3,754	3,937	3.38%
Australia	3,662	3,989	3.42%
France	3,072	3,440	2.95%
Norway	2,015	2,406	2.07%
United Kingdom	1,570	1,619	1.39%
The Netherlands	1,455	1,992	1.71%
Finland	1,433	1,697	1.46%
New Zealand	1,384	1,775	1.52%
Switzerland	1,120	1,329	1.14%
Spain	550	630	0.54%
Ireland	400	410	0.35%
Portugal	212	231	0.20%
Belgium	0	178	0.15%

⁹ The total target for UNHCR refugee referral submissions for CY 2022 was 108,862. UNHCR exceeded the target by 7,614 referrals totaling 116,481 referrals and resulting in 107 percent of the referral target having been met.

¹⁰ The figures provided are limited to UNHCR country operations with allocated quotas and specific commitments to meet; additional submissions have been made by operations without allocated quotas.

¹¹ Submission targets are based on requests from States for new UNHCR submissions between January and December 2022 and may not correspond to pledges or the planned number of arrivals under respective programs.

¹² Referral targets below 50 refugee referrals per country per year are not depicted. UNHCR submitted an additional 5 refugee referrals to Argentina, Iceland, Malta, Romania, and Uruguay.

¹³ The table reflects only the number of refugee referrals UNHCR submitted to resettlement countries and does not reflect actual number of refugees resettled in each country.

Denmark	150	162	0.14%
Japan	60	62	0.05%
Republic of Korea	60	67	0.06%
Italy	50	54	0.05%
TOTAL	108,862	116,481	100.00%

Source: UNHCR, actual data current as of June, 2023