



Khasan, one of five brothers, belongs to the Meskhetian Turk community. Facing discrimination in Uzbekistan, the family moved to the Russian Federation in 1989, along with many other families from the same ethnic group. After many years in the Russian Federation, they were not able to obtain residence permits, making it impossible to send their children to school and find jobs. With no future there, they ended up in the United States of America in 2005 on a resettlement programme for Meskhetian Turks. When they arrived in the United States, the International Rescue Committee helped the family learn English, find accommodation, secure jobs and adjust to life in their new home. All five brothers and their families are now U.S. citizens.



Durable Solutions and New Displacement

Introduction

EACH YEAR, thousands of refugees find a durable solution by repatriating to their home country, by integrating locally into the host society, or by obtaining permanent settlement in a third country. In addition to providing protection, seeking and finding solutions for refugees is a core activity of UNHCR, together with the governments concerned. For this reason, the agency's Executive Committee has re-emphasized that 'the seeking of solutions is a mandatory function' of the Office.

The first part of this chapter tracks progress towards achieving

durable solutions for refugees during 2013. Voluntary repatriation movements, numerically the most important durable solution, are generally based on information from both the country of asylum as well as the country of return. Resettlement of refugees, meanwhile, is a significant contribution towards international responsibility and burden sharing. This chapter considers statistics on refugee resettlement from two perspectives: departures from countries of asylum, as well as arrivals from the perspective of the resettlement country.

Finally, local integration takes many shapes. As will be explained below,

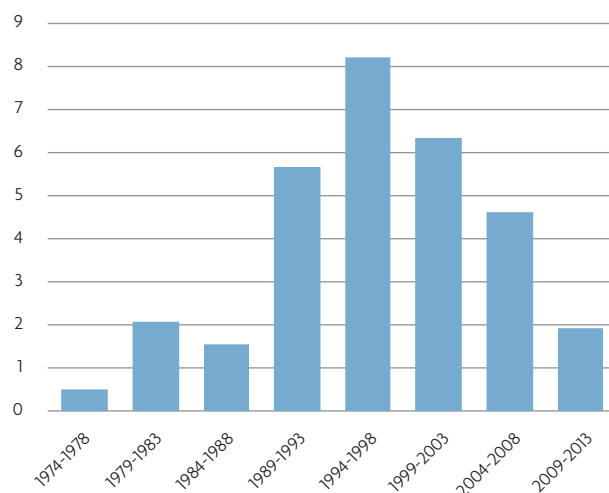
however, it is often difficult to quantify in numerical terms. This chapter is limited to the local integration of refugees through naturalization, whereby the full range of protection is extended to refugees by the host country.

Progress towards achieving durable solutions is partly offset by new outflows of refugees. Each year, thousands of refugees flee their home country and are recognized either on an individual or *prima facie* basis. The main focus of this chapter is on *prima facie* refugee outflows, while asylum applications and refugee status determination are reviewed in detail in Chapter V.

Return of refugees

Voluntary repatriation is the return of refugees to their country of origin based upon a free and informed decision, in and to conditions of safety and dignity, and with the full restoration of national protection. Voluntary repatriation may take the form of an ongoing programme or a single operation, and may range from the return of a few individuals to the movement of thousands of persons together with their belongings. The return may be organized or spontaneously initiated by the refugees themselves, and is by preference to the refugee's place of residence in the country of origin.

Fig. 4.1 Refugee returns | 1974 - 2013 (in millions)



4 Durable Solutions and New Displacement

In practice, UNHCR, in cooperation with governments, NGOs, and other partners, promotes and facilitates voluntary repatriation through various means. These include the negotiation of repatriation agreements, registration for return, organizing and assisting with transport, negotiation for the full recognition of skills obtained in exile, and ensuring a safe and dignified reception in the country of origin, among other activities. Throughout the repatriation process, particular attention is given to the specific needs of returning refugees – including women, children, older people, and other persons with special concerns – in order to ensure that they receive adequate protection, assistance, and care.

Compared to the past 25 years, 2013 witnessed the fourth lowest level of

refugee returns. Lower figures have only been recorded in 1990, 2009, and 2010. During the past decade, some 6.5 million refugees were able to return to their country of origin, compared to 14.6 million during the preceding decade [see **Figure 4.1**].

During 2013, around 414,600 refugees returned to their countries of origins, 206,000 of them with UNHCR's assistance.⁷⁶ This figure constitutes a drop compared to both 2011 and 2012, when return figures totalled 532,000 and 526,300, respectively. Further, the proportion of refugees assisted by UNHCR to return to their country of origin reached its lowest level (50%) in a decade. This situation was particularly influenced by the fact that some 140,800 Syrian refugees in Turkey returned spontaneously during the year. With

the continued violence in the Syrian Arab Republic, however, returns to this country may not be sustainable.

Excluding spontaneous returns to the Syrian Arab Republic, the countries that reported the largest number of returned refugees during 2013 included the Democratic Republic of the Congo (68,400), Iraq (60,900), Afghanistan (39,700), Somalia (36,100), Côte d'Ivoire (20,000), Sudan (17,000), and Mali (14,300). In many instances, UNHCR facilitated the return of these refugees.

During the same period, the largest numbers of refugee departures were reported by Turkey (140,900), the Republic of Congo (62,900), and the Syrian Arab Republic (45,900). These were followed by Pakistan (31,200), Kenya (28,800), Liberia (18,700), and Chad (16,900).

Resettlement of refugees

Traditionally, resettlement ranks second in numerical terms out of the three durable solutions, after voluntary repatriation. Moreover, the total demand for resettlement always exceeds the available places, thus posing a constant challenge for this durable solution. In 2013, the total number of countries offering resettlement remained unchanged (27) compared to the previous year.

In 2013, UNHCR offices in 80 countries presented over 93,200 refugees to States for resettlement consideration. The main beneficiaries were refugees from Myanmar (23,500), Iraq (13,200), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (12,200), Somalia (9,000), and Bhutan (7,100). In numerical terms, these same refugee groups have constituted the top five since 2009, although their order has shifted.

Women and girls at risk represented more than 12 per cent of total submissions. That figure surpassed for a third consecutive year the 10 per cent target set to implement Executive Committee Conclusion No.105 (2006).⁷⁷ Ultimately, over four-fifths of submissions were made under three submission categories:

legal and/or physical protection needs (42%), lack of foreseeable alternative durable solutions (22%), and survivors of violence and/or torture (16%).

During the year, a total of 98,400 refugees were admitted by 21 resettlement countries, according to government statistics. These included the United States of America (66,200),⁷⁸ Australia (13,200),

Canada (12,200), Sweden (1,900), and the United Kingdom (970). This total was 9,400 more individuals than in 2012 (89,000). The United States of America,

⁷⁶ Based on consolidated reports from countries of asylum (departure) and origin (return).

⁷⁷ See <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e6e6dd6.html>.

⁷⁸ During US fiscal year 2013, some 69,900 were resettled to the United States of America.

Fig. 4.2 Resettlement of refugees | 1994 - 2013

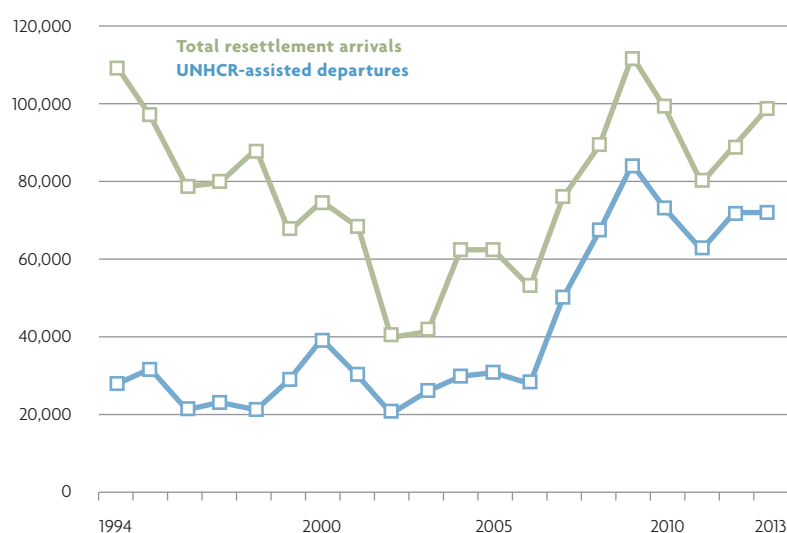
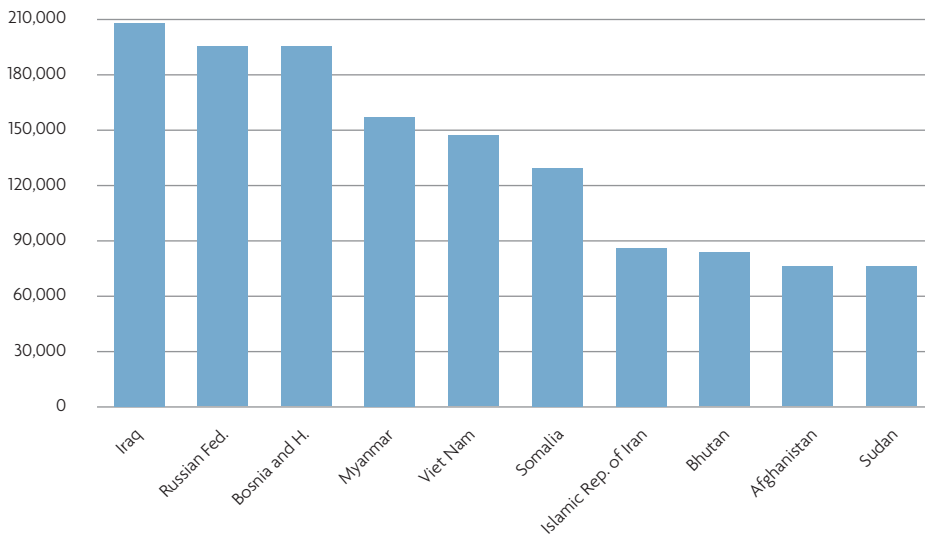


Fig. 4.3

Main refugee groups benefiting from resettlement*
| 1994 - 2013



Note

* Resettlement arrivals with or without UNHCR assistance (Source: Government statistics).

Australia, and Canada together admitted 90 per cent of resettled refugees in 2013. UNHCR facilitated the departure of about 71,600 of these 98,400 admitted refugees [see **Figure 4.2**].

Over the course of 2013, UNHCR offices in 81 countries facilitated the processing of resettlement claims, a slight decline from 85 countries in 2012. The largest number of resettled refugees left from Nepal (10,700), Thailand (8,800), Malaysia (8,500), Turkey (7,200), the Syrian Arab Republic (4,200), Kenya (3,600), Jordan (3,400), and Lebanon (3,300). The largest numbers of

refugees who benefited from UNHCR-facilitated resettlement were nationals of Myanmar (16,700), Iraq (14,300), Bhutan (10,700), Somalia (8,800), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (4,500), and Afghanistan (4,400).

Over the past 20 years, Iraqis were the largest group of refugees benefiting from resettlement. According to government statistics, more than 207,500 Iraqi refugees arrived under resettlement programmes, more than half of them in the United States of America. Citizens of the Russian Federation were the second largest group with an estimated 195,000

arrivals, about 95 per cent of them in the United States of America [see **Figure 4.3**].

Of course, these trends change over time. While arrivals of Iraqis have been particularly strong during the past decade, the same was the case for Russian citizens during the 1990s. Bosnian refugees, too, were among the largest group to be resettled during the 1990s, in the aftermath of the civil war in the country. However, these activities largely ended in the middle of the last decade. In contrast, among the most recent wave of groups to be resettled are refugees from Myanmar and Bhutan.

Can local integration of refugees be measured?

Local integration is a complex and gradual process by which refugees legally, economically, socially, and culturally integrate as fully contributing members of the host society. As a legal process, of course, refugees are granted a range of entitlements and rights that are broadly commensurate with those enjoyed by citizens. Over time this process should lead to permanent residence rights and, in some cases, the acquisition of citizenship in the country of asylum. Yet the legal dimension of local integration

relates not only to status and documentation but also to the enjoyment of political rights, as well as non-discriminatory access to institutions and services.

As a socio-economic process, refugees attain a growing degree of self-reliance and become able to lawfully pursue sustainable livelihoods, thus contributing to the economic life of the host country. The economic dimension is measured by access to and participation in domains that are crucial for any residents. For instance, do refugees have

access to housing, to work rights, and to education and health facilities, and can they actually use these facilities?

As a cultural process, refugees are able to live among or alongside the host population, without discrimination or exploitation, and to contribute actively to the social life of their country of asylum. Are refugees perceived by the host community as being physically, culturally or religiously different, and do they face discrimination or restrictions in this regard?

Humanitarian admission: Expediting and simplifying resettlement procedures


The 2013 resettlement statistics include submissions made by UNHCR for both resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes. Resettlement is the transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection to a third State that has agreed to admit them as refugees with permanent residence status. Humanitarian admission is similar to resettlement but is a simplified and expedited process, providing urgent protection in a third country for refugees in greatest need.

The legal status provided under humanitarian admission may vary, depending upon the receiving State's legislation. Some countries offering humanitarian admission provide permanent residence, while others provide refugees with temporary residence but with the option of extending their stay based upon the situation in their country of origin. In both resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes carried out by UNHCR, the agency identifies refugees according to a set of criteria based upon vulnerabilities, and then prepares their cases for consideration by the resettlement or humanitarian admission country. Ninety-nine per cent of the Syrian refugee cases submitted by UNHCR and considered under resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes in 2013 were accepted.

As an expedited process, humanitarian admission provides an important tool for facilitating protection for large numbers of refugees in the context of an ongoing emergency. At the same time, this preserves the capacity of resettlement programmes for refugees globally. As part of the emergency response to the Syria situation, UNHCR is encouraging States to offer humanitarian admission and additional resettlement places for Syrian refugees. Complementing global resettlement programmes with such additional quotas provides vulnerable Syrian refugees with access to protection and solutions, while also ensuring that resettlement opportunities remain available for refugees from the rest of the world.

In 2013, both Germany and Austria initiated humanitarian admission programmes for Syrian refugees, under which UNHCR submitted cases for a total of 4,280 refugees. UNHCR expects that, from 2013 to 2014, more than 27,000 Syrian refugees will benefit from humanitarian admission schemes. Further, UNHCR called upon States to make multi-annual commitments towards a goal of providing resettlement and other forms of admission for an additional 100,000 Syrian refugees in 2015 and 2016.

By early 2014, 21 countries have pledged to receive refugees on resettlement or humanitarian admission for 2013–2014. The total pledges stand at more than 21,900 places, plus an open-ended number to the United States of America. Other pledging States include 17 European countries, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. Additional initiatives include a special humanitarian visa programme established by Brazil, Ireland's immigration-based Syrian Humanitarian Admission Programme, and the United Kingdom's Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme. ●



Strictly speaking, it can be argued that the process of local integration becomes a durable solution only at the point when a refugee becomes a naturalized citizen of his or her asylum country. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees calls on States to facilitate the naturalization of refugees, including by expediting naturalization proceedings and by reducing, as far as possible, the charges and costs of these proceedings. It is quite possible, however, for a refugee to acquire and exercise a wide range of rights, to become entirely self-reliant, and to develop close social ties with the host country and community, yet without becoming a naturalized citizen of the asylum country.

UNHCR does not recognize progress in local integration solely at the point of naturalization. Analysis is also undertaken as to whether or not refugees enjoy protection of basic civil, economic, and social rights, including freedom of movement and the right to engage in income-generating activities.

Improvement in these areas demonstrates an increased enjoyment of rights but also an improvement in independence and autonomy. These are achievements that support all solutions, including repatriation, resettlement or migration, and integration.

Progress on the spectrum towards local integration is tracked. This starts from the point of zero integration (possibly, encampment or detention) and moves up and through temporary and permanent legal residence. Concurrent measurements are made on economic and social self-reliance and integration, up to the point of and after nationality. Whether or not legal integration is a viable solution, the level of economic, social, and cultural integration is a measure of quality of asylum and of refugees' resilience, and thus should be tracked.

UNHCR and certain States are currently exploring the potential for protection-sensitive labour migration schemes for refugees. In one programme, refugees will temporarily

move from their country of asylum to a third country in order to pursue employment and educational opportunities within the frameworks of existing regional mobility schemes. In another programme, refugees will exchange their refugee identification cards for a migrant status with additional labour market benefits. Regional schemes, such as ECOWAS, offer opportunities.

Multiple initiatives to support local solutions are currently in progress. In several locations, UNHCR is implementing what is known as the Graduation Model. This is an approach to poverty reduction that uses a sequenced combination of interventions that include livelihoods, capacity-building, social support, and micro-finance to graduate people out of poverty in both rural and urban areas. Where there are opportunities for legal solutions, this model can support refugees' transition into durable integration. Where legal windows remain limited, economic independence and associated

This twelve-year old Pakistani schoolgirl, Rukayah, loves her newly constructed classroom in the city of Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which hosts around one million Afghan refugees. In recognition of this generosity and to support the Government in increasing educational opportunities in the province, UNHCR is providing financial assistance to improve schools that have opened their doors to Afghan refugee children.



social integration can lay the groundwork for local integration or for a more independent return or onward migration. An effort to learn from the ways in which analysis of integration were undertaken in the resettlement context also offers potential.

Measuring the various dimensions of local integration from a statistical perspective remains a challenge, for the

reasons outlined above. Analysis of related data in the Yearbook is limited by the availability of statistics on the naturalization of refugees in host countries. While significantly under-reporting the true magnitude of naturalization of refugees due to lack of data, the limited information available to UNHCR shows that, during the past decade, at least 716,000 refugees have been granted

citizenship by their asylum countries. The United States of America alone accounted for two-thirds of this figure.⁷⁹ For 2013, UNHCR was informed of refugees being granted citizenship in 31 countries, including Canada (14,800), Benin (3,700), Belgium (2,500), Ireland (730), and Guinea (300).

■ New refugee displacement

The year 2013 saw a level of new displacement which had not been seen since 1994, the year of the Rwandan genocide. An estimated 2.5 million individuals were newly displaced during 2013, most notably from the Syrian Arab Republic. These 2.5 million new refugees joined the two million persons who had become refugees over the course of 2011 and 2012. Syrian refugees alone accounted for 2.2 million newly registered refugees during the year, fleeing mostly to neighbouring countries including Lebanon (737,400), Jordan (667,600),

Turkey (477,800), Iraq (173,400), and Egypt (121,600).

In addition, hundreds of thousands more fled their countries across Africa, from the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Sudan, and Mali. From the Central African Republic, some 88,700 persons fled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (53,900), Chad (15,200), Congo (9,900), and Cameroon (9,800). Outflows from Sudan were mainly registered in Chad (36,300) and South Sudan (31,300). From Mali,

more than 58,000 fled to Mauritania (31,400), Burkina Faso (15,700), and Niger (11,000).

Of the total new refugee displacements during 2013, the largest numbers of new arrivals were reported by Lebanon (738,000), Jordan (668,600), Turkey (477,800), Iraq (173,400), and Egypt (121,600). ■

⁷⁹ The United States of America ceased issuing statistics on the number of naturalized refugees. The latest available information is for 2009, when 55,300 refugees were naturalized between January and September of that year.