

United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees



HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND FORCED MIGRATION

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WEBSITES

- <https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends>
- <https://www.un.org/en/site-search?query=forced+migration>
- <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-campaign-urges-uk-consumers-buy-responsibly-help-end-human-trafficking>
- <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/site-search.html?q=human+trafficking>
- <https://www.ohchr.org/en/search?query=Refugee+and+Migrant+Rights>
- <https://www.unicef.org/search?query=child+trafficking&created%5Bmin%5D=&created%5Bmax%5D=>
- <https://www.who.int/home/search-results?indexCatalogue=genericsearchindex1&q=Health%20of%20Refugees%20and%20Migrants&wordsMode=AnyWord#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=Health%20of%20Refugees%20and%20Migrants&gsc.page=1>

GLOSSARY

Statelessness: The condition of not being considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law (UNHCR, s. f.).

Resettlement: The selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought treaty protection to a third State that has agreed to admit them – as refugees – with permanent residence status (UNHCR, s. f.).

Safeguards: Specific rules, legal protections, and practical measures used to prevent harm, abuse, or unfair treatment of refugees and asylum-seekers (UNHCR, s. f.).

Stigmatization: Using harmful labels or negative stereotypes that make displaced people feel powerless and isolated (UNHCR, s. f.).

Displacement: The movement of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence (UNHCR, s. f.).

Repatriation: A refugee returning safely and with dignity to their home country based on a free and informed choice (UNHCR, s. f.).

Resilience: The ability of individuals, households, communities, national institutions and systems to prevent, absorb and recover from shocks, while continuing to function and adapt in a way that supports long-term prospects for sustainable development, peace and security, and the attainment of human rights (UNHCR, s. f.).

Reintegration: Process which enables returnees to regain the physical, social, legal and material security needed to maintain life and dignity, which eventually leads to the disappearance of any discrimination (UNHCR, s. f.).

Vulnerability: The limited capacity to avoid, resist, cope with, or recover from harm (UNHCR, s. f.).



WHAT IS UNCHR?

- WHAT THIS COMMITTEE IS ABOUT

This committee is dedicated to confronting one of the most urgent humanitarian challenges of our time: the global refugee crisis. Delegates will step into the shoes of real countries and confront the tough questions surrounding forced displacement people fleeing war, persecution, violence, and disaster, often with nothing but what they can carry. Together, they'll examine why this crisis keeps growing, who it affects most, and what the international community can realistically do about it (UNHCR, n.d.).

- WHAT IT'S FOR

The purpose of this committee goes beyond simply discussing a problem — it's about practicing real diplomacy. Delegates learn to see the world through another country's eyes, understanding that every nation has its own interests, limitations, and pressures when it comes to accepting and supporting refugees. Through debate, negotiation, and resolution-writing, delegates develop skills that matter far beyond the conference room: critical thinking, public speaking, compromise, and the ability to find common ground even when perspectives clash.

- WHAT IT COVERS

In general terms, this committee brings together everything from the causes that push people to flee their homes, to the way refugees are received, protected, and supported once they arrive somewhere new. It touches on the daily realities of camp life, the legal and political debates around asylum and borders, the role wealthier nations play in helping those on the frontlines of the crisis, and the special care needed for the most vulnerable — women, children, and anyone left especially exposed by displacement. In short, it's a space to understand the refugee crisis not as a distant issue, but as a shared global responsibility.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The UNHCR, or United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, is an organization created by the United Nations in 1950. Its main purpose is to protect and assist people who have been forced to leave their homes because of war, violence, persecution, or human rights violations. UNHCR works in many countries around the world and helps millions of people affected by humanitarian crises. UNHCR protects refugees, advocates for their rights and works with governments and partners to find long-term solutions” (UNHCR, n.d.).

UNHCR provides assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, and stateless individuals. It helps provide emergency shelter, clean water, food, medical care, education, and psychological support. The organization also gives special attention to vulnerable groups, including children, women, elderly people, and families who have been separated.

During emergencies, especially in the first 72 hours, UNHCR works quickly to provide basic necessities and protection. Its priorities include finding safe shelter, providing clean water and essential supplies, registering displaced people, and protecting their human rights. These first hours are extremely important because many people may arrive in safe areas without homes, food, or access to basic services. “UNHCR protects people forced to flee their homes as well as stateless persons” (UNHCR, n.d.)

1. UNHCR also works to find long-term solutions for refugees. These solutions can include returning safely to their home country, integrating into the country where they found protection, or resettling in another country. Overall, UNHCR plays an important role in protecting human rights and helping millions of displaced people rebuild their lives and have the opportunity for a safer future. When people are forced to flee, speed is critical” (UNHCR, n.d.).

CONTEXT

Currently, the world is facing one of the largest displacement crises in history. According to the latest UNHCR data, by the end of 2025, approximately 117.8 million people worldwide had been forcibly displaced because of war, conflict, violence, persecution, and human rights violations. This means that approximately 1 in every 70 people in the world has been forced to leave their home. There are currently 41.6 million refugees, around 9 million asylum seekers, and approximately 68.7 million internally displaced people who have had to leave their homes but remain within their own countries. Countries affected by conflicts and humanitarian crises, including Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Myanmar, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, continue to contribute significantly to global displacement. UNHCR works to uphold the basic human rights of uprooted or stateless people" (UNHCR, n.d.).

Although the total number of forcibly displaced people decreased slightly during 2025 compared with 2024, the situation remains extremely serious. Millions of people returned to their homes, especially in countries such as Afghanistan, Syria, and Sudan, but many returned to places where security and access to basic services remain difficult. Therefore, returning home does not always mean that people are completely safe or that their problems have ended. In this global context, UNHCR plays a very important role by protecting refugees and displaced people and providing emergency assistance. However, the organization also faces major challenges, including ongoing conflicts, increasing humanitarian needs, and limitations in funding. Today, UNHCR continues working with governments and international organizations to provide protection and help displaced people rebuild their lives and find a safer future. "Internally displaced people have been forced to flee their homes [...] however, they remain within their own country" (UNHCR, n.d.).

PROBLEMS

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) is losing the trust of the refugees it is mandated to protect—to whom it ought to be accountable. The organization has considerable administrative control over refugees' lives, making it a quasi 'government' (Pallis, 2005), functioning as a 'UN surrogate state' (Kagan, 2011). Our research into urban refugee protests against UNHCR compels us to question its governmental actions and relations and to explore avenues for change. We recognize that UNHCR faces unprecedented challenges. Powerful states are withdrawing from, or actively undermining, the core commitments of international refugee law, signalling 'an illiberal dismantling of the international refugee regime' (Lavenex, 2024). Its budget was already shrinking (UNHCR, 2024) before the new US administration's cuts forced reductions in activity by up to one-third (France24, 2025). UNHCR has also been expelled from or compelled to suspend services in both Libya and Egypt (Booty 2025; ECRE 2025). Nevertheless, as the primary actor for refugee protection, UNHCR must do better. Without reform, it risks being perceived as the 'UNFAIR Agency' losing its 'moral authority' and its ability to promote humanitarian responses and durable solutions for refugees.

POINTS TO DISCUSS

- The Role of Technology in Preventing Human Trafficking ----The role that social networks play really help in the prevention of human trafficking?
- The Responsibility of Developed Countries in Forced Migration Crises ----Do countries have a responsibility to prioritize refugees over their people?
- The Use of Refugee Camps as Targets for Human Trafficking ----A refugee center be considered a safe place for them?
- Climate Change and the Rise of Forced Migration ---- How has climate change displaced people from their homes?
- Women and Children as the Main Victims of Human Trafficking ---- Why are women and children more prone to migrant trafficking?
- Border Militarization and Violations of Refugee Rights ---- How has the armed forces acted by governments?
- The Failure of International Policies to Protect Migrants and Refugees ---- Are refugee protection processes really useful?
- Smuggling vs. Human Trafficking: International Legal Challenges ---- What is the legal difference between migrant smuggling and human trafficking at the international level?
- The Impact of Humanitarian Crises on mass displacement due to Bellicose conflicts. ---- Are countries prepared for the massive arrival of refugees?
- Refugees as Victims of Human Exploitation and Forced Labor ---- Do refugees really arrive at a safe place or are they just in the same vulnerability they were in?

ORGANIZATIONS

- ONU
- UNICEF
- Scalabrinian Hostels
- The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)



ACTIONS TAKEN

These organizations operate under the umbrella of the UN to address global migration crises. UNICEF focuses its efforts on integrating displaced children and families into education, health care, and drinking water systems (UNICEF, s. f.); the World Food Program (WFP) ensures food security in large refugee camps through direct nutritional rations and cash transfers (World Food Program USA, 2022); and HIAS provides legal assistance, mental health programs, and administers higher education scholarships to promote employment and economic self-sufficiency among refugees (UNHCR, 2020).

IMPORTANCE

Forced migration can increase people's vulnerability to human trafficking, as those fleeing conflict, persecution, or violence may lose their support networks, find themselves isolated, and face difficulties accessing resources and opportunities. Traffickers can take advantage of these conditions to exploit refugees, asylum seekers, and other displaced persons. For this reason, UNHCR plays an important role in protecting those at risk by identifying potential victims, promoting their access to international protection, and working with governments and organizations to prevent trafficking. In addition, UNHCR cooperates with agencies such as IOM, UNICEF, and UNODC to strengthen the identification and protection of victims and to address trafficking within mixed migration flows (UNHCR, 2006).

OBJECTIVES

UNHCR seeks to ensure that migration policies take into account the specific protection needs of refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless persons. With regard to human trafficking and forced migration, its objectives include:

- Facilitating access to asylum procedures and international protection.
- Identifying individuals who may be at risk of trafficking.
- Strengthening cooperation among governments, organizations, and other actors.
- Developing policies and mechanisms for the guidance and referral of victims.
- Promoting respect for the human rights of all people on the move, regardless of their immigration status.

UNHCR also works to improve the management of mixed migration flows and reduce the risks of exploitation and other human rights violations (UNHCR, s. f.).

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