



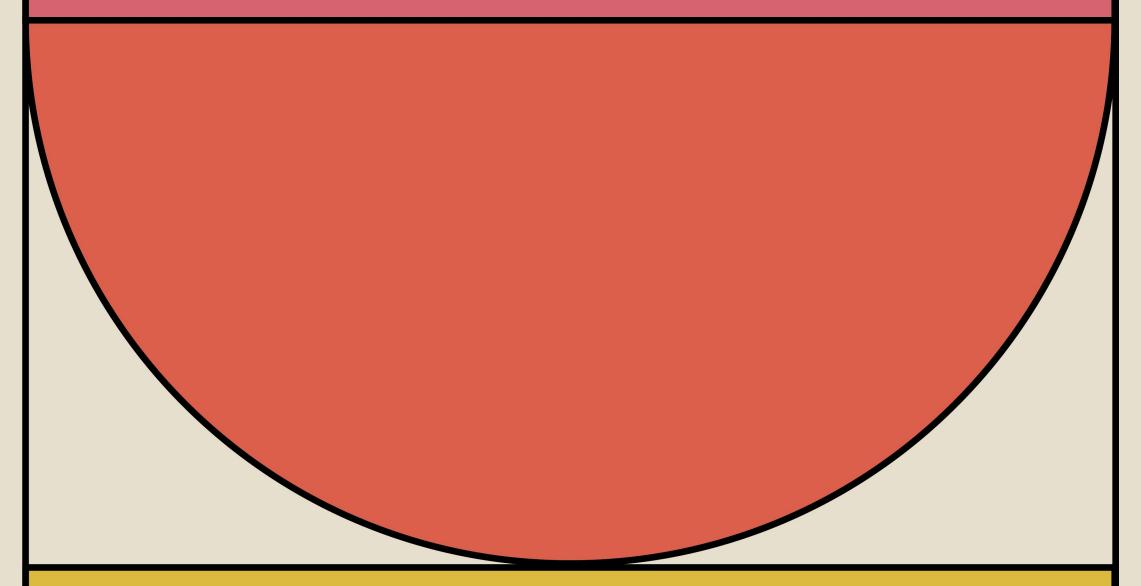
"A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."

In the UK, a person becomes a refugee when government agrees that an individual who has applied for asylum meets the definition.

In the Refugee Convention they will 'recognise' that person as a refugee and issue them with refugee status documentation.



Developing countries - not the UK - look after most of the world's refugees.



At the end of 2020 around 82.4 million people were forcibly displaced across the world. Of these, 26.4 million were refugees, whilst 48 million were internally displaced within their country of origin.

86% of the world's refugees are living in countries neighbouring their country of origin, often in developing countries.

Over 6.7 million people have fled conflict in Syria, and many more are displaced inside the country.

Turkey is the biggest refugee hosting country in the world. At the end of 2020 Turkey was providing safety to 3.7 million Syrian refugees.

By the end of February 2021 the UK had resettled 20,319 refugees from Syria under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS). This includes 239 refugees who were resettled prior to the target of 20,000 being set.



The UK is home to approx. 1% of the 26.4 million refugees, forcibly displaced across the world.

People seeking asylum are looking for a place of safety.



The top ten refugee producing countries in 2020 all have poor human rights records or on-going conflict. People seeking asylum are fleeing from these conflicts and abuses, looking for safety.

In 2020, more than two thirds of the refugees across the world came from just five countries:

Syria - 6.7 million

Venezuela - 4.0 million

Afghanistan - 2.6 million

South Sudan - 2.2 million

Myanmar - 1.1 million

There is no such thing as an 'illegal' or 'bogus' asylum seeker. Under international law, anyone has the right to apply for asylum in any country that has signed the 1951 Convention and to remain there until the authorities have assessed their claim.

It is recognised in the 1951 Convention that people fleeing persecution may have to use irregular means in order to escape and claim asylum in another country – there is no legal way to travel to the UK for the specific purpose of seeking asylum.

The 1951 Refugee Convention guarantees everybody the right to apply for asylum. It has saved millions of lives. No country has ever withdrawn from it.

There is nothing in international law to say that refugees must claim asylum in the first country they reach.

A European regulation allows a country such as the UK to return an adult asylum seeker to the first European country they reached. This means that countries on the edge of Europe have responsibility for a lot more asylum seekers than others.

Some of the countries through which people travel to get to Europe are unsafe for some. Many have not signed the Refugee Convention, meaning that people who remain there will not get international protection and be able to rebuild their lives.