

# Refugee Health Challenges: Healthcare Experiences in the U.S.

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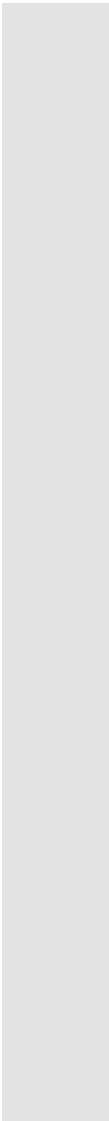
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# Overview

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1. Key Terms and Definitions
  2. Facts and Figures
  3. Services upon Arrival
  4. Case Studies
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# A refugee is someone 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 to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country...”

# Asylum Seeker → Asylee

Someone claiming to be a refugee, but their **claim has not yet been decided** by UNHCR or authorities of the country in which he or she has requested refugee status

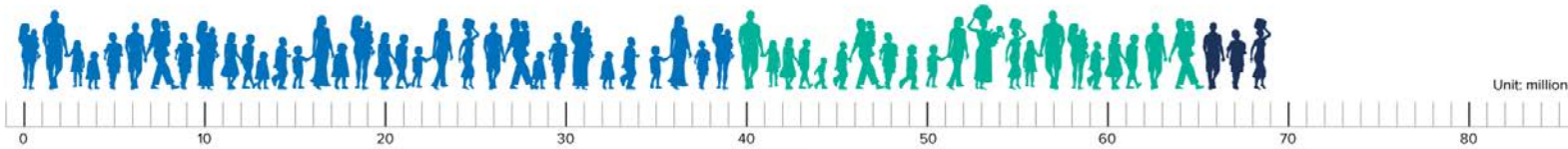
- Once an asylum seeker's claim has been validated, they become an "asylee"
- Not every asylum seeker will be granted refugee status, but every refugee is initially an asylum seeker.

# Immigrant

A person who migrates to another country, usually for permanent residence

- Employment
- Education
- Family Reunification

**68.5 million** forcibly displaced people worldwide



Internally Displaced People  
**40 million**

Refugees  
**25.4 million**

19.9 million under UNHCR mandate  
5.4 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA

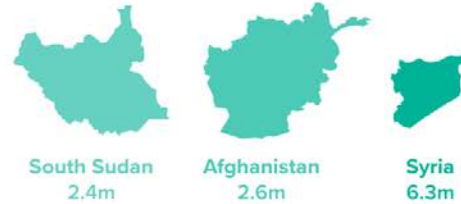
Asylum-seekers  
**3.1 million**

Where the world's displaced people are being hosted

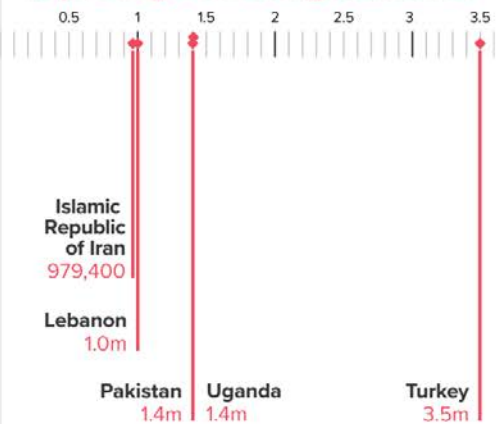


85 per cent of the world's displaced people are in developing countries

**57%** of refugees worldwide came from three countries



Top refugee-hosting countries



**10 million** stateless people

**102,800** Refugees resettled

**44,400** people a day forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution

# Durable Solutions



REPATRIATION



LOCAL  
INTEGRATION



RESETTLEMENT

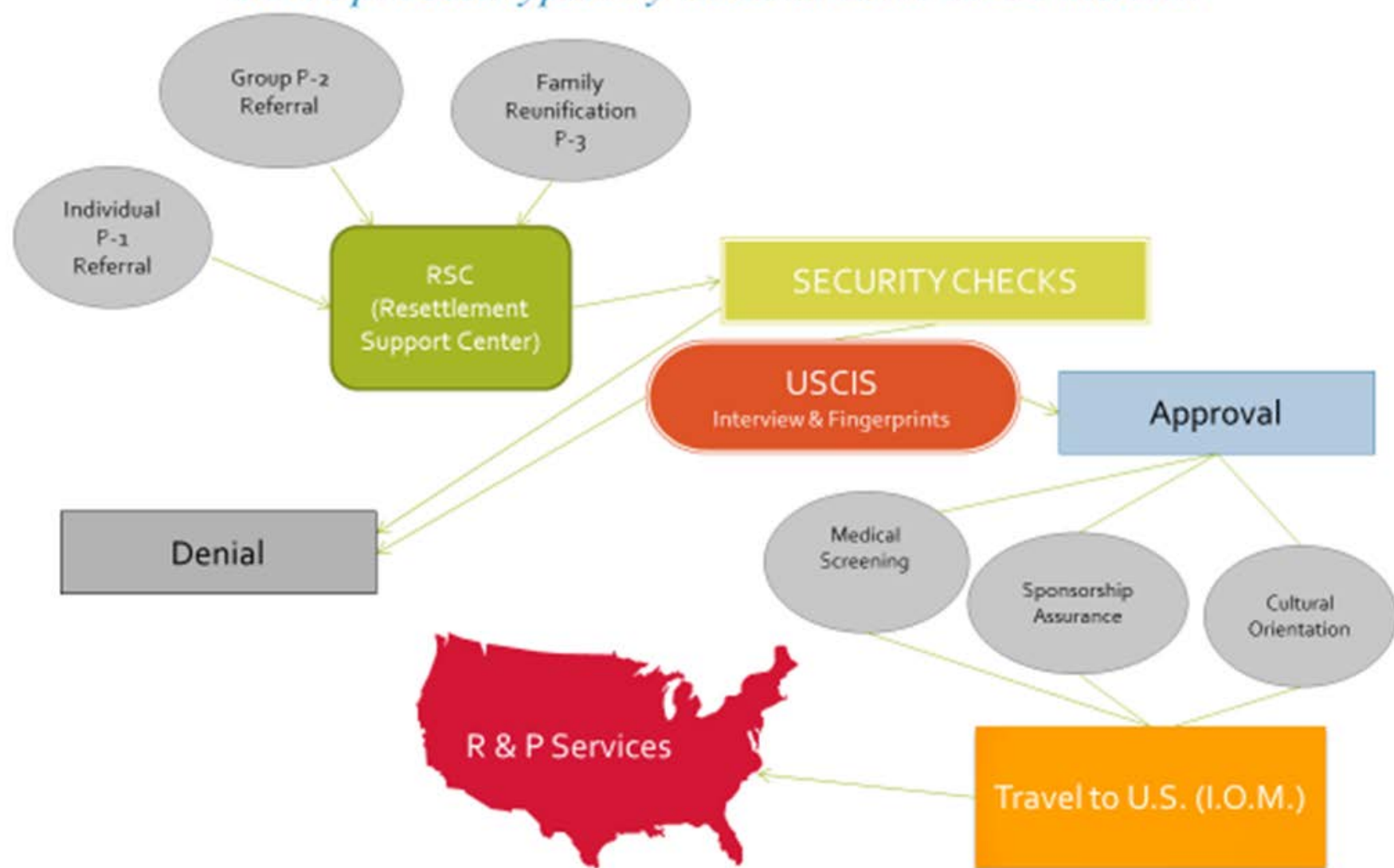
# Reasons for Resettlement

## UNHCR Resettlement Categories:

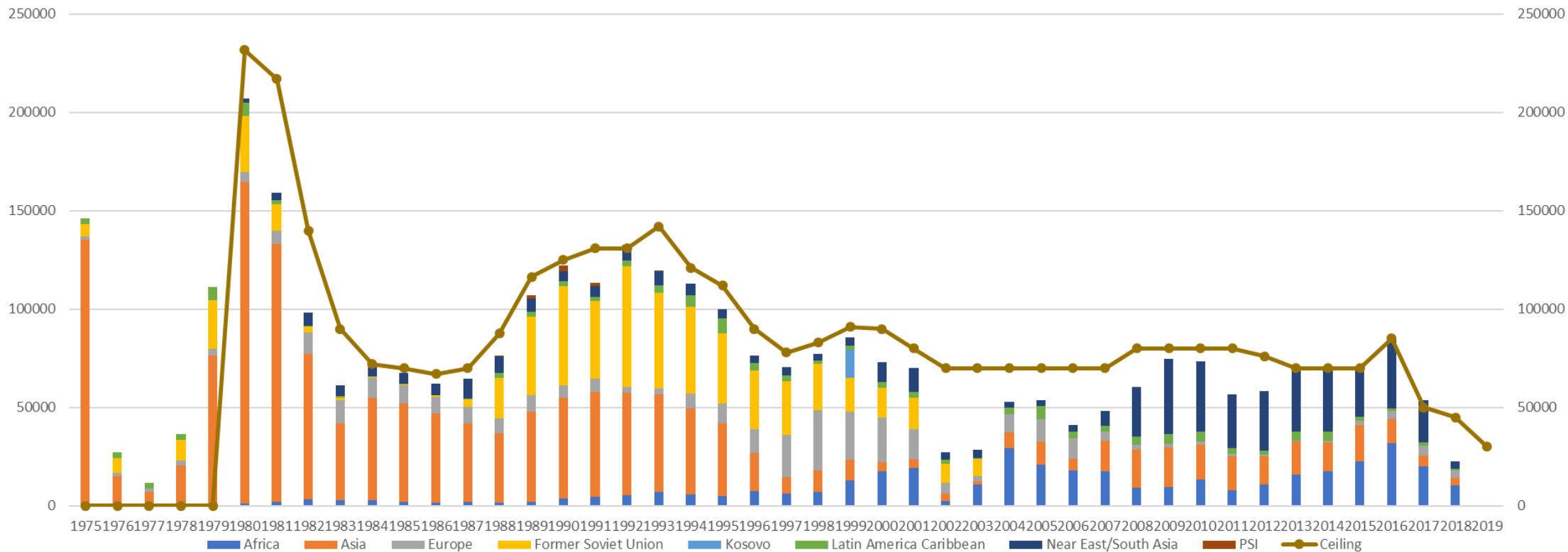
- Legal or Physical Protection (35%)
- Survivors of Violence or Torture (19%)
- Women and Girls-at-Risk (12%)
- **Medical Needs (1-2%)**
- Family Reunification (1-2%)
- Children and Adolescents (1-2%)
- Lack of Foreseeable Alternative Durable Solutions (30%)



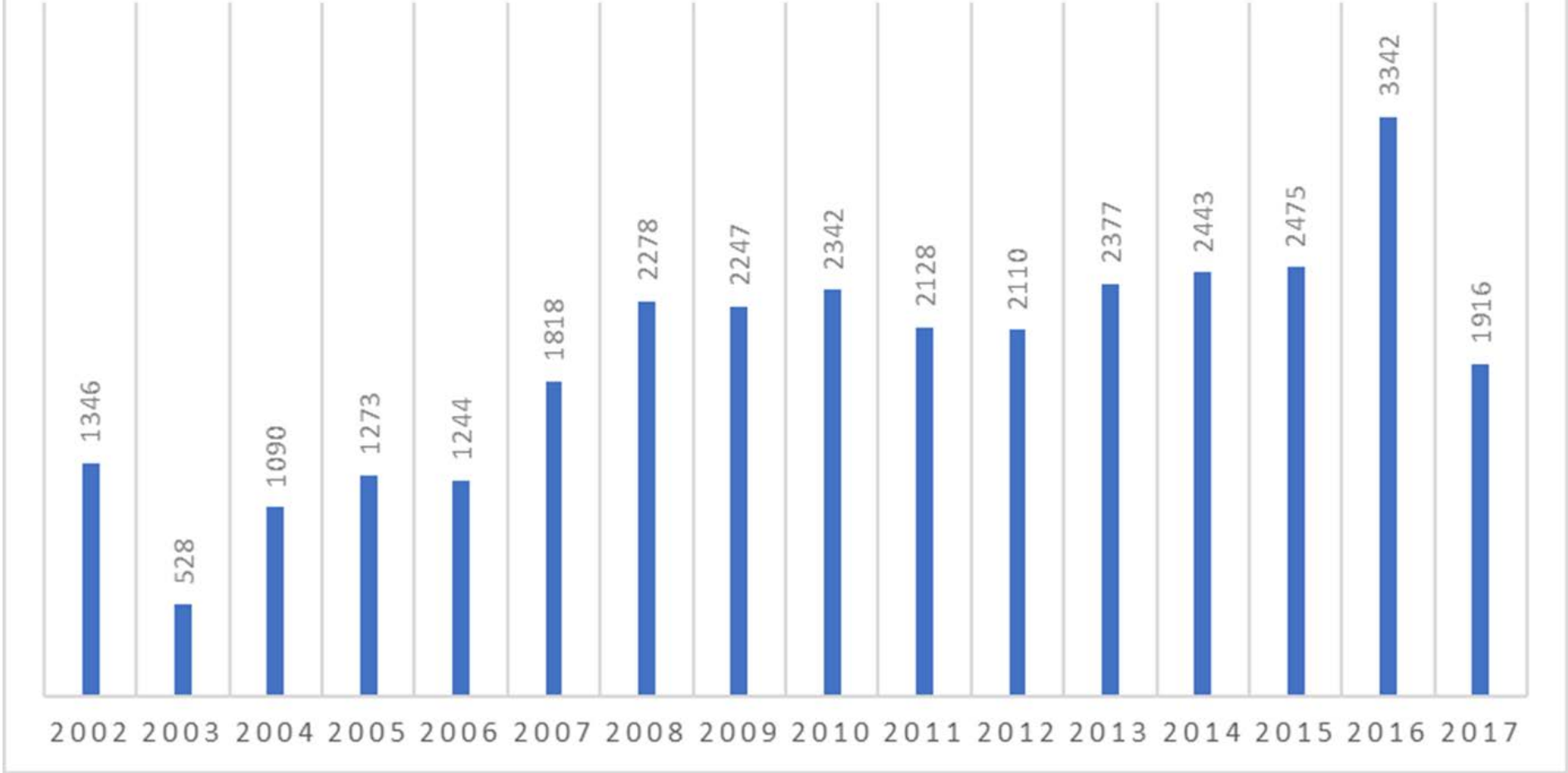
*The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program – before U.S. arrival  
~entire process typically takes at least 18-24 months~*



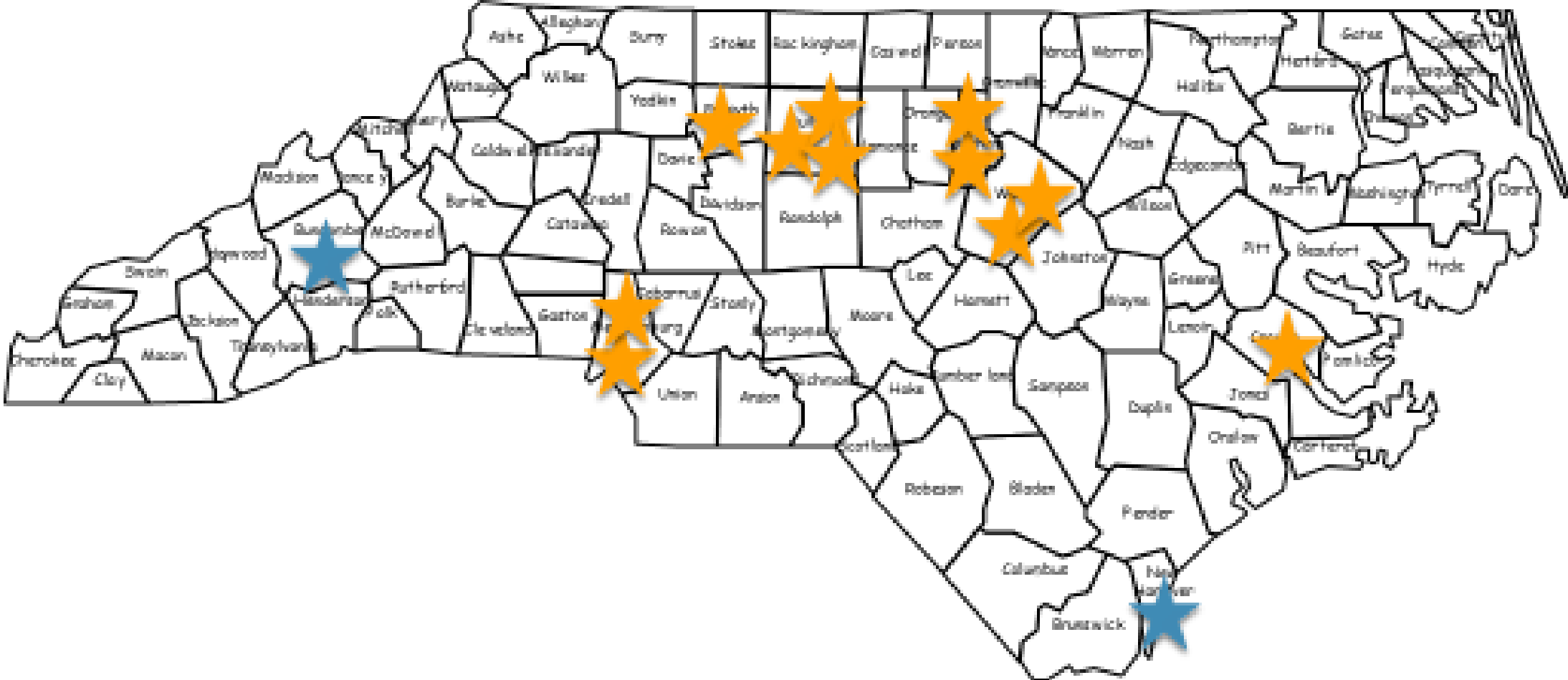
U.S Refugee Resettlement Ceiling and Refugee Arrivals (1975-2018)



# NORTH CAROLINA REFUGEE ARRIVALS



# Resettlement in North Carolina



# Services: U.S. State Dept (PRM)

## Reception and Placement (30 – 90 days after arrival)

- Find and set up Housing (rent and furnishings)
- Provide food and clothing
- Employment Services
- Medical Care Coordination
- Enroll children in school
- Apply for a Social Security card
- Access shopping facilities
- Language support
- Connect with social services

# Services: DHHS Office of Refugee Resettlement

- Refugee Cash Assistance (up to 8 months)
- Refugee Medical Assistance (up to 8 months)
- Refugee Social Services Program: Employability Services (up to 5 years)
  - Job Training and Preparation
  - Job search, placement and retention
  - English language and vocational training
  - Skills recertification
  - Job-related transportation
  - Translation and interpretation
  - Case Management

# Additional Programs Available through ORR

## Match Grant (120 - 180 days to become economically self-sufficient)

- Case Management
- Employment Services
- Maintenance Assistance
- Cash Allowance
- Maximum of \$2,200 per client (\$3,300 total)

## Preferred Communities (up to 5 years)

- Support Special Needs populations
- Intensive Case Management

## Case Study #1

Malanga,  
Refugee from  
Dem Rep Congo





Sept. 2016  
Arrived in U.S. in  
kidney failure.  
Additional  
diagnosis of  
prostate cancer.



## Case Study #2

Y Bli Hra and  
Alai Unk

Montagnard  
refugees who  
arrived in 1992



Y'Bli Hra  
developed  
Type I DM in 2003,  
Cryptococcal  
meningitis in 2017

Alai Unk  
developed  
rheumatoid  
arthritis in 2016



# Common Obstacles and Barriers

- Poverty
- Minimal assistance accessing and navigating the medical system
- Language – lack of vocabulary & understanding of terms & procedures
- Uninsured or under-insured with high co-pays
- Minimal access to support systems and difficulties navigating social services
- Cultural misunderstandings or preconceptions about healthcare
- Experience of not being heard or taken seriously by healthcare providers
- Pharmacy issues such as complicated medication, literacy, & lack of funds to purchase

# References

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# Questions?

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