

AFGHANISTAN REFUGEE

BVOR BACKGROUNDBERS

Photo by Ahmed Akacha





B V O R B A C K G R O U N D E R S

COUNTRY'S RECENT HISTORY OF UNREST/DISPLACEMENT

In December 2020, an estimated 2.2 million Afghan refugees were already in neighbouring countries. The recent unrest has created more internal displacement, but the number of registered refugees has remained relatively stable. Some refugees in nearby countries have been displaced since as early as 1979.

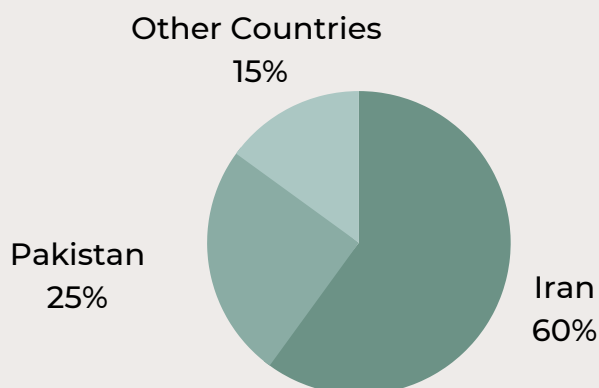
About 60% of Afghan refugees are in **Iran**, with whom Canada does not have diplomatic relations.

Another 25% are in **Pakistan**, and most of the remainder are in

Turkmenistan, **Uzbekistan**, **Tajikistan**, and **China**. While

Pakistan and **Iran** have accepted asylum claimants and given

temporary protections to people seeking asylum, most countries in Central Asia are not signatories of the 1951 Convention on Refugees and do not have a system in place to grant refugee protection long term. **Uzbekistan** and **Tajikistan** were willing to assist in the US, Canadian, and British evacuations. However, they have urged foreign governments to use their countries as only short-term transit before moving the refugees to third countries. (Amnesty International report)



THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN ESTIMATES THAT UP TO 500,000 AFGHANS WILL ARRIVE IN IRAN IN 2021.



B V O R B A C K G R O U N D E R S

MAIN REASONS FOR FLIGHT: VIOLENCE AND INSECURITY

Specific security threats – based on previous work with western military forces, human rights defender

The Taliban have conducted raids on the homes of journalists, activists, and human rights defenders. Security forces have used excessive force to break up protests in several cities. Taliban authorities have also increasingly restricted the rights of women and girls, as they did in areas they previously controlled. Officers have fired all women from leadership posts in the civil service, announced restrictions allowing only boys to attend schools from grade 6 and above, and banned coeducation, which will, for practical reasons, obstruct many girls and women from receiving an education. (HRW)

REASONS FOR RESETTLEMENT: WOMAN AT RISK

Threat to safety due to previous work with western military forces and human rights defenders – the Taliban network extends well past the borders of Afghanistan, and people who were involved in human rights activities or who previously assisted the western military forces are sometimes also still at risk while seeking protection from their neighboring country. Many will cross borders through irregular crossings and not register with the local authorities for fear of the Taliban finding out where they are. They are at significant risk of deportation if found or exploited by those who keep them hidden.

No opportunity for local integration, and unsafe to return to Afghanistan – most countries around Afghanistan are not signatories of the 1951 Convention on Refugees and do not have an asylum determination process. Refugees who seek protection from these states have only temporary status and are always at risk of deportation back to Afghanistan.





B V O R B A C K G R O U N D E R S

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Blended Visa-Office Referred (BVOR) program helps to resettle refugees to Canada identified by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) as those who are the most vulnerable and most in need of resettlement.

The BVOR program is a partnership program between sponsor groups in Canada, Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), and the newcomers. IRCC provides up to six months of income support to the newcomers, while the private sponsors provide the start-up costs, remaining six months financial support, along with social and emotional support for the newcomers' first year in Canada.

For more information about the BVOR program, and to view profiles of refugees that urgently need to be matched with a sponsoring group, please visit our website or contact us via email.

Refugee Sponsorship Training Program

 BVOR@RSTP.CA

 416.290.1700
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 RSTP.CA

 **CCS**
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