

Clarification 1. Rationale for counting in-donor refugee costs as ODA
Q1/ Describe in a nutshell the asylum procedure in your country.

Those who seek asylum must apply through the US Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) or appear before an immigration judge through the Department of Justice, Executive Office for Immigration Review DOJ/EOIR. The US Government does not provide assistance to asylum applicants. Only those granted asylum are eligible for benefits, which may include cash, medical assistance, employment preparation, job placement, and English language training, along with other social services that support the path to self-sufficiency.

Assistance is provided by the following three federal departments: US State Department/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM); US Department of Health and Human Services/Office of Refugee Resettlement (HHS/ORR), and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service. State/PRM supports the initial month of residency and HHS/ORR thereafter, while USDA provides assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP).

State and Territorial governments have no procedural role in the asylum process. While they do provide some assistance to asylum seekers and recipients, the United States does not report that assistance as ODA.

Of those granted asylum by USDHS in 2018 the top countries of origin were:

- China
- Venezuela
- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Egypt

Source: Annual Flow Report (Table 7)¹

In 2018, 22 405 asylum seekers arrived in the United States. In the same year, 25 439 persons were granted asylum affirmatively and 13 248 defensively².

Clarification 2. Meaning of the term “refugees”

Q2/ Indicate the categories of refugees for which costs are included in your ODA reporting: asylum seekers, recognised refugees, persons granted temporary or subsidiary protection.

The United States does provide limited services to asylum seekers centered around resettlement assistance.

¹ https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2018/refugees_asylees_2018.pdf

² Individuals can apply for asylum affirmatively if they are physically present in the U.S., regardless of how they entered the country within one year after arrival. A defensive application for asylum occurs when an asylum seeker requests asylum as a defense against removal from the U.S. For asylum processing to be defensive, a person seeking asylum must be in removal proceedings in immigration court with the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR).

Benefits and services available to United States citizens and residents are only available to refugees granted asylum, therefore only refugees granted asylum have access to SNAP benefits. Services provided by HHS/ORR are also only available to refugees granted asylum. Services provided by PRM Reception and Placement Services are available to refugees for 30 days after arrival in the United States, regardless of status, so costs for these exact services are included for all categories of refugees including asylum seekers.

Clarification 3. Twelve-month rule

Q3/ When does the twelve-month rule start (date of application, date of entry into the country, date of start of support)?

The United States cannot track expenditures attached to individual asylum seekers or those granted asylum. Additionally, the United States also cannot track state and local government expenditures for individuals granted asylum. To reflect estimated participation in SNAP by refugees/asylees an adjustment is made: Assessing refugee/asylee expenditures for the first twelve months of their stay: Arrivals are treated as if they all came on the first day of the year.

The imputed share of SNAP benefits that go to refugees granted asylum in that calendar year is calculated using the Yearbook of Immigration Statistics as detailed in the methodology. PRM assistance services are provided for only 30 days after refugees arrive in the United States. HHS/ORR services are provided to refugees granted asylum beyond one year, but the methodology accounts for assistance beyond one year by attributing only 75% of HHS/ORR calendar year spending as ODA.

	Eligible for Assistance	Period Receiving Assistance	Estimation Method
PRM	All Arrivals	First 30 days	PRM financial flows
HHS/ORR	Granted asylum	First year	Budget attribution
USDA SNAP	Granted asylum	First year	Immigration Yearbook of those granted asylum from ODA eligible countries

Clarification 4. Eligibility of specific cost items

Q4/ Provide the list of cost items included in ODA for each category of refugee and a justification for their inclusion.

The United States is unable at this time to provide a list of cost items included in ODA for each category of refugee and justification for their inclusion.

The United States provides voluntary returns to asylum seekers, however costs associated with these repatriations are not currently available. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) conducts repatriations (removals and returns) via two of its agencies: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

As of 2020 reporting on 2019 flows the United States does include administrative costs in its reporting of ODA for in-donor refugee costs. Moving forward, to comply with DCD/DAC/STAT(2019)16 (paragraph 14) as of 2021 reporting on 2020 flows, the United States will exclude the administrative costs of the U.S. Refugee Processing Center related to management, human resources and information technology.

The US State Department/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

- Refugee Processing Center
- Refugee Processing Center Support
- Resettlement Assistance: No costs for integrating refugees into the U.S. economy are included. PRM Resettlement Assistance activities provide “cultural orientation, processing, transportation and initial placement to refugees inside the United States”, according to the activity descriptions.
- Cultural Orientation Technical Assistance Program
- Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange Project
- Reception and Placement Services in the United States by different organisations such the International Rescue Committee or Church World Service:

(e.g. interpreters who speak various languages, the size and special features of available housing, the availability of schools with special services, medical care, English classes, employment services, etc.)

- Security Advisory Opinion (Sao) Analyst

Moving forward, for 2021 reporting on 2020 ODA for in-donor refugee costs, the United States will exclude PRM activities for “Refugee Processing Center”, “Refugee Processing Center Support” and “Security Advisory Opinion (SAO) Analyst.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement (HHS/ORR)

The United States will reassess the percentage of HHS/ORR it reports as in-donor refugee cost to omit the economic integration activities.

Currently, the United States includes the following programs under HHS/ORR.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement [HHS/ACF/ORR] Refugee and Entrant Assistance budget cost items include funding for: Transitional and Medical Services, Refugee Support Services, Survivors of Torture, Unaccompanied Alien Children, and ;Anti-Trafficking in Persons Programs.

The Transitional and Medical Services (TAMS) program provides refugees and other eligible populations with time-limited assistance to purchase food and clothing, pay rent, use public transportation, and secure medical care. Additionally, this program provides a path to economic self-sufficiency by supplying resources for employment training and placement, case management services, and English language training in order to facilitate economic self-sufficiency and effective resettlement as quickly as possible.

The Refugee Support Services (RSS) program provides services to address barriers to employment, such as social adjustment services, interpretation and translation, childcare, healthcare, and citizenship and naturalization services.



The Survivors of Torture program provides services and rehabilitation for survivors of torture through grants primarily to nonprofit organizations that provide treatment, social and legal services to survivors of torture, and training to health care providers on treating the physical and psychological effects of torture. The Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC) program provides for the shelter, care, and placement of unaccompanied alien children who are referred to ACF's Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) by another federal agency or department. The UAC program funds private non-profit and for-profit agencies to provide shelter, counseling, medical care, legal services, and other support services to children in custody.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 (P.L. 106-386) and subsequent amendments and reauthorizations allow ACF to assist foreign national and domestic (United States citizen and lawful permanent resident) victims of human trafficking and improve the national response to human trafficking through a number of efforts including: screening and identifying victims, providing victims benefits and services, conducting research, and raising awareness and preventing human trafficking.

The Reception and Placement (R&P) Program

Refugees selected for resettlement through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program are eligible for Reception and Placement (R&P) assistance, unlike asylees, who arrive in the United States on their own. Each refugee approved for admission to the United States is sponsored by a non-profit resettlement agency participating in the R&P Program under a cooperative agreement with the Department of State. The resettlement agencies place refugees through a network of approximately 200 local affiliates operating in communities throughout the United States. Through its local affiliates, each agency monitors the resources that each community offers (e.g., interpreters who speak various languages, the size and special features of available housing, the availability of schools with special services, medical care, English classes, employment services, etc.)

The Department of State's standard cooperative agreement with each of the resettlement agencies specifies the services the agency must provide. The R&P Program provides resettlement agencies a one-time payment per refugee to assist with expenses during a refugee's first three months in the United States, but the program anticipates that sponsoring agencies will contribute significant cash or in-kind resources to supplement U.S. government funding.

Food Stamp Usage by Refugees and Asylees in First Year of US Residency (USDA)

Only the costs of SNAP food benefits (food assistance only), no administrative costs, are included.

Clarification 5. Methodology for assessing costs

Q5/ Describe the methodology used for assessing ODA-eligible costs and provide the actual data points and detailed calculations used to reach the figures reported as ODA.

Include responses to the following questions in your description:

- Is the same methodology used to assess costs for different categories of refugees?
- How does your methodology ensure there is no double-counting (e.g. counting the costs for the same person for 12 months as an asylum seeker and another 12 months as a refugee granted status)?
- Do you use imputations when refugees benefit from the services available to all citizens (e.g. education or health)? How do you clearly define the estimate of the number of refugees/asylums seekers benefiting from a particular service for up to 12 months?
- What estimates do you use? What is their source and their frequency of updating?



- How do you assess the share of rejected asylum seekers: based on real data, estimates, well founded expectations? Based on first instance or final rejection?
- Provide data on the number of refugees and per capita costs (included in ODA), the average time to get a decision on status, the average time on support, the share of rejected asylum seekers.

The reported amount is the sum of actual expenditures of State/PRM and estimates on benefits extended to persons from ODA-eligible countries by HSS/ORR and USDA.

Funding of the U.S. Reception and Placement (R&P) program and other U.S.-based refugee assistance activities (State/PRM)

Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration [STATE/PRM], agency raw data submission for 2018

The US State Department/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) reports the sum of actual expenditures in a calendar year.

The United States uses the Yearbook of Immigration statistics to only include those refugees from ODA eligible countries in our estimation of USDA SNAP benefits. PRM and HHS/ORR spending is an estimation that takes into account the ODA eligibility of origin countries.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement (HHS/ORR)

Source 1: FY2020 U.S. Congressional Budget Justification for HHS/ACF [URL: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/olab/olab/budget>], See section "FY2020 (Current)", publication ACF Congressional Budget Justification FY 2020, page 34

Source 2: the FY2018-2019 U.S. Treasury Monthly Treasury Statements (MTS) reports (see relevant tables below)

2018 ODA commitments of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Refugee and Entrant Assistance are calculated from the FY2020 Congressional Budget Justification for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families [HHS/ACF]:

- by taking the FY2018 obligations for Refugee and Entrant Assistance,
- then multiplying by the 0.75 coefficient (to capture HHS/ORR estimate that approximately 75% of their budget is spent on assistance and services during a refugee's first twelve months after arrival),
- then multiplying by the coefficient for percentage of refugees from ODA recipients (this coefficient is 0.988, based on 2017 U.S. refugee figures used for 2018 ODA reporting)

FY2018 Obligations (used as proxy for CY Commitments)	2,449,000,000
* coeff. of budget for first 12-mo. Assistance	0.750
* coeff. for pct of refugees from ODA recipients	0.988
HHS/ACF/ORR CY2018 ODA Commitments =	1,815,174,958



2018 ODA disbursements of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Refugee and Entrant Assistance are calculated from the U.S. Treasury MTS fiscal-year-to-date reports:

- by taking the sum of annual outlays for U.S. fiscal year 2018 and quarterly outlays for FY 2019 Q1, then subtracting the quarterly outlays for FY 2018 Q1,
- then multiplying by the 0.75 coefficient (to capture HHS/ORR estimate that approximately 75% of their budget is spent on assistance and services during a refugee's first twelve months after arrival),
- then multiplying by the coefficient for percentage of refugees from ODA recipients (this coefficient is 0.988, based on 2017 U.S. refugee figures used for 2018 ODA reporting)

Budget appropriation 75 x 1503 Refugee and Entrant Assistance Disbursements (Outlays) for 2018:

+ FY2018 Total Outlays	1 648 573 836 USD
+ FY2019 Q1 Total Outlays	674 395 055 USD
- FY2018 Q1 Total Outlays	- 339 183 609 USD
	1 984 785 282 USD
*coeff. of budget for 12-mo. Assistance	0.750
*coeff. for % of refugees from ODA recipient countries	0.988

2018 ODA disbursements of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
= 1 471 103 528 USD

Food Stamp Usage by Refugees and Asylees in First Year of US Residency (USDA)

Source: USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, "SNAP Data Tables", National Level Annual Summary: Participation and Costs, 1969-2019 <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

	<i>Monthly Average Benefit per Person</i>	<i>(calculated) Annual Average Benefit per Person</i>	Refugees and Asylees Headcount (from year 2017*) From 2018 ODA eligible DAC recipient countries	Total Benefit to Refugees and Asylees per year	ODA Benefit to Refugees and Asylees [total benefit modified by 50% coefficient – for estimated refugee and asylee food stamp program participation rate] This amount is cited for ODA commitments and disbursements.
2018	126.96	1,523.52	68,905	104,978,146	52,489,073
*Note: 2017 refugee and asylee figures were used for CY2018 U.S. in-donor refugee costs calculation due to the 1-year lag in U.S. refugee and asylee data publication by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.					



ODA costs in 2019

	Commitments (USD)	Disbursements (USD)
U.S. Department of State - Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration - US Reception and Placement	\$92,313,859	\$97,607,957
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement	\$1,815,174,958	\$1,471,103,528
U.S. Department of Agriculture - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	\$52,489,073	\$52,489,073
Total U.S. In-donor Refugee Costs CY2018	\$1,959,977,890	\$1,621,200,558

Refugee/Asylee Headcount (in 2017*) from ODA-eligible Countries	68,905	68,905
Refugee/Asylee total headcount (in 2017*)	69,724	69,724
Refugee and Asylee Arrivals from ODA-eligible countries as percentage of total Refugee and Asylee Arrivals	98.83%	98.83%
2018 In-donor Refugee Costs Per Capita	\$28,445	\$23,528

*Note: 2017 refugee and asylee³ figures were used for CY2018 U.S. in-donor refugee costs ODA calculation due to the 1-year lag in U.S. refugee and asylee data publication by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

OECD DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
 OECD DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE
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³ In the context of the U.S. methodology an asylee can be considered an asylum seeker. A refugee seeking entry into the United States would be seeking asylum by necessity.