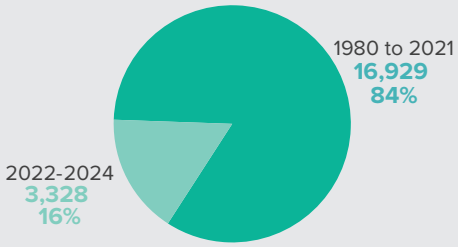
UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

PAKISTAN OPERATION
Resettlement Factsheet
as of 30 April 2025

31,230
Total RST case members submitted from 1980 to 2024

20,257
Total RST case members departed from 1980 to 2024

RST DEPARTURE BY YEARS



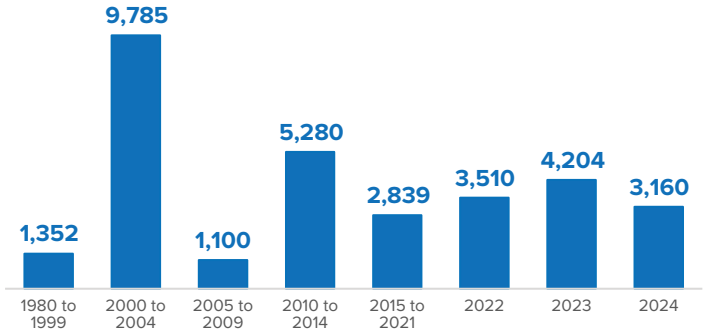
OVERVIEW

UNHCR is mandated by its Statute and the UN General Assembly Resolutions to undertake resettlement as one of three durable solutions. Resettlement is unique in that it is the only durable solution that involves the relocation of refugees from an asylum country to a third country. It demonstrates responsibility-sharing and collaboration between the host state and the resettlement countries. It also allows refugees to settle permanently in another country with a legal status ensuring international protection and a chance to build a new home for themselves. Resettlement is a protection response for the most vulnerable refugees including survivors of violence and torture, vulnerable women and girls, persons exposed to gender-based violence, certain profiles of at-risk children, and persons with serious medical conditions.

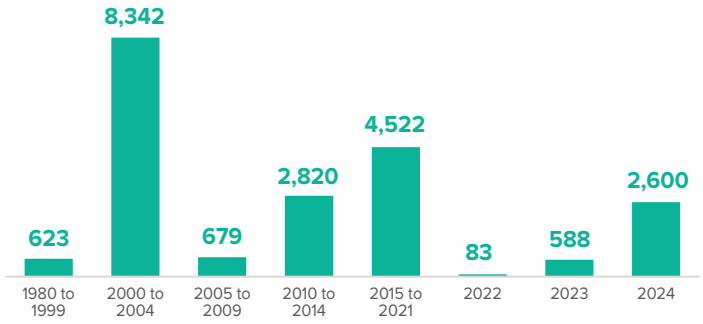
UNHCR Pakistan's Resettlement Programme prioritizes Afghan refugees for resettlement consideration. The Office estimates that some 110,000 refugees and asylum-seekers in Pakistan have both high-risk profiles with increased international protection needs, and specific or cumulative vulnerabilities that could qualify them for resettlement, including a minimum 8% of POR cardholders.

The Resettlement Program in Pakistan has been active since the 1980s and currently more than 20,000 vulnerable refugees have now departed for resettlement to third countries to find safety and rebuild their lives.

RST SUBMISSIONS: 1980 TO 2024*

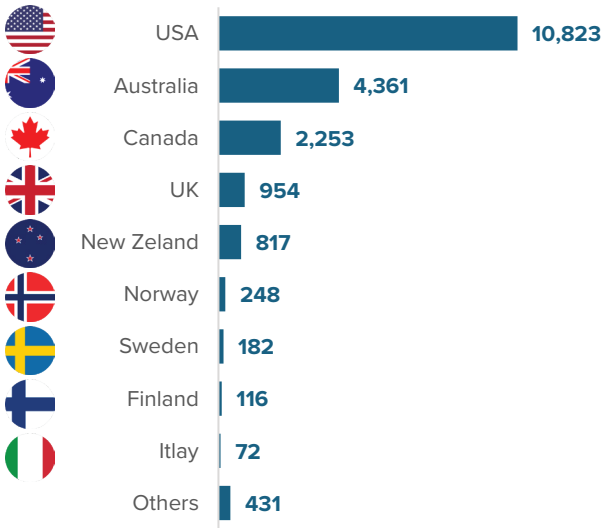


RST DEPARTURES: 1980 TO 2024



RESETTLEMENT DEPARTURES BY COUNTRIES

In 2021, following the changed situation in Afghanistan, there was a renewed interest by the international community for the resettlement of Afghan refugees leading to an increase in resettlement quotas for Afghan refugees in Pakistan.



UNHCR RESETTLEMENT VIS-A-VIS EMBASSY EVACUATION PROGRAMS IN PAKISTAN

While UNHCR's Resettlement Programme in Pakistan has existed for decades, following the developments in Afghanistan in 2021, several diplomatic missions in Pakistan established their own "safe passage" programs to facilitate the evacuation and relocation of Afghan nationals affiliated with their foreign missions in Afghanistan. Safe Passage Programmes established by various countries are outside the framework of UNHCR's Resettlement Programme, and UNHCR is not involved in the process.

Refugees identified by UNHCR for Resettlement are individually assessed by UNHCR staff to determine their international protection needs and specific vulnerabilities. Refugees are submitted for resettlement to countries that have allocated quotas to UNHCR Pakistan independently from their Safe Passage Programmes. UNHCR Pakistan's Resettlement Programme has always been generously supported by the Government of Pakistan over decades of collaboration.

**Due to complex exit permit process and related fees, several countries have withdrawn or greatly reduced their resettlement quotas from 2024. UNHCR is seeking support from the Government of Pakistan to reinstate the long-standing, "free of charge" exit permit system for refugees submitted under UNHCR's Resettlement Program.*

For further information please visit the Pakistan Operational Data Portal or please contact pakisim@unhcr.org