

# HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

Sources: JustFaith Ministries ([www.justfaith.org](http://www.justfaith.org)); International Organization for Migration, The U.N. Migration Agency ([www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int))

## **Alien**

A person who is not a national of a given State.

## **Asylum Seeker**

A person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than his or her own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, the person must leave the country and may be expelled, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds.

## **Deportation**

The act of a State in the exercise of its sovereignty in removing an alien from its territory to a certain place after refusal of admission or termination of permission to remain.

## **Displacement**

Forced removal of a person from his/her home or country, often due to armed conflict or disasters.

## **Economic Migrant**

A person leaving his/her habitual place of residence to settle outside his/her country of origin to improve their quality of life. This term may be used to distinguish from refugees fleeing persecution. It also applies to people settling outside their country of origin for the duration of an agricultural season, i.e. seasonal workers.

## **Forced Migration**

A migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes. For example, refugees, internally displaced persons, and people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects.

## **Internally Displaced Person (IDP)**

People who have had to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, generalized violence, violations of human rights, or natural or human-made disasters; and who have *not* crossed an internationally recognized national border.

## **Migrant**

A migrant is any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a country away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is.

## **Naturalization**

Granting by a country of its nationality to a non-national through a formal act on the application of the individual concerned. International law does not provide detailed rules for naturalization, but it recognizes the competence of every country to naturalize those who are not its nationals and who apply to become its nationals.

## **Pull and Push Factors**

Migration is often analyzed in terms of the "push-pull model", which looks at the push factors, which drive people to leave their country (such as economic, social, or political problems) and the pull factors attracting them to the country of destination.

### **Refugee**

A person who, "owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, 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." (Art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees).

### **Remittances**

Monies earned or acquired by non-nationals that are transferred back to their country of origin.

### **Resettlement**

The relocation and integration of people (refugees, internally displaced persons, etc.) into another geographical area, usually in a third country. In the refugee context, the transfer of refugees from the country in which they have sought refuge to another country that has agreed to admit them.

### **Trafficking**

"The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation" (Art. 3(a), UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000). Trafficking in persons can take place within one country's borders or from one country to another.

### **Unaccompanied Minors**

Youth who are not accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other adult who by law or custom is responsible for them. Unaccompanied minors present special challenges for border control officials, because detention and other practices used with undocumented adults may not be appropriate for minors.

### **Undocumented**

A migrant who enters or stays in a country without the appropriate documentation. This includes, among others: (a) a person without legal documentation to enter a country but manages to enter clandestinely, (b) a person who enters using fraudulent documentation, (c) a person who, after entering using legal documentation, has stayed beyond the time authorized or otherwise violated the terms of entry and remained without authorization.

### **A Few Helpful Abbreviations:**

DACA: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

DHS: Department of Homeland Security.

ICE: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

LPR: Lawful Permanent Resident or Green Card holder.

TPS: Temporary Protected Status.

UNHCR: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, created in 1950 in the aftermath of World War II.

USCIS: United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.