

Utah's Disability Diversity: Refugee Communities

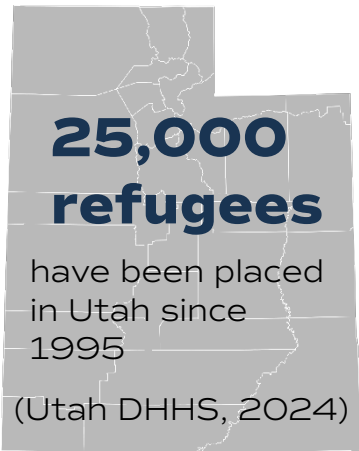


Utah's Multicultural Disability Network

For references, visit idrpp.usu.edu/projects/mulldinet-utah

Refugee

a person who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of nationality because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. (Dep. of Homeland Security, 2022)

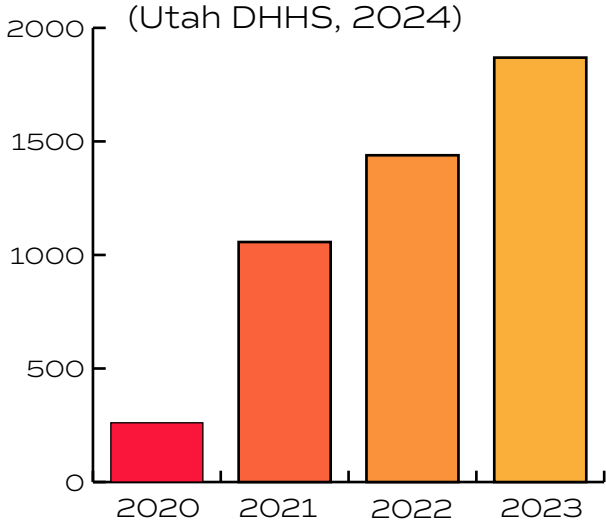


An estimated **20%** of global refugees have a **disability** (Women's Refugee Commission, 2017)

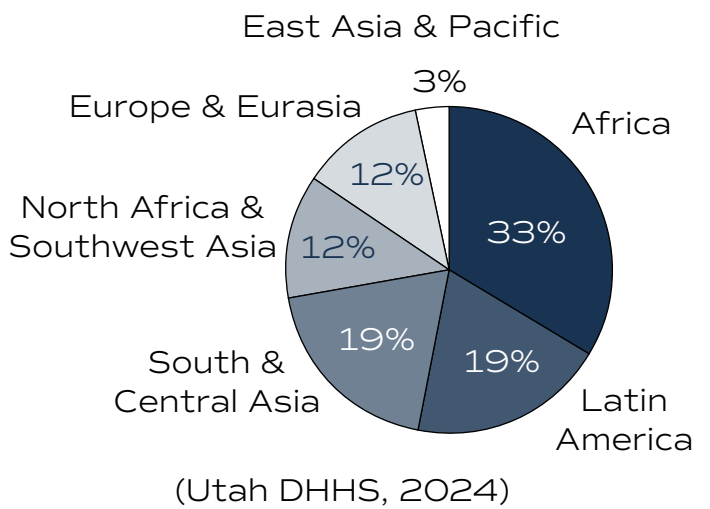
Refugees most likely to have disabilities are:

- Older (+7% every +10 years) (Kaur et al., 2024)
- Not fluent in English (72%)
- From Southwest Asia & North Africa (42%)
Likely due to wars & challenges in journey to resettlement

How many refugees come to Utah in a year? (Utah DHHS, 2024)



Where do refugees in Utah come from? (Utah DHHS, 2024)



Some Unique Barriers Refugees Face (Adams & Santos, 2022)

Unique cultural perspectives, often valuing collectivism over individualism	Perceived lack of power when communicating with providers
Unique understanding of disabilities	School systems not equipped to support diverse languages/cultures
Differing cultural parenting values	Impact of lived experiences and relocation trauma
Difficulty understanding language surrounding disability services	Pressure & challenges of adjusting to a new country

“Due to the unique set of circumstances surrounding refugees’ **escape from their home countries and resettlement in their new host countries, they face several challenges that increase their risk of developing mental or physical disabilities** at various points in their lives, including physical and psychological trauma and fragmented access to healthcare, education, and social services.” (Kaur et al., 2024)

Teach Refugee Families to Advocate (Adams & Santos, 2022)

- Understand disability characteristics & value of early intervention
- Disagree & ask questions with providers in meetings
- How to seek disability resources through schools, government programs, & healthcare facilities
- Ensure interpretation services

