

Immigration Glossary of Terms

Alien: a person who is not a citizen or national of the United States. It includes people who are here legally, as well as people who are here in violation of the Immigration and Naturalization Act.

Asylum: Permission granted to reside in the U.S. to a person fleeing persecution in another country. Under current U.S. law, to receive asylum a person must be entitled to refugee status.

Family-Sponsored Immigration: U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents can petition to bring immediate family members from other countries to live permanently in the U.S.

Free Trade Agreements: Treaties between countries that facilitate the free movement of labor and capital that remove certain taxes, environmental laws and worker protections.

Guest Worker: Temporary workers admitted to the U.S. under one of 70 visas categories.

Immigrant: A foreign born individual residing in the United States.

Legal Permanent Resident (LPR): A person who has been granted permission to live in the U.S., but who is not yet a citizen. Also known as a green card holder.

Naturalization: The name of the process through which qualifying individuals maintain their status and meet certain other eligibility criteria to become U.S. citizens. Applicants must generally reside in the U.S. for five years.

Legal Non-Citizen: An individual who is permitted to enter the U.S. for a period of limited duration including students, tourists, temporary workers, business executives, diplomats, artists, entertainers and reporters that must pass immigration inspection upon arrival in the U.S.

Refugee: Under U.S. law, a person who has a well-founded fear of persecution in his/her country of nationality by reason of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. Under the Refugee Act of 1980, persons whose asylum claim is approved can, after a year, apply for residence. Once granted asylum, the person is called an *asylee*.

Undocumented Immigrant: A person who is in the country without the permission of the U.S. government. They lack the required paperwork. Undocumented immigrants enter the U.S. either illegally, without being inspected by an immigration officer, or by using false documents; or legally, with a temporary visa, and then remain in the U.S. beyond the expiration date of the visa.

U.S. Citizen: Includes everyone born in the U.S., as well as a person born abroad to U.S. citizen parents, or who immigrated to the U.S. and became a "naturalized" citizen.

International Terms

Migrant

No agreed upon definition. Could include the following ideas:

- Persons outside the country of which they are citizens, and in the territory of another state;
- Persons who do not enjoy the legal recognition of rights in the host state through the status of refugee, permanent resident or a similar status.

Irregular migrant also known as an undocumented person

An irregular (or undocumented) migrant is a person who lacks legal status in a transit or host country.

Immigrant

Person who leaves one country to reside permanently in another.

(Convention) Refugee

Person who, by reason of fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside their country of nationality and is unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of this country.

Internally displaced persons

Internally displaced persons are those forced or obliged to flee their homes or places of habitual residence, usually in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, but have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.

Source: International Organization for Migration—www.iom.int

