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Refugee Arrivals in the Mountain West, 2017-2021

Demography Fact Sheet No. 19 | September 2021

Prepared by: Saha Salahi and William E. Brown, Jr.

PURPOSE:

This fact sheet displays data on the influx of refugee arrivals by nation to five Mountain West States: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. Refugee Processing Center data, selected from annual reports and limited to the years 2017-2021, are presented.¹

ABOUT THE DATA:

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) refugee case management systems report refugee arrivals for each fiscal year. The RPC Office of Admissions reports the annual refugee arrivals by state and nation from 2010-2020. This factsheet analyzes data from the years 2017-2021. The annual fiscal year (FY) reports date from October 1st - September 30th of each year. Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) recipients who have elected and received U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) Reception and Placement (R&P) benefits are not included in this report.

For this fact sheet, the most current data available at the time of publication for 2021 represent only nine months, from October 1st, 2020–July 31st, 2021.²

KEY FINDINGS:

1. Among Mountain West states, New Mexico accepts the least total number of refugees each year. Arizona accepts the greatest number of refugees.
2. The most refugee arrivals in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah for 2017-2020 are from the Democratic Republic of Congo.
3. In the FY 2020 annual report the state rankings for the number of refugees accepted among Mountain West states are: Arizona (9th), Colorado (22nd), Utah (24th), Nevada (31st), and New Mexico (40th).

Table 1 displays refugee arrivals from 2017-2020 in five Mountain West states: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. The 2021 refugee arrivals in each state represent a partial year (October 1, 2020-July 31, 2021). Arizona accepts the most refugee arrivals among the Mountain West states. Colorado receives the second largest influx of refugee arrivals, Utah is third, and Nevada is fourth. New Mexico accepts the least total number of refugees each year among Mountain West states.

¹ Refugee Processing Center annual reports from 2010-2020, "Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality." (<https://www.wrapsnet.org/archives/>)

² Refugee Processing Center. "Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality report," from Oct. 01, 2020, through July 31, 2021. (<https://www.wrapsnet.org/documents/Refugee%20Arrivals%20by%20State%20and%20Nationality%20as%20of%2031%20Jul%202021.pdf>)

Table 1: Refugee Arrivals in the Mountain West States, 2017-2021

Placement State	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	Totals 2021 ³
Arizona	2,250	1,000	1,216	432	255
Colorado	1,144	486	635	195	119
Nevada	469	213	224	81	37
New Mexico	155	65	132	27	17
Utah	716	320	463	186	86

*Adapted from Refugee Processing Center annual reports from 2010-2020, “Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality.”

Table 2 displays the top 5 nations for refugee arrivals for FY 2017 in five Mountain West states: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. Nevada lists six nations because of the same number of refugee arrivals from Eritrea and Somalia. The most refugee arrivals for Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah are from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Most of Colorado’s refugees arrived from Somalia.

Table 2: FY 2017 Refugee Arrivals in Mountain West States

Placement State	Nationality	FY 2017
Arizona	Dem. Rep. Congo	755
	Iraq	343
	Somalia	338
	Syria	294
	Burma	93
Colorado	Somalia	208
	Dem. Rep. Congo	182
	Burma	173
	Syria	122
	Iraq	102
Nevada	Dem. Rep. Congo	118
	Syria	77
	Iran	56
	Iraq	40
	Eritrea	38
	Somalia	38
New Mexico	Dem. Rep. Congo	78
	Somalia	15
	Iraq	14
	Afghanistan	11
	Syria	8
Utah	Dem. Rep. Congo	215
	Iraq	124
	Somalia	95
	Burma	81
	Republic of South Sudan	30
	Syria	30

*Adapted from Refugee Processing Center annual reports from 2017, “Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality.”

³ Refugee Processing Center. “Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality report,” from Oct. 01, 2020, through July 31, 2021. (<https://www.wrapsnet.org/documents/Refugee%20Arrivals%20by%20State%20and%20Nationality%20as%20of%2031%20Jul%202021.pdf>)

Table 3 displays the top 5 nations for refugee arrivals for FY 2018 in five Mountain West states: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. The most refugee arrivals for each state are from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Table 3: FY 2018 Refugee Arrivals in Mountain West States

Placement State	Nationality	FY 2018
Arizona	Dem. Rep. Congo	585
	Afghanistan	98
	Eritrea	87
	Burma	70
	Pakistan	43
Colorado	Dem. Rep. Congo	177
	Burma	113
	Eritrea	62
	Bhutan	31
	Afghanistan	20
Nevada	Dem. Rep. Congo	99
	Eritrea	42
	Afghanistan	20
	Ethiopia	11
	Pakistan	10
New Mexico	Dem. Rep. Congo	35
	Afghanistan	15
	Burundi	10
	Vietnam	3
	Rwanda	2
Utah	Dem. Rep. Congo	160
	Burma	44
	Eritrea	23
	Somalia	19
	Ethiopia	16

* Refugee Processing Center annual reports from 2018, "Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality."

Table 4 displays the top 5 nations for refugee arrivals for FY 2019 in five Mountain West states: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. The most refugee arrivals for each state are from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Table 4: FY 2019 Refugee Arrivals in Mountain West States

Placement State	Nationality	FY 2019
Arizona	Dem. Rep. Congo	762
	Eritrea	116
	Burma	98
	Afghanistan	79
	Syria	24
Colorado	Dem. Rep. Congo	256
	Burma	110
	Eritrea	59
	Ukraine	51
	Belarus	26
Nevada	Dem. Rep. Congo	122
	Afghanistan	18
	Eritrea	18
	Iran	16
	Burundi	13
New Mexico	Dem. Rep. Congo	93
	Afghanistan	19
	Burundi	17
	Iran	2
	Syria	1
Utah	Dem. Rep. Congo	255
	Burma	71
	Eritrea	38
	Central African Republic	29
	Sudan	19

* Refugee Processing Center annual reports from 2019, "Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality."

Table 5 displays the top 5 nationalities of the refugee arrivals for FY 2020 in five Mountain West states: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. Arizona shows six nationalities because of the same number of refugee arrivals from Iraq and Syria. New Mexico accepted refugees from two nations, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic. The most refugee arrivals for Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah are from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Burma provided the highest number of refugee arrivals in Colorado.

Table 5: FY 2020 Refugee Arrivals in Mountain West States

Placement State	Nationality	FY 2020
Arizona	Dem. Rep. Congo	183
	Burma	67
	Afghanistan	45
	Eritrea	29
	Iraq	19
	Syria	19
Colorado	Burma	39
	Dem. Rep. Congo	34
	Ukraine	23
	Syria	18
	Iraq	12
Nevada	Dem. Rep. Congo	18
	Iraq	12
	Afghanistan	8
	El Salvador	8
	Eritrea	8
New Mexico	Dem. Rep. Congo	25
	Central African Republic	2
Utah	Dem. Rep. Congo	68
	Burma	24
	Eritrea	15
	Sudan	13
	Central African Republic	9
	Ivory Coast	9

* Refugee Processing Center annual reports from 2020, "Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality."

Table 6 displays the top 5 nations for refugee arrivals for FY 2021 in five Mountain West states: Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. Data for FY 2021 represents a partial year, **October 1*, 2020, through July 31*, 2021**. Arizona shows six nationalities because of the same number of refugee arrivals from Iraq and Syria. New Mexico accepted refugees from two nations, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic. The most refugee arrivals for Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah came from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Most of Colorado’s refugee arrivals travelled from Burma.

Table 6: 2021 (Nine Months) Refugee Arrivals in Mountain West States

Placement State	Nationality	Totals 2021 ⁴
Arizona	Dem. Rep. Congo	168
	Afghanistan	18
	Iraq	18
	Syria	14
	Iran	10
	Somalia	10
Colorado	Burma	17
	Dem. Rep. Congo	17
	Liberia	14
	Syria	13
	Eritrea	10
	Sudan	10
Nevada	Dem. Rep. Congo	11
	Afghanistan	10
	Iran	6
	El Salvador	4
	Syria	4
New Mexico	Dem. Rep. Congo	11
	Afghanistan	6
Utah	Dem. Rep. Congo	45
	Syria	15
	Iraq	8
	Afghanistan	7
	Sudan	5

* Refugee Processing Center reports from Oct. 01, 2020, through July 31, 2021, “Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality.”

⁴ The most current data available at the time of publication for 2021 represents only nine months, from October 1*, 2020– July 31*, 2021. (<https://www.wrapsnet.org/documents/Refugee%20Arrivals%20by%20State%20and%20Nationality%20as%20of%2031%20Jul%202021.pdf>)