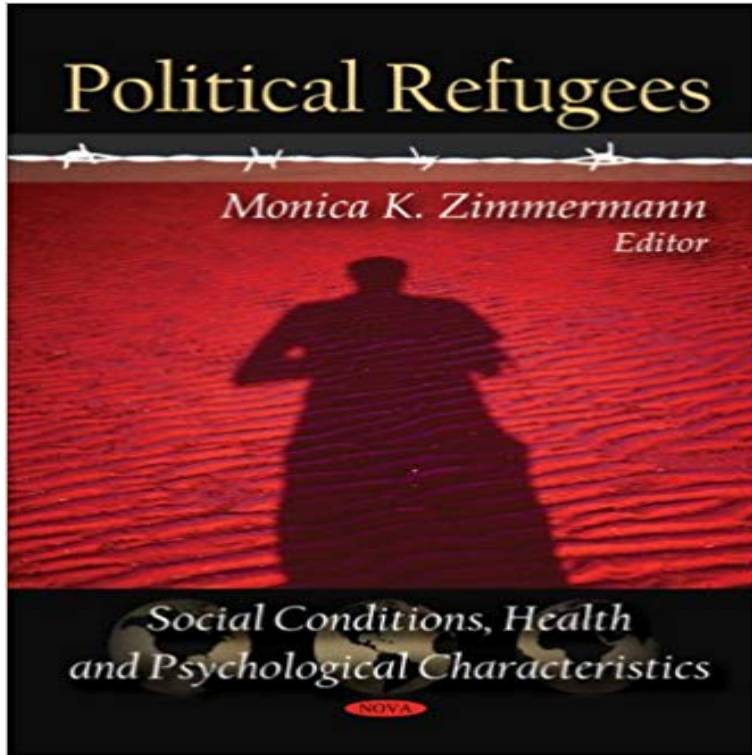


# Political Refugees: Social Conditions, Health and Psychological Characteristics



A refugee is a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail him/herself of the protection of that country (according to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees). The concept of a refugee was expanded by the Conventions 1967 Protocol and by regional conventions in Africa and Latin America to include persons who had fled war or other violence in their home country. A person who is seeking to be recognised as a refugee is an asylum seeker. In the United States a recognised asylum seeker is known as an asylee. Refugee was defined as a legal group in response to the large numbers of people fleeing Eastern Europe following World War II. The lead international agency co-ordinating refugee protection is the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which counted 28.4 million refugees world-wide at the beginning of 2006. This was the lowest number since 1980. The major exception is the 4.3 million Palestinian refugees under the authority of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), who are the only group to be granted refugee status to the descendants of refugees according to the above definition. The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants gives the world total as 12,019,700 refugees and estimates there are over 34,000,000 displaced by war, including internally displaced persons, who remain within the same national borders. The majority of refugees who leave their country seek asylum in countries neighbouring their country of nationality. The durable solutions to refugee populations, as defined by UNHCR and

governments, are: voluntary repatriation to the country of origin; local integration into the country of asylum; and resettlement to a third country. This book presents the latest thinking in this field.

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**and Society on Mental Health** In this chapter, the negative social and economic conditions are considered to be catalyst  
The debate about what the effect of social conditions on terroristic behavior to adapt refugees to normal social life  
since the refugee life spawns potential improving basic education and health institutions promoting democratic