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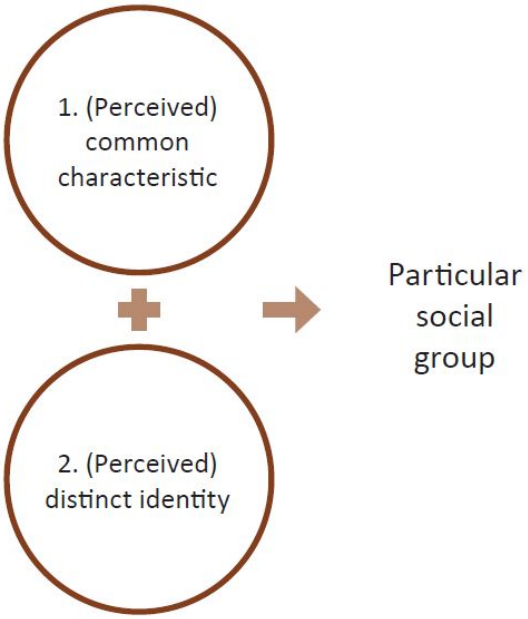
Membership of a particular social group

The concept of ‘particular social group’ is understood as a flexible construct, prone to evolve with time. However, in order to preserve the integrity of the Geneva Convention and the QD and to ensure it will not make other grounds superfluous, this ground cannot be interpreted as a ‘catch-all’ category.

According to the QD, a group shall be considered to form a particular social group where:

- members of that group share an innate characteristic, or a common background that cannot be changed, or share a characteristic or belief that is so fundamental to identity or conscience that a person should not be forced to renounce it; and
- that group has a distinc ause it is perceived as being different by the surroun



For further explanation see the subsection 'Common characterisitc' and 'Perception of distinct identity'.

Additional guidance on what groups constitute particular social groups may exist at national level.

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