

Refugee Crisis Update

October/November 2018



Serving Refugee & Immigrant Neighbors Together

Refugees and U.S. Policy: Tens of thousands of refugees continue to be impacted by current U.S. resettlement policies. We believe we as a country can have safety and compassion.

- The White House lowered the ceiling on the number of refugees who can come to the U.S. to a record low of 30,000 starting October 1 (from 45,000 in PY2018 and 110,000 in PY2016).
- This past PY (ending Sept 30) was the lowest number of refugees admitted in U.S. history – only 22,491.
- Only 62 Syrian refugees were resettled in the U.S. in PY2018 compared to 6,587 in PY2017 and 12,587 in PY2016. This is a 99.5% decrease in the number allowed into the U.S.
- There are special restrictions on refugees coming from 8 countries (including Christians and other minorities). In PY2018 the U.S. admitted 64% fewer Christian refugees and 93% fewer Muslim refugees than the previous year.
- Restrictions have been placed on refugee reunification (family members in camps not being allowed to join those already in the U.S.). This impacts many especially from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.
- Statistics show that the refugee resettlement program is the safest U.S. immigration program. No one in the U.S. has been killed by a terrorist act committed by any of the 3+ million refugees resettled since 1980. Yet, there is a “virtual wall” excluding many refugees, including many persecuted Christians.
- In PY2018 Arrive Ministries resettled 104 refugees. We were previously resettling about 400 per year.
- We have expanded our outreach to those refugees who are already in Minnesota and to asylum-seekers. We have experienced large numbers of volunteers in our Somali Adult Literacy Training (SALT) and Refugee Life Ministries (RLM) programs for which we are grateful

Refugees Worldwide (Source-UNHCR):

- 25.4 million refugees worldwide (and 3.1 million asylum-seekers)
 - 6.3 million Syrians have fled as refugees
 - More than 62% of the 2.0 million refugees who have fled Southern Sudan are children
 - More than 8,000 drowned in the Mediterranean seeking safety in 2016 and 2017
 - 17 years is the average length of time a refugee spends in a camp until they are resettled
- 40 million Internally Displaced People (IDP), including 6.6 million Syrians and 3.0 million Yemenis

Refugees in the United States (Source – U.S. State Department):

- 3,000,000 refugees from all countries have arrived in the U.S. over the past 30+ years.
- From 2002 to 2017, the U.S. admitted 405,000 Christian refugees and 302,000 Muslim refugees. 46% of all refugees who have entered the U.S. during this time were Christian while 33% were Muslim (Pew Research Center).
- More than 250,000 women/children have been resettled in the U.S. since 2011 (70% of total).
- 18-24 months is the average security screening time for a refugee before arriving in the U.S.
- The Administration lowered the ceiling on the number of refugees to be allowed into the United States annually from 110,000 in PY2017 to 45,000 in PY2018 to 30,000 for PY2019 (or a maximum of only one refugee admitted for every 12,000 U.S. residents).

What this means:

- The U.S. has seriously cut the number of refugees who can be resettled in the U.S. Fewer refugees are helped and family reunification cases will be put on hold indefinitely.
- Refugees in the U.S. are protected by U.S. law. Refugee status does not expire, but we encourage refugees to apply for Green Cards (after 1 year) and to become U.S. Citizens (after 5 years).

DACA/Dreamers—A Primer

- **What is DACA?** The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, better known as DACA, temporarily shielded certain child immigrants (often called Dreamers) from deportation and made them eligible for work permits. It was considered a temporary measure until Congress addressed immigration reform.
- **Who is eligible for DACA?** To qualify, immigrants had to have been under 31 at the time the program was announced (2012), have come to the U.S. before reaching their 16th birthday, have lived in the U.S. continually since June 15, 2007 and have no criminal record. About 1.6 million children qualified for DACA, but not all registered for the program.
- **Why did DACA end?** A year ago, Attorney General Jeff Sessions declared that DACA would end on March 5th. The Administration said the deadline would force Congress to find a substitute for DACA. Congress has not found a substitute and, in the meantime, Dreamers are in limbo and federal judges have ordered the Administration to accept renewals to prevent deportation.
- **How many people have DACA?** The total number of DACA recipients, reported by Department of Homeland Security, is around 800,000.
- **What can I do?** Pray that Congress would act and debate immigration reform. Please advocate on behalf of Dreamers who have no country to go back to and have no other way to become legal residents of the U.S. For more information visit <http://evangelicalimmigrationtable.com>

Temporary Protective Status

- **What is TPS:** The Secretary of Homeland Security can designate a foreign country for TPS due to conditions in the country that temporarily prevent the country's nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances, where the country is unable to handle the return of its nationals adequately because of such things as ongoing armed conflict (such as civil war) or environmental disaster (such as earthquake or hurricane), or an epidemic.
- **Countries for which TPS has been terminated**
 - Liberia: TPS terminated March 2018
 - Nepal: TPS terminating June 2019
 - Nicaragua: TPS terminating January 2019
 - Yemen: TPS valid through September 2018
 - Haiti: TPS terminating July 2019
 - El Salvador: TPS terminating September 2019
 - Sudan: TPS terminating November 2019
 - Honduras: TPS terminating January 2020
- **Countries which may lose TPS status**
 - South Sudan: TPS valid through May 2019
 - Syria: TPS valid through September 2019
 - Somalia: TPS valid through March 2020

How to respond:

- **Pray** for our country's leaders, refugees around the world, and the church.
- **Love** your friends, neighbors, and coworkers who are refugees, DACA or on TPS. They are feeling disheartened and fearful right now and unsure of the future of their loved ones still overseas.
- **Advocate** for refugees overseas and for a compassionate response to refugee resettlement and for Dreamers from our leaders in Washington.
- **Volunteer and support Arrive Ministries.** We still have refugees being resettled and many families already here who desire friendship, ESL/tutoring help, employment mentors, and other practical support.
- Above all "love your neighbor as yourself."

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