



A Look at the FY 2021 Report to Congress on Refugees

Good information, but likely to change under a Biden administration

By Nayla Rush

The president's "Report to Congress on Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2021", released this October, provides us with a snapshot of the Trump administration's refugee and asylum policy in FY 2020 and its projections for FY 2021 (those will likely be short-lived with the new Biden administration).¹ I highlight a number of important points below, followed by more detail and longer excerpts on key matters. All quotes are from the report's text; emphases are mine.

- In FY 2020, the United States admitted over 11,000 refugees for resettlement (under a ceiling of 18,000) and granted asylum to approximately 31,000 individuals.
- Recent years have seen an increase in asylum claims by migrants encountered along or near the U.S. southern border with Mexico. New cases add to the lengthy backlog of pending claims and undermine the integrity of the asylum system. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United States led the world in the number of new asylum applications received in calendar years 2017, 2018, and 2019.
- Because of the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting travel restrictions, the U.S. refugee resettlement program was suspended from March 19 to July 29, 2020, except for those who were considered as "emergency cases". (As I wrote in October, the Covid-19 pandemic slowed down, but did not halt, refugee arrivals in FY 2020. Also, none of those resettled during the suspension or afterward were tested for the Covid-19 virus prior to being admitted here.²)
- The pandemic also decreased the number of asylum seekers at the U.S. southern border. The CDC issued an order in March suspending the introduction of persons into the United States at or near the U.S. borders with Canada and Mexico. Although the number of such encounters dipped at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, it has now returned to its pre-pandemic level. (We can expect even higher numbers under a Biden administration since Joe Biden vowed to end "Trump's detrimental asylum policies" once in office.³)
- The Covid-19 pandemic has made it harder for resettled refugees to attain self-sufficiency. Widespread hiring freezes, layoffs, and reduced hours, wages, and benefits in the hospitality and transportation industries hit many refugees, who often find their first jobs in these sectors. (This will be even more problematic with the resettlement of up to 125,000 refugees in FY 2021, as Biden has pledged.⁴)
- Enhanced security vetting is applied to refugee candidates for resettlement in the United States. Refugees may pose an additional risk to the security of the United States because if it is determined after admission that they present a threat to national security or public safety, it is extremely difficult to remove certain

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refugees in immigration proceedings for lack of a country to which they can be removed without the possibility of persecution. Refugees from high-risk areas of terrorist presence or control such as Somalia, Syria, and Yemen are not allowed in. (Joe Biden, in a video address to Muslim advocates, announced putting an end to these restrictions on day one of his presidency.⁵)

- U.S. humanitarian assistance reaches millions of displaced people worldwide, including those who will never be considered for resettlement in a third country. The Trump administration prioritizes proximity help and the safe and voluntary return of refugees to their home countries — the solution that most refugees prefer. (A Biden administration on the other hand — like the Obama administration — is likely to favor increasing the number of resettlement spots as well as to look for “other channels” or “private sponsorships” to admit more refugees into the United States outside of the refugee resettlement program.⁶)
- In FY 2021, the United States under the Trump administration was projecting to receive more than 300,000 refugees and new asylum claims: 290,000 new asylum claimants and 15,000 resettled refugees under the new refugee admissions ceiling. (Joe Biden did vow to increase FY 2021 refugee ceiling to 125,000 and “restore asylum laws” should he win the presidency.⁷ Under a Biden administration, we can expect at least 700,000 refugees and new asylum claims this fiscal year: 580,000 new asylum claimants — that’s double Trump’s projection, but numbers could be much higher — and 125,000 resettled refugees.)
- The Trump administration estimates the cost for refugee resettlement at \$814 million in FY 2021, down from FY 2020’s \$932 million. (The cost for refugee resettlement in FY 2021 under a President Biden is likely to be double that amount. Under the Obama administration, the cost in FY 2016 was over \$1.4 billion for some 85,000 resettled refugees and the estimated cost for FY 2017 was over \$1.5 billion, for a ceiling of 110,000 refugees.⁸)

Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic slowed down (but did not halt) refugee arrivals.⁹ (Refer to my “Refugee Resettlement Roundup for FY 2020” for details about FY 2020 admission numbers, nationalities, religious affiliation, and placement states.¹⁰ A three-year roundup of refugee resettlement admissions under the Trump administration from January 20, 2017 to January 20, 2020 is also available.¹¹)

Following the alarming spread of the Covid-19, the world took extreme measures to try and contain this contagious virus. Necessary steps undertaken by many countries, including the United States, entailed travel restrictions, quarantines, closing of borders, etc., which affected refugee admissions. On March 17, 2020, UNHCR and IOM (the International Organization for Migration) announced the temporary suspension of resettlement travel for refugees in view of the Covid-19 global health crisis.¹² The suspension was lifted on June 18 and “the resumption of resettlement departures for refugees” officially declared.¹³ But, as I noted in an October *Backgrounder*, refugees were still being resettled into the United States despite this suspension, albeit in smaller numbers. Moreover, they were not tested for the Covid-19 virus prior to being admitted here.¹⁴

In the current 2021 fiscal year, amid an economic and health crisis, thousands of refugees (up to 125,000 under an upcoming Biden administration) from countries with floundering healthcare systems are expected to be resettled in the United States without prior testing for the Covid-19 virus. President Trump could change that by issuing an executive order explicitly citing Covid-19 as a SARS quarantinable communicable disease. That should make Covid-19 testing (or vaccination when this becomes available) obligatory for refugees shortly before departure for the United States. Such an executive order would not likely be reversed by Biden, who has been very vocal about the dangerous nature of that disease.

The Covid-19 pandemic affected refugee resettlement and asylum claims in the United States, as shown in the refugee report to Congress:

*Refugee resettlement in the United States decreased significantly in FY 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to travel restrictions in and out of refugee processing sites worldwide, USRAP suspended refugee arrivals from March 19 to July 29, 2020 **except for emergency cases** [it is not certain how “emergency” cases are defined¹⁵]. USRAP resumed*

general refugee arrivals July 30, 2020 with additional health measures specified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [which translates into a fever check and a series of health questions about Covid-19 symptoms or exposure to someone who tested positive for the virus and recommendation to stay home as much as possible for the first 14 days after arrival.¹⁶]

The COVID-19 pandemic also decreased the number of aliens seeking humanitarian protection at the U.S. southern border. In order to protect public health, CDC issued an order March 20, 2020 temporarily suspending the introduction of persons into the United States...at or near the U.S. borders with Canada and Mexico. Since then, **credible fear receipts dropped significantly, from over 4,500 per month in January and February to approximately 500 to 700 per month in April through August 2020.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the assimilation of resettled refugees and approved asylees into American society and their progress towards self-sufficiency. Widespread hiring freezes, layoffs, and reduced hours, wages, and benefits in the hospitality and transportation industries hit many refugees, who often find their first jobs in these sectors.

Why, then, admit thousands of refugees (up to 125,000) amid a global crisis, knowing that self-sufficiency is hard to attain under these circumstances? Even the co-founder of a U.S.-based group of Australian volunteers who support resettled refugees admitted it was an absolutely brutal time to be arriving in America: “These guys [resettled refugees from Manus Island and Nauru] are landing with barely more than the clothes on their backs and they’ll be looking for work alongside millions of recently unemployed Americans. Since COVID-19 hit, more than 100 refugees reached out to us for help, they’ve lost jobs and are struggling to pay rent and for basic supplies.”¹⁷

Rising Protection Claims and Growing Backlog

The United States is witnessing rising asylum claims and a growing backlog:

Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in the number of aliens encountered along or near the U.S. southern border with Mexico. (Although the number of such encounters dipped at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has now returned to its pre-pandemic level.) This trend has corresponded with a sharp increase in the number and percentage of those who claim fear of persecution or torture when apprehended or encountered by DHS.

In FY 2019, DHS received and completed more than 100,000 new credible fear cases, a record high since the credible fear process was introduced more than 20 years ago, and an increase of more than 113 percent since FY 2015. DHS also received over 148,000 new affirmative asylum cases, while the immigration courts received 213,320 new asylum filings. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United States led the world in the number of new asylum applications received in calendar years 2017, 2018, and 2019.

New meritless asylum cases add to the backlog of pending claims and harm legitimate asylum seekers:

These new cases added to the lengthy backlog of pending claims, undermining the integrity of the asylum system. They delay the grant of asylum to individuals who are legitimately fleeing persecution and have valid claims. Further, such delays are a pull factor for illegal immigration. By providing protection from removal, they create an incentive for those without lawful status to enter and remain in the United States.

The increasing number of asylum claims also comes with a cost to U.S. government programs.

*Asylum applicants are not eligible for resettlement assistance through USRAP but **are eligible for certain other forms of assistance and services run by state, private, and non-profit agencies**, and they may apply for discretionary employment authorization under certain conditions.*

[T]hose who have been granted asylum status under Section 208 of the INA are eligible for other assistance and services funded by the HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). This is in addition to mainstream federal means-tested public benefits for which refugees and asylees are eligible, even ones otherwise unavailable to lawful perma-

ment residents, as well as any other assistance they might receive under state law. For FY 2021, ORR predicts 45,600 asylees will be eligible.

To address this backlog, the U.S. government has undertaken a number of measures:

*DHS has introduced efficiency measures to **maximize case processing; undertaken regulatory, policy, and procedural changes to deter and screen for non-meritorious filings;** and increased the USCIS Asylum Division's adjudicative capacity by expanding its field office workforce and facilities.*

*DOJ continues to hire new immigration judges and support staff to reduce the case backlog in the immigration court system, which will include approximately **575,000 pending asylum cases at the end of FY 2020.***

President-elect Biden vows to end “Trump’s detrimental asylum policies.”¹⁸ One of those policies is the third-country transit bar that, as my colleague Andrew Arthur explained, “would almost definitely raise the positive credible fear rate back to its historical level (if not higher).”¹⁹ Read Arthur’s blog post for more on “Trump vs. Biden on asylum.”²⁰

Security Vetting in Refugee Admissions

In accordance with the 2017 National Security Strategy, the U.S. Government put up a plan to “enhance vetting of prospective immigrants, refugees, and other foreign visitors to identify individuals who might pose a risk to national security or public safety” and “set higher security standards to ensure that we keep dangerous people out of the United States.”²¹ This enhanced security vetting applies to refugee candidates for resettlement in the United States:

*Refugees admitted to the United States are similar to individuals traveling on immigrant visas insofar as **they are resettling here permanently and are afforded a pathway to U.S. citizenship.** Refugees may pose an additional risk to the security of the United States because, **if it is determined after admission that they present a threat to national security or public safety, it is extremely difficult to remove certain refugees in immigration proceedings** for lack of a country to which they can be removed without the possibility of persecution.*

*Pursuant to Executive Order 13780, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Director of National Intelligence, developed a **model to assess national security and public-safety threats for foreign nationals seeking to enter the United States.** Among the risk factors considered is “**whether the country is a known or potential terrorist safe haven.**” Using that model, which has been updated and refined, the Secretary of Homeland Security has recommended, and the President has taken action, to **restrict the travel of nationals from a number of countries due to, among other factors, a high risk relative to other countries in the world of terrorist travel to the United States.** Among the countries whose nationals are subject to travel restrictions are Somalia, Syria, and Yemen.*

The threat to U.S. national security and public safety posed by the admission of refugees from high-risk areas of terrorist presence or control is significant and cannot be fully mitigated at this time. As a result, the President proposes not admitting any refugees from such areas, including Somalia, Syria, and Yemen, except those refugees of special humanitarian concern listed in the proposed FY 2021 allocations, such as those who have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution on account of religion.

This travel ban is set to end “on day one” of a Biden presidency.²² In a video message to Muslim advocates, “Joe Biden has vowed to include Muslim Americans in every social and political aspect in his administration as well as repeal President Donald Trump’s ‘Muslim ban’ if voted to power.”²³

Third-Country Resettlement

Resettlement is only the tip of the refugee protection-iceberg. U.S. humanitarian assistance reaches millions of displaced people worldwide, including those who will never be considered for resettlement in a third country. Resettlement is only an option for refugees who cannot return to their home countries or remain in the countries of first asylum.

The Trump administration has been prioritizing the safe and voluntary return of refugees to their home countries — the solution that most refugees prefer. This ensures that more people get help more rapidly in their own region, facilitating return when possible.

As underlined in the report to Congress, the United States remains the world's largest humanitarian contributor:

*[T]he United States is the **largest single provider of humanitarian assistance worldwide**, funding the programs of UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), IOM, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the World Food Programme (WFP), and a number of other international and non-governmental organizations. **Total U.S. humanitarian assistance was nearly \$9.3 billion in FY 2019**, including funding from PRM and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).*

Moreover,

According to UNHCR, 26 countries admitted 107,800 refugees for resettlement during 2019. Other than the United States, the top resettlement countries were Canada (30,100 resettled) and Australia (18,200 resettled). Among European countries, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom resettled the highest number of refugees, with over 22,000 resettled to these five countries in 2019.

Last year, I refuted claims about Canada resettling more refugees than the United States in 2018.²⁴ As I explained then, such a “lead” could only be reached by including “private sponsorships” (a process that that UNHCR calls “alternatives pathways” for refugee admissions) into the equation. Refugees who use these pathways to come to a country do so outside government help and financial assistance. “Private sponsorships” are accounted for within Canada’s refugee resettlement program, but not the U.S. program. Refugees who come to the United States under any of the other “alternative pathways” are not counted in the U.S. government resettlement program. I also demonstrated how the United States remained the number-one refugee resettlement country in the world in 2019.²⁵

Here’s a brief look at Canada’s resettlement data in 2019 and 2018 to demonstrate that the government of Canada resettled fewer refugees than the U.S. government in both years.

Canada’s resettled refugees (including private sponsorships) in calendar year 2019 according to Canadian government sources are as follows:

- Privately sponsored refugees [financial assistance from the sponsor for the first year]: 19,000 (63.4 percent).
- Government-assisted refugees [financial assistance from the federal government for one year]: 9,300 (31 percent).
- Blended visa-offered referred [financial assistance: six months from sponsor, six months from government]: 1,650 (5.5 percent).
- Total: 29,950 refugees (of whom 10,950 supported at least in part by the Canadian government).²⁶

The U.S. government resettled 30,000 refugees in FY 2019 (October 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019) and 25,782 refugees in calendar year 2019 (January 1 to December 31, 2019).²⁷ By any count, that is more than double the number of refugees resettled by the Canadian government in 2019.

In 2018, 28,076 refugees were resettled in Canada. Sixty-seven percent were privately sponsored, 29 percent were government-assisted, and 4 percent were blended visa-offered referred.²⁸ Which means the Canadian government resettled 8,703 refugees in 2018.

The U.S. government resettled 22,491 refugees in fiscal year 2018 (October 1, 2017, to September 30, 2018); 22,874 refugees if we use the calendar year (January 1 to December 31, 2018).²⁹ By any count, that is more than double the number of refugees resettled by the Canadian government in 2018.

Proposed FY 2021 Allocations

The Trump administration’s proposed FY 2021 resettlement allocations are as follows:

Proposed FY 2021 Allocations	
Population of Special Humanitarian Concern	Admit up to
Refugees who have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution on account of religion; or who are within a category of aliens established under subsection (b) of Section 599D of Title V, P.L. 101-167, as amended (the Lautenberg and Specter Amendments).	5,000
Refugees who are within a category of aliens listed in Section 1243(a) of the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act of 2007, Title XII, Div. A, P.L. 110-181, as amended.	4,000
Refugees who are nationals or habitual residents of El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras.	1,000
Other refugees in the following groups:	5,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those referred to the USRAP by a U.S. embassy in any location. • Those who will be admitted through a Form I-730 following-to-join petition or who gain access to the USRAP for family reunification through the P-3 process. • Those currently located in Australia, Nauru, or Papua New Guinea who gain access to USRAP pursuant to an arrangement between the United States and Australia.* • Those who are nationals or habitual residents of Hong Kong, Venezuela, or Cuba. • Those in the USRAP who were in “Ready for Departure” status as of September 30, 2019. 	
Total proposed refugee admissions in FY 2021	15,000

Source: [“Report to Congress on Proposed Refugee Admissions for FY 2021”](#), U.S. State Department, October 2020.

* This refers to the deal made between the outgoing Obama administration and Malcolm Turnbull’s government to resettle Australia’s unwanted refugees in the United States, one that President Trump has honored. I wrote extensively about this issue years ago as I described how refugees from Australia’s offshore processing centers were being resettled into the United States amid a Covid-19 pandemic. (See Nayla Rush, [“U.S.-Australia Refugee Resettlement Deal Is Underway”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounder*, June 10, 2017; Nayla Rush, [“Australia’s Unwanted Asylum Seekers \(Mostly Iranians\) to Be Resettled in the U.S.”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounder*, February 2, 2017; and, more recently, Nayla Rush, [“Australia’s Unwanted Refugees Are Still Being Resettled in the U.S.”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, May 29, 2020.)

Again, that ceiling is likely set to increase over eightfold (up to 125,000 refugees) under a Biden administration.

Religious Freedom

The United States remains committed to protecting religious minority groups worldwide. That is why the Trump administration dedicated a specific spot for refugees who fear persecution because of their religious affiliation:

On December 18, 2019, Secretary of State Pompeo designated Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan as Countries of Particular Concern (CPCs) under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 for engaging in or tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom. The Secretary also placed Comoros, Cuba, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Russia, Sudan, and Uzbekistan on a Special Watch List for governments that have engaged in or tolerated severe violations of religious freedom.

The USRAP provides access in various ways to refugees who suffer religious persecution, including from CPC countries:

Priority 1, Individual Referrals: Nationals of any country, including CPCs and Special Watch List countries, may be referred to the USRAP through a Priority 1 referral for reasons of religious persecution.

Priority 2, Groups of Special Concern: Under the Lautenberg and Specter Amendments, religious minorities designated as Priority 2 category members, including from Iran, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, are considered under a reduced evidentiary standard for establishing a well-founded fear of persecution.

Will a Biden administration keep prioritizing refugees who fear persecution because of their religious affiliation?

Enhancing State and Local Participation in Refugee Resettlement

As I wrote in July, resettlement agencies decide where refugees are initially placed in the United States, not refugees (or state and local officials).³⁰ In principle, the federal government (and the resettlement agencies it works with) needs to consult with states and localities about welcoming refugees into their communities, but reality is quite different. In an attempt to correct such omissions, President Trump issued an executive order on September 26, 2019, allowing state and local authorities to opt out of the refugee resettlement program altogether; this order was blocked by a Maryland judge. Further details from the report to Congress:

*On September 26, 2019, President Trump signed Executive Order 13888 on **Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement, which provides that refugees should be resettled only in U.S. jurisdictions where both the state and local governments have provided their consent.** Implementation of Executive Order 13888 currently is enjoined due to a January 15, 2020 preliminary injunction issued by the U.S. District Court in *HIAS v. Trump*, PJM 19-3346. The Administration has appealed the court's decision and, if successful on appeal, will implement Executive Order 13888 swiftly thereafter.*

Under a President Biden, the option for state and local governments to opt out of the resettlement program altogether will likely be buried before it sees the light of day.

Estimated Cost for Refugee Processing and Resettlement

Resettled refugees are eligible for U.S. government-funded assistance and access to multiple public benefits. Details regarding some of those are included in the report to Congress:

*Unlike asylees, who arrive in the United States on their own, **refugees selected for resettlement through USRAP are eligible for R&P [Reception and Placement] assistance.***

The Matching Grant Program through the R&P resettlement agencies is an alternative to public cash assistance.

ORR distributes Refugee Support Services (RSS) grants based on arrival numbers of ORR eligible populations in each state. Refugees ... can access RSS services **up to five years after arrival**.

ORR also funds non-profit agencies to carry out special initiatives or programs for refugees ... including: case management, ethnic community development, career pathways etc.

Up to eight months of Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) is available for refugees. ... Refugees not eligible for Medicaid can receive **up to eight months of Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) upon arrival**.

Refugee School Impact grants are available to support regions with high concentrations of refugees and other ORR-eligible children in local schools. This program funds activities that aim to strengthen academic performance and facilitate social adjustment. Set-aside funds also support youth mentoring activities and specialized services for elderly refugees.

The Department of State funds the international transportation of refugees resettled in the United States through a program administered by IOM [International Organization for Migration]. The cost of transportation is provided to refugees in the form of a **no-interest loan**. Refugees are responsible for repaying these loans over time through their R&P providers, beginning six months after their arrival.

Under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, **refugees are eligible for public assistance when they first arrive**. Nevertheless, the U.S. government seeks to promote early economic self-sufficiency through employment to speed integration into American society. **Refugees receive employment authorization upon arrival** and are encouraged to become employed as soon as possible.

Refugee processing and resettlement comes with a price tag to American taxpayers. The estimated cost for refugee resettlement for FY 2021 is \$814 million (down from FY 2020's \$932 million).

These are direct costs related to the refugee resettlement program that include general expenses, staffing, refugee officers' salaries and benefits, etc. They do not include indirect services to refugees, such as Medicaid, Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI) programs, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), etc.³¹

We do not know what the estimated cost for refugee processing and resettlement will amount to under a Biden administration and a ceiling determination of 125,000 refugees. We can, nonetheless, look at the resettlement program's cost in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 under the Obama administration for clues, since his administration admitted a large number of refugees.³²

In FY 2016, 84,994 refugees were resettled under a ceiling of 85,000.

The FY 2017 ceiling determination set by President Obama in September 2017 was 110,000 refugees (which was decreased to 50,000 by President Trump shortly after he took office). Refugee arrivals in FY 2017 finally totaled 53,716.

The estimated costs for refugee processing and resettlement (according to the Obama administration report to congress) were:

- Estimated FY 2016 availability (in millions) for a ceiling of 85,000 refugees: \$1,427.5
- Estimated FY 2017 availability (in millions) for a ceiling of 110,000 refugees: \$1,544.2

It would be fair to say that a Biden administration's estimated cost for refugee processing and resettlement of 125,000 refugees this fiscal year and beyond would be equal, if not higher, to the Obama administration's \$1.544 billion (almost double the Trump's administration's FY 2021 estimated cost of \$814 million).

Impact of U.S. Participation in the Resettlement of Refugees on U.S. Foreign Policy Interests

As noted above, the United States under the Trump administration has been focusing on the safe and voluntary return of refugees to their home countries. The Trump administration is committed to achieving the best humanitarian outcomes by supporting displaced people close to their homes while advancing the foreign policy interests of the United States. This strategy is explained further in the report to congress:

*[T]he U.S. National Security Strategy says that we will **continue to lead the world in humanitarian assistance**, that we will continue to catalyze responses to man-made and natural disasters, and that we will **support displaced people as close to their homes as possible** to help meet their needs until they can safely and voluntarily return home.*

*By focusing on ending the conflicts that drive displacement in the first place, and by providing assistance overseas to prevent further displacement, we can help prevent the destabilizing effects of such displacement on affected countries and their neighbors. This is why we **pursue diplomatic efforts around the world to find solutions to crises.***

...

*Also, the United States is the **largest single provider of humanitarian assistance worldwide.***

Total U.S. humanitarian assistance was nearly \$9.3 billion in FY 2019.

*U.S. humanitarian assistance reaches tens of millions of displaced and crisis-affected people worldwide, **including those who will never be considered or qualify for resettlement in a third country.***

A Biden administration will probably privilege different targets and choose to focus on third-country resettlement and private sponsorship for refugees in line with the trajectory of President Obama, who hosted the “Leaders’ Summit on the Global Refugee Crisis” in New York in September 2016 on the margins of the UN General Assembly, asking the world’s leaders to admit more refugees through resettlement or other legal pathways.³³ Biden vowed this year on Refugee Day to “pursue policies that increase opportunities for faith and local communities to sponsor refugee resettlement” and “make more channels, such as higher education visas” available for refugees to come to the United States.³⁴

End Notes

- ¹ [“Report to Congress on Proposed Refugee Admissions for FY 2021”](#), U.S. State Department, October 2020.
- ² Nayla Rush, [“Why Aren’t Refugees Being Tested for Covid-19?”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounders*, October 29, 2020.
- ³ Joe Biden, [“The Biden Plan for Securing Our Values as a Nation of Immigrants”](#), Joe Biden website, 2020.
- ⁴ Joe Biden, [“My Statement on World Refugee Day”](#), Medium website, June 20, 2020.
- ⁵ [“Joe Biden vows to repeal ‘Muslim ban’ imposed by Donald Trump admin if elected”](#), Deccan Herald, October 16, 2020.
- ⁶ Joe Biden, [“My Statement on World Refugee Day”](#), Medium website, June 20, 2020.
- ⁷ Joe Biden, [“The Biden Plan for Securing our Values as a Nation of Immigrants”](#), Joe Biden website, 2020.
- ⁸ [“Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2017”](#), U.S. State Department, September 15, 2016.
- ⁹ Nayla Rush, [“Refugees Are Being Resettled Despite the Coronavirus Outbreak: More than 3,000 resettled since late January when pandemic task force was created”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, March 20, 2020.
- ¹⁰ Nayla Rush, [“Refugee Resettlement Roundup for FY 2020”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, October 6, 2020.
- ¹¹ Nayla Rush, [“Refugee Resettlement Admissions: A Three-year Roundup under the Trump Administration”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, August 7, 2020.
- ¹² [“IOM, UNHCR announce temporary suspension of resettlement travel for refugees”](#), UN High Commissioner for Refugees, March 17, 2020.
- ¹³ [“Joint Statement: UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi and IOM Director General António Vitorino announce resumption of resettlement travel for refugees”](#), International Organization for Migration press release, June 18, 2020.
- ¹⁴ Nayla Rush, [“Why Aren’t Refugees Being Tested for Covid-19?”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounders*, October 29, 2020.
- ¹⁵ Nayla Rush, [“For Most Refugees, Resettlement is not a Matter of Life and Death”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, July 25, 2018.
- ¹⁶ Nayla Rush, [“Why Aren’t Refugees Being Tested for Covid-19?”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounders*, October 29, 2020.
- ¹⁷ Nayla Rush, [“Australia’s Unwanted Refugees Are Still Being Resettled in the U.S.”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, May 29, 2020.
- ¹⁸ Joe Biden, [“The Biden Plan for Securing our Values as a Nation of Immigrants”](#), Joe Biden website, 2020.
- ¹⁹ Andrew Arthur, [“Astounding Asylum Numbers in DOS Refugee Report for FY 2021”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, October 26, 2020.
- ²⁰ Andrew Arthur, [“Trump vs. Biden on Asylum”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, October 21, 2020.

- ²¹ [“A New National Security Strategy for a New Era”](#), The White House website, December 18, 2017.
- ²² [“US ‘Muslim ban’ set to end ‘on day one’ of Biden presidency”](#), Al Jazeera, November 8, 2020.
- ²³ [“Joe Biden vows to repeal ‘Muslim ban’ imposed by Donald Trump admin if elected”](#), Deccan Herald, October 16, 2020.
- ²⁴ Nayla Rush, [“Is Canada Number One in Refugee Resettlement? Only if you Compare Apples to Oranges”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, October 25, 2019.
- ²⁵ Nayla Rush, [“U.S. Was the Number-One Refugee Resettlement Country in the World in 2019”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, February 27, 2020.
- ²⁶ [“IRCC Minister Transition Binder 2019: Refugee Resettlement”](#), Government of Canada, June 11, 2020.
- ²⁷ [“Refugee Processing Center”](#), accessed October 1, 2020.
- ²⁸ [“Canada, Refugee Resettlement Facts”](#), UNHCR factsheet, July 2019.
- ²⁹ [“Refugee Processing Center”](#), accessed October 1, 2020.
- ³⁰ Nayla Rush, [“Resettlement Agencies Decide Where Refugees Are Initially Placed in the United States”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounder*, July 16, 2020.
- ³¹ For more on these costs, see Steven Camarota, [“The High Cost of Resettling Middle Eastern Refugees”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Backgrounder*, November 2015.
- ³² [“Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2017”](#), U.S. State Department, September 15, 2016.
- ³³ Nayla Rush, [“White House Looks to Private Sector to Increase Refugee Admissions Outside the Resettlement Program”](#), Center for Immigration Studies blog, July 6, 2016.
- ³⁴ Joe Biden, [“My Statement on World Refugee Day”](#), Medium website, June 20, 2020.