

Refugee Facts

We wanted to provide you with a few facts about refugees in the United States, as this has become a polarizing and much-debated topic:

- Refugees go through extremely thorough background checks. They undergo biometric and biographic examinations and are cleared by the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of State, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and national intelligence agencies. This process takes an average of 18-24 months to complete. Refugees from Iraq and Syria undergo additional security screenings.
- Refugees arriving in the United States have spent an average of 17 years living in a refugee camp.
- The International Institute expects to welcome at least 550 refugees over the next year, with Minnesota as a whole planning to resettle 2,000 refugees. The United States plans to resettle up to 85,000 refugees.
- The majority of refugees arriving in Minnesota are Somali and Karen from Burma.
- Between 2009 and 2011, 66% of refugee men in the U.S. were employed while 60% of U.S.-born men were employed. During this time, refugee and U.S.-born women were employed at similar rates.
- In 2015, the Institute helped 237 New Americans begin or advance their careers.
- Refugees are just as likely as U.S.-born individuals to have a college degree.
- The U.S. Refugee Resettlement program has historically received bi-partisan support. In the program's 40 years, 1,690,048 refugees have been resettled under Republican leadership, and 1,562,451 refugees have been resettled under Democratic leadership.

Sources:

- "Refugee Processing and Security Screening" by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Available at <http://www.uscis.gov/refugeescreening>
- Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services' Refugee Arrivals data. Available at <https://rpo.dhs.state.mn.us/Resources/RefugeeArrivalReports.aspx>
- "Ten Facts About U.S. Refugee Resettlement" by Randy Capps and Michael Fix from the Migration Policy Institute. Available at <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/ten-facts-about-us-refugee-resettlement>
- The International Institute of Minnesota's 2015 Annual Report. Available February 2016 at <http://www.iimn.org/about/annual-report/>

