

# Latina Republic

## Policy Impact Plan

**Reenvisioning the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program:**  
Improvements to Purpose, Functionality, and Humanity.



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## Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the U.S. refugee resettlement process and gives policy recommendations to improve the program so that refugees of all backgrounds can be better supported. **Latina Republic provides 23 recommendations to improve the functioning of the refugee resettlement program, address bias, provide support for historically marginalized communities, and make a refugee's transition to the U.S. less stress-inducing.**

### Overview of Recommendations

1. Improving the overall functioning of the refugee resettlement program.
2. Providing better support for individual refugees.
3. Educating members of congress and the public on the real refugee experience to increase support for strengthening the resettlement program and for private sponsorship.
4. Addressing exclusion of Central American migrants.
5. Making changes to better support LGBTQ+ migrants, women, and members of historically marginalized groups.
6. Healing bias present in the refugee resettlement program.

## Introduction

The U.S. refugee resettlement program is currently in crisis. After an administration that made tremendous cutbacks to the program, there is an extreme need for the Biden Administration to devote more resources to the program.

Below, Latina Republic provides an in-depth overview of the refugee resettlement process to highlight all the steps a refugee must go through before being settled in the United States. This is to demonstrate the immensely emotionally taxing experience that refugees face, how long they must wait in danger abroad, and how quickly they are expected to be self-sufficient. It is vital that policymakers understand in-depth the challenges of refugees so they see the intense need for an improved resettlement program.

To gather information on the needs of refugees and urgent problems within the program, Latina Republic spoke with Chris George, the executive director of [Integrated Refugee and Immigration Services](#), located in New Haven, CT. This allowed us to get an on-the-ground, professional perspective on the issues refugees face and how the current administration can improve the resettlement program for all actors involved. We then spoke with Lacy Broemel, a Policy Analyst with [International Refugee Assistance Project](#) to hear her perspective as a key player in refugee policy analysis. In addition to these two primary sources, the secondary sources listed below were also consulted.

Latina Republic then offers 23 recommendations for addressing different problems present within the current program. We not only address how to improve the program's functioning, but also how to make the program more sympathetic to refugee experiences and more equitable.

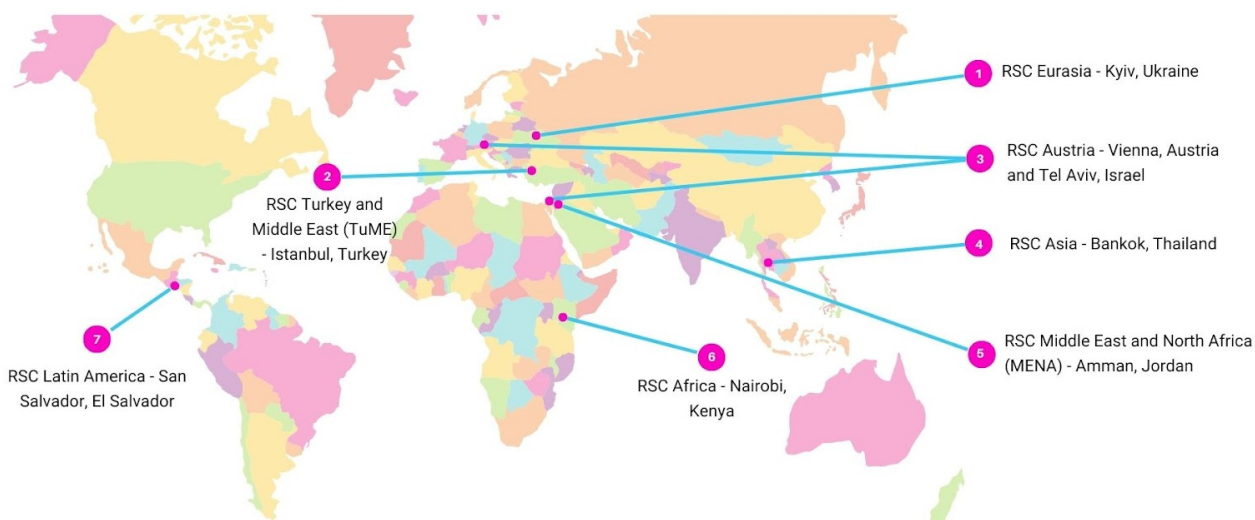
## U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program Overview

### How the Refugee Resettlement Program Works

The current U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), under the control of the State Department, was established by the Refugee Act of 1980. This act standardized the refugee admission and resettlement process.

In order for a person to begin the refugee application process, they must be referred to a Resettlement Support Center (RSC), located abroad, by a [U.S. embassy or nongovernmental organization](#), such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). However, a referral is not needed if the refugee has [close family](#) members in the U.S. who already have refugee or asylee status. RSCs begin the biographic data collection process. Security screenings and interviews are then conducted by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). USCIS decides whether or not to approve the applicant for refugee status.

## U.S. Refugee Resettlement Support Centers (RSCs)



Source: U.S. Department of State and HIAS/ Credit: Latina Republic

In order to qualify as a refugee, a person must meet the definition laid out in the [Immigration and Nationality Act](#). The [U.S. Department of State](#) defines a refugee as: “a person who, generally, has experienced past persecution or has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” This is similar to the definition of a person seeking asylum. The only difference is that asylum seekers are already present at a U.S. port of entry or in the U.S. when applying, whereas refugees are abroad, typically in the country they have fled to.

The admissions process takes [18 months to two years](#). It is common for refugees to wait within the host country to which they fled, either in a refugee camp or in a local city. Oftentimes, refugee camps pose new dangers to refugees and their families, especially to refugees of marginalized communities, such as the [LGBTQ+ community](#) and [women](#).

Refugees must wait out the years-long application process in uncomfortable or dangerous situations. During this time, they have countless interviews where they must prove that they qualify as refugees in need of resettlement.

Emma Yaaka, a refugee in Chicago from Uganda told [Heartland Alliance](#):

*“Every month, you have to go for interviews and assessments with resettlement officers. You repeat your story over and over again, and they ask for evidence – but we don’t have evidence, we are without anything as we flee...Combine that with having few resources and absolutely no security. Many of the places where refugees live are not welcoming. These places claim that we feed on their food, that we take their jobs, and so these communities do not make life easy for us.”*

Once their application is approved, transportation to the U.S. is handled by the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) and funded by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration ([PRM](#)) run by the State Department. Refugees are given a loan covering the cost of transportation that they are expected to begin paying back [six months](#) after their arrival.

Refugees may arrive with their immediate family members if they were included and approved in the refugee’s application or their family may follow later. If a refugee is already in the U.S. and wants to apply to have their family join them, after they have been resettled they can file a [“follow-to-join”](#) petition for their spouse, children, and/or parents.

Prior to and immediately following arrival refugees have a cultural orientation session to help them with the transition of moving to the U.S. Pre-arrival orientation is conducted by RSCs. According to the [State Department](#), pre-arrival orientation covers information on international travel, the path to citizenship, employment, U.S. healthcare, and the U.S. education systems. The post-arrival orientation is conducted by local resettlement agencies after the Reception and Placement (R&P) process, once the refugee arrives in the United States.

R&P is handled by one of [nine domestic resettlement agencies](#) funded by PRM. These domestic resettlement agencies work with local partners across the U.S. to help the refugees settle in. The U.S. Department of State’s [“Report to Congress on Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2022”](#) lists the duties of the domestic resettlement agency as:

*“sponsorship; pre-arrival resettlement planning, including placement; reception on arrival; basic needs support (including housing, furnishings, food, and clothing) for at least 30 days; cultural orientation; assistance with access to health, employment, education, and other services, as needed; and development and implementation of an initial service plan for each refugee.”*

## The Refugee Resettlement Process



01

### UNHCR Referral

After fleeing their country, a refugee registers with UNHCR, who then refers them to the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP).



From UNHCR

02

### Application and Vetting Process

The refugee then goes through a rigorous vetting and security background check process. This process includes health screenings and recounting traumatic experiences. It can take 2 to 4 years.



03

### Transportation to the U.S.

Once approved for travel to the US, the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration provides the refugee with a loan to cover transportation costs.

Local resettlement agencies, such as [Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services](#) (IRIS), are the actors that continue assisting refugees with integration into their new communities. [Organizations like IRIS](#) set them up with fully furnished housing, provide them with hot meals from their culture upon their arrival, register the family for healthcare and the children for school, help the parents find jobs, and help them learn English. The overall goal of this assistance is to help make the refugee's transition to the U.S. as smooth as possible while also encouraging self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.



04

## Welcomed by local resettlement organization

Upon arrival to the US, the refugee is met by someone from the UN and taken to their new home which has been set up by a local resettlement organization. The local organization welcomes them to the area and provides a hot, culturally appropriate meal.



Taha in front of his new home set up by Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS)/ Image from IRIS

05

## Settling In

The local resettlement organization provides the refugee with support to help them settle into the community. This support includes English language classes, job application and placement, enrolling them in healthcare, and enrolling the children in school. Initial funding for the first 3 months is provided by the State Department and just covers the basics.



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UNDERSTANDING THE U.S. AND ITS LATIN AMERICAN NEIGHBORS ONE VOICE AT A TIME

The U.S. Department of State provides local resettlement organizations with [\\$1,200 per refugee and also provides the same amount to each refugee directly](#). The organizations and the refugees use this money to finance their first 30 to 90 days in the U.S.

Upon arrival, refugees receive work authorization immediately so they can begin to support themselves and their families. Refugees are expected to be self-sufficient extremely quickly. The R&P program only offers service for [3 months after the refugee arrives](#). This means refugees oftentimes have to take the first job offered to them, even if it is outside of their professional field of expertise.

According to Executive Director of IRIS, [Chris George](#), who is a leader in refugee resettlement on the ground, it often takes refugees around 6 months to be fully self-sufficient.

There do exist other services, offered by the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), for additional funding. [Social services](#) that some refugees are

eligible for include cash and medical assistance, employment programs, and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Additionally, refugees are eligible for the same social benefits as American citizens.

After living in the U.S. for one year, refugees are required to apply for a [green card](#) which gives them [“lawful permanent resident \(LPR\) status.”](#) Then, after five years of living in the U.S. a refugee can start the application process to become a U.S. citizen. Their local resettlement organization may provide assistance with the application process.

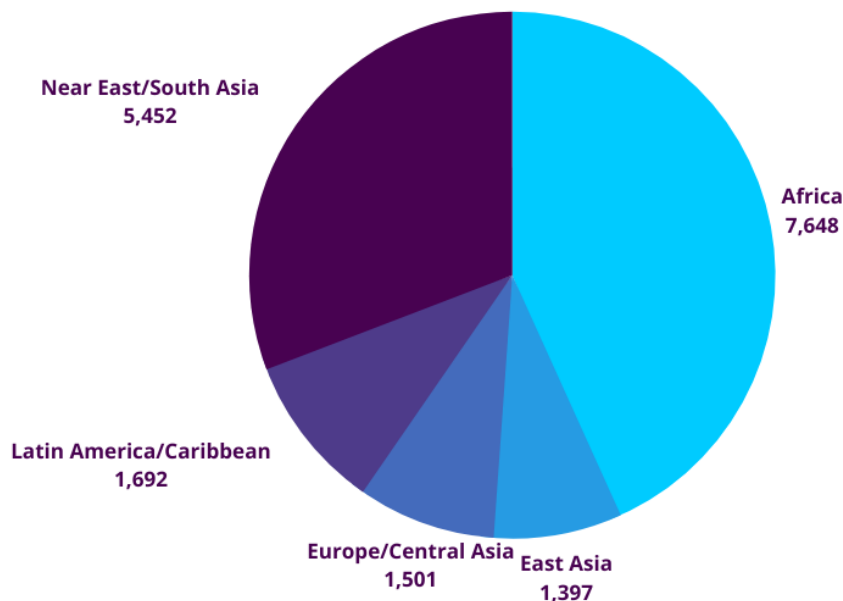
### **Determining the Refugee Ceiling and Who Gets Admitted**

The number of refugees allowed into the country changes based on presidential administration as the president proposes the refugee ceiling each fiscal year in accordance with their political aims. The ceiling then goes to congress for approval. With the harmful xenophobic rhetoric of the Trump administration, President Trump cut the refugee ceiling down to 15,000 people in 2021; which was [the lowest it has ever been](#). The Biden administration has since raised the ceiling for 2022 to [125,000](#) ([not counting Ukrainian refugees](#)).

Within the general ceiling are refugee ceilings split by geographic region. The president’s [fiscal year refugee ceiling proposal](#) explains the refugee ceilings by region based on the number of refugees within the region and current/expected drivers of refugee flows, such as conflict or famine. Additionally, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security also has the power to admit any refugee in need of resettlement.

As of June 1, 2022, UNHCR has submitted [27,467 refugees](#) for resettlement to the U.S. Only [17,690](#) refugees have arrived in the United States as of July 31. Thus, the Biden administration is nowhere close to admitting the number of refugees permitted by the refugee ceiling for this fiscal year.

Lacy Broemel, a policy analyst with [International Refugee Assistance Project](#), stated that this hold-up is due to much bureaucracy added to the program since 9/11, making the process extremely lengthy. Lacy Broemel [told Latina Republic](#): “The resettlement program is at a crisis point. It’s not able to do what it should do because of these layers of bureaucracy. The Biden administration, a year and a half in, is working to put more resources into it and to ramp up this processing, but it hasn’t done enough yet.” She cites this “red tape” as creating bottlenecks in the program that must be urgently addressed in order for the refugee resettlement program to be functional in general and in emergencies.



## Refugee Arrivals Fiscal Year 2022

Source: Refugee Processing Center Refugee Admissions Report  
<https://www.wrapsnet.org/admissions-and-arrivals/>

# 17,690

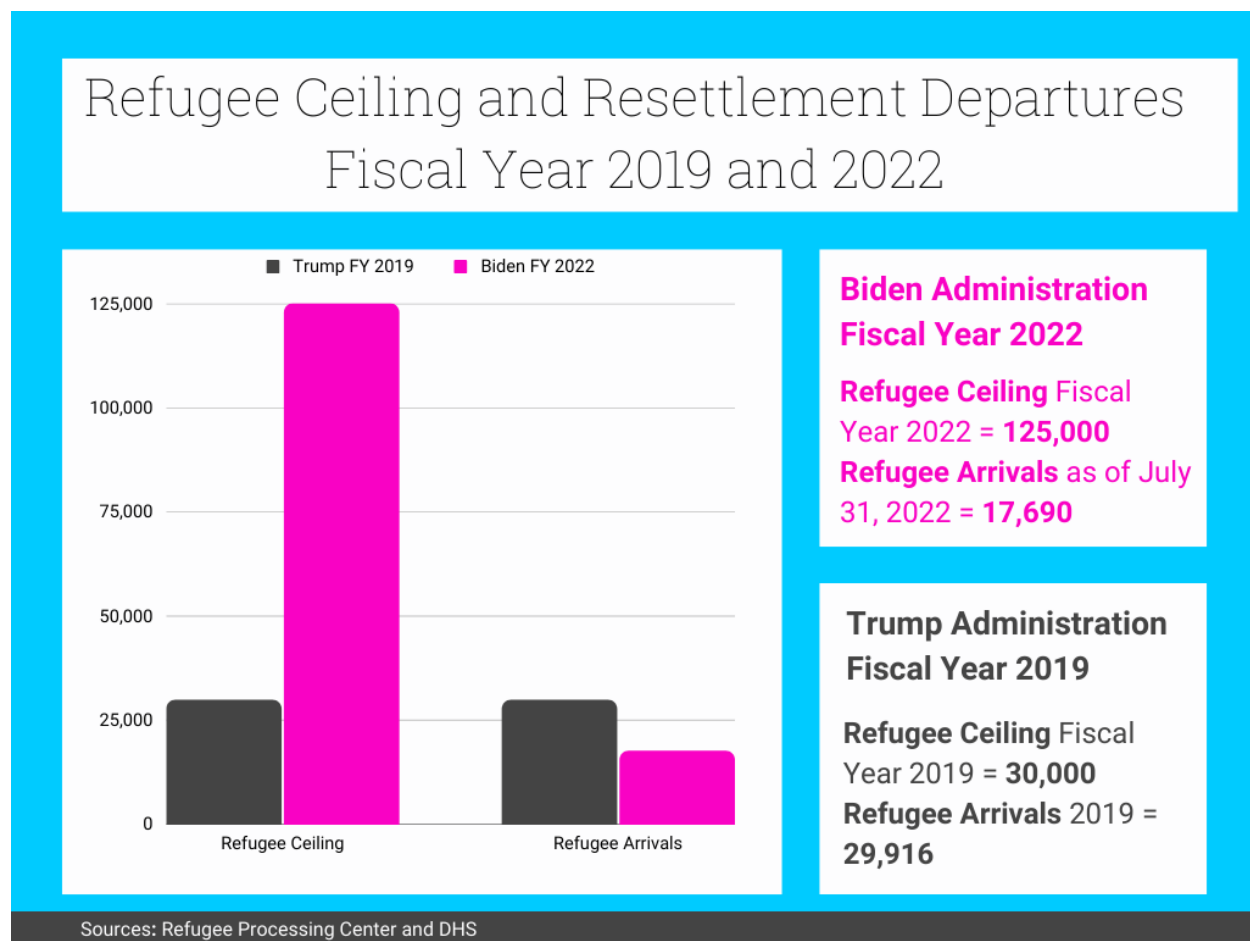
**Total Refugee  
Admissions as of  
July 31, 2022**



\*Does not include those arriving under Uniting for Ukraine since it provides humanitarian parole status not refugee status

The COVID pandemic also greatly impacted the program, stalling refugee application interviews due to health concerns for refugees and the Refugee Corp of USCIS staff in charge of conducting interviews.

Additionally, Trump defunded and took resources away from the program throughout his administration. Thus, the Biden administration must do more to fund and restaff the program so that it can reach the 125,000 refugee ceiling.



### The Traditional Refugee Resettlement Process v. Uniting for Ukraine

The resettlement process of Ukrainian refugees and Biden’s Uniting for Ukraine program look much different than the traditional refugee resettlement process outlined above. Only [300 Ukrainian refugees](#) as of June 2022 were admitted through the traditional resettlement program. Many Ukrainian refugees in the U.S. [entered at the U.S.-Mexico border](#) seeking asylum status. However, with the launching of the Uniting for Ukraine program, entrance at the southern border is no longer an option.

Biden launched Uniting for Ukraine on April 25, 2022; which provides a platform where people can privately sponsor Ukrainian refugees to help them temporarily resettle in the U.S. According to [CBS News](#), Ukrainians who enter through this program will not have traditional refugee status. Instead, they will be granted humanitarian parole which allows them to live and work in the U.S. for up to two years. Though they do not have refugee status, many are still eligible for [benefits](#) that traditional refugees receive, minus [“reception and placement benefits.”](#)

As of June 2022, [15,000](#) Ukrainian refugees were able to enter the U.S. through this program. However, since the status of humanitarian parole is temporary, it has yet to be seen how the resettlement of Ukrainian refugees will function in the long term.

# LATINA REPUBLIC POLICY IMPACT PLAN:

## Recommendations Guide

### Reenvisioning the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program: Improvements to Purpose, Functionality, and Humanity.

Erica Drufva, Policy Writer | Soledad Quartucci, Executive Director

## Executive Summary

The U.S. refugee resettlement program is currently in crisis. After an administration that made tremendous cutbacks to the program, there is an extreme need to devote more resources to the program. Latina Republic provides 23 recommendations to improve the functioning of the refugee resettlement program, address bias, provide support for historically marginalized communities, and make a refugee's transition to the U.S. less stress-inducing.

## Methodology

To gather information on the needs of refugees and urgent problems within the program, Latina Republic spoke with Chris George, the executive director of [Integrated Refugee and Immigration Services](#), located in New Haven, CT. This allowed us to get an on-the-ground, professional perspective on the issues refugees face and how the current administration can improve the resettlement program for all actors involved. We then spoke with Lacy Broemel, a Policy Analyst with [International Refugee Assistance Project](#) to hear her perspective as a key player in refugee policy analysis. In addition to these two primary sources, the secondary sources listed below were also consulted.

## Policy Recommendations

### Improving the Overall Functioning of the Refugee Resettlement Program

- 1 Open more overseas processing centers and hire more staff to meet and raise the refugee ceiling.

The administration must invest more resources into the refugee program so that the focus is on meeting and raising refugee quotas. A high refugee quota means nothing if there are not enough resources for it to be met. As Lacy Broemel highlights, hiring more staff and opening more processing centers allows for more refugee interviews to be conducted and for a more efficient resettlement process.

## **2 Allow for refugee interviews to be conducted virtually.**

The manner in which interviews are conducted should also be updated to expedite the resettlement process. Broemel emphasizes that staff in the U.S. or other locations should be able to interview refugees virtually. This can vastly increase the capacity for conducting refugee interviews and thus speed up the resettlement process.

## **3 Preventing future administrations from taking resources away from the refugee resettlement program.**

Chris George, Executive Director of IRIS, cites the number one lesson resettlement organizations learned from the mass resettlement of Afghan refugees in the second half of 2021 and early 2022. He says, “we never should have allowed the refugee resettlement agencies of this country to be weakened, as they were during the previous administration, and should never allow that to happen again. They have to remain strong because you never know when they’re going to have to move quickly.” Thus this program must be protected.

## **4 Private/community sponsorship**

A robust private sponsorship program, alongside putting more resources into the traditional refugee resettlement program, increases the number of refugees the U.S. can settle. Putting resources in private/community sponsorship programs is absolutely vital in order to settle large numbers of refugees efficiently. Chris George said:

“at IRIS, by April 2022, 40% of the Afghans we resettled were placed with community groups. If we didn’t have those community groups, there’s no way we would have been able to resettle 600 Afghans. So every refugee agency needs to have a community-based or private sponsorship program, so that when necessary, in an emergency, you can quickly increase your capacity.”

Private sponsorship provides the opportunity for stronger refugee support systems, as the Department of State funding only covers the very basic needs of refugees for the first three months. Whereas, it normally takes refugees about [6 months](#) to settle in and be fully self-sufficient, according to IRIS. With private sponsorship, more than just a refugee’s basic needs will be supported so that they can settle into their new home comfortably.

An additional benefit to the private sponsorship program is increased public support for refugees. Private sponsorship involves local residents and communities in the resettlement process. He strongly supports private sponsorship because, he elaborates:

“Private sponsorship or community co-sponsorship will lead to an American public that understands refugees better, supports them, and protects the refugee program.”

## **5 Conduct an in-depth analysis of the refugee resettlement application process to eliminate bureaucratic barriers and decrease processing time.**

The U.S. refugee program needs to be able to function so it can resettle refugees easily in a



short period of time when a crisis like Afghanistan or Ukraine arises. [Broemel stated](#) that much vetting and bureaucracy has been added to the program since 9/11 “even if that vetting doesn’t actually make the program more secure” and she highlights, “this system has never really been fully examined from top to bottom to see if the additional layers are actually valuable or impact the function and intention of the program.”

We call for a top to bottom examination of the application process to decrease processing times so this program can actually function for refugees in a timely manner. It is unjust to make them wait in limbo and fear for 2+ years. Because the system as it functions today is not able to help and protect refugees efficiently, it is currently failing at what it was created to do.

## **6 Provide more resources to local resettlement agencies, especially during emergencies.**

Local resettlement agencies settled almost all of the 80,000 Afghan evacuees. Speaking from the perspective of resettlement organizations that resettled all these evacuees, [Chris George says](#) “it nearly killed us.” As these resettlement agencies are vital to the U.S. refugee program, the government must provide them with more resources to strengthen them, especially during emergencies.

## **7 Reform the program so it is capable of responding to resettlement emergencies.**

The refugee resettlement program is not ready to handle migration crises. A separate program had to be created to serve the needs of Ukrainian refugees because the U.S. resettlement process does not function properly. The U.S. needs to create a system to expedite the resettlement process for all refugees and for mass evacuation emergencies.

## **8 Make political decisions that put people and their livelihoods first.**

The refugee program is not built to effectively serve the needs of individuals and does not seem to understand the urgency of the situations refugees face. Oftentimes, it seems to put bureaucracy rather than people first.

Lacy Broemel states that a significant issue with the refugee program is:

“There is a political aspect to our protection mechanisms that is failing the people who need to seek protection ...It is these political decisions that are being made, when elected officials choose not to protect individuals when they need protection but rather put in place deterrents or essentially turn a blind eye to people in need. And that means that many refugees who have been waiting years for resettlement are going to be waiting longer. And that can mean that there are multiple generations of people waiting for resettlement, or it means that somebody who is just seeking resettlement or seeking asylum is being put into danger because of the efforts that they’re having to go through to try to seek safety.”

The U.S. must act on its commitment to human rights and begin to put the needs of people over politics.

# **Improving Support for Refugees**

## **9 Improved mental healthcare**

Throughout the refugee application process, refugees are required to recount the horrific



experiences they faced repeatedly. This is often retraumatizing. Thus, it is vital that the Biden administration ensures that every refugee arriving in the U.S. has access to affordable mental healthcare. Additionally, refugees being processed by USRAP who have not yet arrived in the U.S. should also have access to mental health care, as they are recounting traumatic experiences during the years-long application process and should have counseling support available.

## **10 Increase the funding that individual refugees receive upon arrival**

The Department of State only provides refugees with funds for basic necessities for the first three months. This is not enough time, as according to IRIS, it normally takes refugees around 6 months to become fully self-sufficient.

## **11 Job recertification**

Refugees often have to take the first jobs offered to them upon arrival to the U.S. even if they are outside of their field of professional expertise. There should exist easier and quicker processes for refugees to be recertified to work in the field in which they hold professional experience. This will allow refugees to get higher-paying jobs upon arrival and be able to more easily support their families in a short period of time.

## **12 USRAP should provide English language classes abroad to refugees awaiting resettlement.**

The option to have in-depth English classes as refugees await the years-long application process would make integration into the U.S. much easier. Learning English is one of the [biggest challenges](#) for refugees arriving in the U.S. Thus, this option would make their transition much easier.

# **Education on the Refugee Experience**

## **13 Education to increase public and policymakers' support for the refugee resettlement program.**

Community support is absolutely vital for the functioning of the traditional refugee resettlement program, as well as a private sponsorship program. There currently exist numerous misunderstandings surrounding refugees, even among policymakers. Broemel told Latina Republic:

“There’s a lack of understanding from policymakers of what the experience is like for individuals who are resettled to the United States...It would be helpful for members of Congress to learn more about what life is like for refugees once they come to the United States; and for them to understand that in their states, there are refugees that are here that are contributing. They’re simply just trying to live their lives and do the best for their families, just like everybody else. It can be really difficult to change that negative narrative, but that could especially assist Congress in understanding why additional funding is needed for resettlement.”

In addition to building support within Congress, education must be done to increase public support since it is resettlement organizations working with local individuals who welcome them into the community. Chris George highlights the importance of raising private funding and donations to help refugees settle in New Haven, CT. Since government funding only covers

refugees' basic needs for three months, IRIS often reaches out to the community to provide additional support to help the refugee family settle in comfortably. Chris George states, "here in New Haven, and throughout Connecticut, there are a lot of people who really believe in this program and they have contributed financially so that we're able to do the extras that refugees need."

As community support is absolutely vital in resettling refugees, it is imperative that the Biden Administration puts resources into educating the public and policymakers about the importance of accepting refugees and about their lived experiences. Garnering public support must be a number one priority, especially with the launch of the private sponsorship program.

**14 Invite members of Congress to visit refugee agencies, especially in their own states, and meet with refugees to acquaint themselves with their experiences.**

It is vital that members of Congress learn and understand how quickly refugees are expected to restart their lives with funding that only covers the necessities. With a better understanding of refugee experiences, policymakers can better support refugees and encourage programs like private sponsorship and increased funding.

**15 Highlight the conditions of those awaiting resettlement abroad to garner broad support for speeding up the refugee application process.**

Oftentimes, refugee camps may not provide safe conditions for refugees, especially those who are historically marginalized. Bringing this to light makes the need for an efficient refugee application process abundantly clear.

**16 Fund an oral history project to document the testimonies of various refugees across the U.S. to learn about their experiences.**

There is no better way to learn about refugee experiences than listening to their stories first-hand. This project should be shared broadly throughout the U.S. and internationally, possibly as a museum exhibit, to increase support for welcoming refugees.

## **Recommendations to Better Support Central American Migrants: Addressing Exclusion**

**17 Allow people to be eligible for refugee resettlement even if they have paid gangs bribes or extortion fees.**

The Migration Policy Institute, in [Humanitarian Pathways for Central Americans](#), states:

"The Immigration and Nationality Act makes individuals ineligible for refugee protection if they have paid bribes or extortion fees to criminal gangs... These bans are significant barriers as many in northern Central America have done so as a matter of survival."

It is discriminatory to deny people refuge from the persecution or gang violence they face, just because they have previously paid a bribe or extortion fee to protect themselves or their family from that violence.

## **Recommendations to Better Support LGBTQ+ Migrants, Women, and**

## Particularly Marginalized Groups

### 18 Advertise the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program broadly as an option for members of the LGBTQ+ community to get out of dangerous situations they face.

Advertising must be done broadly, but generally, so as to not draw attention to individual LGBTQ+ persons since this could make them a greater target.

### 19 Speed up the resettlement process for refugees who continue to face immense danger and persecution within refugee camps/ in their temporary host country.

No refugee should have to wait 2+ years for their case to be processed, especially if they are still being threatened and abused while they wait. According to the [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights](#) (OHCHR), LGBTQ+ people “at all stages of their journey... may be at particular risk of violence, abuse, and exploitation from numerous actors, including though not limited to immigration and security authorities, traffickers, and smugglers.” Women and girls also face particularly dangerous situations as [20% of female migrants face sexual violence](#). The resettlement processing time must be expedited especially for marginalized individuals who continue to be at risk in a third country.

## Addressing Bias in Refugee Resettlement

### 20 Refugees should still be eligible for resettlement even if they have worked in the sex work industry.

According to the Migration Policy Institute’s [Humanitarian Pathways](#) report and as outlined in the Immigration and Nationality Act, refugees are ineligible if they have been sex workers. History of sex work should not make people ineligible, as oftentimes people work in the sex work industry out of necessity. Thus, this stipulation is discriminatory and must be removed.

### 21 Learning Lessons from Resettlement of Ukrainian Refugees

This country must provide a wide open-armed acceptance of all refugees, just as was done for Ukrainian refugees, as every refugee deserves a chance at living a life free from persecution. Broemel states, “the treatment that Ukrainians have received should be the norm and not the exception. We are very concerned that that’s not the case.”

### 22 Healing the Politicization of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

There exist two different dialogues when it comes to discussing refugees versus asylees. There is a warmer acceptance of refugees than there is of asylum seekers because of the politicization of the southern border. The vast similarities between refugees and asylum seekers must be brought into public dialogue so that policymakers and U.S. citizens understand that both should be welcomed.

Oftentimes, asylum seekers are fleeing the same violence, persecution, and danger that refugees are fleeing. The only difference is that asylum seekers are already present at a U.S. port of entry, whereas refugees are abroad.

Broemel states:

“There is a fundamental misunderstanding about who a migrant is, who an asylum seeker is, who a refugee is. These populations are all seeking the same kind of protection from similar situations. I don’t think that’s publicly recognized. There is just a political game that is played as it relates to the border. And that’s extremely unfortunate because that comes at the cost of lives.”

There must be education that highlights the similarities between refugees and asylum seekers so that asylum seekers can be supported and welcomed into the U.S. to the same degree that refugees are.

**23 Revisit lessons learned from the Ukraine crisis to revise current asylum procedures. Create a standard humanitarian approach to asylum that provides similar responses and services to everyone.**

We must not see preferential treatment given to migrants from Europe over migrants from Latin America. The welcoming of Ukrainian migrants should be the welcome that all asylum seekers receive, as regardless of background, they are fleeing persecution and just trying to get a better life for themselves and their families.

## Conclusion

There currently exist numerous problems within the U.S. refugee resettlement system. However, they are all solvable if the Biden Administration commits to putting more resources into the program. By taking these suggestions this administration can improve the refugee resettlement program for all refugees and encourage Congress and the American public to welcome migrants with open arms.

Devoting resources to the program to meet the refugee ceiling and raise it in the future will positively impact the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. By addressing bias, exclusion, and working hard to support refugees of marginalized groups, the U.S. can create a world-renowned, just refugee resettlement program.

The U.S. has the resources to welcome more refugees and the Biden Administration must show that it truly cares about migrants by investing in the program. In this way, not only will the U.S. be acting on its commitment to human rights, but will also be encouraging other nations to follow suit and improve their own resettlement programs. This is a vital step in creating a world that is welcoming to migrants in need.

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