

Fiscal Year 2019 Presidential Determination for Refugee Admissions: Advocacy Toolkit



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Background on Resettlement and the Presidential Determination

Today, the global level of forced displacement of 68.5 million people is the highest on record. Most forced migrants remain in their home countries and are known as internally displaced persons (IDP). Out of the 68.5 million, [an estimated](#) 25.4 million people seek refuge across international borders, most often in nearby countries. Over half of these refugees are under the age of 18.

Only the most vulnerable refugees are considered for third country resettlement beyond those neighboring host countries. This currently amounts to about 6% of refugees globally. Generally, on an annual basis, less than 1% of refugees worldwide actually receive resettlement.

By September 30th, the U.S. President sets the refugee admissions goal for the coming fiscal year. For Fiscal Year (FY) 18, this number was set at an **all-time low** of 45,000 refugees. Currently, the United States is on pace to admit between 20,000 to 21,000 refugees by September 30, 2018, the end of the fiscal year, **less than half** of the 45,000 goal for FY 18. The low Presidential Determination (PD) and even lower actual refugee admission rate come at a time when **the need for resettlement has never been greater**.

The United States provides crucial humanitarian support around the globe and provides overseas assistance to support both refugees and the countries that host them. Also, the United States is a leader on global resettlement, traditionally resettling over half of the refugees resettled worldwide.

Catholic Social Teaching on Refugees and Forced Migration

“Hope is the force that drives the hearts of those who depart, leaving home, their homeland, at times their relatives, in search of a better life which is worthier of them and their loved ones...let us not be afraid of sharing the journey! Have no fear! Let us not be afraid of sharing hope!”

-Pope Francis, [General Audience](#), September 27, 2017

Catholic social teaching calls on the global community to offer protection to those individuals fleeing wars and persecution. It is a core Catholic teaching that every human being is created in the image of God and is therefore entitled to dignity and respect. The Catholic Church views welcoming the stranger as a fundamental Christian duty that is derived directly from the life of mercy of Christ, who himself was a migrant and a refugee. We as Christians are called to support refugees and other forcibly displaced people overseas. Also, refugees from all over the world come to our U.S. communities and are fleeing danger, exploitation, and persecution. We are also called to welcome these new neighbors with the same love and compassion we would want ourselves to be shown in a time of persecution.

Take Action! Call to Action for FY 2019 Refugee Admissions Presidential Determination

By August 10th:

Action #1: Catholic sign-on letter urging the President to set the FY2019 Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions at 75,000. See [letter and how to sign on to it.](#)

By August 31st:

Action #2: Schedule in-district/in-state meetings with your legislators during the month of August to advocate on the Presidential Determination and robust funding for refugees and others who are forcibly displaced. *Use the following resources:* [How to Set up a Meeting](#), [Talking Points](#), [PD Backgrounder](#), and Appropriations Backgrounders [LHHS](#) and [SFOPs](#).

Asks for August Meetings

1– FY2019 Refugee Admissions Goal: We urge our elected officials to see that the Administration commits to resettling at least 75,000 refugees for FY2019.

2 – Refugee Admissions Accountability for FY 2018. We urge elected official to ensure that the Administration conducts robust ongoing processing of refugees already in the pipeline and continues to add new refugees to the pipeline. The projected number of refugees admitted to the U.S. for FY2018 will be only 21,000 refugees, less than ½ of the 45,000 refugees allowed to be admitted in 2018.

3 – Appropriations: We ask for robust funding to support resettlement efforts and ensure that the Refugee Resettlement goal of 75,000 refugees admitted to the U.S. in FY 2019 can be successfully met. We also ask for robust humanitarian emergency and overseas funding for internally displaced persons and for refugees in host countries.

Thank you for all your advocacy efforts in solidarity with our sisters and brothers forced to flee their homes, and for your encouragement of Catholics and others of good will to act as well.

Convened by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS), the Justice for Immigrants (JFI) coalition joins together a diverse set of Catholic organizations with national networks to unite and mobilize a growing group of Catholic institutions, individuals, and other persons of goodwill in support of immigrants and refugees. To learn more about JFI, please visit: <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/>.

The Share the Journey campaign, run by Caritas International and launched by Pope Francis in September 2017, has at its heart the vision of a united global human family. Our public awareness campaign promotes opportunities and spaces for migrants and communities to come together and share stories and experiences with the aim of strengthening the bonds between migrants and communities. To learn more about Share the Journey, please visit: www.sharejourney.org.