

Refugee Health in Worcester

University of Massachusetts Medical School Population Health Clerkship

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Refugee:

a displaced person who has been forced to cross national boundaries and who cannot return home safely

Asylum Seeker:

a person who flees his or her home country, enters another country and applies for the right to international protection, in this other country

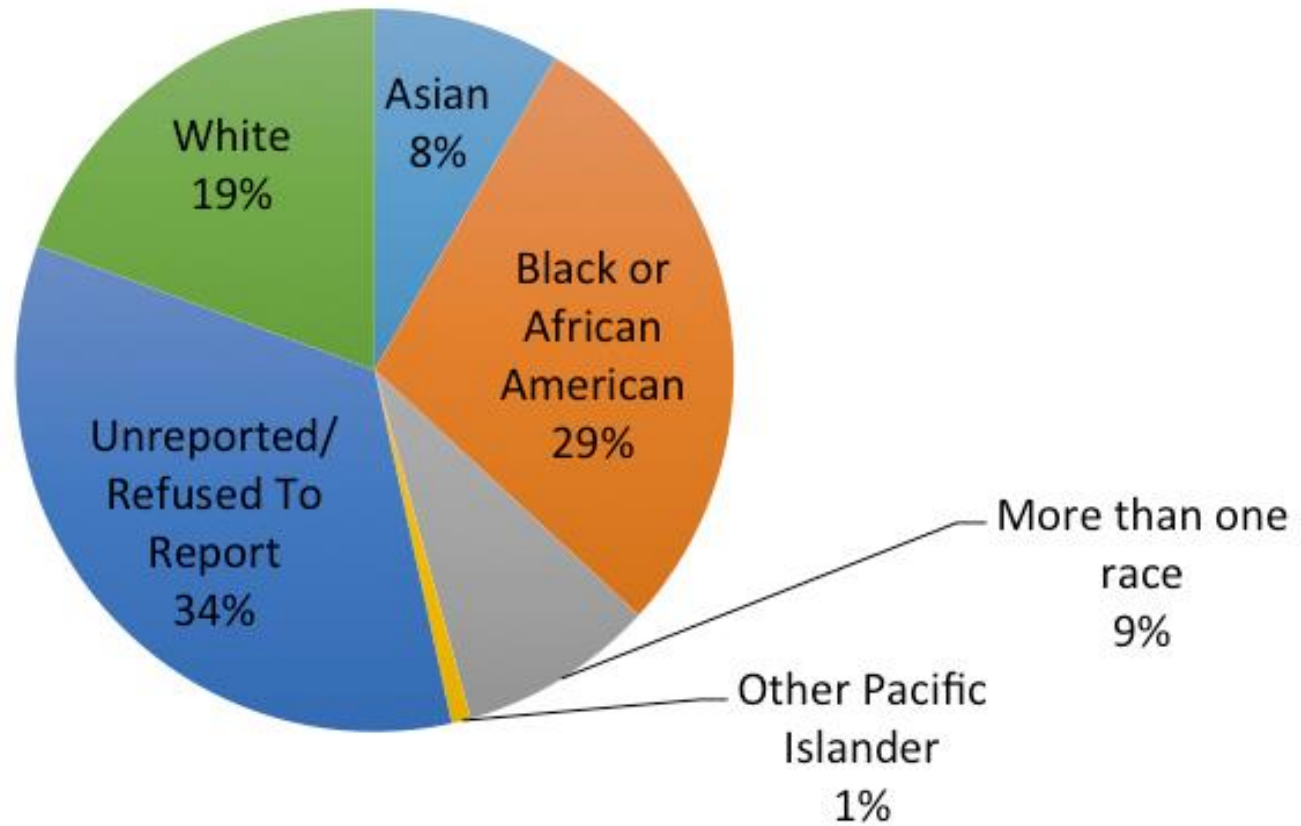
(USCIS, 2018)

Definition of Population Focus

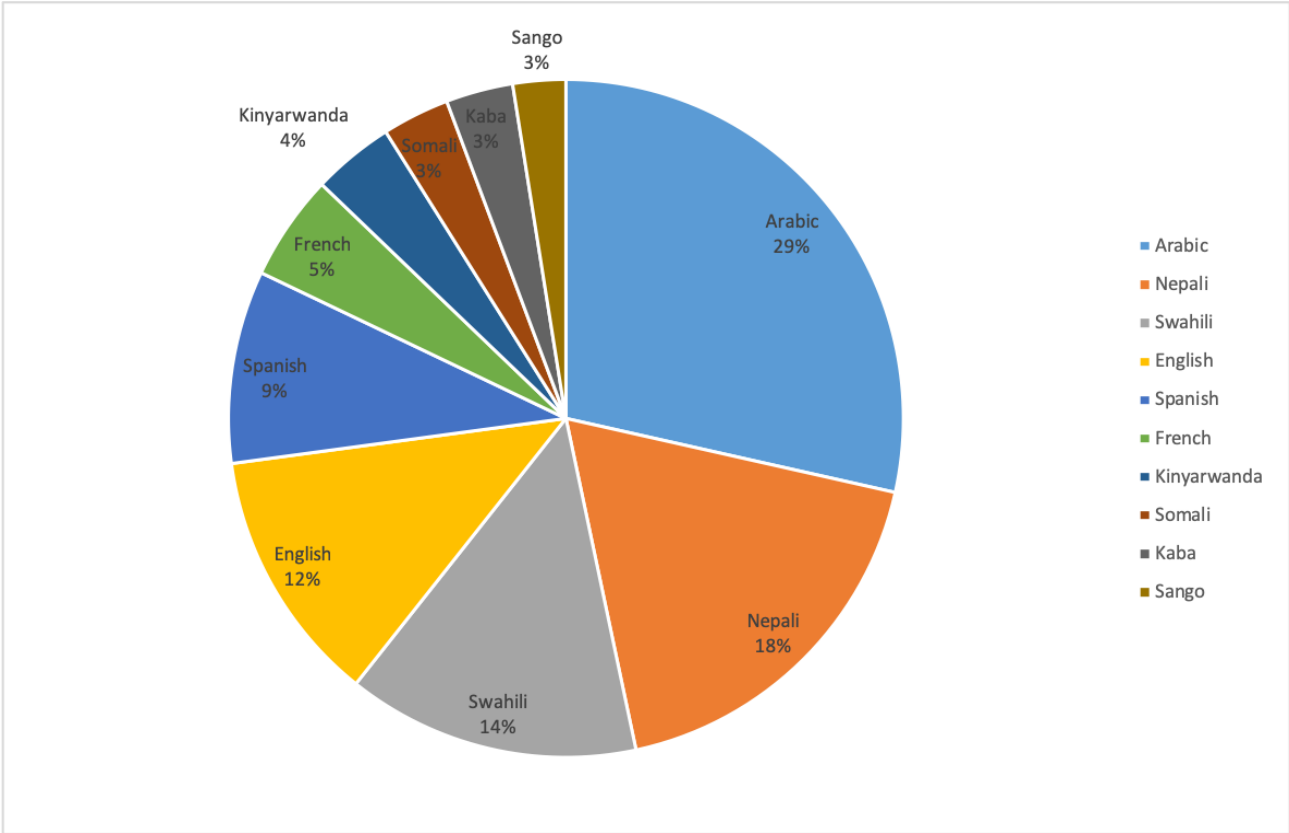
Geographic Distribution:

- Worcester Area
 - Resettling Agencies
 - Ascentria Care Alliance
 - Refugee and Immigrant Assistant Center

Race in Refugee Clinic



Top 10 Languages Spoken by Refugee Clinic Patients



Risks to refugees and asylum seekers

Physical problems and disabilities:

- Malunited fractures
- Soft tissue injuries
- Musculoskeletal symptoms
- Neuropathies
- Head injuries
- Epilepsy
- Malnutrition and anemia
- Non-communicable diseases and infectious diseases



(Langlois, Haines, Tomson, Ghaffar 2016)

Medical Risks

- Tuberculosis
- Polio
- Mumps
- Measles
- Rubella
- Viral Hepatitis
- Malaria

(CDC, 2013)





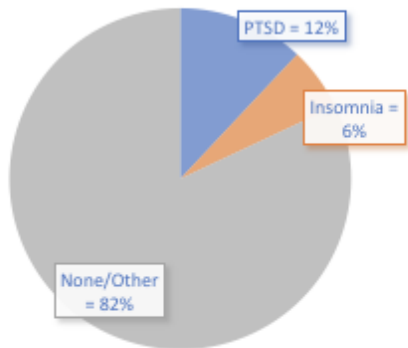
Social Risks

- Language/culture Barrier
- Theft
- Lack of Job Opportunities
- Substance Abuse
- Poverty
- Education Gap
- Human Trafficking

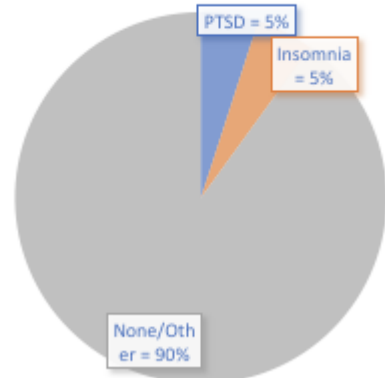
(UNHCR, 2018)

Acute Mental Health Problems and Trauma

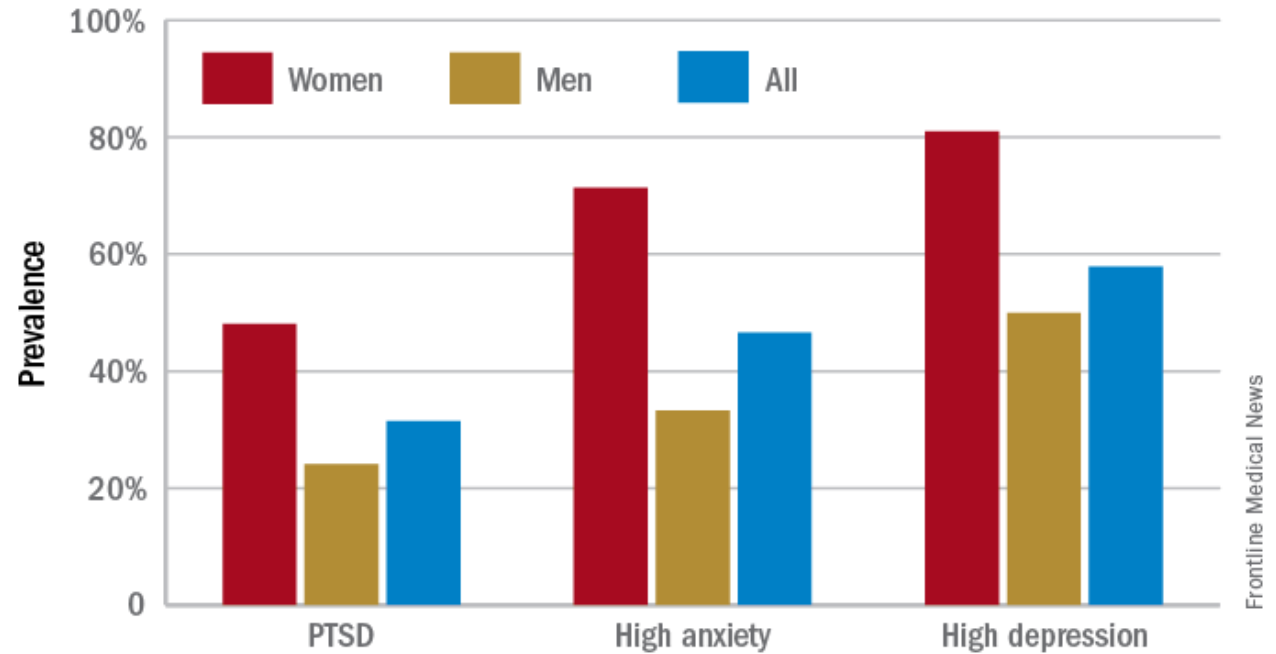
REFUGEES WITH PTSD OR INSOMNIA



TEAM 3 WITH PTSD OR INSOMNIA



Mental health screening results in resettled Syrian refugees



Note: 82 adults were evaluated with the PTSD Checklist for DSM-IV (PCL) and the Hopkins Symptom Checklist (HSCL-25).

Source: Dr. Javanbakht

Refugee Clinic:
PTSD: 12%
Anxiety: 1.2%
Depression: 17%

Team 3:
PTSD: 5%
Anxiety 3.4%
Depression: 25%

As a future provider, why is this a population that you should know more about?

Rapid increase in population

- Public health implications
- Response from health sector

Increased risk of diseases

- Not common in the US

Vulnerable Population

- Mental health
- Education gap
- Adjustment to new environment

Exploration of Interprofessional Teams

- Physicians (4)
 - Amber Sarkar, MD
 - Olga Valdman, MD
 - Satu Salonen, MD
 - Danielle Fitzsimmons-Pattison MD
- Nurse (1)
 - Alaina Theocles, RN
- Medical assistants (3)
 - Haddy Kanuteh MA
 - Sulay Alamo MA
 - Yamilette Torres MA
- Scheduler
 - Yorelis Rivera
- Behavioral health specialist (1)
 - Shawna
- Interpreters (both on-site and over the phone)
- Case managers, social workers

What is Refugee Advocacy?



Government Policy

Funding for refugee agencies
Number of accepted refugees



Legal

How broad is the refugee
determination?
Individual legal needs



Local

Individual / community assistance
Education
Healthcare
Employment



Local Refugee Advocacy Agencies

- Worcester provides a wealth of agencies which work to advocate for its refugee population
 - New Citizen Center
 - Ascentria
 - African Children Education (ACE)
 - Family Health Center of Worcester
 - Catholic Charities of Worcester County
 - Worcester Refugee Assistance Project (WRAP)

State/National Refugee Advocacy Agencies

- Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)
- The Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center (RIAC)
- Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)
- US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)



REFUGEES 
INTERNATIONAL

 **UNHCR**
The UN Refugee Agency
مفوضية الأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين



world relief™

Refugee Council USA

International Refugee Advocacy Agencies

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- Refugees International
- Refugee Council USA
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- World Relief

Acknowledgements

- Family Health Center of Worcester
 - Staff:
 - Fran Anthes, CEO
 - Amber Sarkar, MD
 - Olga Valdman, MD
 - Satu Salonen, MD
 - Danielle Fitzsimmons-Pattison MD
 - Alaina Theocles, RN
 - Haddy Kanuteh MA
 - Sulay Alamo MA
 - Yamilette Torres MA
 - Yorelis Rivera - scheduler
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 - Staff:
 - Judy Freedman Fask

Acknowledgements Cont.

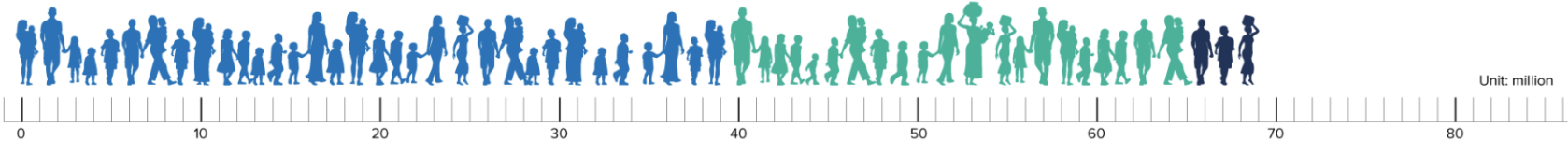
- Women, Infants and Children
 - Staff:
 - Kwame Appiah
- African Community Education Program (ACE)
 - Staff:
 - Kwame Bidi, Program Director
 - Noah Stolkner, After School Program Coordinator
- Umass Medical School
 - Staff:
 - John Trobaugh, Manager Diversity & Inclusion Office
 - Heather-Lyn Haley, Research Project Director Family Med & Community Health
 - Carla Carten, Assistant VC Diversity & Inclusion Office

BY THE NUMBERS



Share this page:

68.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide



Internally Displaced People
40 million

Refugees
25.4 million
19.9 million under UNHCR mandate
5.4 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA

Asylum-seekers
3.1 million

Where the world's displaced people are being hosted

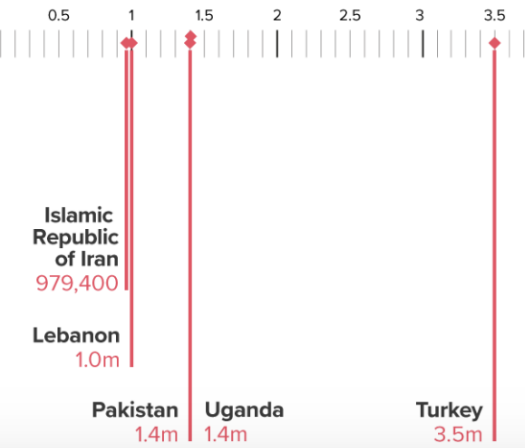


85 per cent of the world's displaced people are in developing countries

57% of refugees worldwide came from three countries



Top refugee-hosting countries



Refugee Statistics in the U.S.

Refugee Arrivals by Top Country of Nationality: Fiscal Year 2016

(Ranked by country of nationality)

Dem. Rep. Congo

16,370 | 19.3%

Syria

12,587 | 14.8%

Burma

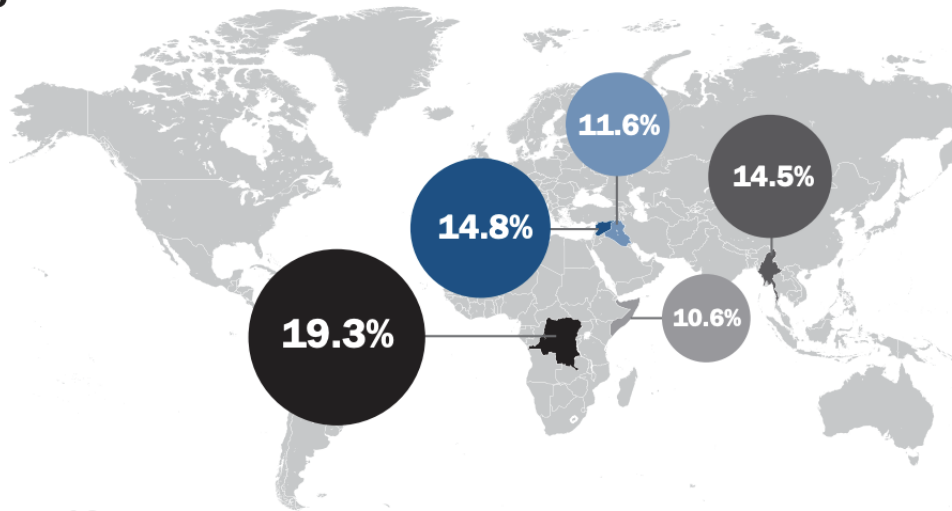
12,347 | 14.5%

Iraq

9,880 | 11.6%

Somalia

9,020 | 10.6%

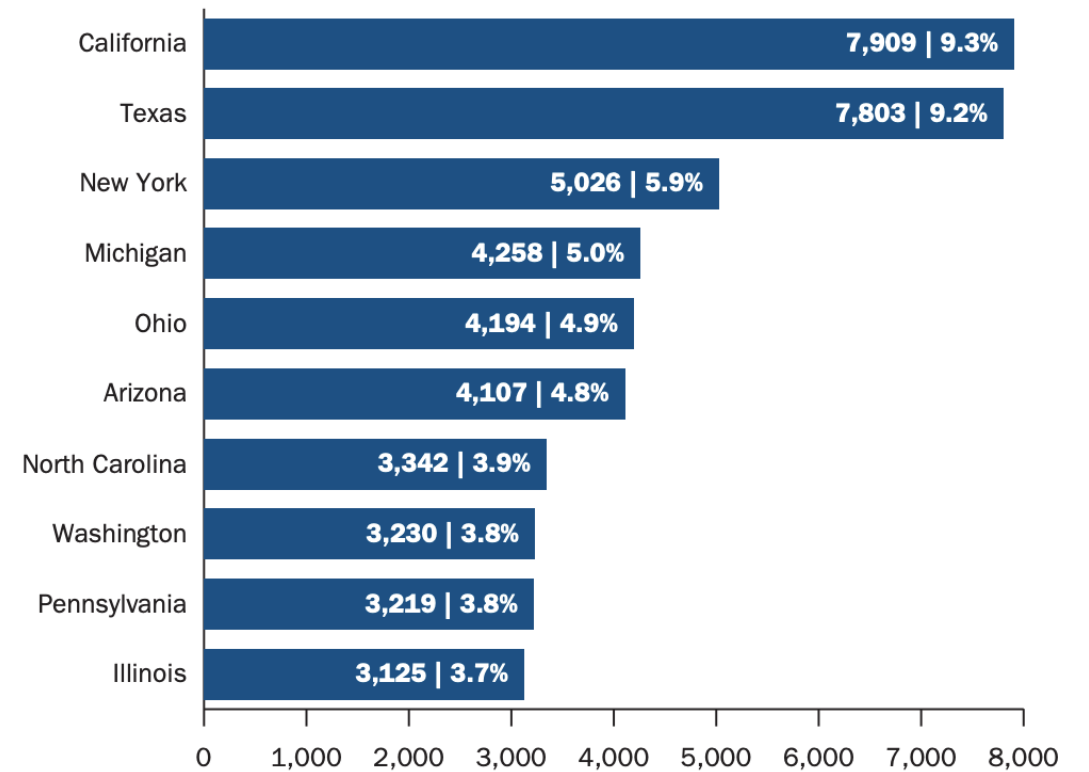


Source: U.S. Department of State.

Figure 3.

Refugee Arrivals by Leading States of Residence: Fiscal Year 2016

(Ranked by 2016 state of residence)



Source: U.S. Department of State.

Asylum Seeker Statistics in the U.S.

Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively or Defensively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Year 2016

(Ranked by country of nationality)

People's Republic of China

4,484 | 21.9%

El Salvador

2,157 | 10.5%

Guatemala

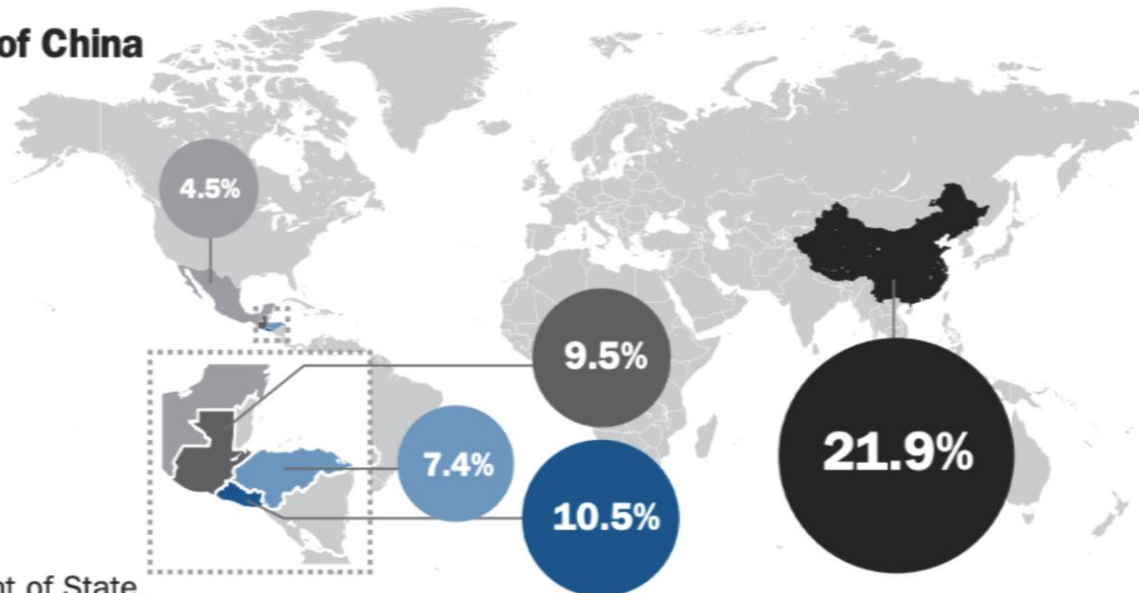
1,949 | 9.5%

Honduras

1,505 | 7.4%

Mexico

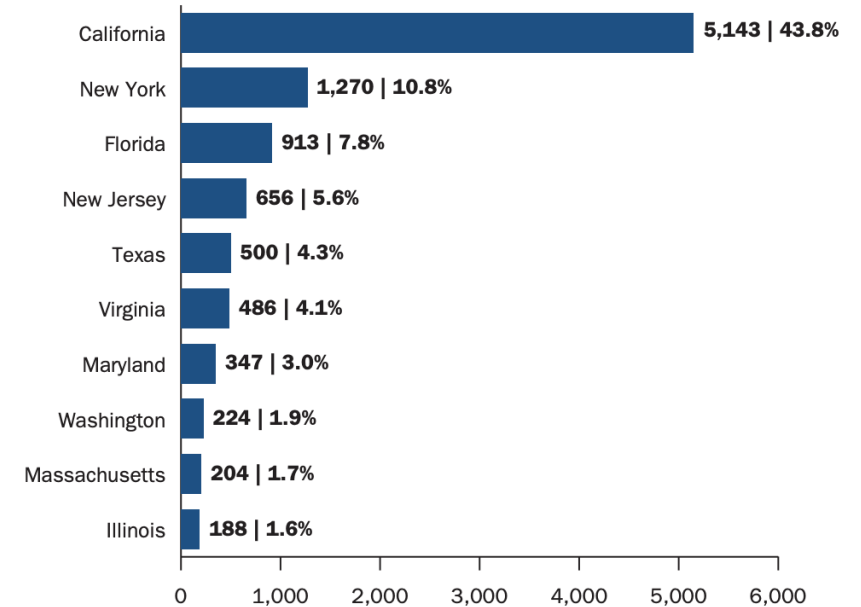
919 | 4.5%



Source: U.S. Department of State.

Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by State of Residence: Fiscal Year 2016

(Ranked by 2016 state of residence)



Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.

Source: U.S. Department of State.

References

Langlois, E. V., Haines, A., Tomson, G., & Ghaffar, A. (2016). Refugees: towards better access to health-care services. *Lancet (London, England)*, 387(10016), 319-321.

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[Refugee Council USA, Refugee Resettlement Massachusetts, 2017](#)

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<http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/excom/standcom/3ae68d0e10/social-economic-impact-large-refugee-populations-host-developing-countries.html>



QUESTIONS?

