

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN Arkansas

REFUGEE POPULATION OF ARKANSAS

The United States has been a leader in welcoming [refugees](#) who seek safety from persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Following World War II, the U.S. began welcoming refugees and over time the system has evolved to have a strong infrastructure centered on [public-private partnerships](#). Communities across the U.S. have recognized the important economic and social benefits of resettling refugees. Arkansas residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to AR communities. In 2013, organizations and communities across [Arkansas](#) welcomed less than 1% of [refugees arriving in the U.S.](#) Of the 18 newcomers to Arkansas in 2013, 11 were asylees and 7 were resettled refugees.

Where are most refugees in Arkansas from?

Bhutan
Iraq

SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN ARKANSAS

In addition to [programming](#) to support refugees when they first arrive to the United States, the federal government provides monetary aid through grants to the state, Voluntary Agencies, and other refugee aid organizations for community and short-term refugee support. Two successful programs, the [Refugee Resettlement Office](#) and the [Catholic Charities Immigration Services](#) are administered by the [Catholic Charities of Arkansas](#). Primary program services include cash and medical assistance, access to English as a second language classes, vocational and employment assistance.

FEDERAL FY14 ORR FUNDING TO ARKANSAS FOR REFUGEE PROGRAMS (AS OF DECEMBER 2013)

Total	Cash & Medical Assistance	Refugee Social Services
85,000	10,000	75,000

“Abosh, eager to resume his teaching career and complete his doctorate, applied and was accepted into the program.”

--[Story](#) by Dwain Hebda of the *Little Rock Correspondent*

REFUGEES MAKE ARKANSAS STRONG

[The Gurungs](#) are the first Bhutanese refugees to arrive in this area. Other family members are scheduled to come in the next several months. After a few days of extreme jet lag, the Gurungs are beginning to enjoy the temporary housing that St. Joseph secured for them near the University, close to the trail system, and within walking distance to grocery stores. They have learned how to use a washing machine, microwave, and shower – all for the first time. This week, Sangam started Kindergarten at Root Elementary. And his parents, Yam and Bishnu, began daily ESL classes at Ozark Literacy Center. They have made friends with priests and monks, Catholics, Hindus, and Buddhists. They are happy to have a fresh start.

LOCAL AFFILIATES AND OFFICES OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN ARKANSAS

- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Arkansas, Little Rock
- USCCB, Catholic Charities Immigration Services, Springdale

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees to aid in the resettlement of fellow refugees by providing a variety of direct services, increasing civic participation, and preserve the community's cultural identity and history.