

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN Louisiana

REFUGEES IN LOUISIANA

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. Louisiana residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to Louisiana communities. In 2013, organizations and communities across [Louisiana](#) welcomed less than 1% of [refugees arriving in the U.S.](#) Of the 344 newcomers, 42 were asylees, 223 were resettled refugees, 77 were Cuban and Haitian entrants, and 2 were Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) recipients who served alongside U.S. troops.

Where are most refugees in Louisiana from?

Bhutan
Burma
Iraq
Congo
Rwanda

SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN LOUISIANA

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. [The Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge](#) serves as the refugee resettlement office for the state of Louisiana. Primary program services include social and medical services, job placement, language training, family reunification, and assistance with the citizenship and immigration process. [Discretionary grants](#) are also awarded to private agencies for various other self-sufficiency programs.

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

Total	Cash & Medical Assistance	Wilson Fish RCA	Matching Grant	Refugee Social Services	Preventive Health
\$1,438,454	\$150,000	\$864,268	\$110,000	\$226,660	\$87,526

Another service available to refugees in Louisiana is the employment [Matching Grant Services](#), administered by Voluntary Agencies in the state. An alternative to public cash assistance, private agencies match federal contributions and provide intensive case management services to help refugees get employed and become self-sufficient within 120 days of arrival.

Through the work of Migration and Refugee Services of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge and with the assistance of a group of dedicated volunteers, the family is making the transition from hunger and misery in a refugee camp in Zambia, Africa, to a new life in America.”

—on the [Kasongo family](#) and their transition to the U.S

REFUGEES MAKE LOUISIANA STRONG

Mariam Kurdadze moved from Tbilisi, the capital of the Republic of Georgia, as an evacuee in 2008 when extreme insecurity and instability in her home country flared up as a result of armed conflict with the Russian Army. She moved to the United States to play tennis at Tulane where she has spent the last four years as a star player for their team. Her presence has uplifted the program in their attempt to recover from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Mariam has been a model student-athlete during her tenure at Tulane. Her personality and spirit are infectious and she leaves a lasting impression on those she touches. Mariam is set to enroll in Tulane's business school this summer after a trip home, and plans to work with Tulane's sports information department to help promote the tennis program.

LOCAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OFFICES AND AFFILIATES IN LOUISIANA

- USCCB, Migration & Refugee Services, Baton Rouge, Lafayette
- USCCB, Resettlement Center of Central LA Inc., Alexandria, Metairie

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.