

Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants (ORI)



**Refugees in Massachusetts; Resettlement
and Integration**

Agenda

- I. Overview of ORI
- II. Key Populations
- III. Service Provisions
- IV. Resources
- V. Questions



Overview

Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants (ORI)

Mission: To Promote the full participation of refugees and immigrants in the economic, social, and civic life of Massachusetts.

“Services across the life-span”

Primary Activities

- State refugee resettlement planning and implementation
- Collaboration with the MDPH Refugee and Immigrant Health Program (RIHP)
- Management of various interdepartmental service agreements
- Coordination of Statewide Refugee Services

Funding Sources



- 93% Federal Funding
 - Office for Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
 - AmeriCorps
- State Appropriation
 - Citizenship
 - Employment Support Program

Importance: This drives the populations we can serve.

Primary Populations Served



A **refugee** is a person **outside of his or her country** of nationality who is **unable or unwilling to return** because of persecution or a well-founded **fear of persecution** on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

Primary Populations Served (cont.)

- **Asylee** – Same criteria as refugee but applicant is in U.S., whereas refugee applicant applies outside U.S.
- **Cuban/Haitian Entrant** – Includes nationals of Cuba and Haiti granted parole status, or who have applied for asylum
- **Certain Amerasians from Vietnam**
- **Certified Victims of a Severe Form of Trafficking** – Victims of forced commercial sex and forced labor
- **Special immigrant visa** holders from Afghanistan and Iraq
- **Immigrants**

Refugee Resettlement: A Bipartisan Commitment

- Affords rights to refugees of special humanitarian concern into the US
- US Congress enacted refugee legislation in 1948
 - Accommodate incoming and displaced Europeans,
 - Later to receive Cubans fleeing political strife (1960s),
 - Vietnamese (1975)

The United States is part of a bipartisan commitment to incoming populations fleeing significant strife. These laws ensure parity and standardization in refugee service provisions.

Process of Becoming a Refugee

Becoming a
Refugee
(Designation)

Pre-
Admission to
the US
(Refuge)

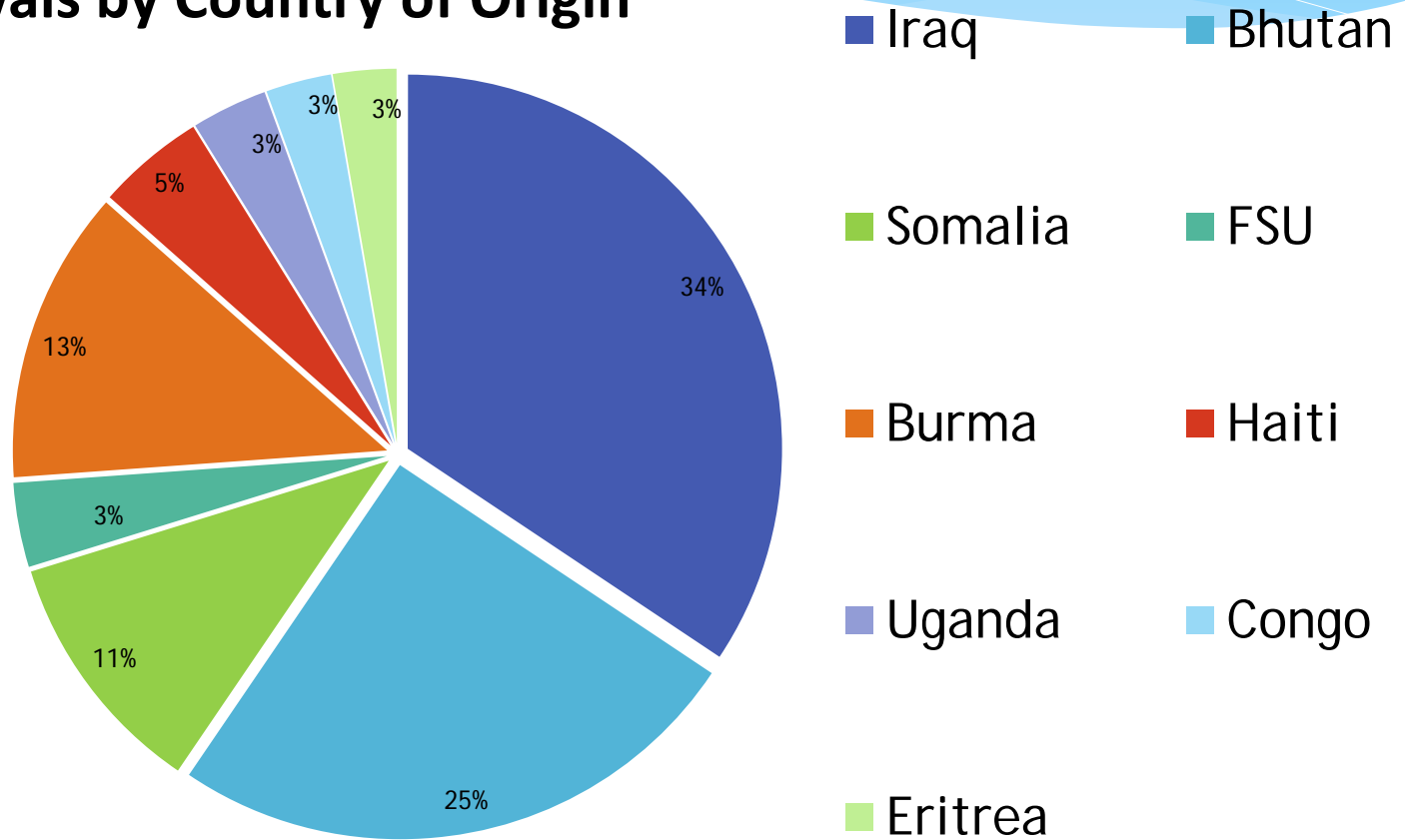
Admission to
the US
(Integration)

MA Refugee Arrivals

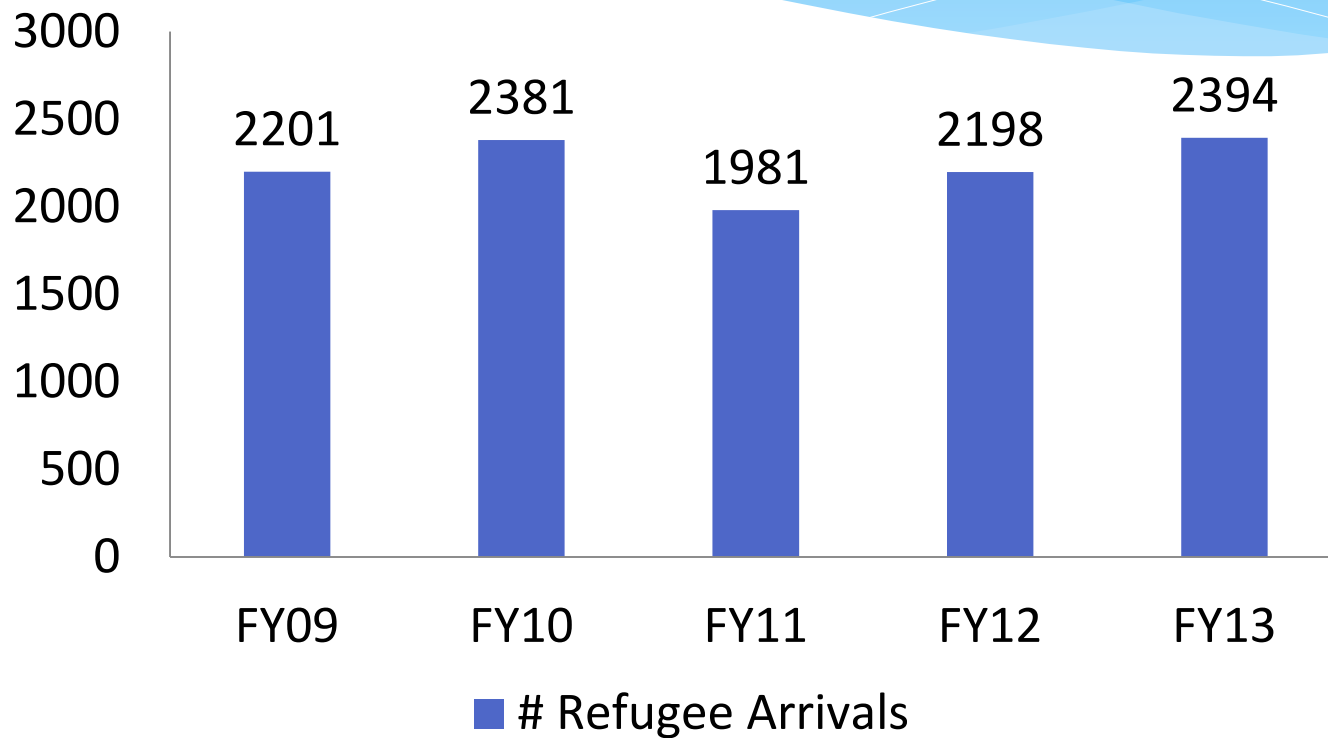
2009-2013

Total: 11,155

Refugee Arrivals by Country of Origin



MA Refugee Resettlement Annual Enrollments: 2009-2013



Data includes: new overseas refugee arrivals, Cuban/Haitian entrants, certain Amerasians, refugee secondary migrants, asylees, certified victims of trafficking, and special immigrant visas.

Primary Refugee Resettlement Areas

Includes: Worcester,
Fitchburg, Leominster

Includes: Lowell
& Lawrence

Merrimack
Valley
11% of annual
arrivals

Includes:
Boston,
Brockton,
Cambridge,
Chelsea, Everett,
Framingham,
Lynn (11%),
Malden,
Revere,
Salem

Western
MA
28% of
annual
arrivals

Central MA
23% of annual
arrivals

Greater
Boston
38% of annual
arrivals

Includes: Agawam, Amherst, Northampton,
Chicopee, Holyoke, Greenfield, Pittsfield,
Springfield, W. Springfield, Westfield

Source: MA Office for Refugees and Immigrants, Refugee Resettlement Agency Provider Reports, FFY13

Barriers to Successful Resettlement and Integration

- Limited English proficiency
- History of trauma *
- Substantial medical issues*
- Long stays in refugee camps and lack of exposure to education, technology, etc.
- High cost and unavailability of housing
- Trouble navigating U.S. systems (health, education, other services)
- Lack of transportation in many areas



Barriers to Successful Resettlement and Integration (cont.)

- Anti-Immigrant Sentiment
- Weather, culture, food differences
- Caregiver Burdens
- Access to Services
- Drivers Licenses

Benefits to Successful Resettlement and Integration (cont.)

- **Responsive and local programming:**
 - RSP/ORI Grantees
 - Community Health
 - Bilingual/Bicultural Staff
- **Linguistically appropriate supports: Translation/Interpretation**
- **Inclusion of the whole person:**
 - Family/friends/neighbors circles ties
 - Religious beliefs/ houses of worship



Refugee Service Providers

- Amherst Health Department
- Asian Center of the Merrimack Valley
- Berkshire Community Action Council, Inc.
- Bosnian Community Center for Resource Development
- Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association
- Catholic Charities of Boston
- Catholic Charities of Worcester
- Centro Latino de Chelsea
- City of Boston
- City of Springfield
- Congolese Development Center
- Department of Public Health
- Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley
- Eritrean Community Center
- Ethiopian Community Mutual Assistance Association
- Haitian American Public Health Initiatives
- Immigrants Assistance Center
- International Institute of Boston
- International Institute of Lowell
- Irish International Immigrant Center

Refugee Service Providers (cont.)

- Jewish Family Service of Metrowest
- Jewish Family Services of Western MA
- Jewish Vocational Service
- Lawrence Council on Aging
- Lowell Public Schools
- Lutheran Social Services of New England
- MA Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
- Massachusetts Alliance for Portuguese Speakers
- Office of Medicaid/MassHealth
- Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center Boston/Worcester
- Russian Community Association of Massachusetts Lynn/West Springfield
- Somali Development Center
- Southern Sudanese Solidarity Organization
- West Springfield Public Schools
- Westfield Public Schools

Resources

- MA Office for Refugees and Immigrants:
www.mass.gov/ori
- MA Refugee Resettlement Program:
<http://www.massresources.org/refugee-resettlement-program.html>
- US Citizenship and Immigrant Services (USCIS):
<http://www.uscis.gov/>
- United Nations High Council for Refugees (UNHCR):
<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>

Resources

- www.lep.gov For information about limited English proficient individuals
- N-LAAN Listserv – www.probono.net/nlaan
- N-LAAN List of State Language Access Groups
- www.masslegalservices.org/languageaccess for information regarding translation and interpretation access

Resources

- State Specific Language Access Policies/Plans:
http://www.migrationinformation.org/integration/language_portal/doc4.cfm
- How to work with an interpreter (video):
[http://www.health.medicbd.com/library/video_play/cXkrmqsWJ0/10 Tips for Working with Language Interpreters](http://www.health.medicbd.com/library/video_play/cXkrmqsWJ0/10_Tips_for_Working_with_Language_Interpreters)

Resources (cont.)

- www.Mass.gov to search and view language access plans developed by MA State Agencies
- Telephonic Interpreters: www.languageline.com, www.ctslanguagelink.com, www.pacificinterpreters.com
- <http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlID=15> to view the National CLAS Standards Culturally Competent health Providers Training

MA Office for Refugees and Immigrants (ORI)
617-727-7888

Thank You!