



Syrian Refugee Crisis and Resettlement

A Statement from the International Institute of St. Louis

There have been horrific terrorist attacks by ISIS abroad in the past few days, namely in Beirut and Paris. In the case of Paris, one of the attackers may have used a Syrian passport to cross by sea to Greece and enter Europe in the refugee/migrant flow of the past few months.

As a result, many in America have become more fearful for their safety. They have been expressing their concerns, especially in light of the recent White House decision to increase Syrian resettlement in the US by 10,000 (over the 1,500 in the previous year).

Those of us involved in refugee resettlement are aware that the **US admissions process is very different from what we have been seeing in Europe**. This is how the US Program actually works: Refugees applying for admission to the US Program must have been duly registered with the United Nations and must be currently located in refugee camps or nearby in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. Once refugee applicants are cleared for resettlement by the UN and referred to the US program for consideration and vetting, [multiple security hurdles](#) must be passed. The process takes at least 18 months. Also, contrary to footage of refugee flight in Europe, Syrians being resettled in the US are, by-and-large and will continue to be, families.

It is likely, and appropriate, that the Syrian resettlement process, including its already complex security procedures, is being reviewed by federal authorities. So, the American public can rest assured that appropriate protections will be in place. And in St. Louis, we stand ready to offer a welcoming resettlement community to refugees who pass our country's strict security checks.

While we have resettled 29 Syrians in St. Louis in recent months, none have been resettled through our branch office in Springfield, MO. The focus of our resettlement program remains in St. Louis where there is language and cultural capacity to assist with the resettlement of this newcomer population.

America was founded to offer safe haven to refugees escaping persecution. We cannot imagine the horrors these people are fleeing. Their stories are not unlike the stories of many of our ancestors. Let's work with the federal government to address security issues. And let's continue to offer safe haven and thereby not forget who and what we are as a nation.

Anna E. Crosslin
President & CEO

November 18, 2015

*Immersion
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Inclusion*