



Immigrants and Immigration:

A Guide for Entertainment Professionals

2019 Media Reference Guide





In a constantly shifting U.S. immigration landscape, *Immigrants and Immigration: A Guide for Entertainment Professionals* is written as a resource for writers, producers, directors, and creators who want to tell stories that are both accurate and humanizing about immigrants in our country today.

We are living in an unprecedented cultural moment in this country. While we're becoming demographically more diverse, "Americans have been clustering themselves into cultural bubbles just as they have clustered in political bubbles," says *The New York Times* reporter Josh Katz, with [our TV preferences reflecting just that](#). According a 2014 study by MTV and PRRI, 91% of White people in America do not have meaningful relationships with non-White people. This means that careless media stories about immigrants, Muslims, and people of color help shape the broader cultural narrative in powerful and dangerous ways. Entertainment and pop culture are often the lenses through which we see the world, and Hollywood has the power to tell stories that help us understand how to feel about other cultures, traditions, and people with differing world views from our own. In this current cultural moment, bridges between people of different backgrounds and cultures are far more likely to be torn down than constructed. Pop culture has

the opportunity to build those bridges and be the connector to drive positive change in our society. While much has changed in the past year, one thing is certain: anti-immigrant rhetoric and misinformation still dominate the news cycle. With new and added topics like family separation, climate change refugees and detention and mass incarceration, along with case studies from current television programs, this updated Media Reference Guide is more relevant than ever. We hope you will find it not only useful, but also inspiring, as we work toward a more inclusive future together.

The primary purpose of this document is to educate and inform. Define American has years of experience in this field and works alongside researchers and seasoned journalists, but assumes no responsibility or liability for the content herein and accuracy of the Media Reference Guide or any use made of the Media Reference Guide by the subscriber or user. Define American also assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of this document. The information contained in this document is provided on an "as is" basis with no guarantees of completeness, accuracy, usefulness or timeliness. This guide will be edited on an annual basis. Please direct any questions or concerns to ent@defineamerican.com.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Today, when many in the government use language to dehumanize people and push extreme policy, words matter more than ever before. The words we use can inadvertently suggest bias and may serve to promote a political agenda. At Define American, we use the term “undocumented Americans” for the over 11 million people living in the U.S. without authorization. Here are some other humanizing terms: *new Americans, newcomers, people who are undocumented, unauthorized immigrants, families who have moved from one place to another, and people who weren’t born in the United States*. While there is no pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants in the U.S., individuals’ immigration statuses may change, and thus the terms used in reference to them may need to change as well.

Problematic: **illegals, illegal immigrant**

The Associated Press writes in the [AP Stylebook](#), “Except in direct quotes essential to the story, use *illegal* only to refer to an action, not a person. *Illegal immigration*, but not *illegal immigrant*.”

Problematic: **Alien, Illegal Alien**

The term *illegal* is dehumanizing and replaces complex legal circumstances with an assumption of guilt.

Preferred: **undocumented immigrant, unauthorized immigrant, undocumented American**

“Undocumented” or “unauthorized” offer options for neutral terminology.

Learn more about our #WordsMatter campaign at DefineAmerican.com/wordsmatter.

ANCHOR BABY: An offensive term that is often used to refer to a child born to a non-citizen parent under the assumption the child will provide them a pathway to securing citizenship or legal residency.

ASYLUM SEEKER/ASYLEE: A person or group of people seeking refugee status to secure protection based on their religion, nationality, political affiliation or particular social or ethnic group membership.

BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP: The right of any person born in the United States to American citizenship, as created by the 14th Amendment. The current administration has been very vocal about their desire to take this right away from kids born to immigrant parents.

BORDER PATROL (CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION, CBP): A federal law enforcement agency that monitors the U.S. borders in an attempt to prevent illegal crossings into the U.S.

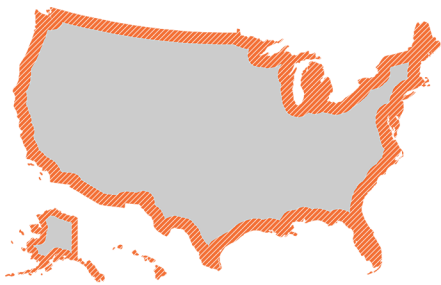
BORDER WALL: The barrier that exists between the U.S. and other countries that aims to keep undocumented individuals from entering into the country illegally.





DREAMER: The term “DREAMer” has often been used when referring to undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children. Individuals who have since become eligible for DACA are also referred to as DREAMers.

CHAIN MIGRATION: This term was [developed by anti-immigration groups](#) to refer to the well-established legal process of issuing “[family-based immigrant visas](#).” This is how lawful permanent residents or U.S. citizens apply for their relatives to become lawful permanent residents. First Lady Melania Trump’s parents [are confirmed to have become American citizens](#) through this process. Preferred term: Family-based migration.



CONSTITUTION-FREE ZONE: A zone within 100 miles of the U.S. border where immigration authorities can operate immigration checkpoints at random. It is not uncommon for border patrol agents to engage in unconstitutional traffic stops and property searches and for undocumented immigrants to be immediately detained. Source: [ACLU](#) bit.ly/2olwSi7

DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS (DACA):

DACA is a program that allows individuals who came to the U.S. as children and meet several requirements to apply for temporary protection from deportation and work eligibility for a period of two years. DACA does not provide amnesty or a path to citizenship. The program was ended by President Trump in 2018, but it remains for individuals who had previously received DACA due to court rulings.

DEPORTATION: Deportation occurs when the federal government orders forced removal of an individual from the United States. A common misconception is that deportation is only pursued when criminal laws have been violated. In reality, individuals are and continue to be deported for reasons such as minor traffic offenses or no reason at all other than unauthorized status.

DETAINED: When an undocumented individual is apprehended and taken into custody in preparation for deportation.

DETENTION CENTER: A facility where undocumented immigrants are held after being detained. The vast majority of detention centers operate on a “for profit” model.



FAMILY SEPARATION: The process by which parents are separated from their children at the U.S.-Mexico border due to the Trump Administration’s [zero tolerance policy](#) implemented in April 2018. Family separation has caused a record number of [children to be imprisoned](#).

GREEN CARD: A green card is an informal name for a permanent resident card which allows immigrants to live and work permanently in the United States. The card isn’t actually green.

H-1B Visa: A specialty visa that allows U.S. employers to hire foreign workers into specialty occupations.

ICE Detainer: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) must have probable cause that the individual is deportable before issuing a detainer. This does not necessarily mean that the person is undocumented, as legal permanent residents and citizens can be subjected to this treatment as well.

IMMIGRANT: An immigrant is defined as a person who migrates to another country, usually for permanent residence.

IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE): ICE is a federal law enforcement agency under the United States Department of Homeland Security that enforces laws governing border control, customs, trade, and immigration.

MIGRANT: A broad term that includes refugees and those moving for economic reasons. Migrants may remain on the move for extended periods of time, and some may wish to return home one day.



MIGRANT WORKER: An individual who travels seasonally for temporary work. Not all migrant workers are undocumented, and not all undocumented individuals are migrant workers. As the border has become more militarized, many migrant workers who once came seasonally now stay and live as undocumented immigrants.



MIXED-STATUS FAMILY: When individuals within a family unit have different citizenship and/or immigration statuses. For example: An undocumented mother may give birth in the United States, resulting in a citizen child. Or, someone married to a citizen could have their visa fall out of status. It is estimated that eight million U.S. citizens live with an undocumented family member. Source: [American Immigration Council](https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/mixed-status-families/) bit.ly/2p2AsF7

NATURALIZATION: The process of being granted U.S. citizenship after certain eligibility requirements have been met. Source: [USCIS](https://uscis.gov/immigration/become-us-citizen) bit.ly/2gvCacV

REFUGEE: An individual who has been forced to flee his or her home country due to political persecution, natural disaster, famine, or war.

SANCTUARY: A location that offers temporary security, safety, and protection for undocumented immigrants. Generally speaking, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has viewed churches, hospitals, and schools as “sensitive locations” where they do not conduct enforcement actions such as arrests — although they do not always honor the policy.



Jeanette Vizguerra holds her income tax return and her award of Time’s “100 most influential people in the world”. She had previously taken sanctuary in the basement of the First Unitarian Society church in Denver, Co, but left after receiving a temporary stay of removal through early 2019.

SANCTUARY CITY: A sanctuary city is a city/state that limits its cooperation with the national government effort to enforce detention and deportation of its residents. This is important because it allows anyone to report crimes without fear of deportation.

Source: [America's Voice](https://www.america'svoice.net) bit.ly/2LNpRc1

TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS (TPS): People may be granted TPS if their country of origin has been designated by the Secretary of Homeland Security as a country where conditions, such as war and natural disasters, prevent immigrants from returning to the country safely. In the past year, the government has rescinded TPS for thousands of immigrants who came from many of the countries that were granted the designation previously.



TOUCHBACK: The myth that undocumented individuals can just temporarily go back to their home country to easily gain a legal path to citizenship in the U.S. This is often used to trick undocumented immigrants to unknowingly “self-deport.” For undocumented immigrants, leaving the country can result in a 10-year bar from applying to re-enter with authorization. In many countries the wait-list for applications is decades long.

U.S. CITIZEN: A legally-recognized subject of the United States, either by birth or naturalization.

VISA: A visa is an official document that indicates that the holder has permission to enter and stay in a requested country for a specified period of time. The difficulty of obtaining a visa depends on the country you are traveling from.

Source: [Passport Index](https://www.passportindex.com) bit.ly/1IYKOSk

[U.S. State Department](https://www.state.gov) bit.ly/10ZekID



TALKING ABOUT IMMIGRANTS IN TV AND FILM

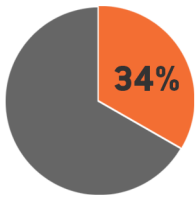
FALSE or FALSE: Debunking popular stereotypes seen in TV and Film

Immigrants are criminals **FALSE**

Immigrants are far less likely than the native-born population to commit crimes and be incarcerated, but we often see immigrants portrayed in television and film committing crimes or engaging in criminal activities. Check out [Define American's study](#) examining immigrant portrayals on popular TV shows, in partnership with the Norman Lear Center at USC, for more information. Source: [CATO Institute](#) bit.ly/2gm8pul

CRIME & INCARCERATION

IMMIGRANT CHARACTERS ASSOCIATED WITH A CRIME



One-third of immigrant characters on TV were associated with a crime.



In reality, **immigrants commit less crime** than native-born Americans.

Learn more about these results by reading our study of television shows, produced in collaboration with the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center. DefineAmerican.com/tvstudy

Immigrants are a drain on our resources **FALSE**

A nonpartisan team of economists and researchers reported that the economic effects of immigration are mostly positive and encourage economic growth. Their report “assesses the impact of dynamic immigration processes on economic and fiscal outcomes for the United States, a major destination of world population movements.”

Source: [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#) bit.ly/2cRKhBm

Undocumented immigrants don't pay taxes and social security **FALSE**

- Undocumented Americans pay \$11.64 billion annually in state and local taxes. Undocumented immigrants nationwide pay on average an estimated 8% of their incomes toward state and local taxes. Source: [ITEP](#) bit.ly/2BUeSJo
- Undocumented Americans pay \$12 billion annually to the Social Security Trust Fund and will never have access to those funds when they retire. The Social Security Administration (SSA) estimates that unauthorized workers have paid \$100 billion into the fund over the past decade. Source: [VICE News](#) bit.ly/UXn3N1
- Undocumented Americans paid \$23.6 billion in federal income taxes in 2015 using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). Source: [IRS](#) bit.ly/2F2pM2S
- Undocumented Americans are not granted access to any federal aid, benefits, or services.

Immigrants take our jobs **FALSE**

Immigrants are more likely to start businesses than native-born Americans. In 2012, 49% of immigrants owned their own businesses, compared with only 26% of native-born Americans.

Source: [Kauffman Institute](#) bit.ly/Odljff

Undocumented immigrants are all from Mexico **FALSE**

Undocumented immigrants are often assumed to be Mexican, since Mexicans are currently the largest undocumented population in the U.S. However, the fastest growing undocumented population is comprised of Asian immigrants. Net migration from Mexico has been zero since 2009. Undocumented Black and White immigrants are often erased from the conversation.

Source: [Migration Policy Institute](#) bit.ly/2A9Hb7D
[Pew Hispanic Center](#) pewrsr.ch/1S6

BEST PRACTICES FOR PRODUCING PROJECTS ABOUT IMMIGRANTS

Hire more immigrants

Having writers, cast, and crew members with diverse perspectives can only lend authenticity to your project, especially when telling stories about communities outside of your own.



Consult with the immigrant community

If writing about or producing a project about a culture or group outside of your own, it's important to speak to members of the community you are working to portray to ensure that your characters and storylines are realistic. When speaking to someone who is undocumented, be conscious of and sensitive to the fact that they are taking a personal and sometimes legal risk by speaking to you about their situation or sharing their narrative.



The Entertainment Media team at Define American is here to provide an expert voice for television and film projects.

Focus on community bondedness

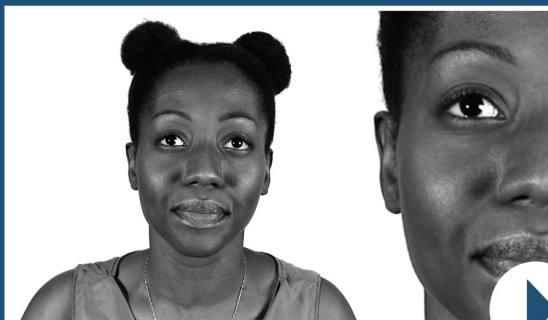
Leverage universal and relatable themes to showcase how connected and shared our experiences as people really are. Even if one hasn't lived in a community with new immigrants, we can all relate to ideas like wanting to belong, to succeed, to feel free, and to find love.



READ: ICE Came for a Tennessee Town's Immigrants. The Town Fought Back. nyti.ms/2sXGIZW

Steer clear of the “Good Immigrant Narrative”

A common narrative seen in media today is the myth that only “good” immigrants – those who are highly educated, English-speaking, wealthy, and have white collar jobs – are worthy of living in the United States. Yes, we all know that immigrants are “hard working” and “good for the economy,” but reducing people to economic value-add or taking away their right to be imperfect, complex individuals is still dehumanizing. When developing immigrant characters and storylines, give them the same flawed but beautiful humanity that we see in American-born characters.



WATCH: The Good Immigrant bit.ly/2dzVzaJ

Be sensitive to risk and privacy

Undocumented immigrants are assuming a risk when they speak to members of the news media and entertainment communities. Many people in this situation choose to hide their immigration status rather than risk deportation due to the unwanted attention this type of exposure would attract. It's important to keep in mind the risk that undocumented immigrants face in coming forward with their personal journeys.



Move away from fear-based storytelling

Too often, representation of immigrants in film and television feed into a growing unease and uncertainty around immigration and demographic shifts happening in our nation. The result is a divided and deep fracturing of our country.



Seek an expert opinion

Immigration is a very complex issue and one that many Americans don't fully understand. One of the ways we can work to counteract misinformation about immigrants and immigration is to seek out an expert opinion when crafting storylines about characters who are undocumented immigrants.



Many of the undocumented immigrant portrayals we see in TV and film today are what have been termed “fear-based” narratives. These narratives portray immigrants as either living in fear (of deportation or other types of discrimination) or causing fear in others when they are depicted as terrorists or criminals.

IMMIGRATION LAW 101

Pathways to citizenship

DISCLAIMER: Under current immigration law, for most undocumented Americans, there is no pathway to citizenship and the following options do not apply to their situations.

- **Asylum** status can be granted to an individual who has suffered persecution in his/her home country due to their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political affiliation. There must be fear of returning to one's home country for one of the previously mentioned reasons.
- **Green Card** eligibility can be obtained through being a spouse of a U.S. citizen, parent of a citizen who is at least 21 years of age, or an unmarried child of a U.S. citizen under the age of 21. Many people are denied green card status due to past civil or criminal violations or other unknown reasons.
- **Marriage** to a citizen or permanent resident does not necessarily mean that a person who is undocumented has a path to citizenship. Restrictions include the requirement of a legal method of entry into the country. The spouse of a citizen can be deported.



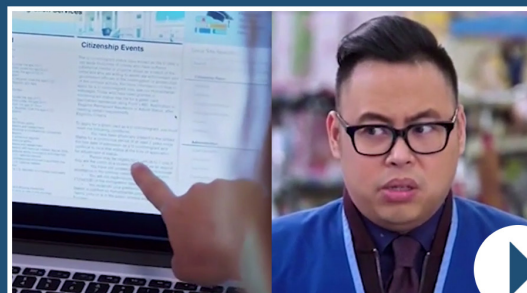
READ: A marriage used to prevent deportation.
Not anymore nyti.ms/2qIS62c

- **Military service** is not a guaranteed path to citizenship, and undocumented individuals are only allowed to serve through special programs that the Trump administration has recently announced will be canceled. Some immigrants who have served in the military have been deported to their countries of origin.

Source: [USCIS](https://uscis.gov) bit.ly/1qJzdcg

Resource: [Deported Veterans Support House](https://www.deportedveterans.org)

- **U Visa** is a visa for victims of violent crimes here in the United States. Many undocumented victims are afraid to report assaults due to fear of deportation and not having valid evidence of the crime and the number of U Visas available is small, so this solution is not common.



WATCH: NBC's Superstore explains the U Visa
bit.ly/2Qml6XL

Increased arrests and detentions

- Immigration arrests and deportations are rising under the Trump administration. Deportations have increased 9% in the past year while immigration arrests are up 17% from 2017.
- Back in 2009, Congress passed a law that required no fewer than 33,400 immigrant detention beds to be "active" every night. Four years later, that number increased to 34,000 and came to be interpreted as a mandatory minimum. No other law enforcement agency has a similar quota.

Source: [PRI](https://www.pri.org) bit.ly/2vj5uvc



READ: Deportations are up 9% in 2018 bit.ly/2Rvh0Rx

Reporting crimes as an undocumented immigrant

Undocumented immigrants often avoid reporting crimes due to fear of harassment or deportation. For this reason, violent crimes, sexual assaults, domestic



READ: Deportation Fears Silence Some Domestic Violence Victims bit.ly/2rCf8d9

abuse, and exploitation often go unreported. The fear of deportation in reporting crimes is one of the primary reasons that cities choose to become “sanctuary communities.”

Deportation and foster care

An increase in arrests and detentions results in an influx of children from immigrant families being placed into foster care after their parents have been detained and/or deported.



READ: How immigration and Foster Care are connected bit.ly/2GPXBH2

DACA

DACA Recipients CANNOT	DACA Recipients CAN
DACA recipients cannot receive amnesty, a path to <i>citizenship</i> , or legalization.	DACA recipients can get a temporary stay against their deportation for 2 years at a time.
DACA recipients cannot vote.	DACA recipients can apply for driver's licenses in some states. The licenses are clearly marked that they cannot be used for federal purposes, like voting.
DACA recipients cannot receive any federal benefits, like Social Security, college financial aid, or food stamps.	DACA recipients are required to pay federal income taxes.

What is DACA?

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals is a Department of Homeland Security policy that allows for certain undocumented Americans to have their deportations delayed and obtain a temporary work permit for a two-year period. To be eligible, a person must have been age 30 or younger as of 2012, enrolled in or graduated from high school, and not have a felony conviction.

Risk of losing DACA

The Trump administration decided to end the DACA program beginning March 5, 2018. But, as of November 8, 2018, [DACA has been upheld by a federal judge](#) in response to a lawsuit.



Grey's Anatomy reveals that a character has DACA bit.ly/2B4FRIN

Ever wonder why undocumented immigrants can't just "get legal"?



click or visit bit.ly/legalgame

FAMILY SEPARATION

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Applying for asylum is perfectly legal

Seeking asylum is not a crime, and those looking for safety and refuge should not be treated as criminals. The ACLU has filed a class action lawsuit against ICE on behalf of families who entered at ports of entry to seek asylum and had their children taken away.

Family separation has a psychological impact on kids

Immigrant children suffer negative physical and emotional symptoms from detention, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Conditions in U.S. detention facilities force children to endure sleeping on cement floors, open toilets, constant light exposure, insufficient food and water, a lack of bathing facilities, and extremely cold temperatures.

Source: [American Academy of Pediatrics](http://AmericanAcademyofPediatrics.org) bit.ly/2KtRPbh

The racist history of separating families

Family separation was an integral part of American

slavery and continues to endanger Black communities today through over-policing and mass incarceration. Enslaved families suffered permanent separation through the sale of parents and children to different owners. The penalties for resistance included death.

Source: [Solomon Jones, Philadelphia Media Network](http://SolomonJones.com) bit.ly/2Qk7dce

Now in 2018, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions justifies the current separation of immigrant families by citing the very same Bible verse supporters of slavery used to defend the separation of enslaved children from their mothers prior to the Civil War.

Source: [The Washington Post](http://TheWashingtonPost.com) wapo.st/2CL0DId

CLIMATE CHANGE REFUGEE

- Climate change is here, now, and in America, reshaping our landscape and forcing us from our homes. While 70% of Americans think that [global warming is happening](#), only 45% believe that [global warming will pose a serious threat in their lifetimes](#).
- Of the top 10 hottest years on record, [eight have happened since 2009](#). Sea level is five [to eight inches higher](#) on average today than it was in 1900. Tropical storms [are getting stronger](#). These drastic changes to the environment are beginning to cause a global refugee crisis, as people displaced from their homes by extreme weather are forced to migrate elsewhere.
- Since 2008, an average of [24 million people](#) have been displaced by catastrophic weather disasters every year. In the next 100 years, sea level changes could force up to a fifth of the world's population [to become climate refugees](#).



WATCH: Two mothers describe their experience immigrating to America bit.ly/2QkwIzF

MASS INCARCERATION & MASS DETENTION

The criminalization of immigrants and people of color in media leads to higher rates of incarceration and deportation, making mass incarceration and mass detention inseparable.



Produced in partnership with
Color of Change colorofchange.org

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Immigration detention *is* incarceration

The U.S. has the largest imprisoned population in the world, in terms of both of citizens in prison (2,172,800) and non-citizens in immigrant detention centers (39,322), which creates roughly \$80 billion in revenue annually. Both citizens of color in the criminal justice system and non-citizens in immigrant detention are subjected to inhumane living conditions, unethical labor practices, and a cycle of punishment for poverty.

Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Racial disparities in incarceration

Although Black immigrants comprise just 5.4% of the unauthorized population in the U.S., they make up 10.6% of all immigrants in removal proceedings between 2003 and 2015.

Source: Black Alliance for Just Immigration and NYU School of Law Immigrant Rights Clinic bit.ly/2LNZvGS

Black youth were more than five times as likely to be detained or committed compared to White youth, according to data from the Department of Justice collected in October 2015.

Black people only make up 13% of the U.S. population, but make up 28% of juvenile arrests and 56% of juvenile life sentences.

Source: The Sentencing Project bit.ly/2LL1ziX

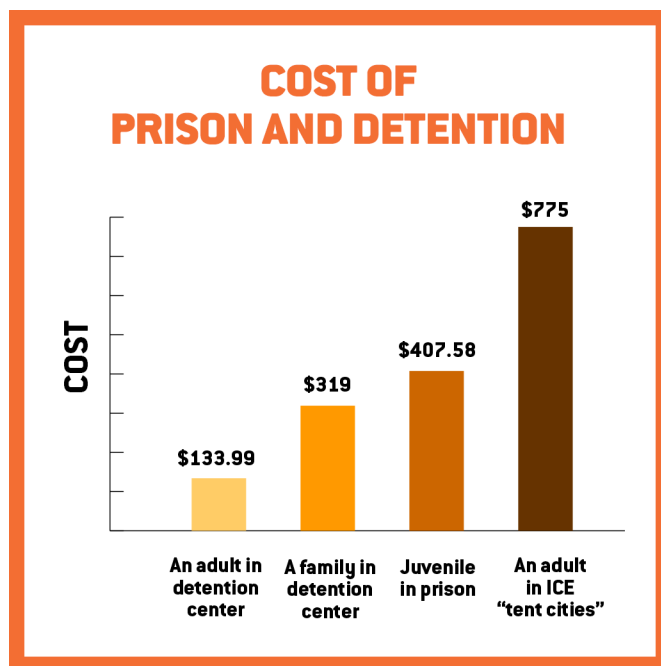
Cost of prison and detention

It costs \$133.99 a day to maintain one adult detention bed, \$319 a day for a family bed (which holds one mother and up to three children), and \$775 a day for an adult bed in ICE's newly founded "tent cities," which were created due to the drastic increase of detention and separation of immigrant families.

Source: Department of Health & Human Services via NBC News cnb.cx/2tptgoL

Incarcerating a juvenile costs states an average of \$407.58 per person per day and \$148,767 per person per year, with some states billing the parents for the cost of jailing their child.

Source: The Justice Policy Institute bit.ly/1BVvwCr



Immigrant and bond hearings

Immigrants who have entered without documentation, asylum seekers, and people with criminal convictions are often not eligible for bond hearings and have no right to an attorney. They can be held in detention indefinitely.

Source: Jennings v. Rodriguez, 2017 bit.ly/2ooQC9i

THE GLOBAL MIGRATION CRISIS

Migration is often directly linked to war, climate change, and terrorism, and many migrants are fleeing deadly situations in their home countries. Tens of thousands of Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Hondurans, many of them unaccompanied children, have arrived in the United States in recent years, seeking asylum from the region's skyrocketing violence and economic hardship.

<https://www.cfr.org/background/central-americas-violent-northern-triangle>



PRODUCED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE (IRC)
[rescue.org](https://www.rescue.org)

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Global refugee statistics

- According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 68.5 million people have been driven from their homes across the world at the end of 2017, a record number.
- Asylum seekers, who were still awaiting the outcome of their claims to refugee status, meanwhile rose by around 300,000 to 3.1 million
- Refugees who have fled their countries to escape conflict and persecution accounted for 25.4 million people. People displaced inside their own country accounted for 40 million. This is 2.9 million more than in 2016, also the biggest increase UNHCR has seen in a single year.
- In 2017, an average of one person was displaced every two seconds.

Refugees are people who have lives you would recognize

- They were once able to live peacefully: they had jobs, took their kids to school, celebrated family milestones and held their families close and dear. All of this has been torn apart by war. Refugees want nothing more than to find a way to live a peaceful and stable life.
- Refugees can't return home safely. They live a life in uncertainty - often stateless, either in refugee camps, or in urban settings across the globe.

Refugee resettlement in the United States

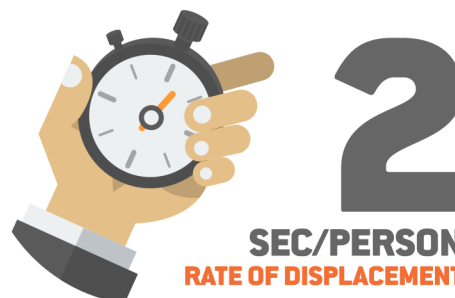
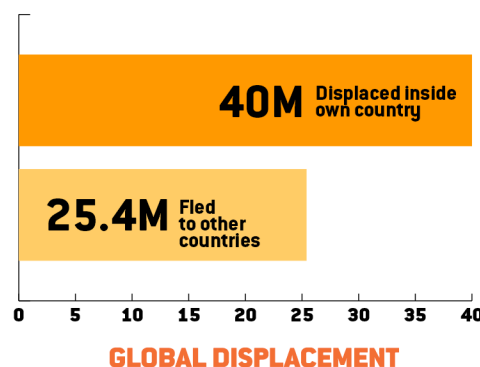
- The [United States](https://www.rescue.org) has a proud tradition of leading the world in offering stability to refugees who have fled war and oppression. Yet the current administration has announced a drop in annual refugee admissions to 30,000 in fiscal year 2019, a 33% drop from 2018's record-low ceiling of 45,000.

GLOBAL REFUGEE STATISTICS

68.5M



PEOPLE DRIVEN FROM THEIR HOMES IN 2017



Refugees make America better

- Refugees bring cultural and economic vitality to their new communities. Employers report that hiring refugees increases company efficiency, improves management practices, widens applicant pools [and brings down turnover rates](#).
- U.S. government-commissioned research shows that refugees have generated [\\$63 billion in net revenue](#) over the past decade.
- Resettled refugees ages 18 to 45 pay on average \$21,000 more in taxes than they receive in benefits over a 20-year period.
- Refugees are [50% more likely to become business owners](#) than U.S. born citizens.
- [Famous refugees](#)
- Five [inventions](#) by refugees
- More than 80% of refugees who are enrolled in one of IRC's national early employment programs are [self-sufficient within 6 months](#).

American perceptions

(Note: These findings are from an IRC-commissioned poll)

- 76% of Americans believe the refugee crisis is an important national and global issue and 60% of Americans believe the U.S. has a moral obligation to help refugees.
- 3 out of 4 Americans recognize the extensive cross-agency nature of security vetting for refugees.
- If there was a conflict in America forcing residents to flee their homes, two-thirds (67%) of Americans would expect Canada or Mexico to welcome them.

For additional information and statistics, please contact **Meagan Fouty**, Associate Director, Corporate Alliances/Institutional Philanthropy & Partnerships, meagan.fouty@rescue.org.

HELPFUL RESEARCH STUDIES AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Define American

DefineAmerican.com

Define American “Immigrant Nation” research

defineamerican.com/tvstudy

Color of Change

colorofchange.org

The International Rescue Committee

rescue.org

Pew Research Center

pewresearch.org/topics/immigration/

Southern Poverty Law Center - Immigrant Justice

splcenter.org/issues/immigrant-justice

National Immigration Law Center (NILC)

nilc.org

ENDNOTES

1. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/12/26/upshot/duck-dynasty-vs-modern-family-television-maps.html>
2. <http://www.thesocialcontract.com/pdf/four-three/massey.pdf>
3. <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/immigrate/family-immigration/family-based-immigrant-visas.html>
4. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/16/reader-center/melania-trumps-parents-chain-migration.html>
5. <https://www.aclu.org/other/constitution-100-mile-border-zone?redirect=constitution-100-mile-border-zone>
6. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/01/us/prisons-immigration-detention.html>
7. <http://time.com/5388643/family-separation-policy-court-agreement/>
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ABOUT DEFINE AMERICAN

[Define American](#) is a non-profit media and culture organization that uses the power of story to transcend politics and shift the conversation about immigrants, identity and citizenship in a changing America. At Define American, we believe that powerful storytelling is the catalyst that can reshape our country's immigration narrative and generate significant cultural change. We partner with some of the biggest influencers in Hollywood and leverage the power of media and entertainment to create a new rhetoric and cultural relevancy around this crucial topic.



ABOUT COLOR OF CHANGE

[Color Of Change](#) is the nation's largest online racial justice organization. We help people respond effectively to injustice in the world around us. As a national online force driven by more than 1.4 million members, we move decision-makers in corporations and government to create a more human and less hostile world for Black people in America.



ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

The [International Rescue Committee](#) (IRC) is a humanitarian aid organization that responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises, helping people to survive, recover and reclaim control of their future. The IRC was founded at the request of Albert Einstein in 1933 and works in over 40 countries around the world and resettles refugees in 25 offices across the US.



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