

Comparing U.S. and the United Nations' Refugee Responsibility From 1998-2018

In this comparative analysis the role of refugee responsibility as an international or domestic issue is discussed. Refugee responsibility in this thesis is described as taking financial, legislative, and hands-on means to aid in the resettlement and relief of globally displaced people. Problems such as American exceptionalism, sovereignty, and customary law have been consistent ousts for U.S. policy makers to use as a means of avoiding international commitments regarding refugee relief. Additionally, U.S. immigration history notes the lack of domestic responsibility exhibited by the U.S. government. In fact, refugees have little to no human rights protections.

Data was collected from the UNHCR and the Department of Homeland Security. Firstly, U.S. immigration data is compared to that of other United Nations countries. Then, the data is compared to the change in U.S. immigration policy over the Clinton, Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations. We can evaluate the responsibility that the U.S. is taking to relieve the growing number of displaced people.

My findings show that the U.S. has maintained the same relative standard of aid for refugees and immigrants up until 2018. Under the Trump administration, the numbers of admitted refugees and asylum seekers decreased, despite the continued growth in numbers of refugees. This finding suggests that the U.S. is not upholding their due responsibility in combating the global refugee crisis on an international or domestic level. The U.S. is diminishing resettlement for the first time since 1998. It is important to note that rhetoric, especially under President Trump, influences immigration policy and public opinion. For future research, I recommend looking further into the policies

and actions taken by the U.S. at the southern border as a means of deference compared to the number of illegal border crossings.

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