



Warren County Refugee Resettlement Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Report



Prepared by
MCM Consulting Group Inc.
328 Innovation Blvd. Suite 210
State College, Pa 16803



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Introduction

Warren County elected officials are considering accepting Ukrainian refugees into their county. This is a true moral and ethical decision by the county with both benefits and risks to the current county residents and infrastructure. The county understands the refugee resettlement process and is in contact with elected state officials to request refugees. The county hired MCM Consulting Group, Inc. (MCM) to identify the risks and develop a strategy to mitigate risk and determine an acceptable number of refugees who could be resettled in the county.

Executive Summary

As Russia continues to invade Ukraine, the number of refugees seeking safe harbor in other countries grows at an astounding rate. Western Europe has received millions of refugees since the invasion started in February 2022. The United States has agreed to accept 100,000 refugees in their initial resettlement plans. Pennsylvania will have the ability to accept Ukrainian refugees soon, but what questions should be asked and answered prior to any county government accepting refugees and how many should they accept? MCM provides guidance with their Refugee Resettlement Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (RRHIRA) model. The model breaks down identifiable aspects of both the county and the refugees' socioeconomic, religious, health, employment and educational aspects. Clearly, there are benefits to accepting refugees, but there are also risks that any county or other elected officials may have to accept to allow refugee resettlement in their respective municipality. The answer should be a series of questions when state and federal officials ask, "How Many?". The responses to those higher-level government officials are not just how many, but what is the breakdown or representation of 20–40-year-old female without children, 20–40-year-old women with children, 40–60-year-old women without and with children, and male and females over the age of 60 years old. The next question is what are the representative groups by age of children accompanying the "How Many"? Next, the county must consider how many they can accept without degrading the current services to its current residents. The model attempts to look at this as a capability versus capacity thought process or methodology. We also look at a moderate and conservative number to start with as there will be multiple opportunities to accept refugees beyond the initial 100,000. Accepting a moderate 20-60 refugees to start will allow the county to get a baseline for accepting more without compromising current residents' needs.

Two of the main difficulties with integration over the medium to long term are access to housing and work. Compared to these two elements, the provision of other public goods such as access to healthcare and education for young people is relatively easy to achieve, although these too pose certain specific difficulties, such as the language of delivery in teaching and the Ukrainian population's use of alcohol and tobacco products. (World Health Organization, 2020)

Access to jobs, which is allowed immediately under the Temporary Protection, will be particularly difficult for the women who have left Ukraine with small children, because in addition to the language difficulties there is the burden of their parental responsibilities. Given

that women and children make up the bulk of the refugees (95%), this route towards integration, through employment, appears more difficult in the current wave. Warren County can expect an increase in daycare applications and possible request for subsistence through Women, Infant, Children Programs (WIC). As far as housing is concerned, temporary housing from a nonprofit like Catholic Charities, Salvation Army or other nonprofit organizations would work until permanent housing is available and refugees have the opportunity to secure employment.

Let us first look at the start point of refugees entering the U.S.A. and what they receive prior to resettlement in any county or city.

The process

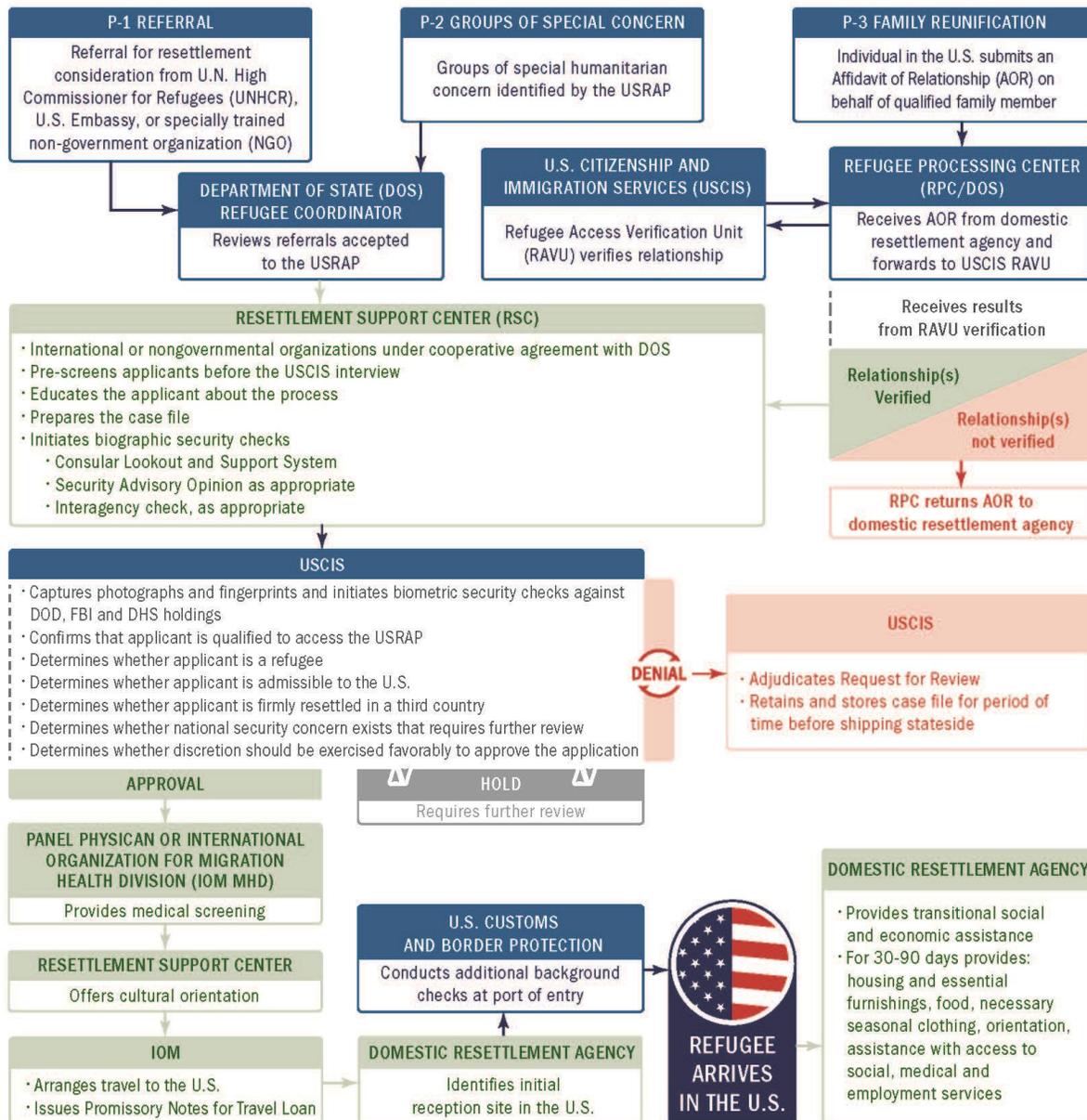
The following flowchart shows the process for refugee resettlement in the U.S.A

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UNITED STATES REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM (USRAP)



REFUGEE IS OVERSEAS AND MUST BE IN ONE OF 3 CATEGORIES:



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services



Last Updated 8/31/2018



Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

What do Ukrainians come to the United States with, and is there funding from the federal government?

Refugees and Access to Funds & Benefits in the U.S.

A refugee is “a person who is unable to return to his or her country of origin because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.” A refugee legally resides in the country of resettlement and is eligible for federally funded cash assistance for up to eight months. Refugees are resettled in the United States by the federal government and are afforded specific refugee assistance to help them rebuild their lives in America. This federal funding is limited in both duration and amount. It is important to note that most refugees arrive with very little in terms of possessions, besides a few bags of luggage, and if they are lucky, all of their family members.

Reception & Placement

All refugees arriving in the United States will receive \$900.00 when they first arrive. This is a one-time only provision of initial resettlement money, which they can spend on whatever they wish (e.g., security deposits for an apartment, bus fare, winter coats, food, etc.). The spending of this money is often guided by advice from resettlement case managers who assist the families in getting resettled quickly and economically.

Match

Refugees who are able to quickly enter the job market can elect to participate in the Match program, a federal program for refugees geared toward employment and self-sufficiency. The Match program provides families with money for rent and basic living expenses for three months. Only 50 slots were allotted for Match enrollees in FY 2019, and enrollees consist of all members of the family, not just those able to work. An additional 50 slots will be allocated for the Match program annually. Prior to and during participation in the Match program, refugees cannot access state or local assistance benefits. Adults are provided \$325.00 each month for the three-month program, and children are provided \$200.00 each month for the three months. Refugee Cash Assistance & Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, all refugees arriving in the United States are entitled to eight months of Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) from the date of their U.S. arrival. The RCA amounts vary based on the size of the family: Single person (\$230.00/month), family of two (\$363.00/month), family of three (\$485.00/month), family of four (\$611.00/month), etc.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits are provided to refugee elders aged 65 and older in the amount of \$674.00 a month, which is similar to SSI received by American elders. These refugee elders often do not receive any of the other state benefits because they aren't raising children or participating in fast-track employment programs. Refugee elders have been resettled later in their lives, which makes language acquisition very difficult, however many of the refugee elders participate in English language classes and pursue their U.S. citizenship.

President Joe Biden announced a new program recently that will expedite the U.S. asylum process for Ukrainian refugees fleeing Russia's invasion.

The "Unite for Ukraine" program will allow individual Americans and nonprofits to sponsor Ukrainian refugees, provided they can financially support them.

Biden said, "This program will be fast, it will be streamlined, and it will ensure the United States honors its commitment to the people of Ukraine, and that they need not go through our southern border,"

Biden unveiled the new refugee sponsorship program as part of a broader slate of assistance measures for Ukrainians as they fend off a brutal Russian assault.

The "Unite for Ukraine" program will be centered on a web portal through which U.S.-based individuals and groups can apply to become sponsors and upload documents, according to a fact sheet from the Department of Homeland Security. The portal is now live at <https://www.uscis.gov/ukraine>.

In order to be eligible for the expedited process, Ukrainians must have lived in their home country as of February 11, 2022. They must also undergo vaccinations, biometric screening and background checks before being granted admission.

Now, let's look at both Warren County capabilities and the risks of accepting refugees to a point where the county resources or capacity are degraded to provide its residents their current capabilities.

About Warren County, PA from sources: <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/warren-county-pa> and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren_County,_Pennsylvania

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 899 square miles (2,330 km²), of which 884 square miles (2,290 km²) are land and 14 square miles (36 km²) (1.6%) are water.^[4] Notable physical features include the Allegheny River, the Allegheny Reservoir, the Kinzua Dam, and the Allegheny National Forest. The county has a warm-summer humid continental climate (*Dfb*) and average temperatures in the city of Warren range from 24.5 °F in January to 69.3 °F in July

In 2019, Warren County, PA had a population of 39,800 people with a median age of 47.4 and a median household income of \$50,250.00. Between 2018 and 2019 the population of Warren County, PA declined from 40,035 to 39,756, a -0.697% decrease and its median household income grew from \$48,409.00 to \$50,250.00, a 3.8% increase.

The five largest ethnic groups in Warren County, PA are White (Non-Hispanic) (96.8%), Two+ (Non-Hispanic) (1.02%), White (Hispanic) (0.936%), Asian (Non-Hispanic) (0.48%), and Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (0.468%). 0% of the households in Warren County, PA

speak a non-English language at home as their primary language.99.5% of the residents in Warren County, PA are U.S. citizens.

In 2019, the median property value in Warren County, PA was \$98,000.00, and the homeownership rate was 76.9%. Most people in Warren County, PA drove alone to work, and the average commute time was 19.3 minutes. In 2019, 81.4% of workers in Warren County, PA drove alone to work, followed by those who carpooled to work (10%) and those who walked to work (3.6%). The average car ownership in Warren County, PA was 2 cars per household.

Religion

This is a difficult bridge to build for accepting Ukrainian refugees in Warren County. Surveys estimate a large majority of Ukraine's population is Orthodox, with a significant minority of Ukrainian Catholics who worship with a Byzantine liturgy like that of the Orthodox but are loyal to the Pope. The population includes smaller percentages of Protestants, Jews and Muslims. Currently there are no Orthodox ministries in Warren County. The closest Orthodox church is St Nicholas Orthodox Church in Dubois, PA. Of course, There are non-denominational churches available in Warren County, but most Orthodox practitioners will want an Orthodox service. This remains the number one missing resource for accepting Ukrainians in Warren County.

Economy

Median household income in Warren County, PA is \$50,250.00. In 2019, the tract with the highest Median Household Income in Warren County, PA was Census Tract 9702 with a value of \$70,492.00, followed by Census Tract 9710 and Census Tract 9711, with respective values of \$64,714.00 and \$64,406.00.

Males in Pennsylvania have an average income that is 1.34 times higher than the average income of females, which is \$52,851.00. The income inequality in Pennsylvania (measured using the Gini index) is 0.469, which is lower than the national average.

The economy of Warren County, PA employs 18,300 people. The largest industries in Warren County, PA are Manufacturing (3,914 people), Health Care & Social Assistance (3,443 people), and Retail Trade (2,481 people), and the highest paying industries are Utilities (\$65,365.00), Public Administration (\$46,607.00), and Transportation & Warehousing, & Utilities (\$46,313). Therefore, increasing the working age force with refugees can enhance the economy of Warren County. However, this goes back to the question of what the breakdown by age of the groups are coming to Warren County. How many can enter the work force immediately or within a year?

Health Care

In 2020, 94.7% of the population of Warren County, PA has health coverage, with 48.9% on employee plans, 13.3% on Medicaid, 15.1% on Medicare, 15.7% on non-group plans, and 1.7% on military or VA plans.

Per capita personal health care spending in Pennsylvania was \$9,258.00 in 2014. This is a 4.29% increase from the previous year (\$8,877.00).

Primary care physicians in Warren County, PA see, on average, 2,079 patients per physician or advanced medical provider per year, which represents a 0.383% decrease from the previous year (2,087 patients). Compare this to dentists who see 2,177 patients per dentist, per year, and mental health providers who see 852 patients per provider, per year. Although most refugees are women and children, all males over the age 60 years old were allowed to egress from the country as refugees. Alcohol, smoking and mental health issues along with a strong substance abuse history in Ukraine will surely tax the capabilities of Warren county's healthcare. Additionally, most refugees do not have similar immunity to natural bacteria and virus as do current inhabitants of Warren County. This is a common occurrence documented by the U.S. military when sending troops to other countries. There seems to be an initial flu breakout every time troops are mobilized or relocated to another country. Assuming this will occur to refugees as well, Warren County can expect an increase in walk-in medical care for a short duration until the refugees' immunity becomes accustomed to local environmental viruses. Long term increases will be attributed to smoking and alcohol usage by Ukrainians leading to long term care for lung, heart, and mental health conditions. Currently, Warren County Hospital with its eighty-nine bed capacity is the only healthcare facility that offers a full range of medical care in the county.

Alcohol

Ukraine falls in the highest WHO category of “years of life lost” due to alcohol use, with an average alcohol consumption of **13.8 liters of pure alcohol per person per year** (WHO, 2018).

The Ukraine 2002 World Mental Health Survey revealed that ‘lifetime alcohol use’ was reported by 97% of the respondents (total sample size = 1,719). That was the highest consumption in the World Health Organization's Mental Health Survey of 17 countries (WHO World Mental Health Survey Consortium, 2004). Similarly, Degenhardt et al (2008) reported that more than 39% of young adults in Ukraine have started to drink by age 15 and almost all (99%) by age 21

Smoking

According to UNICEF and WHO, more than 40% of Ukrainian men use tobacco and approximately 130,000 Ukrainians die from tobacco-related diseases each year. Recently, the Ukrainian government implemented new laws that prohibit advertising by cigarette companies to appeal to youth ages as well as eliminate smoking in public establishments. This will not help the refugee population as the laws were executed just prior to the war with Russia and most refugees still fall in the 40% smoker category. This will surely tax the healthcare system for a prolonged time.

Mental Health issues

About one-third of the Ukrainian population has experienced at least one mental health disorder in their lifetime, diagnosable according to DSM–IV criteria. About one person in six (17.6%) has experienced an episode in the past year, and 10.6% are diagnosed with a current disorder

(Bromet et al, 2005). There is no gender difference in the overall prevalence rates, but the prevalence of individual diagnoses varies markedly by gender. The most common lifetime diagnoses among men are alcohol-related disorders (26.5%). These comprise alcohol misuse without dependence (19.7%) and alcohol misuse with dependence (6.7%). In contrast, women more commonly experience mood disorders (20.8%) and anxiety disorders (7.9%)

Utility Services

We explore the basic needs of utilities for current residents and any impact on accepting refugees before there is a degradation of services.

Warren County utilities are business enterprises that provide essential public services including electricity, natural gas, water, and sewer services in Warren County, PA. Because of the infrastructure required to deliver services, a monopoly is often the most economical way for a utility service to operate. Warren County Public Utility Companies serve all the customers for a particular service in Warren County.

There are two utility companies in Warren County, Pennsylvania, serving a population of 40,345 people in an area of 884 square miles. There is one utility per 20,172 people, and one utility per 441 square miles. The companies are Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania Inc. and Warren Electric Cooperative.

According to the EIA, in 2020, the average annual electricity consumption for a U.S. residential home customer was 20,880 kilowatt hours (kWh), an average of 1,740 kWh per month. That means the average usage per person for electricity consumption is 58 kWh/ day (1740 kWh / 30 days). The average price is 17.19 cents per kWh. Currently the gas and electric needs of the county is about one half of its capacity, therefore, we do not see an impact on this service.

Warren Water delivers over 8.1 million gallons of water per day through the system's 1,145 miles of water lines, which span 530 square miles. The wastewater system includes over 173 miles of sewer lines and 59 wastewater-pumping stations that transport more than 2 million gallons of wastewater each day. In addition, the county has a joint operations agreement with Butler County Water System, Inc., and Simpson County Water District, where they serve over 8,200 additional water customers.

Average water usage per person per day is 105 gallons

According to the EPA, here are how many gallons the average American uses in each room and outdoors, per day:

- Toilet – 18.5 gallons per person, per day
- Washing Machine – 15 gallons per person, per day
- Shower – 11.6 gallons per person, per day
- Faucet – 10.9 gallons per person, per day
- Dishwasher – 1 gallon per person, per day
- Gardens/outdoor vegetation irrigation- 30 gallons per day, dependent on area
- Drinking – .5 gallon, per day

- Hand washing, cleaning other than showers –10 gallons, per day
- Other – 7.5 gallon, per day

The only risk with sewer service is in households accepting refugees with septic systems that may fail due to increase household usage. PA Code for septic tanks by bedrooms in a household is 3 bedrooms is 1000-gallon reservoir, 4 bedroom requires a 1200-gallon septic reservoir, and 5 bedroom requires a 1500-gallon septic reservoir. Therefore, accepting anyone beyond the capacity of PA septic sewage codes yields a risk of septic failure and could cause an environmental hazard response. We recommend the refugee resettle occur in Warren City and neighboring townships utilizing sewer treatment facilities, in those areas, there should be no issues with a small number of refugees, below 100 to start and assess.

Based on the above information and that the current usage of water and sewer is about one third of its capacity, we do not see degradation of services for any number of refugees for Warren County as the number for the county would not exceed 100 in any favorable determination by the U.S. State Department and Pennsylvania Health and Human Services Directorate.

Transportation

There are two airports in Warren County, Pennsylvania, serving a population of 40,345 people in an area of 884 square miles. There is one airport per 20,172 people and one airport per 441 square miles. The airports are: Brokenstraw airport in Pittsfield, PA and Rigrtona airport in Tidioute, PA. We do not see any significant impact as most refugees will fly into Erie International Airport and be processed through the resettlement programs currently established in Erie County prior to resettling in Warren County.

Warren County main thoroughfare is U.S. Route 6 and since the expectation is that most resettlement will be in the Warren City area, we do not anticipate impacts on traffic as noted above that most residents work under 19 miles from their residence. This may change if work is more available in lower New York or surrounding counties, but only if the group received is over 80 and has a high degree of 20-40 women with no children. Since resettlement should occur only in Warren City and surrounding townships, the remaining road infrastructure is not considered to impede the number of refugees accepted.

Housing

Realtor.com shows that in April 2022, the median listing home price in Warren County, PA was \$134,900.00, trending up 44% year-over-year. The median listing home price per square foot was \$82.00. The median home sold price was \$160,000.00. Warren County, PA is a buyer's market in April 2022, which means that the supply of homes is greater than the demand for homes. However, other sites like Zillow, RocketMortgage and Trulia.com have very different listings for 2022 ranging from 70 homes on Zillow to 7 homes on Rocket Mortgage. The question is whether refugees can afford housing or rentals. According to apartmentliving.com there are fourteen apartment rentals, including two in Sheffield. Since housing is a limited

resource, it is recommended that resettlement be specific to Warren City and just its surrounding townships. Of course, short term housing can be provided by nonprofit organizations like the Catholic Charities or Salvation Army. Additionally, short term housing can be provided through agreements with the state to use the closed State Hospital in Warren County. All these options are viable, but short term, and not mitigated with removing the language barriers and increasing viable employment in county.

Education

As a general rule using Warren School District enrollment, Warren School District has 4,117 students in grades K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 14 to 1. According to state test scores, 37% of students are at least proficient in math and 58% in reading. One would think that with approximately 294 teachers, we can accept a high number of families with children to integrate into the public school districts. However, the question to be asked here is “how many interpreters can be hired or volunteer to translate for the Ukrainian children at each level of primary education?” Secondary to the number of translators would be the changes in the teaching environment to allow the translator to speak to the Ukrainian students without distracting the current students and the current teacher. Perhaps a room adjacent to the class where the translator has audio and video of class, and the Ukrainian students use headsets to hear the translation without disrupting the cognitive learning process of current residents. Another impact that needs further investigation is the ability to provide lunch and possibly breakfast meals out of the current facilities at these schools. Additionally, to this point is determining the throughput of students for any given lunch period.

The broadband infrastructure for the county will also impact the number of refugees that can successfully integrate and complete studies at Warren School District as well as other schools. There may be a need for the county to conduct a needs assessment and strategic plan for internet service providers and negotiate a low-income rate for broadband and wi-fi services.

Public school districts

- Corry Area School District
- Titusville Area School District
- Warren County School District

Charter schools

- Tidioute Community Charter School

Vocational school

- Warren County Area Vocational Technical School

Private schools

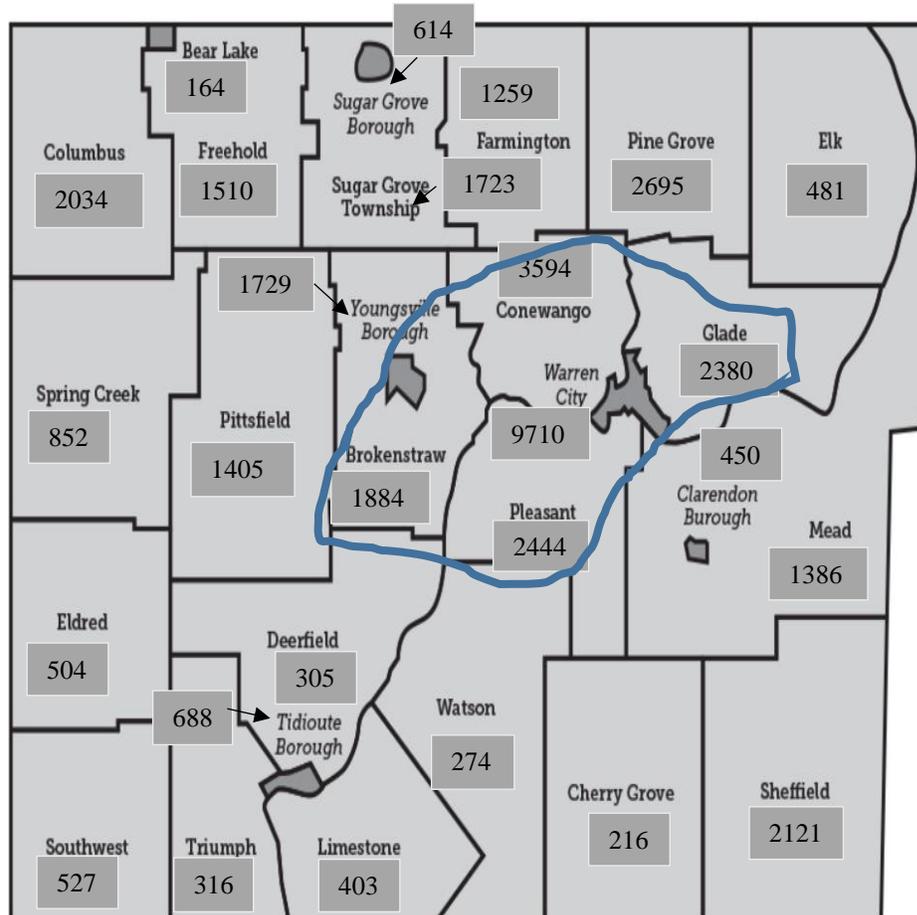
- Beaver Valley Amish School
- Calvary Chapel Christian School
- Cozy Corners Amish School
- Early Childhood Learning Center
- Forest Amish School
- HR Rouse Children's Center

- Little Ash Parochial School, Sugar Grove
- Meadow View Amish School, Sugar Grove
- Pine Ridge School
- Railroad School
- Round Hill School
- Ruth Smith Children's Home
- St Joseph School
- Stoney Run Amish School
- Warren County Christian School

Using the RRHRA, we recommend under 5-10 Ukrainian students for initial acceptance, with the true number based off translator to student ratio, rather than teacher to student ratio. There is no current data available to determine a ratio of translator to student, perhaps using a small initial acceptance number of refugees for Warren County will provide a baseline for further consideration of accepting Ukrainian refugees. Another process could be translator to courses ratio, but again, there is no current data to determine that ratio. Finally, there may be some refugees who are bilingual for Ukrainian and U.S. English languages and can be employed or volunteer their services to the schools.

MAP OF WARREN COUNTY

TOWNSHIPS AND BO (by population)



Recommendation Summary

The map above represents the populations in each community in Warren County. The recommended communities to accept refugees are: Brokenstraw, Conewango, Glade, Pleasant, Warren City and Youngsville.

Combining our RRHIRA factors we have:

Religion- 5-15 refugees..

Economy- 15-50, depending on composition or representative age groups that can enter work force immediately.

Healthcare- 15-50, depending on composition or representative age groups and their healthcare assessments. A lower number is warranted if the refugee group has larger number of over 40 years old and older making up the group.

Utility Services- 50-80, this factor can go higher, but we recommend a start point and then develop a baseline algorithm for any future refugee resettling in Warren County.

Transportation- Except for an initial DMV workload increase which may impact wait times for current residents, we do not anticipate any impact with adding 50 refugees to Warren County population that are of driving age and willing to undergo Pennsylvania driver education and testing procedures. Keep in mind, some may possess an international driving license, but that does not apply to U.S.A. as our driving signs, directional and special monitor actions do not reflect the European driving scenarios the refugees are used to.

Housing: 15-25, this is a critical resource and even nonprofits like Catholic Charities or Salvation Army will need advanced notice to set up temporary housing and support refugees until they can gain employment and support their own long term housing needs. Even federal funding, if eligible and accepted, would allow for three months of housing, in expectation that employment will be secured in that time.

Education: 5-10, this factor is critically based on the number of translators for the Ukrainian children. Currently, there are no Ukrainian translators in the county. It may involve upgrades to current audio-visual classroom monitoring by translators and headsets on students, so as not to distract the current students from grasping their lessons. This number can go higher, but will a coordinated effort between County, public school districts and possibly volunteers from the refugee group that are bilingual in Ukrainian and U.S. English languages to be used as translators or employed by school district. Again, this number may be raised or lower by the food service capabilities and how many meals they can add to current operations as to not exceed current lunchtime periods

and throughput for any given lunch period, i.e., total number of meals served in a given time period.

MCM Consulting Group Inc. recommends 22-40 refugees to include children on initial request, however, the county should stress the need for adults who can enter the workforce within a one-month period of resettling to Warren County. Warren county will have the opportunity to make subsequent requests and will have a good estimate algorithm based off this initial request as to how many refugees to request.