

I-589 EXT Public Comments Matrix

Comment #	Public Comments	USCIS Response
Comment 1.	Commenter: The Tahirih Justice Center	
04/22/2022	<p>The commenter believes that the current Form I-589 includes five questions that do not bear directly on, and add nothing to, USCIS’s inquiry into an individual’s eligibility for asylum or withholding of removal. The commenter recommended that the following questions be removed to lower the burden on applicants, their representatives, and the agency.</p> <p>The commenter noted that Questions 1 and 2 in Part A.III regarding address history are not relevant to whether someone suffered persecution on account of a protected ground. Further, the commenter believes that to the extent that location in a country is relevant to the possibility of internal relocation, specific addresses are not necessary and that the name of a municipality would suffice for that inquiry. The commenter stated that the questions often cause confusion because a substantial percentage of people seeking asylum have lived in locations without formal address conventions like those in the United States.</p> <p>The commenter believes that Questions 3 and 4 in Part A.III are unnecessary because they believe that applicants’ employment and educational history have nothing to do with whether they have been persecuted or reasonably fear future persecution on account of a protected ground. The commenter also believes that past employment and education, even in the country in which a person fears persecution, also has nothing to do with internal relocation, which is forward looking.</p> <p>The commenter further believes that Question 2.A in Part C, which asks whether a person traveled through, or resided in, another country before reaching the United States, is unnecessary. The commenter asserted that this question is arguably relevant only to the issue of firm resettlement and that information is covered by Question 2.B, which the commenter believes makes Question 2.A wholly superfluous. The commenter stated that, to the extent that USCIS believes current Question 2.B does not cover unaccepted offers, it can simply be</p>	<p>Response: USCIS appreciates the feedback from the commenter. Pursuant to President Biden’s Executive Order on “Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government,” 86 FR 71357 (Dec. 13, 2021), USCIS is working on taking key steps to reduce administrative burdens and improve efficiency, equity, and accessibility throughout the customer experience.</p> <p>USCIS intends to undertake the review of these questions when the agency considers a future comprehensive revision of Form I-589. Currently, the commenter’s recommendations go beyond the scope of this extension without change.</p>

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	reworded to ask whether a person has “applied for, received, or been offered any lawful status” in a third country.	
4/22/22	<p>A. The commenter stated that options for “gender” questions must be expanded. The commenter noted that Question A.I.10 on Form I-589 asks for the applicant’s gender, and questions in Part A.II of the form ask for the gender of the applicant’s spouse and children, and the only answers provided are “male” and “female.” The commenter believes that the question excludes people who are non-binary, even though non-binary people are subject to persecution in parts of the world and may seek asylum in the United States on that basis. The commenter also believes that the question excludes people who do not self-identify as male, female, or non-binary. The commenter suggested altering Question A.I.10 to be a fill-in-the blank question (“Gender: _____”) or adding both “non-binary” and “I prefer to self-describe as: _____” to the existing options.</p> <p>B. The commenter believes that Question A.III.5 requires clarification, which concerns “information about [the applicant’s] parents and siblings.” The commenter asserted that neither the form nor the instructions provide instructions on who constitutes a “parent” or “sibling” for this purpose. The commenter stated the absence of further instruction routinely creates confusion. The commenter recommended that clear, simply stated standards should therefore be included in the form or instructions.</p> <p>C. The commenter recommended that the form be changed to more easily accommodate detailed information. The commenter noted that the form and instructions ask for details, but the form itself includes insufficient space for the supply of details. The commenter asserted that the lack of space will naturally lead people to believe that few details are really needed and causes confusion. The commenter recommended that the agency simply provide sufficient space for all answers on the I-589 itself.</p>	<p>A. USCIS is reviewing forms to pursue more inclusive sex and gender markers that accommodate non-binary and transgender individuals. Additionally, USCIS is reviewing policy guidance, training materials, and website content to ensure the agency provides accurate guidance and consistently uses respectful terminology, including in policies regarding the issuance and reissuance of identity documents to accurately reflect an individual’s sex and gender markers. USCIS recognizes that this will improve the agency’s ability to verify identity, as well as to expand access to accurate identity documents, thereby reducing the risk of future harm to or harassment of LGBTQI+ persons.</p> <p>B. USCIS intends to undertake the review of this question when the agency considers a future comprehensive revision of Form I-589. Currently, this recommendation goes beyond the scope of this extension without change.</p> <p>C. USCIS intends to undertake the review of space provided for responses on the Form when the agency considers a future comprehensive revision of Form I-589. Currently, this recommendation goes beyond the scope of this extension without change.</p>