



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



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Refugee Resettlement in
Canada and Private
Sponsorship

EMN Educational Seminar on
Migration, Bratislava

July 2017



Canada 



Canada's Refugee Programs

Canada accepts Convention refugees and those in refugee-like situations for humanitarian reasons, according to the following principles:

- Fulfilling Canada's international obligations and commitments to protect refugees and those in need;
- Supporting successful settlement and integration in Canada; and,
- Reuniting refugee families.

Two refugee program streams are the expression of this commitment:

1. Resettlement from overseas
2. In-Canada Asylum System

Both programs offer a path to permanent residence and citizenship

- Settlement and integration programs are key

Canada's refugee intake represents at least 10% of total global resettlement



Refugee Resettlement: Three Program Streams

Government-Assisted Refugees

Refugees referred by the **UNHCR** or another referral organization

Government provides income support, settlement services and integration support

Privately Sponsored Refugees

Refugees referred by **private sponsors** in Canada

Private sponsors provide income support, settlement services and integration support

Blended Visa Office-Referred Refugees

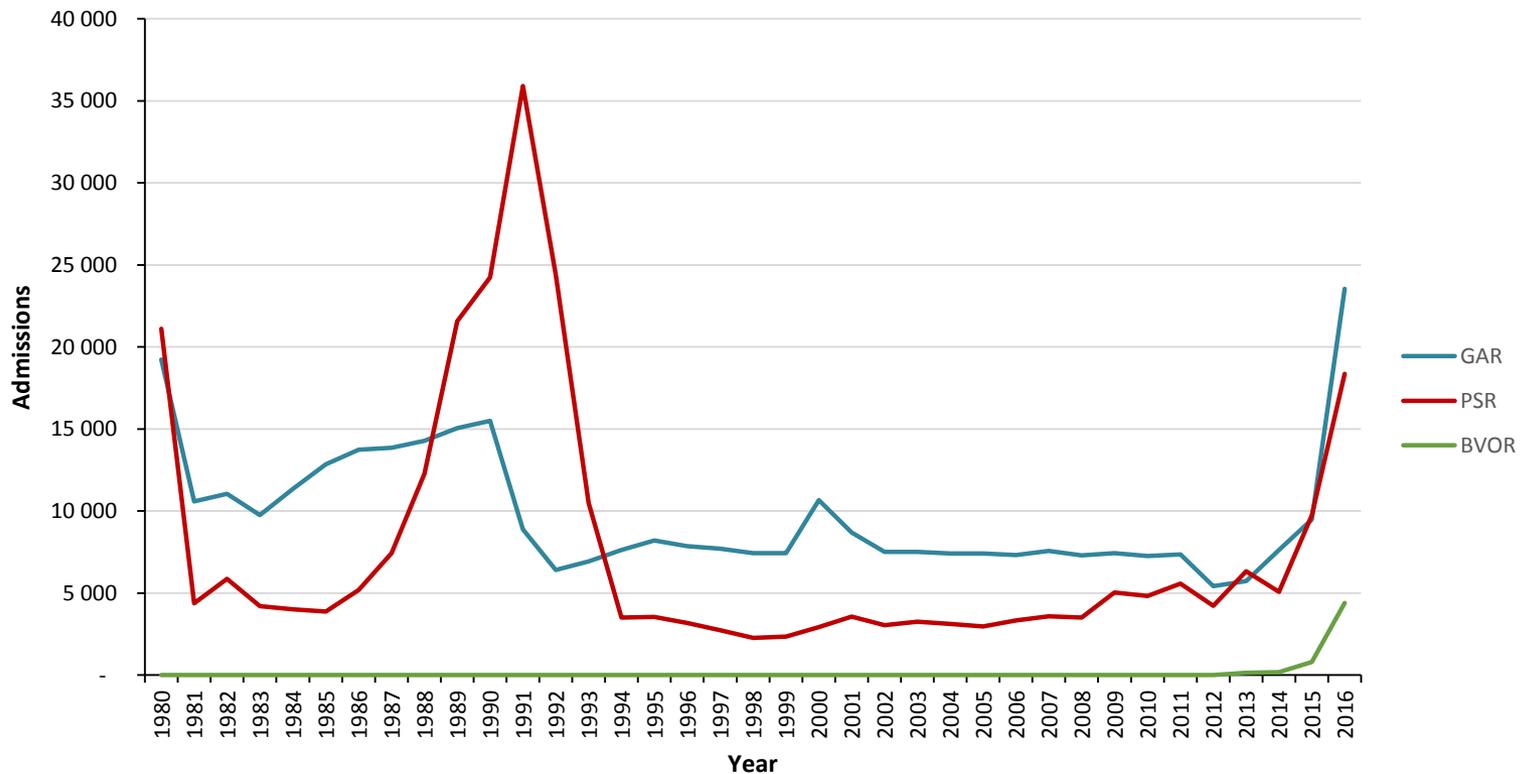
Refugees referred by the **UNHCR** or another referral organization

Private sponsors and the **government** jointly provide income support, settlement services and integration support



Historic Refugee Admission Levels

Admissions of Refugees by Program Stream, 1980 to 2016



* Refugees under the Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program are small in number and captured under the GAR totals.



Historic Admissions and 2017 Levels Plan

	2010-2014 Average Admissions	2015 Admissions	2016 Admissions*	2017 Levels Plan Target
Government- Assisted Refugees	6,655	9,411	23,550	7,500
Privately Sponsored Refugees	5,094	9,350	18,371	16,000
Blended visa office-referred refugees**	165	810	4,400	1,500
Total	11,815	19,571	46,321	25,000

Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Research DataMart as of February 2016; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Levels Plans 2010-2015

*2016 Admissions data is approximate (preliminary as of January 2, 2017)

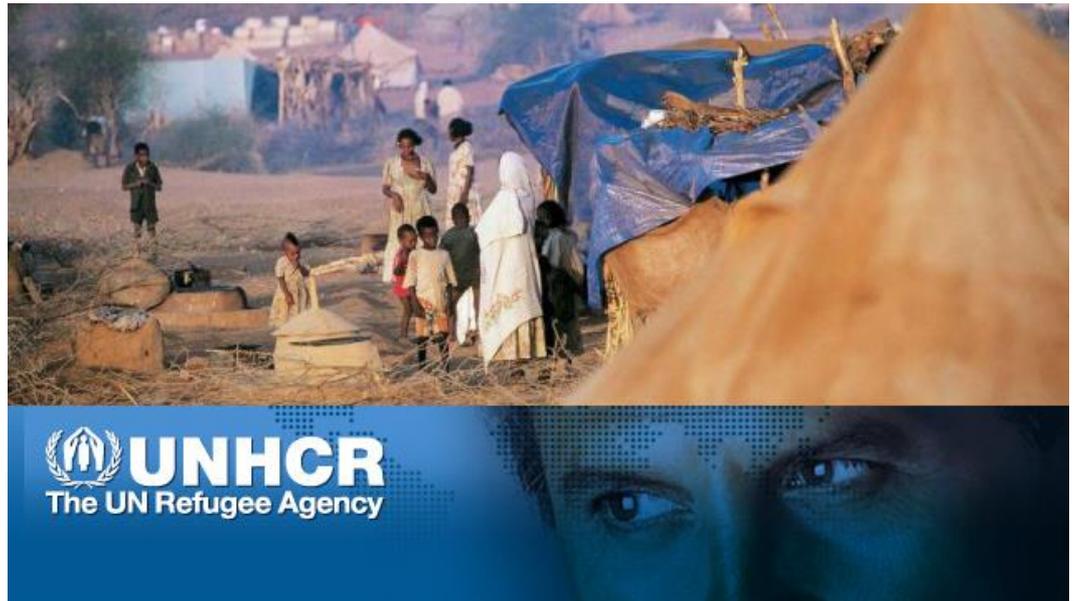
**Blended visa office-referred refugee admissions began in 2013





Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR)

- Refugees are referred by UNHCR who determine the most vulnerable in need of resettlement.
- UNHCR is uniquely placed around the work to identify refugees that are the most vulnerable, have no other prospects of durable solutions; UNHCR thus refers refugees most in need.
- Upon arrival in Canada, refugees receive immediate and essential services and 12 months income support from the government.





Canada's Syrian Commitment

- In response to the UNHCR's appeal for resettlement spaces or other forms of humanitarian admission for Syrian refugees, Canada welcomed more than 25,000 Syrian refugees between December 2015 and February 2016 as part of Operation Syrian Refugees; of which 57% were Government-Assisted Refugees, 34% were Privately Sponsored Refugees, and 8% were Blended Visa Office-Referred Refugees.
- The commitment was based on a five phase plan:
 - Identifying Syrian refugees to come to Canada;
 - Processing Syrian refugees overseas;
 - Transportation to Canada;
 - Welcoming in Canada; and,
 - Settlement and community integration.
- When refugees arrive, the Government of Canada works closely with provincial, municipal and community partners to ensure refugees' needs are met. This includes access to immediate and essential services (e.g. housing, income support) and long-term settlement support (e.g. language training, employment services).



Multi-Year Commitments

- Since 2012, in addition to the recent Syrian commitment, Canada has completed multi-year commitments to Bhutanese and Iraqi refugees, and mixed refugee populations hosted in Turkey.
- Commitments still underway include: Eritreans (4,000 persons by end of 2018); Congolese (2,500 persons by end of 2017); and, Colombians (900 persons by end of 2016).

	Multi-year commitment refugee population	Where	Number of refugees to be resettled
Completed	Iraqis	Middle East	23,000 by end of 2015
	Bhutanese	Nepal	6,500 by end of 2015
	Mixed populations	Turkey	5,000 by end of 2017
In Progress	Eritreans	Ethiopia and Sudan	4,000 by end of 2018
	Colombians	Ecuador	900 by end of 2016
	Congolese	Great Lakes Region	2,500 by end of 2017



Top 10 Source Countries for GARs (2014-2015)

Top 10 Source Countries for Government-Assisted Refugees, 2014

Rank	Country of Citizenship	Intake
1	Iraq	2,171
2	Iran	1,022
3	Democratic Republic of Congo	943
4	Democratic Republic of Somalia	459
5	Eritrea	435
6	Syria	383
7	Bhutan	352
8	Myanmar (Burma)	306
9	Burundi	227
10	Colombia	173
Total Top 10		6,474
Other Countries		1,099
Total Admissions		7,573

Top 10 Source Countries for Government-Assisted Refugees, 2015

Rank	Country of Citizenship	Intake
1	Syria	2,711
2	Iraq	1,848
3	Democratic Republic of Congo	717
4	Eritrea	546
5	Central African Republic	430
6	Burundi	425
7	Iran	374
8	Bhutan	373
9	Democratic Republic of Somalia	128
10	Myanmar (Burma)	249
Total Top 10		8,015
Other Countries		1,472
Total Admissions		9,487

Source: Citizenship & Immigration Canada, Research DataMart, as of February 2016.

For 2010-2014, these are updated numbers and different from those of Facts and Figures 2014.

*These numbers are different from admissions under the "commitment for Syrians and Iraqis out of the Middle East" and may not be used as such





Blended Sponsorship: A Hybrid Approach

- The **Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) Program** allows for private sponsorship of refugees referred to Canada by the UNHCR.
 - The government and the sponsor each provide six months of income support, plus the sponsor provides one year of emotional and social support.
 - Refugees resettled through the BVOR Program are generally without family connections in Canada.
 - This program allows the government and sponsor to share settlement costs while providing refugees with the full benefits of a sponsor's support.
- The **Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program** matches Government-Assisted Refugees with high needs (e.g. medical) with sponsors who provide significant settlement support, while the government continues to pay income support for up to 36 months.





Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

- Private sponsors are groups of Canadian citizens and permanent residents, and may include family members of the refugee who are already in Canada.
- Canada has a strong and unique tradition of private sponsorship, beginning with the Indo-Chinese movement in the late 1970s.
- The private sponsorship program officially began in 1978 and allowed Canadians to get involved in the resettlement of vulnerable refugees.
- Of the more than 60,000 people that found refuge in Canada in 1979-1980 after the Vietnam War, over half were supported by private sponsorship groups.
- Since the program's creation, Canada has welcomed more than 288,000 privately sponsored refugees.





Types of Sponsors in the PSR Program

1) Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs):

- Are incorporated organizations with experience in refugee sponsorship and settlement and who intend on regularly submitting numerous sponsorship applications;
- Have signed a formal sponsorship agreement with IRCC, at which time IRCC assessed their financial resources and settlement knowledge in order to ensure they can effectively take responsibility for all the sponsorships they undertake; and
- Are mostly faith-based, humanitarian or ethno-cultural groups who work with Constituent Groups – groups of individuals in the community of settlement who will be the direct providers of the settlement support.

2) Group of Five (G5):

- Are groups of five or more Canadians or permanent residents, 18 years of age or older with no criminal background; and
- Will provide the full financial and settlement support.

3) Community Sponsors:

- Are organizations, associations or corporations located in the community of settlement; and
- Will provide the full financial and settlement support



Required Financial Support

Sponsors are required to demonstrate the following minimum level of financial support:

Family Size	12 Months of Income Support	Start-up Costs	Estimated Total Annual Settlement Cost
1	\$9,800	\$2,800	\$12,600
2	\$16,800	\$4,400	\$21,200
3	\$17,700	\$5,300	\$23,000
4	\$20,000	\$7,000	\$27,000
5	\$22,500	\$7,200	\$29,700
6	\$24,500	\$8,000	\$32,500
Additional Member	\$1,550	\$1,000	\$2,500

Source: Appendix A – Financial Guidelines, Refugee Sponsorship Application Guide (IMM5413)





Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR)

- Refugees are referred by private sponsors in Canada (mostly faith-based, ethnic or humanitarian organizations) and receive income and settlement support from their sponsor for up to one year.
- Private Sponsorship:
 - Builds **welcoming communities**;
 - Creates **strong support networks** for current and future refugees; and
 - Helps **maintain public and political support** for refugee/immigration issues.





Private Sponsorship: Who is Eligible

Who Can Be Sponsored?

People who have a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion

OR

People who are seriously and personally affected by civil war or armed conflict, or suffered massive violations of human rights

AND :

- Are outside of country of origin;
- Are outside of Canada; and
- Have no other durable solution (e.g. voluntary repatriation, local integration).





Private Sponsorship: Program Overview

- Refugee cases are identified by the sponsoring groups themselves, often through a family or community connection.
- Cases are assessed by a Canadian visa officer and must meet the definition of a refugee as defined in Canada's legislation.
- The Canadian government covers the cost of processing sponsorship and refugee applications, sponsors cover immediate settlement costs, and refugees generally receive a loan to pay for their travel costs.
- Upon arrival in Canada, refugees receive permanent resident status, and a pathway to citizenship.
- Refugees, like other newcomers, can immediately access government-funded settlement services (e.g. language training, employment readiness).





Private Sponsorship: Arrival Supports

- Sponsors provide:
 - Emotional and social support for one year, including:
 - Welcome at the airport and temporary accommodation;
 - Orientation to their new community and life in Canada;
 - Registering for essential services (e.g. obtaining a health card, enrolling children in school, and accessing other settlement services);
 - Assistance finding permanent housing; and,
 - Assistance finding employment.
 - Monthly income support for one year or until the refugee becomes self-sufficient, whichever is sooner.



Top 10 Source Countries for PSRs (2014-2015)

Top 10 Source Countries for Privately Sponsored Refugees, 2014

Rank	Country of Citizenship	Intake
1	Eritrea	1,148
2	Syria	699
3	Democratic Republic of Somalia	590
4	Iraq	582
5	Afghanistan	523
6	Ethiopia	416
7	Democratic Republic of Congo	114
8	Pakistan	77
9	Stateless	68
10	Rwanda	45
Total Top 10		4,261
Other Countries		298
Total Admissions		4,559

Top 10 Source Countries for Privately Sponsored Refugees, 2015

Rank	Country of Citizenship	Intake
1	Syria	4,747
2	Afghanistan	1,121
3	Eritrea	1,082
4	Iraq	936
5	Stateless	368
6	Democratic Republic of Somalia	353
7	Pakistan	319
8	Ethiopia	243
9	Democratic Republic of Congo	86
10	Rwanda	60
Total Top 10		9,315
Other Countries		418
Total Admissions		9,733

Source: Citizenship & Immigration Canada, Research DataMart, as of February 2016.

For 2010-2014, these are updated numbers and different from those of Facts and Figures 2014.

*These numbers are different from admissions under the "commitment for Syrians and Iraqis out of the Middle East" and may not be used as such

See Appendix 2 for more on PSR source countries.





Spotlight on World University Service of Canada

- World University Service of Canada (WUSC) operates through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program as a Sponsorship Agreement Holder.
- Since 1978, WUSC's Student Refugee Program has helped student refugees achieve their educational goals by:
 - building the capacity of young Canadians to sponsor refugee students to their university or college;
 - providing student refugees with an opportunity to pursue their education at a Canadian university or college with permanent resident status; and,
 - supporting sponsored students to adapt and succeed in their new environment in Canada.
- From countries of origin as diverse as Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Burma and Afghanistan, most students have successfully completed their studies and are now Canadian citizens making valuable contributions to their communities.





Helping Refugees to Integrate

- Many resettled refugees face barriers to integration.
 - Low official language skills, limited formal education - more than 65% speak neither English nor French, 70% have less than 10 years of formal education
 - Difficulty accessing affordable housing
 - Range of health issues as a result of migration experience (e.g., trauma, mental illness)
- Economic integration can be challenging
 - Limited work experience and social/professional networks can lead to low employment earnings, especially shortly after arrival, but economic outcomes improve over time
- Yet social integration outcomes have generally been strong
 - Very high rate (88%) of eligible refugees become citizens

The resettlement program not only provides protection to those in need, but contributes to a strong and diverse Canada





Other Supports Available to Refugees

- The Government of Canada funds a large Settlement Program to assist newcomers – including resettled refugees – in overcoming barriers specific to the newcomer experience. The Settlement Program:
 - Provides newcomers with **information** required to make informed decisions, the **language skills** to achieve their settlement and integration goals, assistance in finding and retaining **employment**, and the support they need to build **networks** within communities; and
 - Is available both pre- and post-arrival.
- Resettled refugees also receive access to:
 - **Mainstream public services** including education, health care, etc.
 - **Supplemental medical coverage** (e.g. vision and dental care) for the first year.
- After the first year – during which income support is provided by the sponsor or the government – resettled refugees have access to social assistance (income support for low income families) if required.





Benefits of Private Sponsorship Program (1)

- The Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program maintains and advances Canada's humanitarian traditions.
- Cost sharing between the government and sponsors allows **protection** to be extended to more refugees than would otherwise be admitted to Canada; 275,000+ privately sponsored refugees to date.
- Private sponsorship allows Canadian citizens and permanent residents to get involved in the resettlement of vulnerable persons. This in turn:
 - Builds **welcoming communities**;
 - Creates **strong support networks** for current and future refugees; and
 - Helps **maintain public and political support** for refugee/immigration issues
- With refugees named by the private sponsors, the program:
 - Supports **family reunification**;
 - Allows Canadians and Permanent Residents to play a direct role in determining the focal points of Canada's resettlement policy; and,
 - **Relieves pressure on UNHCR** to identify cases for resettlement, provides alternative cases that may have been missed by the UNHCR.





Benefits of Private Sponsorship Program (2)

- Sponsors frequently play a direct role in linking refugees with essential services and **gaining a foothold in the labour market** by:
 - Providing a source of information on Canadian workplace norms; and
 - Assisting with networking, searching for jobs and completing the application process.
- With the **dedicated and personalized support** provided by sponsors, generally privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) have demonstrated **stronger settlement outcomes** overall than government-assisted refugees (GARs).
 - PSRs perform better economically in the first five years of settlement, with higher incidence of employment and higher incomes, and lower incidence of reliance on social assistance; and
 - PSRs are more likely to develop social support networks in Canada than GARs.





Lessons Learned (1)

- Working with **trusted partners** – well-established NGOs with a history of sponsorship and settlement work – increases program efficiency and ensures appropriate settlement supports are in place.
 - The government signs formal agreements with select incorporated organizations, ‘Sponsorship Agreement Holders’ (SAHs). SAHs must demonstrate they have the financial resources and settlement knowledge to support refugees. SAHs generally submit many sponsorship applications every year and are responsible for all sponsorships under their agreement. This allows the government to use a ‘light touch’ approach to assessing their applications.
 - NGOs that already provide settlement or other services to newcomers and refugees, as well as faith-based or ethno-cultural organizations, are likely candidates to become SAHs.
 - Other groups (e.g. five or more people working together or another organization) may also sponsor refugees. Their applications are assessed by the government with a higher level of scrutiny.





Lessons Learned (2)

- **High quality sponsorship applications** are key to ensuring efficient processing of cases.
 - The government funds an NGO – the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program – to address ongoing information, training and support needs of sponsors. Of note, RSTP develops and provides reference materials and workshops to sponsors.
 - For sponsorship applications submitted by groups other than SAHs, the sponsor must include a refugee status determination (UNHCR or other) in their application. This has decreased the number of cases refused due to the applicant not meeting the definition of a refugee.
- Open channels of **communication** with private sponsors ensure critical information is shared and expectations are managed.
 - Government officials meet regularly with elected representatives from the SAH community.





Lessons Learned (3)

- While privately sponsored refugees receive assistance from sponsors to find employment, refugees may still require more than one year to become self-sufficient and **appropriate supports must be available**.
 - For refugees who required sustained income support following their first year in Canada, this support is provided through social assistance. Continued access to settlement services, including education and job training, is also critical to support the transition to self-reliance.
 - Sponsors need to be adequately informed of available services and how refugees are able to access them.
 - Government support has been necessary during the first year in a small number of cases where the sponsorship has broken down.





Lessons Learned (4)

- Newcomers, including former resettled refugees and asylum seekers, use the private sponsorship program to sponsor relatives abroad who are ineligible for Canada's family reunification programs. This can lead to **high demand** and the need for **intake management systems**.
 - For example, 'echo effects' have been observed where former Government-Assisted Refugees use the private sponsorship program to subsequently sponsor extended family members. Accordingly, many sponsorship applications may be submitted for specific regions or countries. Knowledge of this trend can be used by the government for operational forecasting and planning.
 - Corresponding family connections ensure sponsored refugees will have existing support networks in place upon arrival.





Questions?

