



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

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et Citoyenneté Canada



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Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

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Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSR)

- Canada's private sponsorship of refugees (PSR) program officially began in 1978 and was used to resettle more than 60,000 Indo-Chinese refugees in 1979-1980.
- Since the PSR program's creation, Canada has welcomed more than 288,000 privately sponsored refugees.
 - Over 40,000 Syrian refugees have been resettled since November 2015, and more than 18,000 of these came through the PSR program.
 - More than 7,200 non-Syrian refugees came to Canada through the PSR program during the same period.
- By involving the community directly in refugee resettlement, the private sponsorship of refugee program:
 - Builds welcoming communities;
 - Creates strong support networks for current and future refugees; and
 - Helps foster positive attitudes towards refugees and resettlement.





Types of Sponsors in the PSR Program

1) Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs):

- Mostly faith-based, humanitarian or ethno-cultural groups with experience in refugee sponsorship;
- Sign a formal agreement with the Canadian government to submit and take responsibility for numerous sponsorship applications every year;
- Approximately 90% of PSR sponsorships are submitted by SAHs.

2) Group of Five (G5):

- Groups of five or more Canadians or permanent residents, 18 years of age or older with no criminal background;

3) Community Sponsors:

- Organizations, associations or corporations located in a community of settlement.

❖ Refugees are usually identified by the sponsoring groups themselves: often through a family or community connection.





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;
 - Assistance in registering for essential services (e.g. health care, enrolling children in school, language classes);
 - Assistance finding permanent housing; and,
 - Assistance finding employment.
- Monthly income support for one year or until the refugee becomes self-sufficient, whichever is sooner.

Additional Supports:

- To assist the integration of all newcomers, including refugees, the government of Canada funds a large Settlement Program that includes language classes, and assistance in finding employment and building networks within the community;
- Resettled refugees can also access mainstream public services including education, health care and, after the first year, social assistance (income support for low income families), if required.





Canadian Attitudes Toward Immigrants and Refugees

- While Canadian public opinion toward immigrants in general (and refugees in particular) covers a broad spectrum, overall, attitudes remain consistently positive.
- Canada's history and reality as a nation of immigrants (most Canadians are either immigrants or the descendants of immigrants) may help explain this positivity.
- Through Canada's long-standing humanitarian tradition, both privately sponsored and government-assisted refugees become citizens and neighbours.
- Canada's integration model encourages immigrants to become citizens and entails mutual adaptation by newcomers and Canadian society. Inclusive laws and policies, as well as enabling programs, support this model.
- A commitment to this model in all levels of government, along with civil society and in the broader society as a whole, has resulted in positive outcomes for immigrants, and enabled immigrants to contribute positively to Canadian society.
- In a "virtuous cycle", these positive outcomes reinforce positive views of immigration and opportunities for immigrants and refugees to contribute.





Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI)

- Launched in December 2016 in Ottawa, Canada, the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI) is a partnership between the Government of Canada, the UNHCR, the University of Ottawa, the Radcliffe Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations.
- The GRSI seeks to mobilize citizens in new jurisdictions around the world in direct support of refugees, and encourage worldwide political debate that is supportive of refugee protection.
- The initial aim is to increase the private sponsorship of refugees around the world through the creation and dissemination of training modules, along with tailored advice on how to adapt and implement private sponsorship programs.
- At the December 2016 launch, representatives from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Germany, New Zealand, the UK and the US, as well as other stakeholders from around the world, discussed Canada's private sponsorship model and how it could be adapted and supported in other countries' contexts.
- Since then, officials from the United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile have sought Canada's advice and expertise and GRSI partners co-hosted a two-day event in April 2017 in Brussels to explore the potential of community-driven resettlement initiatives in Europe.
- In July 2017, GRSI representatives will be participating in a five-day tour of five cities in the United Kingdom, meeting with potential sponsors in a community sponsorship initiative.
- Formal launch of the training modules is tentatively planned for September 2017 on the margins of the UN General Assembly.

