

Clarification 1. Rationale for counting in-donor refugee costs as ODA **Q1/ Describe in a nutshell the asylum procedure in your country.**

Canada's Asylum Program

Consistent with its obligations under international convention on protection, Canada's asylum system is based on the principle of non-refoulement and provides protection to persons who have a well-founded fear of persecution or are at risk of torture, or cruel or unusual punishment in their countries or origin and/or habitual residence.

Asylum claimants can make a claim in Canada at a port of entry or at an in-land office with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), or Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). All claimants – at the border, airport, or inland – undergo medical and security screening. Under Canadian legislation, asylum claimants are not yet refugees. CBSA or IRCC officials determine if an individual is eligible to make a refugee claim. Factors determining an individual's eligibility to claim asylum include whether the claimant has committed a serious crime, made a previous claim in Canada or received protection in another country. If the individual is eligible to make a claim, the claim is referred to the independent Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB). Most rejected claimants have access to appeal to the Refugee Appeal Division (RAD). The RAD considers appeals of decisions made by the Refugee Protection Division (RPD) to allow or reject claims for refugee protection. All failed refugee claimants have the option of filing an application with the Federal Court for leave and judicial review of a negative decision. Once an asylum claim has been determined to be eligible, claimants may live in Canada with access to a temporary work permit, social assistance, and education, while they await a decision from the IRB.

The IRB is a quasi-judicial, independent tribunal, which provides a fair hearing to asylum claimants. Decisions are made based on the individual merits of the claim, and in accordance with Canada's immigration laws. Once the IRB accepts an individual's claim, that person will receive the status of "protected person". All protected persons are eligible for settlement services such as language training, employment-related services, and information services. In fiscal year 2019-2020, Canada received over 63,500 claims for asylum.¹

Canada's Refugee Resettlement Program

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's Immigration Levels Plan determines how many permanent residents Canada aims to admit over the course of a calendar year, including the number of resettled refugees.

A person cannot apply directly to Canada for resettlement. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), other designated referral organizations, or private sponsors identify and refer refugees to Canada for resettlement. Once referred, all resettlement cases are carefully screened by Canada for issues related to security, criminality and health.

Canada's Refugee Resettlement Program is first and foremost about saving lives, offering protection for the displaced and supporting integration. Refugees are selected abroad and are resettled through one of three streams:

¹ Data retrieved from public information available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/asylum-claims/asylum-claims-2019.html> and <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/asylum-claims/asylum-claims-2020.html>.

- **Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR) Program:** Refugees are referred by the UNHCR or another designated referral agency and, for those destined outside Quebec, receive support from the Government of Canada through the Resettlement Assistance Program or a provincial equivalent for those residing in the province of Quebec. The RAP includes financial support, typically for 12 months, and immediate and essential services upon arrival. Through the Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) Program, GARs with special needs receive support for an extended duration of up to 24 months plus the added support of a sponsor.
- **Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program:** Refugees are referred by their sponsors, who then provide up to 12 months of income support as well as community and emotional support for one year. Private sponsorship is a separate category that has access to some programs (e.g. education and health), but not to others (e.g. income support). Depending on the type of sponsorships (named or blended), other costs may be covered by the sponsors (e.g. housing and food) and, therefore, excluded from ODA. PSRs are not eligible for income support, shelter support or any other support that can be provided by the sponsorship. The eligible portion of supports provided by the government is included in ODA statistics.
- **Blended Visa Office-Referral Program (BVOR):** Refugees are referred by the UNHCR and matched with a private sponsor. Refugees receive six months of income support from the Government of Canada under the Resettlement Assistance Program, as well as six months of income support and emotional and community support from their sponsors.

In fiscal year 2019-2020, Canada resettled 10,031 GARs, 17,714 PSRs and 919 BVORs from refugee populations all over the world.²

Services

Canada's **Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)** supports GARs and other eligible clients outside Quebec when they first arrive in Canada. The program funds RAP service provider organizations to provide immediate and essential services, generally delivered during the first four to six weeks of arrival in Canada (e.g. reception at the airport; orientation to life in Canada; provision of temporary accommodation and help finding permanent housing; and orientation and links to essential federal and provincial programs and services), as well as funds financial support, including start-up costs and monthly income support typically for up to 12 months. BVORs and PSRs receive similar in-Canada resettlement supports from their sponsors. A provincial equivalent program is provided for those residing in the province of Quebec. All asylum claimants, including those determined to be protected persons, are not eligible for RAP supports.

Canada's **Settlement Program** assists newcomers outside Quebec—including resettled refugees—in overcoming barriers specific to the newcomer experience. The settlement services provide newcomers with the information they require to make informed decisions, basic language training, labour market services to find and retain employment, and community support. Asylum claimants become eligible for Settlement Program services only after the IRB accepts an individual's claim and that person receives the status of "protected person". A provincial equivalent program is provided for those residing in the province of Quebec.

The **Interim Federal Health Program** provides limited and temporary coverage of health-care benefits in Canada to specific groups of foreign nationals who may not have access to provincial or territorial health insurance or extended health care benefits, including resettled refugees and asylum claimants. The Program also covers the costs of certain

² Data are preliminary estimates and are subject to change. Source: IRCC, CDO, Permanent Residents, June 30, 2020 Data. Data is approved for external release.

pre-departure medical services for refugees who have been identified for resettlement before they come to Canada. With respect to resettled refugees, in general, basic health care coverage and income support are provided by provinces and municipalities after a waiting period; as such, Federal support is provided in the interim.

The **Interim Housing Assistance Program** (for asylum claimants) is a temporary grant program which cost-shares with eligible provinces, and if necessary municipalities, for incurred costs associated with interim housing provided to asylum claimants. The program was created in 2019 in order to provide temporary assistance to provinces to allow them to adjust to new asylum pressures and to increase interim housing capacity. Eligible expenditures include costs for shelters, meals, transportation, and other indirect costs.

Clarification 2. Meaning of the term “refugees”

Q2/ Indicate the categories of refugees for which costs are included in your ODA reporting: asylum seekers, recognised refugees, persons granted temporary or subsidiary protection.

To be eligible under Canada’s resettlement program (and considered for provincial and municipal support), refugees must meet the definition of a refugee under Canada’s governing legislation (*Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*) as:

- **A Convention Refugee:** An individual who is outside their country of origin and who cannot return due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, political opinion, nationality, or membership in a particular social group, such as women or people with a particular sexual orientation; or
- **A Member of the Country of Asylum class:** An individual who is outside their country of origin and has been, and continues to be, seriously and personally affected by civil war or armed conflict, or have suffered massive violations of human rights.

For claims for refugee protection made in Canada (i.e., asylum claimants), the Government of Canada publishes the breakdown of Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada hearing decisions (negative, positive, other) [online](#), by year.

As regards the share of discontinued cases, Canada’s methodology does not make a distinction as it uses expenditures at the program level, if refugees stop receiving support, the costs are not incurred.

Clarification 3. Twelve-month rule

Q3/ When does the twelve-month rule start (date of application, date of entry into the country, date of start of support)?

The Government of Canada supports asylum claimants and refugees in Canada through a number of programs, each with their own unique circumstances, and accordingly applies a tailored methodology to each program. The application of the 12 month rule for each program is detailed below; however, services for some programs are provided after the 12 month period, but are not included in Canada’s ODA reporting.



- **Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP):** For resettled refugees, the 12-month rule is applied from the individual's date of arrival in Canada. Asylum claimants are not eligible for RAP services.
- **Settlement Program:** For resettled refugees, the 12 month rule is applied from the individual's date of arrival in Canada. In the case of asylum claimants, the 12 month rule is applied from the point of making their claim to an officer in Canada; however, they only become eligible for settlement supports only after receiving positive decision from IRB.
- **Interim Federal Health Program:** For resettled refugees, the 12 month rule is applied from the date the individual begins receiving services, approximately four months before departure (for certain pre-departure medical services). In the case of asylum claimants, the 12 month rule is applied from the point of making their claim to an officer in Canada. This generally coincides with the start of their Interim Federal Health Program eligibility.
- **Interim Housing Assistance Program:** This program provides payments to provinces and municipalities based on the number of asylum claimants which access interim housing within a calendar year. While shelters do not collect detailed information from shelter clients such as length of stay in Canada, through research and national point in time counts, it is understood that asylum claimants reside in shelters during their first initial months in Canada, and once they have exited the shelter system they are unlikely to return. Provincial and municipal interim housing expenses related to resettled refugees are not eligible for reimbursement under this program.

Provincial and municipal social assistance and health care supports are imputed based on the number of refugees accepted. Due to availability of data and for the sake of consistency, positive asylum claimants are assumed to have received a year's worth of services (less the province's waiting period, if applicable).

Clarification 4. Eligibility of specific cost items

Q4/ Provide the list of cost items included in ODA for each category of refugee and a justification for their inclusion.

Federal Programs:

- The **Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)** funds two main components: financial support and the delivery of immediate and essential services.
 - Financial support comprises an initial start-up amount and monthly income support typically provided to eligible RAP clients for up to 12 months. Monthly income support is intended to cover basic needs such as food, incidentals, shelter, transportation and a communication allowance.
 - RAP services are generally delivered within the first 4-6 weeks of a resettled refugee's arrival in Canada. Activities include the following:
 - meeting resettled refugees at the airport or final destination in Canada;
 - providing temporary accommodation;
 - providing basic orientation to Canada, life skills training and financial orientation;
 - assisting in finding permanent accommodation; and



- Needs and assets assessments and referrals to settlement and broader based community services and links to mandatory federal and provincial programs).

These services represent immediate and essential services to facilitate the arrival and temporary sustenance (arrival support, accommodation, access to services) of the newcomer in Canada. Typically, temporary accommodation is provided generally within 4-6 weeks.

RAP operates as a contribution program, and services are provided by service provider organizations. Accordingly, administrative costs, such as the salaries for direct service providers, are included.

- Only **Settlement Program** service streams assessed to be “temporary sustenance” to refugees within their first 12 months since arrival in Canada are reported (review conducted against ODA eligibility in 2019-20). These include language training (necessary to support access to essential services within first year of arrival), information and orientation services (providing guidance on services relating to housing, health care, well-being, Canada’s legal system, banking and financial management) and community connections (creating linkages with other members of the local communities to support addressing basic needs). More details on methodology in Annex B. The Settlement Program includes funds transferred to service provider organizations that provide support. This includes a portion of administrative costs. Government administrative costs are not included.
- The **Interim Federal Health Program** provides limited and temporary coverage of basic health-care benefits (similar to health-care coverage from provincial or territorial health insurance plans), prescription drugs and supplemental benefits (similar to the extended health coverage given to social assistance recipients by provincial and territorial governments). The Program is temporary in nature and meant to serve as a bridge until refugees qualify for other more permanent forms of health-care coverage. The Program also covers the cost of certain pre-departure medical services (i.e. immigration medical examinations and follow-up treatment of health conditions that would make the refugee inadmissible to Canada on public health grounds, certain pre-departure vaccinations, services needed to manage disease outbreaks, and medical supports required during transit to ensure safe travel to Canada) for refugees who have been identified for resettlement before they come to Canada. The program does not directly fund administrative costs, but rather functions as a reimbursement program for incurred health-care expenses among health-care providers who render services or deliver products to Interim Federal Health Program beneficiaries. Interim Federal Health Program costs do not include any Government administrative costs, including staff salaries. The program does not directly fund administrative services, and rather functions as a reimbursement program for incurred expenses.
- **The Interim Housing Assistance Program:** The Interim Housing Assistance Program is a federal grant program which reimburses a portion of the costs incurred by provinces and municipalities in providing temporary housing to asylum claimants during their initial months in Canada, before more permanent housing is acquired. Temporary housing is usually in the

form of a local shelter where asylum claimants reside for a short period of time. The program was created in March 2019 to provide temporary financial assistance to provinces, and if necessary municipalities, to allow them to adjust to new asylum pressures. The Government of Canada provides compensations based on information provided by provinces and municipalities as per the terms and conditions of the grant program. Eligible expenditures include costs for shelters, meals, transportation, and other indirect costs. Provincial and municipal interim housing expenses related to resettled refugees are not eligible for reimbursement under the program.

Provinces, Territories and Municipalities:

- **Health care:** For eligible refugees under the rules of the province.
- **Social assistance/welfare** is a provincial responsibility and may be available to eligible asylum claimants. Resettled refugees do not access provincial social assistance during the first year in Canada, as they receive income support from federal government through the RAP program, described above.

There is no separate system for refugees in Canada, they benefit from the provincial system once they become permanent residents.

Clarification 5. Methodology for assessing costs

Q5/ Describe the methodology used for assessing ODA-eligible costs and provide the actual data points and detailed calculations used to reach the figures reported as ODA.

As services to support settlement of refugees are provided by federal, provincial and municipal governments, as well as service provider organizations, data collection practices and availability vary, affecting ODA methodology.

Expenditures relating to asylum seekers after they have been rejected are not counted in ODA.

ODA calculation:

1. **Federal Government:** Annual program expenditures are calculated dependent on data availability. Select programs are adjusted to reflect the percentage of eligible refugees receiving federal services in their first 12 months since arrival in Canada. See details in Annex B. Federal support is based on expenditures and costs are considered in the year they occurred. An influx of asylum claimants or resettled refugees at the end of a year may therefore only be reflected in the following year.

Provincial and Municipal Governments: Social assistance and health care are imputed based on the annual cost per capita for these services and the number of eligible refugees; less the waiting period. The calculation is adapted to the type of refugees as some certain services, such as income support, is not offered to privately sponsored refugees. More details are available in Annex A.

Costs per individual vary widely due to many factors including geographic area, family size, specialized medical needs, demographic profile, and service uptake. Income support is imputed based on their particular situation. Certain costs (i.e. health-care coverage) are not attributed to individuals for privacy reasons, as doing so would indicate the type of treatment provided and thus the medical condition being treated.



Provincial support is calculated based on the number of refugees and/or asylum claimants (as applicable) that arrived or obtained a positive determination during the previous year. Due to availability of data, positive claimants are assumed to have received a year's worth of services in the year they were accepted. This approach simplifies reporting, avoids double counting and is directly related to the number of refugees and asylum claimants (i.e., ODA increases when more refugees are accepted and vice-versa).

Annex A – Imputed Refugee Support from Provinces and Territories

Step 1 - Imputed Health Care Support

Resettled refugees and protected persons have different waiting periods in each province and territory before they are eligible to receive health-care support. As a result, the calculation is done separately for each province and territory and only considers a portion of the year (one year less the waiting periods). The number of refugees receiving benefits by type is therefore multiplied by the percentage of the year in which they would be receiving those benefits.³ More details are available in Annex C.

$$HealthCare_i = [(P_i^{RR} \cdot \# \text{ Resettled Refugees}) + (P_i^{PP} \cdot \# \text{ Protected Persons})] \cdot C_i^{HP} + R_i^T \cdot C_i^{HM}$$

Where

i = Province or Territory

$$P_i^{RR} = 1 - \frac{\text{Waiting Period for Resettled Refugee}_i}{365.25}$$

$$P_i^{PP} = 1 - \frac{\text{Waiting Period for Protected Persons}_i}{365.25}$$

C_i^{HP} = Provincial health care – per capita

R_i^T = Total number of Refugees

C_i^{HM} = Municipal health care – per capita

Step 2 - Adjustment factor

This methodology includes an adjustment factor in order to align Canada's aggregate number of refugees with the more granular provincial and territorial breakdown. For confidentiality purposes, the exact number of refugees is not provided, when less than 5 refugees are recorded in a specific category, province or origin. The adjustment factor is calculated using the same methodology with average costs for Canada. For example, in 2017-2018, the total number of eligible refugees in Canada was 34,215, while the sum by provinces and territories was 32,686; the difference (1,529) was multiplied by Canada's average health care support by type of refugees. More details are available in Annex C.

³ Provincial and territorial waiting periods are compiled by Global Affairs Canada; health care data is compiled by the Canadian Institute for Health Information; and details on the number of refugees (by provinces and territories, age, origin, category, etc.) are provided by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

Step 3 - Imputed Welfare Support

Welfare services in Canada are generally provided at the provincial/territorial level and serve as a means of assistance in the form of cash allowances to protected persons. Other categories of refugees have their living expenses paid for privately or by the federal government.

Due to the lack of information concerning refugee family groups, it is assumed that all adult asylum seekers, who are welfare recipients⁴, receive at least the amount equivalent to a single, employable adult, as opposed to making assumptions for number of families. This is the most conservative amount in comparison to amounts received for families, elderly, child benefits, etc.

Given the varying welfare incomes by province, the following calculation needs to be applied to each province and territory. More details can be found in Annex C.

$$\text{Welfare Support} = \# \text{ of eligible adults} \times 75\% \times \text{Income for single, employable, adult}$$

Imputed Refugee Support from Provinces and Territories

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of refugees	52,555	38,839	32,686
Total refugee cost	260,634,741	208,241,466	193,547,758
Costs per capita per Province/Territory	4,959	5,362	5,921

Annex B – Imputed Refugee Support from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

The Government of Canada supports asylum claimants and refugees in Canada through a number of programs, each with their own unique circumstances, and accordingly applies a tailored methodology to each program. Annual program expenditures are calculated dependent on data availability. Select programs are adjusted to reflect the percentage of eligible refugees receiving federal services in their first 12 months since arrival in Canada.

Expenditures from the following programs are considered in the calculation.

Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)

As RAP is only available to eligible resettled refugees and is temporary in nature, since 2019 all expenditures are considered ODA eligible, with the exception of certain pre-departure services (analysis for inclusion ongoing), and knowledge development services (e.g., research and capacity building projects). Government expenses (salaries) for direct service provision of income support are included ODA.

Settlement Program

⁴ Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada calculates the average percentage

To complement the immediate assistance programs, the Settlement Program provides support to newcomers in Canada.

The methodology applied to the Settlement Program costs has evolved over the last several years. In 2018-19, total expenditures were prorated based on the number of eligible refugees that received services in their first year (then calculated at approximately 18%⁵). In 2019-20, Canada reviewed the program to only include service streams considered “temporary sustenance”, and to prorate expenditures based on the number of eligible refugees (receiving service within 12 months of arrival) within each eligible service stream (percentages below). Services offered through the employment services and indirect services are not included.

- Need Assessment and Referrals (2.99%)
- Language Assessment (0.64%)
- Language Training (2.26%)
- Information and Orientation (3.66%);
- Community Connections (5.23%)
- Support Services (14.47%)⁶

Interim Federal Health Program

Interim Federal Health Program expenses can be divided into three categories, and their ODA methodology is as follows:

- **Pre-Departure Medical Services:** Since only eligible refugees are supported, 100% of the costs are considered in the calculation. Canada counts the total expenditures in ODA. Without these services, refugees could not travel to Canada in a safe and timely manner.
- **Resettled Refugees:** All expenses for basic health benefits are included since only eligible refugees are supported and services last for less than 12 months. For prescription drug coverage and supplemental benefits, only expenses for 12 months are included (period beginning with immigration medical exam, the first service offered under the pre-departure medical services, above).
- **Asylum Claimants (typically still awaiting decision from the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada):** Included are only those asylum claimants within 12 months of making a claim (excluding expenses for claimants after and if rejected).

Interim Housing Assistance Program and Accommodation Related Operational Expenses

All funds provided to provinces and municipalities through the Interim Housing Assistance Program are reported as ODA eligible given that the program is meant to reimburse jurisdictions for costs incurred in providing temporary housing to asylum claimants during their initial months in Canada, before more

⁵ Data was provided by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada’s Research and Evaluation Branch (RE-19-0328) and approved for release (DPU-19-1032). Data are preliminary and subject to change. Data excludes Resettlement Assistance Program and does not include services used in Quebec. The table contains data entered by Service Provider Organizations up until March 31, 2019. Data are preliminary estimates and are subject to change.

⁶ Data was provided by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada’s Chief Data Officer branch (CDO-20-0395) and Settlement and Integration Policy branch and approved for release (DPU-20-1748). Data are preliminary estimates and are subject to change.

permanent housing is acquired. Provincial and municipal interim housing expenses related to resettled refugees are not eligible for reimbursement under the program.

In addition to the Interim Housing Assistance Program, operating expenses to support federally-provided interim lodging sites at the Canada-U.S border are included only if related to supporting the immediate needs of asylum seekers.

Quebec Accord

Funding for resettlement and resettlement supports in Quebec (equivalent to the Settlement Program and Resettlement Program) is provided under a separate bilateral agreement between Quebec and IRCC, the Canada-Quebec Accord. For calculating the ODA-eligible expenditures under the Canada-Quebec Accord, it is assumed that eligible refugees in Quebec (the only non-reporting province) account for the same percentage of settlement program service users outside of Quebec (6.64% in 2019-20).⁷

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⁷ Data are preliminary estimates and subject to change. Data was provided by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's Chief Data Officer branch (CDO-20-0395) and Settlement and Integration Policy branch and approved for release (DPU-20-1748).