

## SPECIAL BULLETIN: RESETTLEMENT OF SYRIAN REFUGEES TO BRITISH COLUMBIA

Issue 3: December 1, 2015

AMSSA has created the following special bulletin series, **Resettlement of Syrian Refugees to British Columbia**, to provide our members, partners and stakeholders with the latest information and facts about the Government of Canada's response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, and to assist organizations in preparing for the resettlement of Syrian refugees to British Columbia.

### WORKING FORUM ON SYRIAN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN CANADA

On November 28-29, 2015, a *Working Forum on Syrian Refugee Resettlement in Canada* was held in Toronto, Ontario. It brought together 120 representatives from all levels of government, service provider organizations and other stakeholder groups, including Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC); Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC); Service Canada; Canadian Heritage; Privy Council Office; Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED); Department of National Defence (DND); Provinces / Territories; Municipalities; Federation of Canadian Municipalities; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) organizations; Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs); Immigrant Service Organizations (ISOs); Lifeline Syria; Canadian Council for Refugees; Aga Khan Foundation; Canadian Red Cross; Canadian Chamber of Commerce; Canadian Labour Congress; and more.

The forum served to build common understanding and relationships between key stakeholders and partners across the country. An overview of the federal government's plans for resettlement of Syrian refugees was provided, and participants had an opportunity to share ideas, strategies and best practices for post-arrival planning. Themes included: destining, orientation, housing and other basic needs, health and mental health, language assessment and training, children and youth, welcoming environment, labour market integration, stages of resettlement, and regional coordination.

#### Highlights from the Plenary Presentation:

- Applications processed in Lebanon are mainly for private sponsorship.
- Case processing centres are being set up in Turkey and Jordan. New teams have been put together and will be sent overseas to process applications shortly.
- IRCC is relying on the UNHCR to identify potential GARs. Priority will be given to the most vulnerable cases. Vulnerability indicators include women at risk, families, LGBTI and special needs.
- IRCC is working with host governments of Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan to secure exit visas.
- Decisions regarding destining are complex. This is, in part, due to the many interest groups and non-traditional partners who would like to be involved in the resettlement of Syrian refugees. IRCC will communicate any decisions as quickly as possible.
- The medical screening process for refugees remains unchanged, but IRCC is increasing capacity for overseas medical examinations in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan. Overseas medical tests will include HIV, syphilis and tuberculosis. Visual checks will also be conducted prior to boarding flights.
- GARs and PSRs will have access to the Interim Federal Health (IFH) program. Upon arrival, Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) will issue IFH certificates.
- RAP communities are required to demonstrate the following criteria: capacity to deliver services, settlement and interpretation services available in the community, suitable permanent housing, relevant specialized supports (e.g. mental health, educational support), and a welcoming community strategy.

A full report will be distributed in December.

The contents of this document reflects the views of AMSSA and do not necessarily reflect the official position of its funders or members

## DESTINATION OF PRIVATELY SPONSORED SYRIAN REFUGEES TO BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Government of Canada has released a *Map of Destination Communities for Privately Sponsored Syrian Refugees*, which provides an overview of the applications being processed for Syrian refugees privately sponsored by organizations and groups of Canadians across Canada.

### ARRIVALS (as of November 4, 2015):

Canada – 74 (excluding Quebec)  
British Columbia – N/A

### APPLICATIONS BEING PROCESSED (as of November 24, 2015):

Canada – 4,511 (excluding Quebec)  
British Columbia – 217\*

\*The number of applications for British Columbia represents 4.8% of all applications (excluding Quebec).

### BREAKDOWN OF APPLICATIONS BY REGION AND COMMUNITY IN BC (as of November 24, 2015):

<b>Metro Vancouver</b>	
Burnaby	31
Coquitlam	20
New Westminister	49
North Vancouver	Less than 5
Richmond	10
Vancouver	54
	<b>167</b>
<b>Fraser Valley</b>	
Delta	6
Langley	Less than 5
Surrey	20
	<b>29</b>
<b>Vancouver Island</b>	
Victoria	10
	<b>10</b>
<b>Interior/North</b>	
Kelowna	9
Prince George	5
	<b>14</b>

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Government of Canada: [Backgrounder – Map of Destination Communities for Privately Sponsored Syrian Refugees](#)
- Government of Canada: [Map of Destination Communities for Privately Sponsored Syrian Refugees](#)