

Region:
British Columbia



Info Sheet: Housing Data Tables – Resettled Refugees and Displaced Ukrainians

The following housing data tables show regional housing costs in relation to the income supports that resettled refugees and displaced Ukrainians receive upon arrival to Canada. This info sheet aims to show the disparity between the supports that newcomer refugees and displaced Ukrainians are eligible for compared to the cost of living in each of the regions in British Columbia. In this info-sheet we focus on **British Columbia** as a whole.

Average rent / vacancy rates for British Columbia

The below rates are based on October 2022 rates released in January 2023 by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

| | 1 Bdrm Rent | Vacancy Rate | 2 Bdrm Rent | Vacancy Rate | 3+ Bdrm Rent | Vacancy Rate |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Regional Average | \$1,432 | 1.1% | \$1,721 | 1.5% | \$2,067 | 2.0% |

Source: [CMHC housing market information portal](https://www.cmhc.ca/en/housing-market-information-portal)

Income support for Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)

A GAR is a person who resettles to Canada because they have been determined to be a [Convention refugee](#). GARs receive financial and other support to help cover basic needs from the Government of Canada through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) for up to one year after their arrival in Canada.

Source: https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship/helpcentre/glossary.html#government_assisted_refugee

| Income Support | Description | Individual - monthly | Family of 4 (couple and 2 children) - monthly |
|---|--|------------------------------|---|
| RAP assistance | Food, incidentals, shelter, transportation and a communication allowance. <i>Note: Other special allowances may be added based on need.</i> | \$1,010 (first 12 months) | \$1,726 (first 12 months) |
| Income assistance – Provincial Government | Shelter and food and basic needs. <i>Note: Support allowances may vary based on family make-up.</i> | \$935 (month 13+) | \$1,770 (month 13+) |

Income support for Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) holders

The Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) allows Ukrainians and their family members to enter Canada, offering extended temporary status and allowing them to work, study and live in Canada for up to 3 years.

| Income Support | Description | Individual | Family of 4 (couple and 2 children) |
|---|---|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| One-time payment (Federal government) | Shelter and food and basic needs. | \$3,000 | \$9,000 |
| Temporary Hardship Assistance (Provincial government – for up to 12 months) | Hardship assistance is based on need and eligibility. | Up to \$935 Monthly | Up to \$1,770 Monthly |

Sources: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2022/06/financial-assistance-now-available-for-ukrainians-in-canada.html>
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022SDPR0044-001029>

There is a high level of housing unaffordability for all B.C. residents. However, this is exacerbated for resettled refugees and CUAET populations as they face additional challenges such as finding employment, learning a new language and settling in a new country while managing culture shock and in some cases, trauma and mental health difficulties at the same time.

The income supports listed above are for food, shelter, transportation, communication allowance and other incidentals. However, these expenses as well as costs for utilities, internet, phone, clothing and other basic expenses are higher than the financial supports. Additionally, British Columbia's annual inflation rate grew from 7.3% in August 2022 to 7.7% in September 2022, the third-highest rate in Canada. Grocery prices have increased 11.4% in September 2022 compared to September 2021. The total average cost of utilities in BC is \$156 per month, which includes electricity, water, internet and cable.

"I have been living in a hotel for the past two months since arriving in Canada. I'm a single woman and can speak English fluently so searching for housing has not been a challenge for me. However, because I'm a newcomer, landlords will not offer me their suites. The majority of the landlords have asked for items that I can't provide - references from previous landlords, credit check, and source of employment. Because of this, I'm still struggling with finding a rental. For me, a solution would be to find different approaches for newcomers to get housing, taking into consideration that we are new to the country and do not have references from previous landlords, do not have credit histories or source of employment". –

- Afghan single woman in her 30s



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