

SEEKING REFUGE

AMSSA's BC Refugee Resource Network Bulletin

Edition 4, December 2022

B.C. Hardship Assistance Extended to 12 Months for Ukrainians Arriving under CUAET

The Province of B.C. has recently made a change to hardship assistance, enabling [Ukrainians arriving under CUAET access for up to twelve months](#) . Previously it was six months.

Ukrainians who arrive under CUAET can apply for hardship assistance from the Ministry after they have accessed the federal one-time temporary financial support, the Canada-Ukraine Transitional Assistance Initiative (CUTAI). Hardship assistance is provided on a temporary basis, for only one month at a time. Eligibility for hardship assistance must be re-established each month. While limited to 12 months maximum, these months do not need to be consecutive.

As many displaced Ukrainians arriving in B.C. face challenges finding employment, obtaining suitable and affordable housing, and faced with rising living costs, this extension is a welcome one. For more information on this topic, [click here](#).

New Environics Institute Survey Shows Highest Ever Public Support for Immigrants and Refugees

As Canada opens its doors to displaced Ukrainians and resettled refugees (particularly in response to the Afghan humanitarian crisis), we have seen many people offering their help. Donations such as clothing, goods and groceries quickly poured in. Individuals offered their homes to temporarily house newcomers while they looked for more permanent housing.

The Environics Institute launched its Focus Canada public research program in 1976, and have been continually updating its research to include Canadian attitudes about immigration and refugees. The [Fall 2022 Focus Canada Research](#) asks whether “*Canada ought to be accepting more immigrants from those parts of the world which are experiencing major conflicts*”. 76% of overall respondents (73% in B.C.) either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. This is the highest proportion of positive responses since the question was first asked in 1993. It should be noted though that when the question added “*such as Ukraine*”, the number of positive respondents overall was 81% but when the question added “such

as Afghanistan”, the number of positive respondents overall was 73%, indicating that source countries make a difference in Canadians’ support.

The educational work that proponents of immigration have done over the decades have helped move positive public opinion to the highest levels ever. Some examples are:

- 58% of Canadians (54% in B.C.) strongly or somewhat agree that “ *Canada needs more immigration to increase its population*”, the highest level since the question was first asked in 1985
- 85% of Canadians (83% in B.C.) strongly or somewhat agree that “ *Overall, immigration has a positive impact on the economy of Canada*”, up five percentage points from 2021
- 69% of Canadians (59% in B.C.) strongly or somewhat disagreed that “Overall, there is too much immigration to Canada”. This is the highest level of disagreement with the statement since the questions was first asked in 1977

However, challenges to public opinion still remain. When the Government of Canada unveiled its 2023-2025 Immigration Levels Plan, while heralded as an important step to address labour shortages, there were immediate concerns voiced on how it would exacerbate the lack of affordable housing. 75% of respondents to a recent [Leger and Association of Canadian Studies online poll](#) indicated that they were concerned that the immigration plan would result in an excessive demand for housing and health and social services.

Some Canadians still believe that many claiming to be refugees are not real refugees. In response to the Focus Canada statement “Too many refugees are not real refugees”, 36% of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed, which is up two percentage points since 2021. In B.C. 27% of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed, which is down six percentage points since 2021.

While public opinion numbers show positive changes, it still shows that there is much more work to do by all stakeholders to promote and educate for a more inclusive society for all newcomers.

Canada Unveils its 2023-2025 Immigration Levels Plan

On November 1, 2022, the Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship unveiled Canada’s new [2023-2025 Immigration Levels Plan](#). The Plan calls for increasing the number of Permanent Resident admissions to 500,00 in 2025, a 51% increase from the 2019 plan of 330,800. There is particular focus on increasing the numbers in the Economic immigrant category to address labour shortages Canada’s aging workforce, and economic growth. While AMSSA will be sending out more information in the coming weeks, here is the summary of the plan:

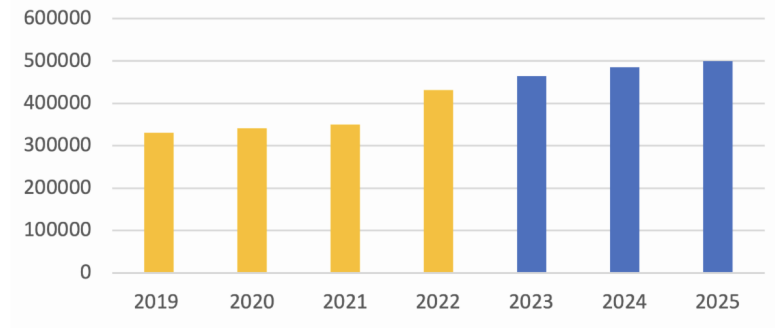
2023 – 465,000 Permanent Resident admissions

2024 – 485,000 Permanent Resident admissions

2025 – 500,00 Permanent Resident admissions

This chart provides a snapshot of Canada’s plans to increase numbers of permanent residents to Canada since 2019.

Canada Immigration Levels Plan 2019-2021, 2022 and 2023-2025 Comparison



As the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) is unique program that enables displaced Ukrainians to work, live and study under a special temporary visitor visa, it is unknown at this time how this group fits into the Immigration Levels Plan.

The 2023-2025 Immigration Levels Plan shows a decrease in the planned numbers of resettled refugees over the three-year period from 76,305 in 2023 to 72,750 in 2025. **It has been reported** that the Plan reduces the numbers of Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) as Canada fulfills its commitment to resettle 40,000 Afghans in Canada. The Plan calls for an increase of Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) to 28,250 in 2025, a large increase from when it was 19,000 on 2019.

The increases in overall numbers of Permanent Resident admission is a welcome one. The challenge that lies ahead for stakeholders working with resettled refugees and displaced Ukrainians is to both provide the support for an increasing number of newcomers to build a life in Canada, and also to build and enlist the public's support to be better able to do so.



Afghans who have arrived in Canada since August 2021 as of December 2022:

26,095



Ukrainian nationals who have arrived in Canada since January 2022 as of December 2022:

128,121

Source: [Government of Canada - #WelcomeAfghans: Key Figures](#),
[Government of Canada - Ukraine Immigration Measures: Key Figures](#)

[Afghan Resettlement Resources](#)

[Ukrainian Migration Resources](#)

Please take the time to fill out the feedback survey so AMSSA can make Seeking Refuge more relevant to your needs

[Survey](#)

AMSSA's BC Refugee Resource Network is an initiative to strengthen community capacity to support resettled refugees and displaced Ukrainians through education, information dissemination, research and training. The Seeking Refuge bulletin has been created to keep service providers up-to-date on news, resources, and to provide information on frequently asked about topics related to recent migrations of displaced Ukrainians and resettled refugees. If you know someone who would like to receive this bulletin, please share this [link](#).

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs



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