

## SEEKING REFUGE

### AMSSA's BC Refugee Resource Network Bulletin

Edition 23, November 2023

#### Pathway to permanent residence opens for Ukrainian nationals with family members in Canada

Further to their announcement in July 2023, IRCC has opened a [permanent residence pathway](#) for Ukrainian nationals with family members in Canada. This temporary public policy came into effect October 23, 2023 and the deadline for applications under this special pathway is October 22, 2024.

Principal applicants must be eligible under one of two categories. For the first category, the principal applicant must have a family relationship (defined as a spouse or common-law partner; child; grandchild; grandparent; parent; or sibling) to a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. The second category is open to the spouse or common-law partner of a Ukrainian national who both has a Canadian citizen or permanent resident family member and is unable to leave Ukraine, be missing, or have passed away. Applicants under this second category must not have remarried or engaged in a common-law relationship since leaving Ukraine.

Under both categories, applicants can include eligible family members in an application – a spouse or common-law partner, dependent children, and dependent grandchildren. The principal applicant must be in Canada with valid temporary status (such as through a CUAET, work, or study visa), but other eligible family members can be either inside or outside Canada. Eligible family members must be listed on the permanent residence application whether or not they are also immigrating. Applicants must meet all other criteria of admissibility to Canada, including a valid passport or other travel document. However, applications may be exempt from financial support requirements for admissibility.

[Information about eligibility and process](#) is available on the IRCC website.

#### Canada meets its goal to resettle 40,000 Afghans

In the wake of the Taliban's seizure of power in Afghanistan in August 2021, Canada pledged to resettle 40,000 Afghan refugees. As part of that process, Canada [created special measures](#) for Afghans who assisted the Government of Canada during Canadian operations in Afghanistan, a pathway to permanent residency for the extended families of former interpreters, and a humanitarian stream for highly vulnerable Afghan refugees, including women leaders, LGBTI+ individuals, journalists, persecuted ethnic or religious minorities, and human rights defenders.

On October 30, the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, [announced that Canada had met its commitment](#). He also clarified that IRCC will continue to process, on a priority basis, eligible applications already submitted under these special measures. Although these programs are now only accepting applicants referred by Global Affairs Canada or National Defence, Afghans can still apply through [regular immigration programs](#), including the [Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot](#) for skilled refugees.

The Province of British Columbia has [welcomed over 5,000 Afghans](#) through the various streams, including 1,100 through private sponsorship. British Columbians can donate to support Afghan refugees, learn more about private sponsorship, and connect with local organizations directly serving Afghan refugees through the [National Afghan Refugee Resettlement Program website](#). Resources to support those working with Afghan refugees are available through AMSSA's [Afghan Resettlement Resources page](#).

#### Temporary measures in response to Syrian/Türkiye earthquake extended

The devastating earthquakes that struck Syria and Türkiye in February 2023 have impacted [more than 15 million people in Türkiye](#), including Syrian refugees who fled to Türkiye for safety. More than six months after these earthquakes, [people in both countries](#) are still experiencing homelessness, food shortages, and further natural disasters. International NGOs continue to provide urgently needed aid in both Syria and Türkiye, but millions still struggle in desperate conditions.

In response, IRCC implemented [temporary special measures](#) for those affected by the earthquakes. Syrian and Turkish nationals who applied for permanent residence from outside Canada will have their applications automatically prioritized and may still be approved even if they have lost travel documents. This includes existing permanent resident applications from people being settled as refugees. New and existing temporary resident applications submitted from the affected regions, including those from family members of Canadian citizens or permanent residents, will also receive priority processing. In addition, Syrian and Turkish temporary residents in Canada can apply to extend or change their temporary resident status for free. Canadian citizens or permanent residents who are in Syria or Türkiye may also submit free applications to replace essential travel documents.

These measures have been extended and will remain in place until January 3, 2024.

#### Wildfire-related document replacement measures extended

BC residents whose status or travel documents were lost or damaged as a result of the wildfires ravaging BC have a new deadline to apply for replacements. In a [previous edition](#) of the Seeking Refuge Bulletin, we covered temporary measures implemented by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada for Canadian citizens, permanent residents, and temporary residents affected by wildfires.

This deadline extension applies to the following groups: Canadian citizens or permanent residents can apply to replace a passport, citizenship certificate, or permanent resident card, including refugee travel documents. Temporary residents may apply extend their status through work or study visas expiring between May 6, 2023 and November 30, 2023. Any IRCC client unable to complete an active application because they have lost documentation to the wildfires may also access special measures.

Affected clients may be eligible for priority processing and fee waivers; see the IRCC website for details, including information about [eligibility and process](#). The new deadline for all applications related to these special measures is November 30, 2023.

Afghans who have arrived in Canada since August 2021 as of October 2023:

40,415

Number of people who arrived in Canada under CUAET program since March 2022 as of October 2023:

198,642

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

[Afghan Resettlement Resources](#)

[Ukrainian Migration Resources](#)

[Access this edition and past editions of the Seeking Refuge Bulletin](#)

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](#).

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