Initial Results of the Western Canadian Syrian Refugee Resettlement Survey

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HUGE Thanks to:

- Brooks and County Immigration Services
- Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- Catholic Social Services (Edmonton)
- Catholic Social Services (Red Deer)
- Lethbridge Family Services-Immigrant Services
- Moose Jaw Multicultural Council
- Regina Open Door Society
- Saskatoon Open Door Society
- YWCA Prince Albert
- La Société franco-manitobaine/Accueil francophone (Saint-Boniface)
- Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. (Winnipeg)
- Westman Immigrant Services (Brandon)

632 interviews
Over ten days!
At fiscal year end!!!
Conducted onsite at HOME
Entered on paper
Almost all done in Arabic!
Refugees to Canada by Type, 2004-2015

Calculations from Immigration and Citizenship Canada. 2015. Facts and Figures
Source Region, Refugees 2006-2015

Source: IRCC 2017
Syrian Arrivals by Province of Destination

Source: IRCC 2017
Syrians to Prairie Region 2015-2017

Source: IRCC monthly statistics, 2017
Syrian Refugees by Class and Province, 2015-16

Source: IRCC Monthly data release, May 2017
Resettling refugees on this scale is not new

- 1956-57: over 37,000 Hungarians
- 1979-1980: 59,000+ Vietnamese
  - Accounted for 25% of all immigrants that year; arrived during an economic recession; were settled outside of MTV
- 1992-1994 11,000+ Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian
- Airlifted 5,000+ Kosovars in 1999 in 6 weeks
- Resettled 4,000+ Karen from Thailand in 2006
Over half of all refugees are under age 25 at arrival

Source: IRCC. 2016. Data request tracking number: CR-16-0095
How do immigrants & refugees compare?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Immigrant</th>
<th>Refugee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rate of mental illness</strong></td>
<td>&lt;5%</td>
<td>~20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical health</strong></td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>Earn 6% more</td>
<td>Work 15% less hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self Employment</strong></td>
<td>Higher than native-born</td>
<td>Higher than immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to settlement services</strong></td>
<td>Low among dependents &amp; family class</td>
<td>Highest among refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience of racism</strong></td>
<td>Higher than refugees</td>
<td>Higher than native-born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge of official language at arrival</strong></td>
<td>Over 80%</td>
<td>Less than 30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beiser 2005; Cortes, 2004; Wanner 2003; Li 2000; Wilkinson, 2016
Basic Methodology

- Intended online but many households did not have wifi
- 632 participants
  - 88% GARs 12% PSRs
- **Funding** meant data collection limited to Alberta (42%), Saskatchewan (35%) and Manitoba (23%)
  - Interviewed 16% of all newly arriving Syrians to the region
  - Participants given $10 grocery gift card OR $10 cash
  - Focal points include: housing, language acquisition and language ability, employment information, and settlement service use
- Interdisciplinary project advisory panel
Who are the participants?

- 57% are “month 13-ers”; 21% are “new” (0-5 months)
- 88% are GARs
- 58% are male, 42% female
- Average family=5.5
- Last country of residence:
  - Lebanon (41%), Jordan (38%), Turkey (12%), Egypt, UAE, Iran, Somalia
- 66% had only primary or middle school education
- 11% vocational or university
- Average time in Canada at time of survey:
  - Alberta: 11.8 months
  - Saskatchewan 10.7 months
  - Manitoba: 12.3 months
# GARS interviewed v. arrived

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th># interviewed</th>
<th>Actual arrivals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moose Jaw</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Albert</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatoon</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regina</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lethbridge</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Deer</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonton</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calgary</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (GAR only)</strong></td>
<td><strong>632</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,315</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Brandon 43%
- Brooks 40%
- Prince Albert 33%
- Lethbridge 31%
- Moose Jaw 19%
- Red Deer 18%
- Saskatoon 16%
- Regina 16%
- Winnipeg 10%
- Calgary 8%
- Edmonton 4%
Housing the Syrian Refugees

Results from the study

Photo credit: City of Brandon, 2017
What do we know about housing and refugees?

• “Housing is the foundation upon which settlement unfolds” (Sherrell 2017: 67)
• **Major issues** include: old and poorly maintained stock, isolated neighbourhood locations, high affordability stress, bugs and mice
• **Context issues**: large families/housing too small, city/town of destination
• **Outcomes of housing**: how quickly they can enroll in language classes, ability to access settlement services, proximity to jobs, transportation availability, psychological and physical well being, affects learning environment for children (no space to study or play), no good place for physical activity
• Basement suites and torture survivors
• Housing discrimination
• Demand for affordable housing is higher than supply
• In Toronto, 29% of PSRs & 51% refugee claimants unsatisfied with housing

Sherrell, 2017; Schmidt and Kück 2017; Silvius, 2017; Watt, 2003; Carter et al., 2008; Hiebert et al, 2005; Preston et al, 2007; Clark-Kazak, 2017; Rose and Charette 2017
Temporary Accommodation by City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saskatoon</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regina</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Albert</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moose Jaw</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Deer</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lethbridge</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonton</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calgary</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: no refugees destined to Manitoba stayed in hotels
Temporary accommodation by time of arrival

end of major Syrian arrivals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-03 months</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04-06 months</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07-09 months</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12 months</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15 months</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18 months</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-21 months</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22+ months</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenges with temporary accommodation

- Average hotel stay:
  - Alberta: 14 days
  - Saskatchewan: 17 days
  - Manitoba: 0 days
- Majority of Syrians **happy** with their experience
- Hotel staff friendly and courteous, even if they couldn’t speak Arabic
- **Size of the room and having to share with many people for weeks**
- Halal food or quality of food concerns
  - asked for Syrian food but were given Greek food instead.
  - few families felt they didn’t have enough food to feed their children
- Settlement service workers who met with the families at the hotel were also described as being extremely helpful and patient.
Main GAR-welcoming CMAs/urban areas, by rent levels at start of Syrian operation — showing RAP-SPO INTERVIEW CITIES
Does housing meet your needs? (yes)
by time in Canada and province

25-30 months
- Manitoba: 100%
- Saskatchewan: 60%

19-24 months
- Manitoba: 100%
- Saskatchewan: 100%

13-18 months
- Manitoba: 81%
- Saskatchewan: 68%
- Alberta: 54%

07-12 months
- Manitoba: 67%
- Saskatchewan: 50%
- Alberta: 90%

0-6 months
- Manitoba: 83%
- Saskatchewan: 77%
- Alberta: 95%
Does accommodation meet your needs?

Housing Situation Meets Needs by presence of children

- Families with children: 69%
- Families without children: 71%
Language

Results from our study

Photo credit: University of Reading, 2017
Self-rated English Knowledge Prior to Arrival

Source: IRCC Monthly data release, May 2017
Currently attending English class by city
Not attending English Class by Sex & Province

Not Attending English Language classes - by Sex

Alberta

Saskatchewan

Manitoba

Females

Males
# Why not attending by sex/prov

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alberta</th>
<th>Saskatchewan</th>
<th>Manitoba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently on wait list</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to attend class</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No plans to attend</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Employment

Results from our study

Images courtesy of hirearefugee.ca and Macleans Magazine, 2017
What do we know about employment outcomes among refugees?

- **Pay more in taxes** than take in social services over lifetime
- Contribute to at least 60% of the labour market growth in Canada
- Age at arrival influences, especially those arriving as refugees
- Lifetime employment rates **10-12% higher** than among workers born in Canada, US or Australia
- Refugees are **not a threat to Canadian/American jobs**
- Privately sponsored refugees find work faster than government assisted
- Four years after arrival, employment rate of refugees is just 6% lower than Canadian workers
- Many **work multiple jobs**, especially in their early years in Canada

Hermansen 2017; Wilkinson and Garcea 2017; Legraine 2016; Ontario Ministry of Finance, 2014; Conference Board of Canada, 2015; Brookings Institute 2015; IRCC 2016; Morrissette et al., 2015; Zue, 2008
Difficulty finding work by time & city

[Bar chart showing difficulty finding work by time & city for different time periods (01-03 months, 04-06 months, 07-09 months, 10-12 months, 13-15 months, 16-18 months, 19-21 months, 22 & more months) and cities (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba).]
Current Employment Status by Province

Employment Status, by Province

- Employed
- Unemployed
- Student
- Home maker

Provinces: Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba
Used employment services by city
Currently not looking for work by city

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brooks</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calgary</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonton</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lethbridge</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Deer</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moose Jaw</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Albert</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regina</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatoon</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Income seven years after arrival of refugees by cohort entry, GARs and PSRs, 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Arrival year 1980</th>
<th>Arrival year 1985</th>
<th>Arrival Year 1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Privately sponsored refugee</td>
<td>$22,933</td>
<td>$25,468</td>
<td>$24,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government sponsored Refugee</td>
<td>$24,101</td>
<td>$22,576</td>
<td>$21,116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The average income of an immigrants meets the average of a Canadian born worker within 7-10 years after arrival; for refugees, it is about 11-14 years after arrival.*

*Findings confirmed in Sweden 2017 and in Canada IRCC 2016*

Source: Devoretz, Pivenko and Beiser, 2004; calculations by Wilkinson Bevelander, 2017; IRCC 2016-
% of refugees in Alberta with Employment Income, 2014

Tombe, 2017-using IMDB
Use of Social Assistance among refugees in Alberta by landing cohort, 2017

Share of Refugees in Alberta on Social Assistance
CANSIM 054-0001 -- in 2014 Constant Dollars

- Landing Year
- 2008 Cohort
- 2004 Cohort
- 2000 Cohort
- 1997 Cohort

Dollars per Year ($2014)


Tombe, 2017-using IMDB
IRCC’s analysis of incidence of Social Assistance (SA) and Employment Earnings (EE) for 2003-2013 cohorts of GARs and PSRs

Source: Edlund, Dawn (2017), Settlement of Syrian refugees – one year later.
Employment Rate by Years since migration, family and refugees- female Canada and Sweden compared, 2007

EXAMINED ONLY FYR, IRAQ, IRAN AND AFGHANISTAN
Bevelander and Pendakur, 2014
Used Swedish Registry, 2007 and IMDB 2007
Employment Rate by Years since migration, family and refugees—males
Canada and Sweden compared, 2007

EXAMINED ONLY FYR, IRAQ, IRAN AND AFGHANISTAN
Bevelander and Pendakur, 2014
Used Swedish Registry, 2007 and IMDB 2007
University completion rate of immigrant children and youth by entrance class, 2016

Hou and Boniskowska, 2016
Difficulties Resettling

Results from our study
## Difficulties Resettling by Province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Alberta</th>
<th>Saskatchewan</th>
<th>Manitoba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language classes</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of information about services</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of childcare</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Difficulties</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of services in your community</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills/training to get a job</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign credential recognition</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation to Canadian economy</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding suitable clothing</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation to Canadian culture</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding a physician</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion where to find help</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection to employers</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service eligibility</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help finding housing</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation of documents</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing, I was prepared</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next Steps

• **Share share share results with** immigrant umbrella organizations, settlement service providers, policy makers and academics

• Analyze in greater detail, the interconnections between housing, employment, language acquisition and settlement service use

• Convince IRCC to fund a longitudinal project to cover the first three years in Canada and to add non-Syrian refugees

• Better fit to theoretical model in future waves of study
Additional Thanks

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Additional Findings, Reports and Information

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http://umanitoba.ca/about_IRW.html