



Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés
Canadian Council for Refugees

Member mailing – September 2019

Dear members,

In this mailing you will find:

- Fall Consultation | Ottawa
- Resources from Summer WG meetings
- Action requests
- Refugees Welcome campaign
- Call for applications - CCR Executive elections
- Practical Resources for members
- New CCR staff
- Events and Webinars Calendar

Register now for the Fall Consultation!



Registration for the **Fall Consultation**, 27-30 Nov in Ottawa, is now open. This year, the theme is *Sharing responsibility: Nationally, regionally, globally*. There are plans for workshops on a wide range of issues, and the consultation will provide a key opportunity to take stock following the federal elections. It will conclude with our Annual General Meeting on November 30, when new Executive Committee members will be elected.

Members should register [here](#) - before **Friday 1 November** to take advantage of reduced fees!

You will find all the information about the venue, the program and more [online here](#) or in our **pamphlet**.

Are there refugees associated with your organization that could benefit from attending the CCR consultation? They may be eligible for the **Amina Malko Refugee Participation Fund**. Deadline to apply: **Thursday 10 October**.

27 November, one day before the Consultation, participate in the **National Forum on Human Trafficking** in Ottawa. Join a full-day meeting on human trafficking. This annual event brings together NGOs, anti-trafficking, social justice and migrant rights advocates, lawyers, and others. [Register and learn here](#).

Summer Working Group meeting resources

Read about what was said during the WG meetings, in our new shorter *Highlights* format:

- *Overseas Protection and Resettlement*: find out more about the discussion on the upcoming CCR survey on G5 Sponsorships, resettlement of unaccompanied minors, resettlement quality assurance, and the Annual Tripartite Consultation on Resettlement.
- *Immigration and Settlement*: find out more about the discussion and updates on transportation loans, family reunification and collaboration between settlement organizations and private sector sponsors.
- *Inland Protection*: find out more about the latest on issues for refugee claimants, detention, new policies for victims of family violence, and legal challenges.

Read about IRCC updates and responses to CCR concerns on a wide range of issues:

Highlights of the CCR-IRCC Roundtable meeting, 9 September

Action Requests from Working Group meetings

Overseas Protection and Resettlement Working Group

- Support CCR's public opinion campaign: ccrweb.ca/en/welcome
- Support the Youth Network: assist youth in attending the **Youth Action Gathering** (4-5 October, Moncton/Dieppe, New Brunswick), complete the survey on youth engagement practices:
<https://ccrweb.ca/en/youth-led-programming-survey>
- Respond to Group of 5 survey (when it comes out).

act>on

Inland Protection Working Group

- Collect information (and share with CCR) on new ineligible claimants and the new PRRA for these ineligible claimants.
- Read the revised **Refugee determination system: a practical guide** and notify Janet of any updates needed.
- During the election campaign, support the CCR's **public opinion campaign** by using the tools; participate in the **virtual meeting September 23**.

Immigration and Settlement Working Group

- Share resource on policies for victims of family violence to women's shelters and centres.
- Read and take recommended actions from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) report.
- Support the Youth Network: assist youth in attending the Youth Action Gathering (4-5 October, Moncton/Dieppe, New Brunswick) by giving your air miles.

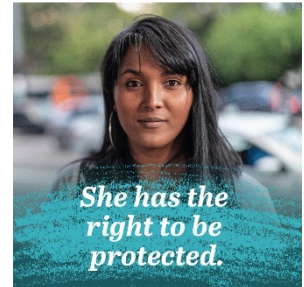
Refugees Welcome campaign

The “Refugees Welcome” campaign has been underway for two months on refugees-welcome.ca. Please share the resources widely so that they have maximum impact.

Many organizations across Canada from diverse sectors (credit unions, faith-based organizations, labour unions, newcomer serving organizations and varied NGOs) have signed on to the open letter – a total of 168 organizations so far.

[Click here](#) to read the media release dated 12 September.

[Click here](#) to discover our **3 new videos** to share and all the resources of the campaign.



It's never too late to [sign on the open letter](#) and to take it to your candidates locally and asking them to commit to the principles in the letter.

Call for applications - CCR Executive elections

As a reminder, please click to read a [Letter from the Nominating Committee for Executive elections](#). We will be electing several Executive members at the Annual General Meeting this fall, including the **President** and **Vice-President**. Please consider whether your organization could support a candidate for one of these important positions within the CCR, or whether there is someone from another organization you could encourage to run. The deadline for nominations is Saturday October 26, 2019.

New Practical Resources for members

- [Refugee claim changes in Budget Implementation Act](#)

Other practical resources are available to CCR members at ccrweb.ca/en/practical-faqs

New CCR staff

We are delighted to welcome Chitra Ramsurn who joins us as Administrative Assistant. You can reach her at cramsumn@ccrweb.ca.

Events and Webinars Calendar

- 🕒 **4-5 Oct** | Youth Action Gathering (YAG) – Moncton/Dieppe, NB
- 🕒 **10 Oct** | Webinar on Employment standards in Ontario versus the Employment Standards Act
- 🕒 **31 Oct** | Virtual meeting on refugee claimant issues – 2pm (Est)
- 🕒 **Nov** | Webinar on Youth Engagement models and experiences
- 🕒 **27 Nov** | National Forum on Human Trafficking in Ottawa
- 🕒 **28-30 Nov** | Fall Consultation in Ottawa
- 🕒 **Spring Consultation 2020** | (date TBC) Moncton

Click for more information about the CCR upcoming [meetings](#) and [webinars](#).





Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés
Canadian Council for Refugees

National Fall Consultation

Ottawa, 28 -30 November 2019

Sharing responsibility: Nationally, regionally, globally

Join more than 300 others in Ottawa to explore current issues affecting refugee protection and newcomer settlement at our Fall Consultation. We will explore realities in Canada in a regional and global context. All are welcome to participate!

With views from all Canadian provinces and with experts in diverse fields, the Consultation offers opportunities for professional development, networking and strategy.

Since 1978 the CCR has connected people and organizations across Canada to support them as they work passionately and tirelessly to protect refugees and make Canada a welcoming home for newcomers.



Table of Contents

Registration	2
Refugee Participation	2
Youth Participation	2
Provisional Program	2
Related meetings & events	3
Become a CCR member	3
About CCR Consultations	3
Caucus Sessions	3
Meals	3
Information Tables	3
Childcare	3
Accommodation	4
Getting to the Consultation	4
About the CCR	4

Here's what some people like about CCR Consultations:

- "I loved the opportunity to share, but also to see the many people involved in the field! It's energizing and motivational!"
- "My clients face these issues and it's important for me to hear from other workers about possible solutions."
- "It takes extra effort to keep updated when you do it on your own so being a part of the CCR and the energy of people who care was absolutely wonderful, refreshing, and a good reminder of what matters."
- "A lot of the consultation was useful to me and my work. I feel that I will be able to bring a lot of what I learned back to my team."
- "It was nice hearing questions, comments and concerns addressed by both people who work in the refugee sector and from refugees themselves."
- "I appreciated the open environment and the speakers' abilities to navigate a conversation so that everyone felt heard."

This is a provisional program.

Check updates at:

ccrweb.ca/meetings

Online Registration

You can register for the CCR

Consultation online at:

ccrweb.ca/meetings

Registration forms and payment must be received by

Friday 1 November to take advantage of the reduced rate.

Refugee Participation

The CCR is committed to promoting refugee participation. Refugees who have arrived in Canada within the last five years and who are without an organization that can pay their registration fee can register free of charge. Refugee participants must complete their registration online, checking the REFUGEE category, by **Friday 21 November**.

Youth Participation

Participants must be over 16 years.

Youth under 18 years old must be accompanied by an adult: we note that the program is not necessarily suited to this age group.

Scholarships are available for local youth between 18 and 25 years old in the Ottawa area for the first 30 applications received **before Friday 1 November**.

For more information, see:

ccrweb.ca/en/youth-participation

Thursday 28 November

7:30am: Registration table opens			
8:30 – 9am: Orientation for first-time participants			
9 – 10 am: Working Group meetings (Part I)★			
Immigration and Settlement		Overseas Protection and Resettlement	Inland Protection
10:30 - 12 pm			
Opening Plenary			
1:30 – 3 pm: Workshops			
Migrant workers policies	Global Compact on Refugees	New Pre-Removal Risk Assessment hearing	Complex family reunification (training)
3:30 – 5 pm: Workshops			
Settling LGBTQ newcomers	Fraud in resettlement	Issues at the Immigration and Refugee Board	Root causes of trafficking
Evening			
Social event, organized by the Ottawa Local Organizing Committee			

Friday 29 November

9 am – 10am Caucus sessions on a range of topics			
10:30am – 12pm: Workshops			
Building bridges: newcomers and Indigenous Peoples	Complementary pathways	Migration in Americas : impact on claims in Canada	Quality of NGO services and IRPA s. 91 (joint)
1:30 pm – 3pm: Workshops			
Working with refugees who have disabilities	Post-election strategizing*	Border issues	Newcomer youth
3:30 – 5:30pm: Working Group meetings (Part II)*			
Immigration and Settlement	Overseas Protection and Resettlement	Inland Protection	

Saturday 30 November

9 am – 10:30am: Caucus sessions		
Vicarious trauma: support for staff	Discussion with the Canada Border Services Agency	Environmental change as cause of displacement
11am to 1pm		
Closing plenary including Annual General Meeting		

* These sessions are closed to members of the media and government. NGO representatives are encouraged to attend to network and strategize about the issues.

National Forum on Human Trafficking, 27 Nov 2019, Ottawa

Join a full-day meeting on human trafficking. This annual event brings together service providers, NGOs, anti-trafficking, social justice and migrant rights advocates, as well as lawyers, and others. More information available at: ccrweb.ca/en/national-forum-human-trafficking-2019

There's no better time to become a member...

If your group or organization is not yet a member of the CCR, consider joining to benefit from member perks like Consultation registration discounts, free webinars and online resources for CCR members only.

Submit a membership application and your Consultation registration by **1 November 2019** to receive member registration rates and membership for 2019. See ccrweb.ca/en/join for more details.

About CCR Consultations

CCR Consultations address issues affecting refugees and other vulnerable groups of migrants, and newcomer settlement. The 300+ participants from across Canada include refugees, immigrants, representatives of NGOs, government, UNHCR, academics, community workers, youth advocates and international guests.

People who work with newcomers and those with a personal interest in refugees and immigrants are warmly invited, especially youth.

The consultation is an excellent opportunity to:

- Meet, learn from and network with experts in the field
- Gain professional training and strategize on a wide range of topics
- Exchange information and prepare resolutions and action plans on a broad range of refugee and newcomer issues
- Contribute to the CCR working groups' ongoing dialogue on policy and legislation

CCR consultations are designed to move from issues to action.

The Working Group meetings frame the discussions, introducing the issues at the beginning, and then, after the workshops, strategizing on next steps. At the Concluding Plenary, we adopt any new policy positions through resolutions and review key action items.

Caucus Sessions

Caucus sessions are informal discussions on a specific topic. They are open to all interested participants, unless otherwise noted. Email sgasana@ccrweb.ca to reserve a caucus session space.

Meals

Meals are not included in the Consultation registration fees.

The Consultation participant's kit will include a list of nearby, affordable places for meals during breaks.

Information Tables

Tables are available for groups to display brochures, etc.

Reserve a table on your registration form. Include the reservation fee with your registration.

Questions? Send an email to sgasana@ccrweb.ca

Childcare

During the conference we may be able to provide childcare services for participants, but only for those who have signed up for this service by **1 November 2019**.

Email sgasana@ccrweb.ca and indicate your childcare needs on your conference registration. Children must be at least 19 months and toilet-trained.

About the CCR

The Canadian Council for Refugees is a national non-profit umbrella organization committed to the rights and protection of refugees and other vulnerable migrants in Canada and around the world and to the settlement of refugees and immigrants in Canada. The membership is made up of organizations involved in the settlement, sponsorship and protection of refugees and immigrants. The Council serves the networking, information-exchange and advocacy needs of its membership.

The CCR's work

The CCR has issues committees called Working Groups, on Inland Protection, Immigration and Settlement and Overseas Protection and Resettlement. All NGO representatives are encouraged to participate. CCR policy is established by resolutions adopted by the membership at its general meetings twice a year.

CCR membership

All Canadian NGOs are welcome to apply to become voting members. Other forms of membership are available. Please look at our website under [About Us](#) or go directly to ccrweb.ca/en/join

Consultation Site:

**Hotel Delta Ottawa City Centre,
101 Lyon Street North, Ottawa (ON)**

Accommodation

Rooms have been set aside for CCR Consultation participants in the Hotel Delta Ottawa City Centre at a negotiated rate of \$165 per night. Participants must make their own reservations:

To reserve rooms at negotiated rates, book your room as soon as possible **by Wednesday 13 November 2019** online at: CCRfallconsultHotelDelta. Rates and room availability cannot be guaranteed after this date. When reserving, say you are with the Canadian Council for Refugees conference. Questions? Contact the hotel by calling +1 (613) 237-3600.

For billeting possibilities, email sgasana@ccrweb.ca by **Wednesday 13 November**. A member of the local committee will try to meet your request.

Getting to the Consultation site

Map: [CCRfall19consultVenue](#)

From Ottawa International Airport (YOW):

A taxi costs approximately \$35 from the airport to the hotel.

You can take **the 97 bus Bells Corners** (\$4 one way) at the Airport Stop for 18 stops (39 minutes) and get off at Albert / Kent.

From Ottawa Train Station:

You can take the new O-Train (line 1) (\$3.50 one way) west for 6 stops (11 minutes) to Lyon. Trains leave every few minutes.

A taxi costs approximately \$17 from the station to the hotel.

From the Bus Central Station:

A taxi costs approximately \$10 from the station to the hotel.

By bus: Walk 6 minutes to Gladstone / Kent, then take the **line 10 bus Rideau** (\$3.50 one way) for 10 stops (8 minutes) to Lyon.

Parking - On-site parking at the Consultation site costs \$25 per day.

Register for the Spring Consultation online at:

ccrweb.ca/en/meetings

You can also reach us at: tel. (514) 277-7223 email: consultation@ccrweb.ca
website: ccrweb.ca address: 6839A Drolet #301, Montréal QC, H2S 2T1



Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés
Canadian Council for Refugees



Overseas Protection and Resettlement Working Group

6 September 2019, Montreal, Highlights

Note: For background on many issues discussed, see the Handout ccrweb.ca/en/opr-handout-sept-2019

Co-chairs: Fikre Tsehai and Michelle Ball

1. Nominating committee

Gilbert Iyamuremye and Mary Purkey will form the nominating committee for the co-chair positions.

2. IRPA s. 91 (Assisting people with immigration processes) and quality of services

The OPR Working Group has not been as engaged on this issue as other the Working Groups, but there are concerns that this may affect SAHs more in the future. OPR supported a joint workshop on the issue at the fall consultation.

3. Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR)

Canada is now the chair, with CCR as co-chair and NGO Focal Point. CCR members are encouraged to sign up for a the consultative committee created to ensure broad participation of Canadian NGOs:

ccrweb.ca/en/atcr-2020-consultative-committee-sign

This is a pivotal moment in terms of resettlement strategies and Canada can make an impact. CCR wants to refocus attention on the current resettlement crisis, work on finding meaningful ways to include refugees in the process and promote international networking among NGOs involved in resettlement (a follow up to the CCR 2018 International Conference).

4. Complementary Pathways

Internationally and within Canada there are efforts to open new immigration pathways to refugees (other than the refugee streams). The Canadian government has been testing a very small pilot, through the economic immigration channel, which is aimed at convincing IRCC that it could work.

There is confusion amongst ourselves and globally about what is meant by Complementary Pathways. A universal definition is needed. It was agreed that we would organize a workshop on the topic.

5. Transportation loans

Loans can now be converted to contributions after arrival (i.e. in effect waived) for Government-assisted refugees and Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS), but not for privately sponsored refugees. Some sponsors have successfully worked with [Miles4Migrants](#), a US-based organization that offers airmiles for refugees to travel.

6. Outreach to Group of Five (G5) sponsors

Possible avenues for connecting with G5 sponsors include settlement agencies, SAHs, RSTP, IRCC (although they will not share data) and diaspora communities. Participants are asked to watch for a survey that the CCR will be sending out and to help promote it in appropriate networks.

Long processing times for G5 applications (much longer than for SAHs) are a concern.

UNHCR Israel was for a while providing refugee status documents to people so that they could be sponsored through a G5, but they stopped when they realized that many people did not in fact have sponsors lined up.

7. Private Sponsorship of Refugees in Quebec

The situation in Quebec is determined by the current Quebec government which has decreased the overall immigration levels and is emphasizing the economic benefits of newcomers. Delays and backlogs are a big problem. Given the economic focus, complementary pathways may be more interesting to the government than humanitarian categories. The CCR could potentially do advocacy on issues in Quebec, but would want to take direction from our Quebec members.

8. Resettlement of unaccompanied minors

Le COFFRET (St. Jérôme, Québec) is interested in opening a pathway for unaccompanied minors to be resettled. Currently, Canada has a moratorium on these sponsorships, because of the positions of provincial governments who are responsible for youth protection. If the Quebec government was open, it could approach the federal government.

It might be useful to connect this initiative with people in BC and Ontario who are working on these immigration issues for newcomer children.

UNHCR will not refer unaccompanied minors for resettlement unless a “best interests” determination has been conducted. There are significant barriers.

It was agreed that a caucus might be held at the Fall consultation to talk further about this issue.

9. Quality Assurance (QA)

See handout for CCR updates. The SAH Council continues to engage through the SAH-IRCC Assurance Working Group, which is addressing (1) operational issues (communication style; need for more communication; feedback into the training of sponsors; need for ombudsperson or appeal mechanism – which is in discussion) and (2) policy-related issues that will take longer to sort through (concerns around privacy; family linked cases; financial and in-kind support issues).

There was a discussion of the negative impacts of QA on sponsored people, whose application in process is simply cancelled if sponsors are found wanting. IRCC needs to be held more accountable. There is some overlap with the issue of fraud. Can SAH Council and CCR do joint advocacy on this?

The Quebec government is not currently auditing sponsorships but may in the future follow the federal government’s example.

10. Afghan refugees in Iran

IRCC says that they cannot do interviews for Afghan refugees who are in Iran and being privately sponsored by groups in Canada. There is a possibility that IOM could provide a secure internet connection for them to be interviewed virtually. A first step would be to find out how many people are affected: CCR could ask its members and we could ask SAH Council to send a similar message to SAHs.



Immigration and Settlement Working Group

7 September 2019, Montreal, Highlights

Note: For background on many issues discussed, see the Handout ccrweb.ca/en/handout-sept-2019

Co-chairs: Marta Kalita and Françoise Magunira

Joint with Inland Protection (IP)

1. IRPA s. 91 (Assisting people with immigration processes) and quality of services

The following points were made in the discussion:

- Small organizations suffer the impact when larger organizations (often funded by IRCC) stop helping people with immigration processes.
- The Quebec government is asking the federal government if s. 91 applies to Quebec NGOs.
- IRCC is now saying that if you call IRCC on behalf of someone you must be identified as the legal representative.
- Many organizations are experiencing the contradiction of IRCC's messaging on s. 91 but at the same time being expected by the government to help with forms.
- Some organizations are training staff as consultants, but this changes the nature of settlement work, as well as being expensive.
- We should seek a meeting with the new Assistant Deputy Minister for Settlement and Integration.

It was agreed that we should hold a joint workshop on this topic at the Fall Consultation.

2. New policies for victims of family violence

The following points were made in the discussion:

- We should reach out to women's shelters to ensure they know about the TRP and expedited H&C.
- There are interconnections between various options now available – the trafficking TRP, the new TRP for victims of family violence and the open work permit for exploited Temporary Foreign Workers.
- Few participants knew of TRPs being issued: this is likely because women are trapped in a cycle of violence.
- We should ask CBSA about their policy and practice when they face a woman who may be escaping family violence.

The measures may need to be extended to women in other immigration streams, for example a woman in the refugee claim process, where the husband has the principal claim.

Immigration and Settlement only

3. Transportation loans

Some loans can now be converted to contributions after arrival (i.e. in effect waived), but not privately sponsored refugees. A webinar was suggested for new members who are looking for some clarity and guidance.

4. Family Reunification

The process for sponsoring parents/grandparents has significant barriers (navigating the website and privileging wealthy clients, leaving behind vulnerable clients).

5. Refugee claimant issues

In Quebec, claimants can access work permits but not subsidized childcare; we are waiting for a judgement from the courts in November/December 2019.

6. New immigration laws in Quebec

Bill 9 and Bill 21 are creating feelings of panic among newcomers. The positive development is that the Quebec government has increased funding to settlement organizations, opening services to TFWs, international students and other temporary residents who will be eligible for services immediately upon arrival.

7. Collaborations between settlement organizations and private sponsors

A workshop or caucus was suggested at the fall consultation to discuss with IRCC directly on this issue, in partnership with OPR, to address concerns and suggest our own vision to address the concerns raised by sponsors and settlement organizations alike, especially in relation to breakdowns.

8. Building bridges between Indigenous communities and newcomers

In follow-up from Victoria Consultation, I&S has really taken the lead and should prioritize the inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW). An action request to members was to look at the report and consider taking action.

9. Migrant workers: updates

There will be a webinar on the employment standards in Ontario versus Employment Standards Act on October 10th. Many changes to policies for Migrant Workers were made over the summer: a workshop was suggested at the fall consultation to have some clarification on these policies.



Inland Protection Working Group

7 September 2019, Montreal, Highlights

Note: For background on many issues discussed, see the Handout ccrweb.ca/en/ip-handout-sept-2019

Co-chairs: Anne Woolger and Mariana Martinez Vieyra

Joint with Immigration and Settlement (I&S)

1. IRPA s. 91 (Assisting people with immigration processes) and quality of services

The following points were made in the discussion:

- Small organizations suffer the impact when larger organizations (often funded by IRCC) stop helping people with immigration processes.
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- Few participants knew of TRPs being issued: this is likely because women are trapped in a cycle of violence.
- We should ask CBSA about their policy and practice when they encounter a woman who may be escaping family violence.
- The measures may need to be extended to women in other immigration streams, for example a woman in the refugee claim process, where the husband has the principal claim.

Inland Protection (IP) only

3. Nominating committee

Rivka Augenfeld and Diana Gallego will form the nominating committee for the co-chair position.

4. Refugee Claimant Issues

a. Legal aid

- Certificates are now available again in Ontario, but Legal Aid Ontario is being more stringent with criteria. People need to re-apply for legal aid once they receive the notice of the refugee hearing: there is little time to find a lawyer. A review is underway of the Legal Aid Services Act, with a final report due in March 2020.
- There are problems in Quebec and BC around the level of payment. There should be consistent national standards. Should we advocate for a different role for the federal government? This is probably not the time.

b. Impact of Budget bill

- In some regions (Ontario, BC) people are seeing delays in determining eligibility and in access to services.
- There are mixed families (e.g. children eligible, parents ineligible, sometimes with no access to PRRA because they are not removable).

c. Other claimant issues

- There are continuing issues with the automatic work permit: box not checked off, address not updated.
- In Quebec, accepted refugees are left without health care because of new delays in access to provincial healthcare.
- We will try holding the next CCR virtual meeting on claimant issues on a Thursday (in October).

5. Family reunification

- The new R117(9)(d) pilot is a result of CCR's advocacy efforts – congratulations to all!
- CCR should focus on advocacy for minors unable to bring family members.

6. Detention

- Alternatives to Detention (ATD): there are low numbers in most regions.
- NGOs are concerned at the expectations that they will support detainees and those released on ATDs, but never with any financial support.
- The detention centre in Toronto is looking much better since renovations. Facilities have been upgraded to allow second level risk detainees in the centre.
- Numbers in Toronto are down, except for Mexicans being held short term and then removed.
- In Montreal numbers are high: a lot of claimants are detained for identity, including many children.
- It would be good to arrange visits between regions to learn from other experiences and share best practices.
- Regarding how to change conditions upon release, members would like a user-friendly tool with procedural information and examples of arguments.

7. Legal Affairs Issues

- The challenge to the RAD bar for those exempted under Safe Third Country may be going to the Supreme Court: if so, it would address the application of Charter Section 7 in the refugee claim process.
- A CARL-CCR working group is starting to discuss a possible Charter challenge to the new ineligibility.

8. Convention on Rights of Child

The CCR is developing a strategy to hold Canada to account. Some WG members volunteered.

9. Venezuelans without status

Venezuelans are often denied work permits: there is a moratorium on removals but the right to a work permit is tied to having an unenforceable removal order. It is unclear what Venezuelans in Canada should do.



CCR-IRCC Roundtable meeting: Highlights

9 September 2019, Ottawa

Co-chairs: Chris Gregory (IRCC) and Claire Roque (CCR)

1. Opening remarks

André Baril, Acting Director General, Refugees Affairs Branch, reported that Fraser Valentine (previously Director General, Refugees Affairs Branch) had been promoted to Assistant Deputy Minister for Settlement and Integration. On Sept. 23, Catherine Scott will take over as Director General, Refugees Affairs Branch.

Because the elections are about to be launched, the department is required to be restrained, in particular with respect to decisions on policies, expenditures and appointments. They may only make decisions that would be reversible, without too much expense, by a new government. Officials will therefore not be able to respond on policy issues. This is also why CBSA is not participating.

The CCR highlighted a number of positive recent developments, including the new R. 117(9)(d) pilot, the measures for victims of family violence, open work permits for TFWs who are exploited, the pilot for undocumented construction workers in the Toronto area (we requested a contact person), the formalization of the Rainbow Refugee Assistance Partnership and the partnership in co-chairing the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR).

Resettlement Updates

2. Client Experience interview findings

Some IRCC officials were present at the CCR Spring 2019 consultation to interview private sponsors. The CCR asked for more information about the “client experience” initiative.

IRCC explained that the process was launched in April. Some of the first interviews were held on the margins of the CCR. In all about 70 interviews were conducted (with SAHs, individual refugees, G5s). Some were in person (in BC and Ontario), some by phone. The Client Experience Branch will provide Refugee Affairs Branch with information and based on the experiences of clients, they may consider improvements. IRCC can share the results once compiled.

There will also be an evaluation of the resettlement program soon.

3. Transportation Loans follow-up

Shortly before the meeting, IRCC had circulated updated operational [guidelines](#) allowing for loans to be converted to contributions after arrival in Canada.

The province of Quebec is considering developing a mirror program for contributions.

IRCC has communicated extensively to RAP SPOs in recent months and will now send out the guidelines.

The CCR questioned whether it made sense to exclude BVORs from contributions, given that they have similar profiles and in some ways may actually be more vulnerable as BVORS than GARs (e.g. access to social housing).

IRCC responded that the budget available this financial year is \$582,000 (it comes out of the RAP budget). They will focus on the highest needs, which generally means not BVORs. If there are compelling circumstances, BVORs can be converted to JAS (and thus eligible for conversions).

The revised guidelines also clarify that loans are to be issued to privately sponsored refugees whether or not they are assessed as having the capacity to repay. IRCC noted that they have automated parts of the loans process. People will learn the amount owing before departure for Canada.

4. Processing times for PSR

Shortly before the meeting, IRCC had shared the dashboard (prepared for the SAH Council), but the information was by now out of date (end 2018).

IRCC reported that processing times are coming down, and they continue to aim for processing times of 12 months. There have been special initiatives to address backlogs in Asia and Africa. They are now down to 394 cases in the pre-2015 caseload (many of those are cases re-opened after a successful judicial review).

They are now working on the 2015-2016 caseload. They are trying to keep times even across the network.

The CCR asked about Groups of Five (G5s) and Community Sponsorships. Processing for them at ROCO is much slower than for SAHs. This is confirmed in the dashboard, which shows a large proportion of G5 cases at ROCO. If G5s (which make up about half the caseload) sit at ROCO for a year, we will never get to 12 months processing. There are also concerns about returns from ROCO for minor reasons, which could have been rectified if the sponsor were contacted.

IRCC responded that there was a huge surge of G5s last year and it took a long time to look through them. They could look at examples of minor issues for return. Many of the rejections were due to eligibility issues (sponsors not having enough money, or individuals taking on multiple sponsorships).

For SAHs, IRCC has a service standard for processing at ROCO, but for G5s, if they receive more applications than expected, processing times will be longer. However, once the sponsorship decision is made, G5s are transferred to the visa office and are to be processed within 12 months

IRCC undertook to look into the CCR request for statistics on processing times for G5s at ROCO.

5. G5s update

The CCR noted that in follow up to the CCR Spring 2019 consultation workshop, the CCR is exploring how to support G5s in sharing information and connecting with each other. IRCC agreed to talk with CCR to see if IRCC could facilitate these efforts.

Refugee determination system updates

6. Implementation Update: ICAC pilot, changes to refugee intake, new measures

a. Making claims

IRCC reported:

- The 2019 Budget included extra money not just for the most visible parts of the system (notably IRB), but other parts, which is necessary so that the process as a whole works well.
- The elimination of the three day rule for eligibility was necessary because with higher claim numbers and the biometrics, they need more time. The service standard however is still 3 days.
- The new ineligibility ground has been complex to operationalize. They need to present the claimant with the evidence of information obtained through info-sharing and give them an opportunity to respond. This has been complicated for the 230 claims affected by the transitional provisions.
- If a decision on eligibility cannot be made on the same day, IRCC or CBSA will issue an acknowledgement of claim document, which shows that they made a claim and have IFH coverage from that day. They have shared this with provinces and territories who should be giving access to services.

CCR raised the following issues:

- It is problematic that there is no time limit to determine eligibility.
- In Ontario people are waiting 5-6 weeks for an eligibility appointment after making a claim at a POE. If they return without forms filled out, they are sent away again (putting an unfair burden on NGOs to do CBSA's job). IRCC requested information about the specific offices.
- It is not clear that provinces are giving access to services based on the acknowledgement of claim document. Further communications efforts may be needed from both federal government and NGOs. IRCC is to share samples of the documents, with text clarifying what each document should entitle the person to.
- In smaller regions there is an unfair burden on claimants awaiting eligibility to travel (e.g. from Windsor to GTA). IRCC will take back the matter to CBSA.

b. PRRA for new ineligible claimants

- IRCC explained that they will be providing training to PRRA officers on the new mandatory hearings in mid-October. No hearings for the new ineligible claimants will happen before this training.
- There is a minimum of 49 days based on regulations for a PRRA decision (15 days to decide to apply, etc). They want to be fair to other PRRA applicants, so there will be two separate tracks (for new ineligible claimants and other PRRA applicants).

CCR raised the following concern:

- There are complicated situations when only some members of a family are affected by the new ineligibility provision. E.g. children are eligible (born in US), adults not eligible but under moratoria so they won't have a PRRA. The children will likely be rejected by IRB, making them removable. Some are advising withdrawing the claims of children (but this creates other problems).

c. Work permits

CCR raised the following points:

- Some members are saying the automatic work permit is mostly working, but we are still seeing some people (e.g. Montreal) where CBSA is using the old form or didn't check the box.
- There are some complaints that the wait is long for automatic work permits.
- There is a problem with the change of address. Claimants move often. Even when they change their address, the work permit is often sent to the previous address. It is unclear what needs to be changed. CBSA says that if you change your address with them it will be passed on, but this doesn't seem to work. Also the form distinguishes residential and postal addresses. CCR asked IRCC to clarify this matter.

d. IFH

CCR reported problems for accepted refugees, where the province is slow to give provincial coverage and IFH lapses. We already raised this matter with respect to provinces where refugees must first submit a permanent residence application. In Quebec, provincial coverage depends on the CSQ and it is now taking 2-3 months to issue. People are left with no coverage.

CCR will present the matter in writing so that there can be follow up with the IRCC Branch responsible for IFHP.

7. Asylum System Management Board (ASMB)

IRCC reported that over the last year, the ASMB has overseen implementation of budget funding and the development of the Integrated Claim Analysis Centre (ICAC). Moving forward, they will be looking at how to guide inter-operability of data system between agencies.

CCR underlined the concern that the independence of the IRB be fully protected.

8. Legal Aid

CCR presented the resolution on Legal Aid: <https://ccrweb.ca/en/res/legal-aid>

IRCC spoke to the additional funding provided by the federal government in August for legal aid in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba, for 2019-20. For next steps, Department of Justice is the lead.

9. Housing

CCR presented the resolution on Housing: <https://ccrweb.ca/en/res/housing>

IRCC spoke to the federal government's announcements of transfers of funds in recognition of the pressures of refugee claimants. CCR's recommendations can be considered in the transition to a new government.

10. Refugee family reunification

The discussion was a follow up to an August conference call at which IRCC shared initiatives to improve processing of DR2s (dependants abroad of refugees in Canada). IRCC is planning a pilot where DR2s in certain world regions would have their applications processed in Canada. CCR urged IRCC to focus on the complicated regions (including Africa) where there are longer delays. IRCC responded that the CCR's

concern was noted but IRCC's objective is to test whether the process can work in principle, so they won't put the most complex cases in the pilot.

Given the shared interest in standardizing procedures at visa offices, the CCR asked if it would be useful to provide examples of visa office procedures. IRCC said it would be useful, noting that some differences in offices is because of issues that are specific to that region.

The CCR restated its request that IRCC test out the systematic issuing of Temporary Residence Permits (TRPs) for separated children, given that the policy already exists in the manual. IRCC said that the challenge is signalling of cases. CCR pointed out that CCR signals cases through an established process at Case Management Branch, but TRPs are not being issued. It was agreed that the CCR should send examples.

11. Unaccompanied minors

CCR presented its resolution on unaccompanied minors: <https://ccrweb.ca/en/res/developing-national-framework-unaccompanied-minors-canada>

IRCC noted that the federal government is comparing experiences and best practices with other countries through the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC). Some countries have developed a video to explain the process and services available.

There is an interdepartmental working group (with IRB, CBSA, IRCC). They have been busy with legislative changes. They have an upcoming meeting with the Red Cross.

Part II Immigration

12. International Students

CCR presented its resolution on International Students <https://ccrweb.ca/en/res/equity-international-students>

On the issue of students having their visa refused if they declare their desire to apply for permanent residency upon graduation, IRCC said that the law recognizes dual intent and visa officers receive guidance that they should not refuse a visa based on whether a person plans to stay in Canada. But officers still need to be satisfied that the person will leave at the end of their time in Canada. Refusals tend to be case-specific. If CCR has specific examples, IRCC could look into them.

CCR noted that this issue should be considered within the context of developing complementary pathways for refugees. People should not be refused student visas simply because they are refugees.

Regarding access to settlement services, IRCC reported that the government considered the possibility of changing the terms and conditions to allow access to certain classes of students, but decided not to do so at this time. It could be extremely costly. After the elections, the issue will be brought to the new Minister.

13. IRPA s. 91

CCR emphasized that this issue continues to be a major concern for members: it was discussed again at CCR meetings over the weekend. CCR had shared our paper on s. 91. CCR will be organizing a workshop at the Fall Consultation on quality of services.

IRCC explained the broader picture of the department's process to take action on the parliamentary committee's concerns related to immigration consultants. These include a revised regulatory framework, new enforcement measures and public education to make sure clients are aware.

The 2019 Budget and legislation created a new college of consultants with more teeth, more effective complaints mechanism, more government oversight (the plan is for the board initially to be majority government appointed). The college is not yet in force (it will take effect only after the election).

The new college can have tiers of licensing, so it could have an NGO licence.

IRCC will be looking at enforcement measures and monitoring non-compliance.

At the parliamentary committee, the Minister was asked about how measures applied to refugee sponsorship organizations. He replied that they need to have education.

IRCC acknowledged that there is a question regarding how people get the advice they need.





TO: All CCR members

FROM: The Nominating Committee (Sherman Chan, Nadine Nasir and Lisa Bamford)

RE: EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS (Deadline: Saturday October 26, 2019)

DATE: 19 July 2019

PLEASE ENSURE THAT THIS MEMO IS CIRCULATED IN YOUR ORGANIZATION.

Dear Colleagues,

Attached you will find a form for nominations to the Executive Committee of the Canadian Council for Refugees. Candidates will be elected at the Annual General Meeting, Saturday 30 November 2019 in Ottawa.

We are writing to encourage your active participation in ensuring that we have a strong, diverse, representative Executive Committee to deal with all the challenges which lie ahead.

The Executive has twelve elected members, and 6 positions will be open for election this year.

The following positions need to be filled: **President, Vice-President** and **4 counsellors** (members-at-large).

If you are someone with relevant experience and a strong interest in CCR issues, but you are hesitant because you have never been on a Board of Directors, we can offer you support by matching you with an existing Executive member for the initial stages of your term.

Executive members **must** represent a member organization of the CCR that supports the nomination.

Over the years we have identified the following criteria to take into consideration in electing the Executive: balance between the issues and working groups, representation of refugees, immigrants and people of colour, gender balance, French/English balance, regional representation, representation of youth; commitment, time, and fundraising and management skills.

This year we have the important task of electing a new President and Vice-President as well as 4 counsellors (members-at-large). We must elect at least one person from the Atlantic region. We are also particularly looking for candidates active in the Overseas Protection and Resettlement Working Group, which is currently under-represented.

Executive members should expect to attend 4 meetings a year: the Fall Consultation and Annual General Meeting in November/December, the working group meetings in Toronto in February, the Spring Consultation (end May/beginning June), and the working group meetings in Montreal in August/September. In addition, Executive members should expect to do work between meetings (by telephone and email).

The CCR covers some costs for Executive members to attend meetings if necessary, although members are encouraged to see these costs as far as possible as part of their participation and membership. Where necessary, the CCR covers air or train costs and accommodation (but not food or local transportation).

You are free to nominate yourself or someone else. If you are interested but have some questions, or you would like to bring the Nominating Committee's attention to someone, please feel free to contact one of us: Sherman Chan (schan@mosaicbc.com), Nadine Nasir (nnasir@rstp.ca) and Lisa Bamford (bamford@mcaf.nb.ca).

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATION AS SOON AS YOU CAN. The deadline is October 26, 2019.



**NOMINATION FORM
FOR CCR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS**

DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS: 26 OCT. 2019

Candidate's name:

Organization:

(Organization must be CCR member in good standing)

Address:

Email:

Telephone:

Position nominated for: ☐ President ☐ Vice-President ☐ Counsellor

Has this nominee accepted his/her nomination? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Does the nominee have the support of the member organization of the CCR that s/he will represent? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Which CCR Working Group is the nominee most closely associated with?

- ☐ Immigration and Settlement
- ☐ Inland Protection
- ☐ Overseas Protection and Resettlement

Please submit (at latest by November 21) some short biographical information (maximum 12 lines). This information will be distributed to members voting at the Annual General Meeting to help them make their voting choices.

Please note that the first meeting of the Executive takes place immediately after the AGM on Saturday 30 November (up to 8pm), in Ottawa. Nominees are encouraged to plan to be available for this meeting if elected.

PLEASE EMAIL, MAIL OR FAX THIS FORM TO:

Nominating Committee

Canadian Council for Refugees

jdench@ccrweb.ca

6839 Drolet #301, Montréal, QC, H2S 2T1

Fax: (514) 277-1447