

REFUGEE UPDATE

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SYRIAN REFUGEES IN BULGARIA: A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

NICOLE MAINE, FRANCISCO RICO-MARTINEZ, VARKA
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Bulgaria and the Syrian Refugee Crisis

Since 2011, the devastating armed conflict in Syria has produced over three million refugees to date most of whom have sought safety in neighbouring countries, as well as in some European states. Although geographically far from the conflict zone, Bulgaria has received more than 6,000 Syrian asylum claimants fleeing violence and persecution in their country of origin.

Unlike other groups of asylum claimants in Bulgaria, the Syrian population is estimated to consist of 50% women and children, the majority (70%) of whom are of Kurdish origin. For many of those fleeing the conflict in Syria, Bulgaria holds the promise of an entryway to safety and settlement in Europe and as such, Turkish smugglers, with the assistance of Bulgarian smugglers, are paid huge sums of money to guide these asylum seekers to and across the Bulgarian border.

The Visits of the Delegation

In June of 2014, a delegation from the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) was invited by the Bulgarian non-governmental organization, Association One, to visit Bulgaria and gather information about Syrian refugees in Bulgaria.



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THE TWO TIER IMMIGRATION SYSTEM: OUTSIDE OF CANADA

GIOVANNI RICO



Under the Conservative mandate there have been whole hearted changes to the immigration system. Every aspect of the immigration system has been reformed, including the application process needed to come and visit Canada. These changes have, for some areas of the world, made visiting more accessible and technically easier to apply. There is now the option to apply online. Unfortunately not all applications are able to be processed online. If a person does not meet the online requirement, they must still go through the process of submitting a paper application. This is where the two tier system is well established. In the old system, applications were submitted to consulates in each South American country and sent to the responsible visa office in Central America; the Canadian Embassy to Guatemala. In the new system, if the applicant is from a developing country, like those in Central America, they have to go through a third party to submit an application; which is known as a Visa Application Centre. Unfortunately through all these changes this visa office no longer accepts applications directly, forcing the use of these Visa Application Centres. This is disguised as being more convenient for the applicants as they can meet

with a person who will determine whether their application is complete before submitting it to the responsible visa office.

The problem with this new system is not only logistics of the new visa offices, but economic discrimination against applicants. Logistically Canada has hired a company to act on its behalf who have no official ties to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, therefore these employees of the Visa Application Centres create their own standard on what is required to apply for a particular visa. If the applicant is able to apply online, Citizenship and Immigration Canada supplies a system generated document checklist specific to the applicant's situation. If you apply to the Visa Application Centre, you are deemed to use the generic document checklist and as you arrive at the Visa Application Centre the applicant may be met with other requirements that are not listed in the generic document checklist, forcing the applicant to use the assistance services offered by the Visa Application Centre. The problem herein lies with the Visa Application Centre charging for all of these services on top of what the applicant pays to Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Those who cannot file their application online, where it is personalized automatically, are usually those who are disadvantaged. The Visa Application Centres are basically charging the disadvantaged for services that are provided for free to advantaged people. The table below explains these charges in the specific Visa Application Centre in El Salvador, which is merely:

Services and Service Charge Schedule

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Revised Service Charges for Application Processing: Effective from 2 November 2013

Core Services	Amount in CAD\$ (Including VAT)	Amount in USD (Including VAT)
Service Charge for Application Processing Per Applicant*	\$85.95	79.07 USD

* **Note:** If you need to provide your biometrics, the biometric fee of \$85 CAD covers the CVAC service charge for application handling. Service charges for additional services are not covered.

Revised Service Charges for Additional Services: Effective from 21 January 2014

Value Added Service	Amount in CAD\$ (Including VAT)	Amount in USD (Including VAT)
Self Service form filling at computer terminal. Price Per Applicant	\$7.28	\$6.70
Assisted Service form filling Price Per Applicant	\$15.60	\$14.35
Photocopy Services Per Page	\$0.16	\$0.14
Printing Service Per Page	\$0.31	\$0.29
Passport Transmission Service Per Person	\$68.76	\$63.26

So taking this into account, an application that through Citizenship and Immigration Canada would cost \$100 dollars, an applicant in El Salvador would have to pay at least \$85.95 more for the services provided by the Visa Application Centre, should they need assistance as they

may have made a mistake on a form or filled out the wrong form. This is not including the cost that entails to the applicant to get the right form of payment to the embassy as it only accepts bank drafts which have an added cost. Therefore an individual who is forced to apply through the paper application process will most likely pay at least \$200 for their whole application to be processed, being double the amount that would be paid for online.

To put this into context the minimum wage in El Salvador is on average \$237.00 a month. Applicants are asked to pay almost a month's salary just to apply. Should they be lucky enough to receive a visa they would have to pay an additional \$70.00 to send their passport to the visa office. This type of process in Canada would not be accepted as all Canadians have the choice to submit their applications in any method acceptable and there is no change in service, fee, or process, yet for visa applicants there is a huge different in cost, process and service.

'This is discriminatory and unacceptable; these applicants have no say in the matter and the Canadian government is doing this solely because it can. The process has evolved in this region from having to go in person to the embassy in Guatemala, to being more convenient and applying in the Consulate in El Salvador, which benefited the applicant, to this arbitrary process which costs more and which service is not controlled by the government to maintain standards. This is completely unacceptable and oppressive as this type of service in Europe costs a third of what it costs in El Salvador. Since the process and distance the application travels is relatively the same, one could argue that labour cost in a country like El Salvador should be cheaper, yet this is not reflected in the pricing structure.

Giovanni Rico is Advocacy and Volunteer Coordinator at FCJ Refugee Centre.



Represented by Francisco Rico-Martinez (Co-Director of FCJ Refugee Centre), Varka Kalaydzhieva (Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinator at FCJ Refugee Centre), and Nicole Maine (York CRS Graduate Fellow and Volunteer at FCJ Refugee Centre) the delegation travelled to Sofia, Bulgaria to conduct meetings and gather information from June 16th—20th, 2014. Association One (which previously existed as *Common Step* but was subsequently dissolved) joined the delegation for most of the meetings and was represented by Danka Tsoleva and Dimitar Arseniev. During the visit the delegation met with a number of non-governmental organizations as well as government representatives, refugees and organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Organization for Migration (IOM). Visits were also made to integration and reception centres.

During the meetings the delegation asked a series of questions focused around four major themes:

1. **Access to the Bulgarian border for Syrian asylum seekers**
2. **The asylum claim process**
3. **Integration of Syrian refugees and protected persons in Bulgaria**
4. **Possible areas of collaboration with the CCR**

All interviews were audio-recorded and photographed (these resources are available at the FCJ Refugee Centre in Toronto) and followed by a ten-minute video interview wherein Francisco Rico-Martinez asked the interviewee(s) four questions related to the key themes. Translation, where necessary, was provided by Varka Kalaydzhieva. The video recordings of this follow-up interview have been used to create a short documentary which aims to raise awareness for the plight of Syrian refugees and asylum seekers in Bulgaria.

Hypocrisies and Challenges

Throughout the course of the delegation's visit to Bulgaria it became apparent that Syrians, as well as other asylum claimants and refugees, face a variety of challenges and obstacles that extend beyond those related to fleeing violence and persecution in their countries of origin.

Among the most notable of these obstacles, is the framework of racism and discrimination espoused by none other than the head of the State Agency for Refugees (SAR). In an extensive interview with Colonel Nikolai Tchirpanliev, the president of SAR and a member of the general headquarters staff of the Bulgarian army, it became apparent that an undercurrent of xenophobia and condemnation runs through SAR's approach to certain refugee populations including Syrians. First, he used Kurdish Syrians as scapegoats, comparing them to the Roma population (a historically subjugated and persecuted community in Europe) and claiming that they are "absolute illiterates" who refuse to learn Bulgarian and are actively segregating themselves from society. He concluded that wealthy refugees as well as those with higher education go to rich countries such as Switzerland and Germany, saying that "the only people who stay in Bulgaria are the Kurds who are worse than our gypsies in every aspect. I don't feel uncomfortable to say that they have been living in dig-outs in their countries." He even went as far as singling out Arab-speaking refugees by stating that "the national culture and tradition of Arabs is lying." These are but a few examples of the racist

rhetoric employed by representatives of SAR, and as such might be interpreted as a part of the greater framework of the Bulgarian response to asylum claimants at the border.

Access

One of the key challenges for Syrians seeking asylum in Bulgaria, is simply gaining access to the country in order to make an asylum claim. Bulgaria's 280 km border with Turkey is considered an external border of the EU, and as such has become increasingly heavily guarded in the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis.

Much of the border runs through mountainous and heavily wooded areas, devoid of official border crossings, known as the 'green border.' Since mid-2013 Syrian asylum seekers, among other groups, have repeatedly attempted the dangerous journey of crossing the border, with the help of well-paid smugglers, at unmonitored locations. No one denies the immense risk of making such an attempt; SAR lamented the discovery of human remains allegedly abandoned by Turkish smugglers and eaten by animals in Turkey, many kilometers outside the Bulgarian border.

In November 2013 the Bulgarian Government intensified its border control practices by deploying 1,500 police officers to the border while also beginning the construction of a 25-30 km

fence (finished in July). Bulgarian border guards also work in collaboration with their Turkish counterparts, using sophisticated technology to monitor the area around the border as far as 17 km into Turkey. The president of the SAR explained the impetus for these changes as being in the interest of protecting refugees, and welcoming them through the 'official border'. He also explained that Bulgaria, as an external border of the EU is responsible for protecting its co-member states from terrorists.

Asylum Process

Following entrance into Bulgaria, for those who gain this access, individuals must begin the process of making a formal asylum claim. Upon making an asylum claim in front of border police, or being detained by them, individuals are taken to a detention centre for 24 hours whereupon they undergo a medical evaluation, have their fingerprints taken and are interrogated (with the help of interpreters) by Bulgarian security services. At this point the State Agency for National Security may determine that an individual poses a threat to the national security of the country. According to Valeria Ilareva, head lawyer at the Foundation for Access to Rights, no evidence is needed for this determination and as such, people are often arbitrarily determined to be illegal immigrants and as such are not given access to the asylum claims system. She also acknowledged the occurrence of secret deportations during the period of legal limbo between making an asylum claim and the claim actually being registered by SAR. Of course there is no formal evidence of these deportations.

If, however, an individual is found not to be a threat to national security, then their asylum claim is registered and they are released from detention whereupon they are assisted by SAR staff to continue their claim procedures and relocate to a reception centre to await their determination

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interview. Under EU law such a determination must be made within 6 months, but to the credit of SAR, determinations for Syrian applicants are now being made within 45-60 days, a vast improvement on the initial backlog of applications. Increased processing speeds are, however, not without issue, as Linda Awanis of the Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria (CRWB) explained. Faster processing of Syrian applications has led to the privileging of this group over others. The processing of claims from those of other national backgrounds is becoming progressively slower and wait times longer.

While waiting for their determination interview to be scheduled, however, asylum applicants live in limbo in one of seven SAR operated Reception and Registration Centres: Banya, Sofia, Harmanli, Transit Centre Pastrogor, or Accommodation Centres of Voenna Rampa, Vrazdebnna and Kovachevtsi. The



UNHCR's January 2014 report outlines the appalling conditions of these centres ranging from unheated tents in winter, lack of medical services, substandard sanitary facilities and overcrowding, but at the current time most organizations agree that conditions meet minimum standards. Under immense pressure from the BHC, UNHCR and the international community, the SAR worked in collaboration with various NGOs to establish acceptable conditions in the camps. Most of the centres are now refurbished, with food provided in all, as well as medical services, language classes and eradication of overcrowding. Many organizations have deemed conditions to be more or less acceptable at this time.

Collaboration with the Canadian Council for Refugees

One of the goals of the delegation's visit to Bulgaria was to establish possible areas of collaboration between the CCR and organizations in Bulgaria. When asked about such collaboration (following interviews) the area of greatest focus was the breadth and history of Canadian experience and what aid this experience could provide to a country dealing with an influx of forced migration relatively late in its history.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Following extensive conversations with various stakeholders and visits to some integration centres, the delegation recognizes the need for concrete and implementable action items and as such has endeavored to identify several gaps in service provision and areas that need further development and support.

Within the realm of access to Bulgaria, reports of push-backs and violence at the border coupled with declining entries into the country, indicate an acute need for formal and ongoing monitoring of practices at the border. This includes not only the

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actions of police officers and surveillance technology at the border to identify irregular migrants, but also the treatment of applicants immediately after reaching the border.

The asylum claims procedure itself is also an area of grave concern for the delegation as more than anything there is a need for heightened transparency in claim proceedings. Clearly interviewers need additional training, both in sensitivity and awareness of the plight of particular groups (women, children, the LGBTQ community, victims of human trafficking etc).

To this end the delegation recommends the formation of a second visit to Bulgaria to formalize possible areas of collaboration and to develop a plan and procedure for implementing assistance, in conjunction with relevant organizations. During this follow-up trip the delegation would endeavor to visit other reception centres outside of Sofia, travel to the Turkish border and meet with organizations operating there, visit detention centres that the delegation was unable to see and meet with more Syrians and Syrian families to learn about their experiences of coming to and living in Bulgaria.

Nicole Maine, Francisco Rico-Martinez and Varka Kalaydzhieva were part of the team who did the research on Syrian refugees in Bulgaria .

OCASI: AGENCY OF THE FUTURE SUMMIT

GRACE DRIEDGER



On October, 30th, 2014 OCASI held a Summit in regards to the Agency of the Future. The purpose of the summit was to discuss innovative ways of doing our work; how we can continue our work in the future, and what will that look like. On the panel was Mario J. Calla, the director of COSTI, Francisco Rico-Martinez the co-director of the FCJ Refugee Centre, and Angela Robertson the executive director of Central Toronto Community Health Centre. The basis of this meeting was to develop a 'strategic advantage'. This advantage pertains to the assumption of the expertise that agencies have "acquired in combining discrete, complementary federal and provincial programs in order to offer comprehensive solutions to the problems facing

immigrant families". For the most part, typically NGO agencies have to work with aspects of the 3 levels of the government for a seamless transition into work. To be completely separated from the work that we do and the government is not very common, and has its many challenges, some of these challenges of working together with the government were further explored within the summit.

According to the reports from the OCASI provincial summit in 2014, the CIC has spent a lot of time and energy making an effort to maximize the social impact in Immigrant and Refugee Settlement and Integration (OCASI, 10). Some of the past priorities have included helping newcomers make connections with Canadians, such as cross cultural integration and social inclusion, helping newcomers with access to "enabling services", and helping newcomers integrate into a foreign-trained work force. This, of course, is manageable providing that the funding is allocated by the government; however, there are strict limitations on funding as it is based on a cost-benefit model and driven by funder priorities which are not always consistent with those of the sector. Meaning that we are able to do the work that we know is so important, providing that it fits in the

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allocated funding given by the government. This of course, only affects the agencies that are funded by the government, which when you look at it, are most of the social service agencies available.

The issue with the funding is that we know that the CIC's settlement budget has been trimmed and there is no likelihood of it being restored; in fact, we know that further cuts are likely to be made in spending. The agencies that deal with the government have been affected and will continue to be affected for settlement agencies to access government support. The statistics reflect these changes; the Ontario employment rate for immigrants who have been in Canada five years or less is 64.5% compared to 83.3% for Canadian-born (OCASI, 2014). We know we are coming into a new era with our work, one that could require many changes. Currently, for most of "Canada's Third Sector, meeting the requirements and conditions of funding rather than maximizing social impact has become the main imperative" (OCASI, 10). This requirement goes against the basis of our work, as we strive to have a person needs center approach. Our work is to serve precarious migrants at risk due to their immigration status, and welcome anyone asking for advice, counsel and support regarding these issues. If

we say that the problem will be fixed if we just re-route our approach is ignoring the basis of the issue. We cannot do our work the same way with continuously made requirements and limitations.

So, here we stand between a rock and a hard place. Not all agencies can afford to be running without the use of the government, as the funding needs to come from somewhere; and, the agencies that are being funded by the government have seen severe cutbacks and requirements to their programs. The solution that was brought up at the summit was more capacity building, to learn how to work around the cutbacks and the limitations. This is only a temporary solution. These cutbacks will continue to be made and the work that we do will continue to be cut back. Who will be affected by this? The people that we are wanting to support. The discussion will then be between newcomers eligibility criteria vs. equitable access (Rico-Martinez, 2014). Having funding by the government means having the government in control, in short, it means that the people that we support may have to be turned away at the door. It is a hard problem to fix; however, I believe that the government is not the answer. We need to work together to come up with a solution for the issue of funding and in turn, try to limit our dependency on the government.

Grace Driedger, graduated from the University of Waterloo with a B.A in Social Development Studies, is studying the Assaulted Women's and Childrens Victims Advocate Counsellor program.

DEATH BOATS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: SYRIANS TRAVELLING ILLEGALLY THROUGH THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA DESPITE DRAMATIC RISE IN DEATH TOLL

GHALIA BDIWE

"Seven months have passed since I resettled in Europe, but I could still hear the mothers' screams while holding their crying babies tightly and begging for help. In the middle of the deadly Mediterranean Sea, nobody could hear our hysterical shouts but God. Our rubber boat was drowning and sharks were roaming when the Greeks finally saw us. We thought we were going to die in that fatal smuggling sail, but we were predestined to be saved".

Adel describes his illegal migration to Europe from Turkey on a rubber boat.

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According to him, it is easy nowadays for a desperate refugee to plan for smuggling into Europe; there are many gangs who take smuggling as a business that brings gold. He says “There is a well-known square in Istanbul, Turkey, called Aksaray where smugglers meet with people to convince them of the safety and uniqueness of their trips... they are all liars with no hearts. They never provide their customers with the full ugly truth”. When Adel and his group reached the boat on the travelling day, their smuggler told them that he was not going to sail with them and that a volunteer among them should learn quickly how to sail the boat, and so they did. This young Syrian chap who speaks about how he tricked death, used to be a student and a worker in a construction site in Syria before the beginning of the Syrian revolution. He had built a little house for him and his wife with his savings and was living peacefully amongst his family and friends. With air strikes starting in his area, his only fortune- his house- got destroyed. He borrowed some money to rebuild it and started working as a freelance reporter for Arabic television stations but his house got smashed again in another raid. On the other side, his reports did not please any of the conflicting sides in Syria, so he fled Syria fearing for his life and decided not to look back. He thought that he had nothing to lose; he ran out of options so he sailed in a trip that ends either with death or with a new birth in a country that gives him civil rights “Now I am in Austria where I know nobody, I do not speak German and I communicate only by signs to people. I felt death and I continuously have nightmares but yet I have human rights and safety. One day I will call for my wife and we will live happily ever after”.

Searching for dignity, looking for basic human rights, fleeing the war, losing hope in the end of the Syrian crisis, and not having any other more respectful option are some of the reasons that Syrians risk their lives for.



Syrians are smuggled to Europe through the sea from different Mediterranean countries, most famously Egypt, Libya and Turkey. With the restrictions that the Egyptian regime is forcing on Syrian refugees, Syrians in Egypt are fleeing in big numbers through Libya despite the length of the trip and the horrifying stories of smugglers' maltreatment. There were two gruesome headlines last autumn on the loss of more than 900 migrants' lives in the sea. Their ships were heading from Egypt to Italy through Libya. Many Syrians ever since have hated looking at the sea, fearing to see their friend's faces.

According to UNHCR's report on the Central Mediterranean Sea Initiative, CMSI, in 2014 over 200,000 refugees and migrants have arrived by sea in the Mediterranean, compared to 60,000 in 2013. Italy alone has received over 160,000 arrivals in 2014, at the astonishing pace of 14,700 arrivals per month or over 480 arrivals each day. Whereas Greece received about 40,000, Spain received 3,500, Malta 568, and Cyprus 339 migrants. At least 10% of these received migrants are women and 14,000 of them are minors; including 8,600 unaccompanied children, according to Save the Children organization. In 2014, up to 3,072 migrants are believed to have died in the Mediterranean, compared with an estimate of 700 in 2013 according

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to IOM report on Fatal Journeys. The true number of fatalities is likely to be higher, as many deaths occur in remote regions of the world and are never recorded. Some experts have suggested that for every dead body discovered, there are at least two others that are never recovered.



Most of these Syrian illegal migrants are on UNHCR lists' for resettlement; however the prolongation of the procedure and the complication of its stages are pushing desperate

refugees to find their own way out. Canada in a recent positive initiative announced a plan to receive 10,000 Syrian refugees over the next three years, answering an appeal by the United Nations to help victims displaced by war and Islamic extremists in the region; however Ottawa is required to accelerate its procedure in receiving accepted applicants before more Syrian lives are to be lost.

Ghalia Bdiwe is a Syrian Journalist living in Toronto. She has several years experience across different International News Organizations in Syria and abroad. Ghalia has devoted her career to defending media freedom and journalists' rights and has MA in Media and Politics from UK. You can follow her on twitter @ghaliabdiwe.

A graphic with a teal header containing the text: "FREE ORIENTATION FOR REFUGEE CLAIMANTS APPEALING THEIR NEGATIVE DECISION TO THE REFUGEE APPEAL DIVISION (RAD) OF THE IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE BOARD (IRB)". Below the header is a white box with the text "RAD Info-session" and a path of colorful footprints leading to it. Four thought bubbles are arranged around the central box, each containing a question: "I received a negative decision in my hearing, what should I do?" (yellow), "Am I eligible to appeal?" (green), "Where should I go if I want to appeal?" (cyan), and "Who can help me to prepare an appeal?" (red).

NEW! Refugee Appeal Division (RAD) Information Sessions for the Appellants
RAD Information Sessions

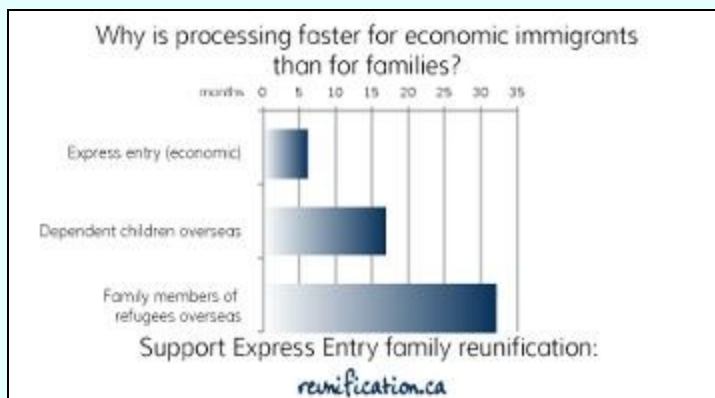
RAD information sessions will provide the Appellant with a FREE opportunity to be better prepared for the submission of their appeal before the RAD. Learn the steps to follow and how to document your appeal before the Refugee Appeal Division. More information

www.fcjrefugeecentre.org

TAKE ACTION! UPDATES AND ACTIONS FROM THE CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES

WISH THEY WERE HERE: CALL FOR EXPRESS ENTRY FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Canada's immigration processing for family reunification cases is extraordinarily slow. Many children wait over two years before being able to reunite with their parents in Canada.



Canada can and must do better. Citizenship and Immigration Canada is planning a new Express Entry program for economic immigrants. For immigrants with a valid job offer, CIC will process applications within 6 months. Shouldn't children be reunited with their parents at least as quickly as economic immigrants are processed?

It's time for Canada to launch an Express Entry program for family reunification and to commit to reuniting children with their parents in six months or less.



What you can do for Express Entry Family Reunification:

- Send a card to your Member of Parliament calling for Express Entry family reunification – by mail, by email or over Twitter. Encourage others to act for Express Entry family reunification
- Post information about the campaign on your website, through social media and through regular media. Use the resources from: <http://ccrweb.ca/en/express-entry-family-reunification>

Some suggested items to share on Twitter:

“Wish they were here: Support Express Entry Family Reunification: reunification.ca #cdnimm”

“Shouldn't processing be as fast for families as for economic immigrants?
bit.ly/expressentrygraph #cdnimm

- **Make a Donation** to the Canadian Council for Refugees. Help us reunite refugee immigrant families and keep Canada a welcoming place for all refugees and newcomers.

For more information, see: ccrweb.ca/en/express-entry-family-reunification

READY TOUR: AN OPORTUNITY TO BE PREPARE FOR YOUR REFUGEE HEARING

CAROLINA TEVES

The Ready Tour was officially launched on Refugee Rights Day in 2014. Through the year, a total of 15 Ready Tours were organized and 153 refugee claimants benefited from the informative sessions. The refugees were from the following countries: Afghanistan, Nigeria, Tanzania, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Arabia Saudi, Syria, Mexico, Uzbekistán, Colombia, Uganda, St Lucia, Kenya, Eritrea, etc. Beside asylum seekers, Ready Tour also welcomed around 70 observers from service provider agencies, students and other organizations who work with refugees.

In every Ready Tour, Dan Crawford, analyst of the Immigration and Refugee Board, facilitated the orientation session and answered questions. Feedback is collected at the end of every Ready Tour, which is always very positive:

“I feel more relax after seeing the hearing room” ,

“The fact of knowing more about the documents I need to submit helped me a lot”

“I do not have a lawyer and this information helped me to be better prepared”

The READY Tour is hosted by the Coalition of Service Providers for Refugee Claimants in Southern Ontario and the Canadian Red Cross First Contact program in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada.

Carolina Teves is the communication coordinator at FCJ Refugee Centre.



Are you a refugee claimant?

You are invited to participate in a tour of one of the IRB-RPD refugee hearing rooms in Toronto!

Ready tour

What is going to happen during my hearing?

How can I be ready for my refugee hearing?

Who is going to be there?

What is the place like where I have to go for my hearing?

LEARN

- ➡ How to navigate the refugee hearing process
- ➡ What is a refugee hearing
- ➡ What to expect at the hearing
- ➡ Who might participate at the hearing

READY tours take place twice a month at 74 Victoria Street, Toronto, ON the 4th Floor.
Registration: www.readytour.ca
E-mail: info@readytour.ca
First Contact toll-free phone number 1-866-902-4993 (from 8:30 am-4:30pm)
Refugee Hearing Guide available at: <http://www.kinbruce.ca>
Click English version on the webpage and select your region.

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