

Refugee resettlement, integration, and access to socio-economic rights, with a focus on the roles of settlement agencies in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

By

Augustine Caesar Nyero

A practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

Faculty of Law

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg.

Copyright © 2025 by Augustine Caesar Nyero

Table of Contents

1.	<i>Glossary and notes on key terms used.</i>	3
1.1.	Abstract	5
2.	<i>Introduction.</i>	5
2.1.	Background of the Study	7
2.2.	Problem Statement.	11
2.3.	Research Objectives.	13
2.4.	Research Questions.	14
3.	<i>Literature Review.</i>	14
3.1.	Justification of the research	17
4.	<i>Conceptual/Theoretical Framework.</i>	18
4.1.	Social Integration theory in refugees' integration and resettlement.	18
4.2.	Human Rights-Based Approach to Refugee Protection and Resettlement.	19
5.	<i>Methodology used.</i>	20
6.	<i>Refugee resettlements and integration in Canada.</i>	21
6.1.	Overview of the Federal and Provincial Program processes.	21
6.2.	The Socio-economic rights of refugees, and barriers to accessing these rights.	24
6.3.	Roles of the settlement agencies/organizations in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.	25
6.4.	Barriers and challenges to the effective resettlement and integration of newcomers in Winnipeg, Canada.	29
7.	<i>Conclusion and Recommendations.</i>	33
7.1.	Summary of Key Learnings.	33
7.2.	Policy recommendations	34
7.2.1.	Child care for mothers with young children.	34
7.2.2.	Foreign credential recognitions	34
7.2.3.	Further Investments in housing projects.	35
7.2.4.	Deliveries of hands-on support training courses	35
7.2.5.	Close monitoring of private sponsorship by the Government	35
7.2.6.	Enhanced social housing capacities for privately sponsored refugees	36
7.3.	Conclusion	36
8.	<i>References</i>	37

1. Glossary and notes on key terms used.

Newcomer: The term used by settlement agencies for people who have received approval from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to stay in Canada as refugees, students, workers, or temporary resident permit holders.

Tenants: The term used by settlement agencies to refer to individuals or families who live within their transitional housing units – typically refugee newcomers who receive temporary affordable housing along with other settlement services to help them integrate into Canadian society.

Refugee: The term used to describe a person who has been forced to flee their home due to war, persecution, violence, or other human rights abuses, and it is deemed not safe for them to return to their home country under what the 1951 Geneva Convention described as “well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership to a particular social group.”

Refugee Claimant: The term refers to a person who has applied for refugee protection in Canada and is awaiting a decision on their claim from the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada.

Asylum Seeker: Term used to describe a person who leaves their country to find refugee protection in another country. However, in Canada, the term is used alongside refugee claimant to mean a person who has already applied for refugee protection from the Government of Canada.

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC): This is a large independent tribunal in Canada that is responsible for making fair decisions on immigration and refugee matters, including those who need refugee protection.

Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA): This is the main law about immigration and refugee claims in Canada, used by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA).

Settlement agencies: These are agencies that provide support and services to new immigrants and refugees in Canada. These services are mostly free, including services related to: housing and employment, English/French classes, supporting the documentation of applications, health care and schools.

Settlement workers: These are people who work for settlement agencies and provide one-on-one help to new immigrants and refugees for their personal settlement needs.

Permanent Resident: This refers to a person from another country who can live permanently in Canada and has the right to enter Canada, however, they are not yet a citizen.

1.1. Abstract

Refugees are recognized under the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The Convention is a rights-based international instrument that has helped codify the human rights of newcomers at mostly international levels. The emphasis of the convention has been on the protection of refugees, mainly from political persecution, including other forms of persecution that lead to a well-founded fear of being persecuted based on race, religion, nationality or membership of a particular social group or political opinion. This study addresses critical questions like: What are the barriers to refugee resettlement and economic rights? How do refugees perceive their resettlement and reintegration experiences? How can policy and settlement agencies' efforts be improved to promote better outcomes for newcomers? With these key questions, the research proposed actions that best enhance economic inclusion and settlement. The experiences from my practicum at IRCOM indicated that settlement agencies are working tirelessly to address these barriers. However, their efforts are being constrained by limited funding, while there is increasing demand for their settlement services. Policymakers must, therefore, prioritize programs that address the systematic barriers of 1) processes of credential recognition, 2) increased costs of affordable housing, and 3) chronic discrimination and racism in all sectors of the economy. This will enable refugees to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Canada.

2. Introduction.

This research paper explores refugee resettlement and socio-economic rights in a Canadian context guided by international legal frameworks for refugee protection. I pay particular attention to the interplay among International Human Rights Law, International Refugee Law, and Canadian legal frameworks – mainly the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Immigration and

Refugee Protection Act (IRPA). I begin by analyzing current policies and practices of resettling newcomers in Canada and provide an overview of refugee protections, resettlement assistance programs, and other strategies meant to support refugee/newcomers' integration into their new communities.

I also focus on the role of settlement agencies and organizations in Winnipeg; including the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organisation of Manitoba (IRCOM), Family Dynamics, Welcome Centre, Seven Oak Settlement services, and Manitoba Start, in implementing policies as mandated by the Immigration and Refugees Protection Act (IRPA). Particular attention is paid to how these policies translate into necessary support for newcomers to settle and integrate into Canadian society. These local programs rely on strategic partnerships between Federal, Provincial/territorial governments and other non-governmental organizations, and their strategic roles in enacting rights protection mechanisms mandated by international law. I explore how the results of the ongoing administration of these programs reach beyond the guarantee of basic human rights and aspire to facilitate the social and economic integration of refugees into their host communities. Aspirations are aimed at improving refugees/newcomers' quality of life, strengthening potential for their economic success, and facilitating a sense of place for them within Canada. Finally, I identify gaps and limitations of the existing system and provide suggestions for improvement.

According to historian Scott Kraft, the city of Winnipeg overall has a positive refugee settlement landscape, including a good history of welcoming and resettling newcomers, which dates back to 1919, the time of the 'great strike'.¹ The paper finds that whereas Winnipeg has achieved general success in supporting refugees through the newcomer experience, there are still

¹ (Kraft 2006)

many policy, employment, housing, and education challenges that continue to affect the full realization of the socio-economic rights of resettled refugees.

2.1. Background of the Study.

Refugees are recognized under the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The Convention has been regarded as a rights-based international instrument that has helped codify the human rights of people fleeing violence and persecution, at mostly international levels. The emphasis of this Convention has been on the protection of refugees, mainly those urgently fleeing political persecution, but also includes other forms of persecution based on race, religion, nationality or membership of a particular social group or political opinion.²

Article 1 of the Convention defines a refugee as any person who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons related to race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.³ To be defined as a refugee, individuals must already be outside the country of their nationality and must be either unable or unwilling to seek protection from their home country due to fear. Included in the definition is if a person does not have documentation on them to confirm their nationality, and is outside the country where they previously lived because of persecution. In that case, they must also be unable or unwilling to return to that location.⁴

For individuals with more than one nationality, the term "the country of his nationality"⁵ refers to each of their national countries. The Convention further guides that when a refugee's status is not immediately determined on an individual or group basis, the need to operate on the

² (UNHCR, 1951, Pg, 14)

³ (UNHCR, 1951, Pg, 14)

⁴ (UNHCR, 1951, Pg 15)

⁵ (UNHCR, 1951, Pg 15)

assumption that all those running away from situations of harm from their country (or countries) of origin and/or nationality are refugees, even when the declaration does not formally state it thus.⁶

Important to note that much as the 1951 Geneva Convention is taken as the foundation of International Refugee Law, there are limitations to it, many of which are related to the time in which it was written (i.e. it applied mainly to events that occurred before 1951 like the First and Second World wars). It was also conceptually focused geographically, to meet obligations to refugees who mainly originated from Europe, as clearly stated in Article 1A (sub-section 2)⁷. Some other limitations include the narrow definition of a refugee, i.e. someone fleeing persecution based on race, sex, religion, or social/political groups, as noted above. This definition notably excludes other at-risk populations in need of rights protections, including people who are fleeing their countries because of natural disasters like climate change, and internally displaced persons who have not crossed an international border.

To redress these limitations and narrow considerations, a 1967 Protocol was created to amend, address, and broaden the temporal and geographical restrictions in the definition to reflect the changing nature of displacement factors and to provide better and more robust legal frameworks to protect refugees globally. Overall, the general provisions of the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 protocol are guided by the fundamental principles of non-discrimination, non-penalization, and nonrefoulement.⁸ This affirms that the Convention should be applied without discrimination based on race, sex, disability, sexuality, or any other grounds of prohibited discrimination, and without penalty. The principle of nonrefoulement provides that no one should be expelled or returned against their will to the territory where they have fears or threats to their

⁶ (UNHCR, Handbook, 2019, pg. 20)

⁷ (UNHCR, 1951, pg.)

⁸ (UNHCR, 1951, pg. 3)

lives and freedoms. Importantly to note is that, the 1951 Geneva Convention and 1967 Protocols relating to the status of refugees do not address refugees' socio-economic rights.

The number of people who are forcibly displaced from their homes due to persecution, conflict, violence, and human rights violations is on the rise globally. Every day, thousands of people flee their homes and hope to establish a new life in a foreign land. UNHCR recently released the 2024 mid-year trends report on displacement, statelessness and durable solutions. As of the end of June 2024, it is estimated that 122.6 million people were forcibly displaced globally, with the main drivers being war, persecution, violence and human rights violations.⁹ The report shows increases of 5% or about 5.3 million people from the year prior, with 71% of the people from low and middle-income countries; fleeing such conflicts as the ones in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Myanmar.¹⁰ Filippo Grandi (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) blames these massive figures on the fact that: "some people are far too quick to rush to the conflict and way too slow to find solutions. The consequence is devastation, displacement, and anguish for each of the millions of people forcibly uprooted from their homes."

Meanwhile, the Country of Canada continues to pledge their commitment to accepting and resettling refugees.¹¹ From Statistics for 2022, Canada accepted 140,621 refugees, an increase of 8.07% from 2021.¹² While Canada continues to improve its refugee resettlement programs to meet the need, further attention is needed to improve refugees' overall access to socio-economic rights (such as the right to work, an adequate standard of living, and the right to health and education). Article 2 of the Convention relating to the status of stateless persons¹³ and Article 3 of the National

⁹ (UNHCR, 2024, Midyear trends report 2024, pg. 2)

¹⁰ (UNHCR, 2024, Midyear trends report 2024, pg. 3)

¹¹ (LLC 2024) (ILO 2021)

¹² (LLC 2024)

¹³ (UNHCR, The 1951 Convention relating to the status of stateless person 1960)

legislation (Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) Canada, particularly in the objectives and application 2 (b),¹⁴ provide assurances and commitments concerning refugees that respect and protect these rights. Therefore, when refugees resettle in Canada, they become subject to these Canadian laws and policies that should assure equal treatment to enjoy these rights, regardless of race, nationality, or ethnic origin.

According to a Forced Migration Review Report (FMRR), socio-economic rights and integration are both a process and an outcome referring to the degree of participation of refugees within local, national and global markets.¹⁵ Socio-economic rights are critical for refugee integration and resettlement since they help refugees: i) contribute to their host society, ii) access resources, and iii) maintain cultural identities. These rights include access to employment, volunteering opportunities, and other resources via social connections with local communities. As emphasized by the International Labor Organisation, key aspects of socio-economic integration and psychological well-being include guaranteeing access to decent work opportunities, recognition of qualifications, access to professional development training, and financial inclusion services.¹⁶

This paper explores the roles of settlement agencies, which have long played key roles in upholding the socio-economic rights of refugees/newcomers. They assist immigrants and refugees navigate and integrate into Canadian society by providing services such as language training,

¹⁴ (F. G. Canada 2023)

¹⁵ Refugee Studies Center, *Forced Migration Review Report, Issue 54*, February 2017
<https://www.refworld.org/reference/countryrep/rsc/2017/en/116120> [accessed December 15, 2024]

¹⁶ ILO, *Regional Socio-economic Integration strategies*, 2021, pg. 6.
(https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40americas/%40ro-lima/documents/publication/wcms_775183.pdf)

employment services, community connections, support services, information sessions, needs assessments, and referrals when needed.

Data for this paper regarding the role of settlement agencies in guaranteeing socio-economic rights was mostly drawn from my experiences on a practicum over three months in the Fall of 2024 with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organisation of Manitoba (IRCOM). My practicum included engagements with other agencies through IRCOM, like the New Journey Housing, Welcome Place, Family Dynamics, Seven Oaks Services, Manitoba Start and Immigrant Centre. These are all settlement agencies that operate in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and are in partnership with federal, provincial, and other community organizations, with funding from Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), as well as other donor agencies like Assiniboine Credit unit, Bell MTS, Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, and United Way Winnipeg.

2.2. Problem Statement.

I will repeat here that in 2024 there were about 122.6 million people worldwide who were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflicts, violence, human rights violations, or events seriously disturbing public order.¹⁷

Between the 1980s and 2017, Canada has hosted more than 1,088,015 refugees, including those recognized as refugees in Canada or resettled from overseas.¹⁸ Despite progressive resettlement programmes that are in place in Canada, the Panel on Employment Challenges of New Canadians report indicates that some immigrant refugees were rejected before the interview for lack of Canadian work experience, lack of information about life in Canada after landing, and

¹⁷ (UNHCR, 2024, Midyear trends report 2024, pg. 2)

¹⁸ (U. Canada 2017)

difficulty obtaining their first paid jobs, amongst other reasons.¹⁹ There has thus been a gap in the resettlement policies and practices that has potentially undermined refugees' socio-economic rights. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Refugees Convention, there are several rights to which refugees are entitled too, including, amongst others, the property right in Article 16 and the right to economic, social and cultural rights such as employment (Article 17- 19) and welfare, social security and education rights as in Article 20 and 24.²⁰ Member countries are expected to integrate refugees and enable those under the statelessness clause to become productive and active community members as soon as possible. However, the UNHCR report on refugees' integration indicated that many refugees are trapped in cycles of poverty and destitution.²¹ Additionally, most refugee scholars have focused on displacement data and migration issues in the Global South. There are many nations in the Global North, however, that are collectively home to tens of millions of refugees, and scant research has been done on refugees' protection and social and economic rights therein.

In assessing contemporary government and public sentiment on refugees, one can skim the headlines to find that there are increasing concerns over the burden and pressure linked to refugee resettlement, which is said to be affecting the larger economy. Citing newcomers to his province, the premier of Quebec said in September of 2024 that “there is a stress on housing infrastructure, on social services, on transport,”²² adding that this has led to more traffic and competition for housing, which has led to a higher cost of living. Coupled with that, the Federal Government of Canada recently reduced its refugee resettlement targets for 2025, citing the housing market

¹⁹ (G. o. Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada December 2014)

²⁰ (UNHCR, The 1951 Convention relating to the status of stateless person 1960)

²¹ (UNHCR, Are refugees good for Canada? A look at Canada Refugees Integration. 2020)

²² (Karen Bartko, Global News, 13th September 2024)

crunch, which is seen to be contributing to tensions between residents and incoming refugees allegedly competing for limited housing.²³

In Canada, the Immigration and Refugees Protection Act Article 3(1 a-f) grants fundamental rights to newcomers towards the practical realization of their socio-economic rights, including access to employment, health services provisions, and long-term service stability. This access, however, remains inconsistent, with procedural and systemic delays like credential recognitions in both regulated and unregulated professions. The reduction in the resettlement targets also brings tensions between the humanitarian commitments of Canada and their national capacity. My research, therefore, explores the extent to which the Government of Canada, through its resettlement program, has been able to align its legal and moral obligations to uphold these rights despite the systemic factors affecting refugees' access to these rights.

2.3. Research Objectives.

The following key objectives guide this paper:

- i. Understanding International Human Rights Law, International refugee laws and Federal government legal frameworks that influence refugees' access to legal protection, resettlements, and socio-economic rights; Examining the challenges in resettling international refugees in Canada and how they are facilitated to develop strategic measures that respond to local needs and challenges.
- ii. Synthesizing my experiences working with refugees at IRCOM over the 3 months of my practicum in the Fall of 2024 to provide recommendations to improve newcomers' access to socio-economic rights.

²³ (Max Chaudhary, Canada Refugee Changes in 2024, September 2024.)

2.4. Research Questions.

The following is my key research question:

1. How can government policies, settlement agencies, and other civil society efforts be coordinated and strengthened to improve economic outcomes and protections for refugees who become trapped in cycles of poverty and marginalization in Canada?

Key sub-questions include:

1a. How do Canada's International and National legal frameworks and policy measures contribute to, or hinder, refugees' protection and economic integration?

1b. What are the main barriers to refugee resettlement and access to socio-economic rights in Canada?

1c. What role do settlement agencies like IRCOM, play in refugees' integration and access to economic rights in Canada?

3. Literature Review

Canada has a long tradition of welcoming and giving protection to refugees and other persons in need of protection.²⁴ The resettlement of refugees in Canada is coordinated by the Federal Government of Canada and is implemented by the Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) while being regulated by the Immigration and Refugees Protection Act (IRPA).²⁵ Resettlement is one of three leading durable solutions that help refugees, as defined by the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention. The other two include local integration into a host country (when for example someone crosses the border from their country of origin into a neighbouring

²⁴ (UNHCR, Are refugees good for Canada? A look at Canada Refugees Integration. 2020)

²⁵ (G. o. Canada, UNHCR Resettlement Hand Book 2018)

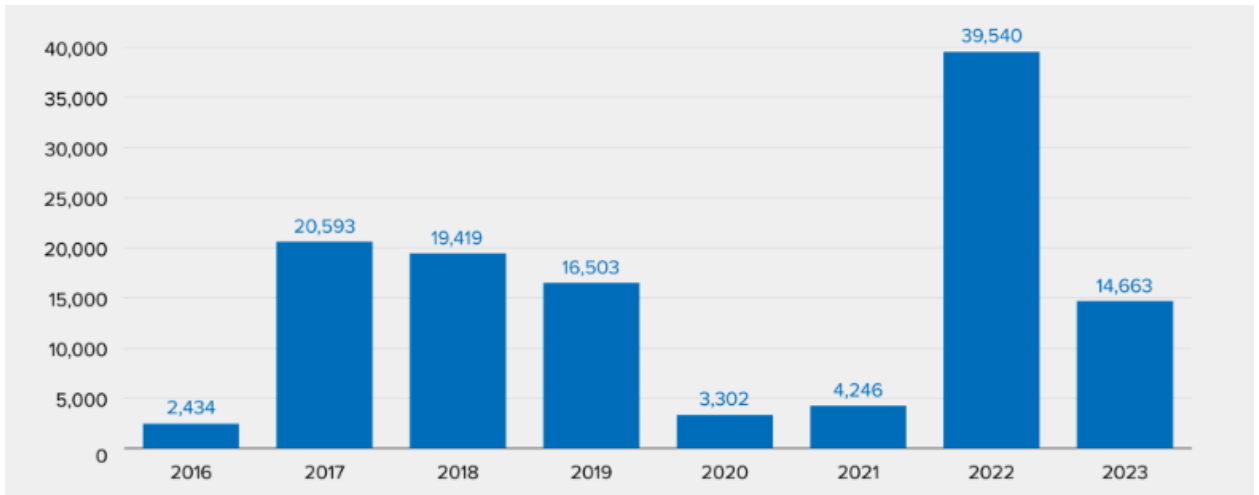
host country), and voluntary repatriation to the country of origin (when someone can return home). The Convention, to which Canada is a signatory, sets out the rights of individuals who fear being persecuted in their home country and the legal obligations of states in protecting the rights of such refugees. Broadly speaking, Canada resettles categories of refugees; they include Convention refugees, members of the Humanitarian-protected Persons Abroad Class (HPC), and persons admitted under public policy considerations due to the compelling nature of their situations.²⁶ These are persons who are not Convention refugees but who are in refugee-like situations or who represent vulnerable groups within their own country or a third country and who require protection through resettlement.

Over time, the Federal government program has reduced its services, obliging resettlement service providers to develop more self-sustaining and integrated service models. Aside from the Federal Government and resettlement service providers, other key agents in resettlement coordination are: non-governmental organizations, private sponsorships, faith-based organizations, and groups of private individual sponsors of the refugee program. These agents work hand in hand with the Federal Government, Provincial Government, and other partners in policy, advocacy and community engagement while providing specialized support and custom adaptation services to refugee populations.²⁷

Refugee Arrivals in Canada, 2016-2023

²⁶ (Ibid. Pg. 15.)

²⁷ (G. o. Canada, UNHCR Resettlement Hand Book 2018)



Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada ©UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, 2024.

Research on refugees' access to socio-economic rights in Canada highlights employment, housing, education, and healthcare disparities. While resettled refugees benefit from government-sponsored programs and services, they often face barriers to full economic participation and social inclusion. Factors such as language proficiency, credential recognition, and discrimination have been noted to contribute to these challenges. As acknowledged by one of the respondents in the Online Panel of Consultation, “Gatekeeping by professional associations keeps immigrants out of jobs they were trained for. There is workplace discrimination based on foreign credentials, and racism which keeps immigrants out of good jobs.”²⁸

At the same time, Canada’s aging population has recently increased, which is believed to be driven by low birth rates and longer life expectancy. The average age of a Canadian has increased from 37.7 in 2001 to 41 in 2016.²⁹ Notably, refugees are on average 011.1 years younger than

²⁸ (G. o. Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada December 2014)

²⁹ (Statistic Canada, 2016 Census, “Age and Sex Highlight table” (www.12.statcan.gc.ca))

those born in Canada,³⁰ implying that they are more likely to be of working age. Economically, aging seniors will increase demand for old-age care and health services provisions, and there will be a shortage of skilled workers as older employees retire. This means that the younger refugee population can be a viable alternative to emerging shortages in Canada's economy.

3.1. Justification of the research.

As the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) notes, resettlement "involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a state where they have sought protection to a third state which has agreed to admit them as refugees with permanent residence status."³¹ Refugee protection and resettlement are processes involving the relocation of individuals who have fled their home countries due to persecution, violence, or conflict. Upon arrival in host countries such as Canada, refugees face numerous challenges related to resettlement, integration, and access to socio-economic rights. This research paper justifies the importance of enhancing refugee resettlement, integration, and access to economic and social rights by highlighting the critical need for comprehensive support systems to gradually facilitate successful integration and promote the well-being of refugees in their new communities. Canada is a signatory to international conventions and protocols, including the Refugee 1951 Conventions and its 1967 Protocol, in which there were legal and moral obligations to provide protection and assistance to refugees by demonstrating leadership in refugee resettlement and integration efforts, facilitating their access to economic opportunities, education, healthcare, and housing.

Refugee resettlement, integration and access to economic and social rights are moral and practical necessities for fostering inclusive, cohesive, and prosperous communities. With its

³⁰ (Statistic Canada, 2016 Census.)

³¹ (G. o. Canada, UNHCR Resettlement Hand Book 2018)

recommendations, this research paper is helping to push for the continued need for investment in policies, programs, and initiatives that support refugees' successful integration and well-being. It further recommends that settlement agencies, with support from the Government of Canada, strengthen its social fabric, promote diversity as a source of strength in fulfilling its international legal obligations concerning refugees, and affirm its commitment to international efforts to aid those in need of resettlement.

4. Conceptual/Theoretical Framework.

Refugee resettlement and integration have been shaped by various socio-economic, political and institutional factors. My research paper's focus draws from integration theories – including social integration theory and human rights-based approaches and frameworks to refugee resettlement and integration. Within I explore how settlement agencies are facilitating the transition of refugees into host communities in Canada.

4.1. Social Integration theory in refugees' integration and resettlement.

Social integration theory, as noted by Laurytseva et al., implies that immigrants no longer consider the native population as an "outsider" group and that they express trust and willingness to cooperate with them in the same way they do with compatriots.³² It supposes that successful integration occurs when individuals or groups can participate fully in their host society's social, economic, and cultural life, thus emphasizing the importance of interaction, inclusion, and participation in shaping integration outcomes. In essence, it means that individuals can engage in most aspects of their social, cultural, economic, and even political lives in their local communities.

³² (Nadzeya Laurytseva, Alessandra Venturini 2017)

Relating social integration to organizational behaviours and work performance implies that psychological capital serves as a regulator that transforms human and social capital into the fundamental element of realities, enhancing a person's career choices, career identity, and work performance.³³ Social Integration Theory is closely related to Social Capital Theory³⁴, which explains how refugees can access resources and build new social networks in their host communities. Social Integration Theory recognizes that war, displacement, and persecution can disrupt social networks, making it difficult to rebuild trust and access to resources, thus exacerbating structural disadvantages and pursuing social advancement.³⁵

Social Integration Theory, therefore, clarifies the various dimensions of integration, including socioeconomic integration in terms of employment, education, language acquisition, cultural adaptation, and structural integration in terms of access to social services and legal rights.

Applying social integration theory supports understanding factors that contribute to successful integration outcomes for refugees, identifies barriers to integration, and assists in developing strategies to enhance social inclusion in host communities in Canada.

4.2. Human Rights-Based Approach to Refugee Protection and Resettlement.

The Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) involves providing a State with an intrinsic and instrumental rationale for acting. An intrinsic rationale emphasizes the right thing to do both morally and legally, whereas an instrumental rationale recognizes that a human rights-based approach leads to better or more sustainable human development outcomes.³⁶ In the context of refugee protection and resettlement, human rights frameworks provide the legal obligations for

³³ (Lu Feng, Wei Yang, Jianhui Yun and Yan Zhang, 2024.)

³⁴ (Ziersch, Anna, Moira Walsh, and Clemence Due. 2023.)

³⁵ (Ibid Zierch, pg. 3880.)

³⁶ (Momin 2017)

states to provide protection, assistance, and access to rights for refugees, which includes the right to seek asylum, the right to nonrefoulement, and the right to necessities such as food, shelter, and healthcare.³⁷

The human rights-based approach broadly emphasizes that refugee integration and resettlement policies and practices uphold the principles of non-discrimination, equality, and non-arbitrariness. By merging social integration theory with a human rights-based approach, the paper analyses whether and how refugee resettlement policies and practices align with international human rights standards. It further identifies gaps or shortcomings in implementation, and advocates for the socio-economic rights and well-being of refugees within the legal and policy frameworks in Canada.

5. Methodology used.

Aside from a literature review, this paper draws upon experiential learning opportunities gained from my practicum placement at the Immigrant and Refugees Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) in the Fall of 2024. The practicum placement is a compulsory part of the Master in Human Rights program – practicum stream. This direct engagement provided first-hand interaction with refugees, settlement workers/social workers, as well as other agencies that offered insights into the settlement and integration challenges and successes of refugee resettlement and integration in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Through active involvement in program implementation over three months, the placement allowed me to better understand: i) how settlement agencies operate; ii) the barriers that refugees face in accessing socio-economic rights; and iii) strategies employed by newcomers to support

³⁷ (Moeckli Daniel, Sangeeta Shah, Sandesh Sivakumaran 2022)

their reintegration. The interactive nature of my practicum also allowed for a reflexive approach that enabled continuous analysis through consideration of agency project reports, program evaluations, grey papers, as well as journal articles and policies that have shaped the experiences of refugees.

This paper also relies on self-reflection to understand my own experiences during the practicum with social workers and newcomers (individual tenants of IRCOM). During my practicum, I also had the opportunity to participate in several agency tours and visits, including with the Welcome Centre, Seven Oak Settlement Centre, Family Dynamics, Manitoba Start, and Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO).

6. Refugee resettlements and integration in Canada.

6.1. Overview of the Federal and Provincial Program processes.

As section 2 of this paper notes, Canada is recognized as a global leader in refugee resettlement for hosting over 1,088,015 refugees since 1980.³⁸ Canada has done this through three main refugee resettlement programs, including i) the Government Assisted Refugees (GAR)/Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP); ii) the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSR); and iii) the Blended Visa Office-Referral Program (BVOR).

The Government Assisted Refugees (GAR)/Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) provides resettlement services and income support to refugees referred by the UNHCR or other designated agencies. Refugee claimants are usually registered by the UNHCR or the state authorities where they intend to seek asylum to be considered for referral. Those who benefit from

³⁸ (Statistics Canada, 2018, Slide 3.)

this program typically receive financial support from the government of Canada for about one year from the date that they arrive in Canada.³⁹

The Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSR) allows for private sponsors to volunteer and sponsor those who qualify as refugees under Canada's refugee and humanitarian program. In this, the refugees are supported with settlement assistance and finances for up to one year from the date they arrive in Canada.⁴⁰

The Blended Visa Office-Referred Program (BVOR) matches refugees with private sponsors in Canada, and costs are shared between private sponsors and the Government of Canada, with each party providing up to six months of financial support.⁴¹

Of the 30,087 refugees who were resettled in Canada in 2019, 64% are noted to be refugees who arrived through the PSR program, 33% arrived through the GAR program, and about 3% arrived through the BVOR program.⁴²

This section mainly examines Canada's refugee resettlement and integration process by examining the roles of federal and provincial policies, community organizations/agencies involved, and their socio-economic structures for long-term integration.

The UNHCR and other partners, such as the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), identify refugees for resettlement. Visa officers typically review the file for cases referred to Canada by UNHCR. If accepted, a refugee is then offered an interview, undergoes medical, criminal, and

³⁹ (UNHCR, Refugees Resettlement to Canada (unhcr.org))

⁴⁰ (Ibid.)

⁴¹ (Ibid.)

⁴² (UNHCR, Refugees Resettlement to Canada) <https://www.unhcr.ca/in-canada/unhcr-role-resettlement/refugee-resettlementcanada/#:~:text=Canada%20has%20three%20different%20resettlement,date%20they%20arrive%20in%20Canada>.

security checks, and provides biometric information and photos. IRCC handles all these processes with support from the Canada Border Services Agency. After these processes are complete, a refugee claimant is then referred to a settlement agency in Canada funded by IRCC (such as IRCOM). The Canadian government through settlement agencies like IRCOM, provide income support and settlement services for about a year, however, the processes may differ from province to province. In some cases, support is maintained until the refugee can protect and support themselves.⁴³

For Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR), any Canadian citizen or permanent resident can resettle a person who qualifies under refugees and any humanitarian programs. They are allowed to support refugees with any settlement assistance, whether financially or materially, for up to one year from the date they arrive in Canada (after following all processes of assessing sponsorship agreement holders, and assessments for admissibility and potential for resettlement.)⁴⁴

Through the Blended Visa Office-Referred Program (BVOR), UNHCR identifies refugees for resettlement and matches them with private sponsors in Canada, with cost sharing between the private sponsor and the Government of Canada through either their federal or provincial programs in which each party provides financial support for a period of up to 6 months.

According to the UNHCR 2018 statistics, 43.4% of the refugees resettled in Canada were from the Middle East and North African countries (Iran, Egypt, Syria, and Palestine); 42.1% came from the African Countries of Somalia, Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda,

⁴³ (G. o. Canada, UNHCR Resettlement Handbook 2018.)

⁴⁴ (G. o. Canada, UNHCR Resettlement Handbook 2018.)

Uganda, and South Sudan; 12.4% came from Asia; 0.5% came from the United States of America; and 0.08% came from Europe.⁴⁵

The 2019 statistics further indicated that 30% of the refugees were survivors of torture and violence, 29% had specific legal and protection needs, 7% lacked alternative solutions to resettlement, and 5% had medical needs that were not available in their countries.

6.2. The Socio-economic rights of refugees, and barriers to accessing these rights.

The 1951 Geneva Convention and 1967 Protocols relating to the status of refugees do not address refugees' socio-economic rights. However, soft laws reflect the political commitment of states with provisions that guide and outline the rights and assistance that refugees are entitled to, including, amongst others, the right to housing, the right to work, and the right to education.⁴⁶

The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), as primary legislation for Canada, explicitly addresses the need to ensure that refugees' socio-economic rights are aligned with both domestic and international obligations, provided the refugee meets all the applicable requirements. These principally include obtaining a work permit and meeting the Labor Market Impact Assessment (LMIA). Section 14.1 of the IRPA of Canada offers guidance for the provision of economic rights, such as establishing classes for permanent residents for economic migration.

Above all, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) provides for the rights of refugees through Article 14, which grants that everyone has the right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution. Important to note as well, is that these rights cannot be invoked in the situation of prosecution for non-political crimes or acts that go against the principles of the UN (murder,

⁴⁵ (Ibid.)

⁴⁶ (M. Charlotte, 2008. The International and Regional Legal Frameworks, pg. 333.)

theft etc.).⁴⁷ The right to work, to choose employment freely, to favourable remunerations, and to form trade Unions for the protection of their interests is well safeguarded by the provision in Article 23, subsection 1-4 of the UDHR.⁴⁸ The UDHR and IRPA thus help establish and create pathways to effective resettlement and integration of refugees. They task governments to fund most settlement services, including economic self-sufficiency integration, job readiness programs, language training, and anti-discrimination measures to enable equitable access to their human rights.

6.3. Roles of the settlement agencies/organizations in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Settlement Agencies are networks of refugee community organizations that work with the Government of Canada to offer various services meant to address the unique challenges that newcomers⁴⁹ . These include challenges as they transition into Canadian society – such as basic orientation; language support; employment support; housing, children, and health care services; and youth programs.

Provincial agencies in Canada, including Manitoba, have long committed to supporting immigrants and refugees. A significant increase in immigrants coming to Manitoba was witnessed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A few years later, the Canadian Government created and implemented Citizen Councils, to oversee settlement support for newcomers and ensure their integration into Canadian society.⁵⁰ Subsequently, a new Citizenship Council of Manitoba was established in Winnipeg to provide employment, housing, and welfare needs to newcomers.⁵¹ By 1947, settlement services in Winnipeg were provided by several agencies, including the Immigrant

⁴⁷ (UN, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, pg. 6.)

⁴⁸ (Ibid, pg. 6.)

⁴⁹ The term “newcomer” has been used to describe individuals arriving in Canada to settle, including immigrants, refugees, and temporary residents

⁵⁰ (Boli, Richard. 2016: pgs., 7–8)

⁵¹ (Ibid pg. 7.)

Centre, and the Manitoba Interfaith Immigrant Council.⁵² The Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) – the organization where I did my practicum – was established in 1991 to “support the province that has staked its future prosperity on its ability to integrate and resettle newcomers into its community.”⁵³ IRCOM empowers newcomer families to integrate into their broader communities by providing affordable transitional housing, programs, and services that foster a sense of belonging. They offer inclusive services to address newcomers' physical, social, and emotional needs. Their approach to integration emphasizes mutual adaptation – they support newcomers in adjusting to Canadian society while also helping the local community adapt to its evolving, diverse nature. This they achieve by building bridges and connections among all communities. IRCOM has several programs, including Common Ground and Stronger Voice programs, that work with Indigenous Peoples including the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples and organizations. These programs enhance relationships and foster understanding to nurture strong Indigenous-newcomer relations. There are also other programs like the After School Program (ASP) for youth of school-going age, and Asset and Capacity Building Programs (ACBP), that work to build the capacity of low-income households to manage finances and save money for the purchase of assets for long-term benefits. Other important programs include the Child Care Program (CCP) which supports newcomer parents, and the Newcome Literacy Program (NLI) which provides adult English classes and lessons.⁵⁴

During my practicum sessions, I worked primarily with the Community Resource Program (CRP). This program connects immigrants, refugees, and claimants with the necessary resources and support to succeed in their new environments. The CRP programs provide newcomers/refugee

⁵² (Ibid pg. 8.)

⁵³ (IRCOM Annual Report 2020-2021.)

⁵⁴ (Ibid.)

families with support services, community linkages, and information sessions on services; such as next-step housing, life skills training and sessions, and referrals.

The CRP programs also work in partnership with agencies for services that are out of IRCOM's reach. For example, if a tenant (newcomer refugee) is traumatized and needs assistance, in most cases the tenant is connected with an organization like the Manitoba Association of Newcomers Serving Organisations (MANSO) that offers trauma services with specialized personnel. During my practicum, I was privileged with the opportunity to attend (along with the CRP Manager) the Refugee Claimant Community Coordination Table meetings – a task force of agencies working together to support refugee claimants through coordinated resource sharing, and collaborations with representation from the municipal and provincial departments in immigration and social services. These meetings are held monthly to discuss emerging issues, share updates, and build synergies with collaborative plans of action to help improve and guide effective service deliveries to newcomer refugees to facilitate meaningful integrations into the Winnipeg community.

Together with other practicum students, we made learning visits to agencies like Welcome Place (Formerly Manitoba Interfaith Immigrant Council), Seven Oaks Settlement Services, Family Dynamics, Manitoba START, and New Journey Housing. Most settlement agencies have adopted differentiated holistic programs regarding their objectives, program contents, and scope, however, most of these agencies complement and support one another by relying on their agency's expertise.

These settlement agencies receive 80% of their funding from the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to help newcomers adjust to life in the

country.⁵⁵ However, there is also funding from other donors, including grants from the Assiniboine Credit Union, SEED Winnipeg, and United Way Winnipeg, which supplement the funding of the federal government. Above all, the roles played by these agencies are critical to the immediate needs of new refugees as it gives them a foundation upon which they can begin to focus on life in their new context. Additionally, these agencies help newcomers make economic contributions via employment services, entrepreneurship, and taxes, which boost and drive growth in various sectors in Canada. In a UNHCR report titled “Are refugees good for Canada?” they note that 14.4% of refugees are self-employed and business owners. These newcomer refugees use their diverse skills and talents to start business ventures and create jobs for themselves and other Canadians, compared to 12.3% of the general population in Canada.⁵⁶

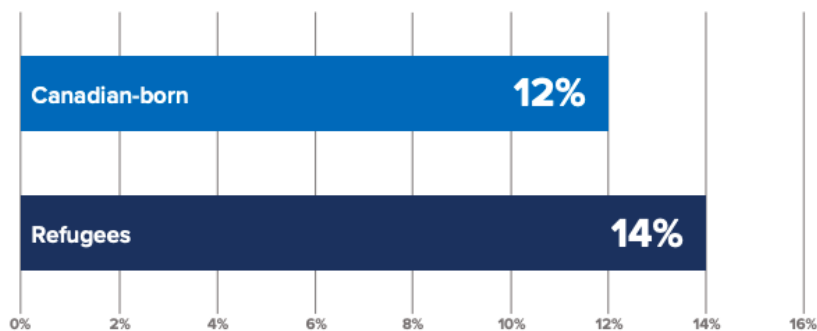


Figure 1 Rates of Entrepreneurship. Adapted from Yuri Ostrovsky and Garnett Picot, "Research Blog: Immigrant entrepreneurs in Canada," Statistics Canada, August 28, 2018, accessed February 14, 2019, <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/blog/cs/immigrant-entrepreneurs>.

⁵⁵ (IRCC, Settlement Program, 2025.)

⁵⁶ (UNHCR, Are refugees good for Canada? A look at Canada Refugees Integration. 2020.)

6.4. Barriers and challenges to the effective resettlement and integration of newcomers in Winnipeg, Canada.

Canada is recognized for welcoming refugees from all over the world, particularly refugees who are fleeing war, political turmoil, and economic instability. Notably, however, these journeys to rebuild lives are not without significant barriers and challenges. These barriers and challenges hinder individuals' progress in resettlement and also impact the broader goal of their socioeconomic integration in Canada.

As part of my practicum placement, I attended the Refugees Claimant Coordination (RCC) meeting, during which the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) noted delays in waiting times and a backlog of claims and appeals. Since 2020, wait times have averaged approximately two years.⁵⁷ Privately sponsored refugees have wait times that far exceed this, and have increased from 35 months to 38 months as of the end of October 2023.⁵⁸ In 2020, delays were attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, during the coordination meeting held on Wednesday, October 16th, 2024, IRB attributed the delay to gradual cuts in funding and the surging number of refugees being received due to unending armed conflicts. The lack of adequate local infrastructure delays processing times, and these prolonged waiting times affect many families who have been separated and processed for reunification.

A lack of proficiency in the official languages of Canada is also notably hindering many newcomers arriving in Manitoba. Sometimes newcomers arrive with little to no knowledge of English and French, which makes it very difficult for them to navigate essential services, secure wage-earning employment, and access health services provisions and education. As reported at the

⁵⁷ 'Wait time' refers to the processing time including the time when the refugee is waiting for the hearing on the claims and appeals of their application.

⁵⁸ (IRCC, Standing Committee Report 2024.)

refugee claimant coordination meeting, several settlement agencies have supported interpretation services whenever possible. However, in most cases, this is for a limited time or is a general service provision.

Furthermore, while many refugees are accomplished and distinguished professionals in various fields in their home countries, many have been unable to use their certifications due to barriers to the Canadian accreditation systems and regulated professions, which has made entry into the Canadian labour market inaccessible. During the men's wellness session that I participated in (in October 2024), a newcomer tenant shared that it took him almost two years to get the required certifications in the teaching profession.

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights recently released a report that indicated that censorship, inequality and racism are the top human rights abuses and challenges that are affecting refugees and asylum seekers in Manitoba.⁵⁹ Reflecting on my interactions with the IRCOM project team for the Newcomer Youth Participatory Action Research Project (NYPARP) reveals several instances that can confirm the above reports, particularly with young people of school-going age. The NYPARP project is based on innovative positive approaches to youth and community development where youth are trained to conduct systematic research to improve their lives, and the communities and the institutions they intend to serve. The project's main components were meetings and participating in human rights advocacy and anti-racism trainings and workshops, sharing experiences, and gaining skills to confront barriers that often arise from racism. These children experience chronic racism at school and in the community.

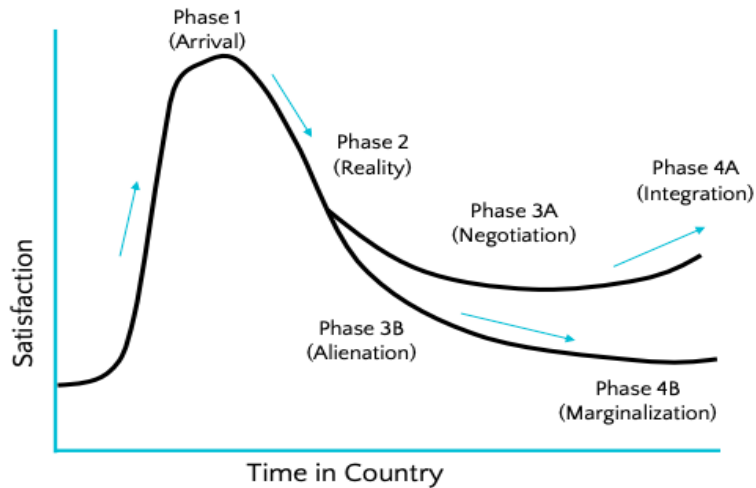
⁵⁹ CBC News, "Censorship, inequality, racism top human rights concerns in Canada, survey suggests", November 18, 2024.

Listening to the youth, I had to reflect on how school is the first place where many students, including myself, become aware of institutional discrimination and racism. It was in particular those moments of realization about identity and belonging which deeply resonated with me, making me think of how schools and other institutions of learning in particular can shape one's understanding of where one fits in the world.

According to the youth, there are several other ways that racism has manifested in schools; such as some teachers do not give opportunities for black students to talk in their class because of their accents. And sometimes, teachers do not take care to attend to the individual educational needs of black students. All these negative experiences make newcomers feel unwelcome, thus limiting their opportunities for building relationships, networking, and other social-economic engagements.

I also learned that there are significant mental health issues amongst refugees; both when they arrive in Canada and during their processes of resettlement. These are mainly a result of lived experiences in their home country and/or the traumatic processes involved in moving to Canada. Some newcomers have had experiences of travelling more than eight months to reach Canada due to immigration and border restrictions and sometimes, have even entered illegally. Coupled with that, there is also the trauma of displacement, and witnessing and fleeing from violence. Combined with the other significant challenges of resettlement I discussed here; refugee newcomers understandably have significant physical and mental health needs.

Phases of refugee Adjustment, Resettlement and integration



Adapted from the National Alliance for Multicultural Mental Health, 2008

In summary, as illustrated above by the National Alliance for Multicultural Mental Health (2008),⁶⁰ Each phase of resettlement has its lows and highs, beginning with when a person is first considered for resettlement. It starts with high levels of excitement and satisfaction; however, as one takes time to learn, adapt, resettle and integrate, the excitement and satisfactions begins to lower, giving way to the realities that life in a new community presents. Unfortunately, these barriers and challenges hinder every phase of effective resettlement and integration. The need to invest in specific programs to address these challenges is thus paramount for Manitoba to overcome these barriers contribute to effective socio-economic rights for refugees in Manitoba, and effectively integrate newcomer refugees to grow Manitoba's economy and balance its resource and labour needs.

⁶⁰ (Wilmsen, Brooke & Gifford, Sandy & Wiseman, John & Casey, 2008.)

7. Conclusion and Recommendations.

7.1. Summary of Key Learnings.

Amidst the barriers and challenges of resettlement and integration, Manitoba has remained a welcoming destination for the resettlement of refugees, with opportunities for them to rebuild their lives. The province's funding and commitments, and settlement agencies' work to welcome refugees, prove their humanitarian values and efforts to facilitate successful integration. The resettlement process itself, however, reveals some critical insights about the barriers refugees face in accessing interlinked socio-economic rights.

First, language challenges remain significant and affect major rights and benefits, such as employment, education, community inclusions, and healthcare access. Although interpretation services are available, they are always limited and time-bound to specific moments and therefore are only ever sometimes available when needed.

The other key learning outcome for me is how social work integrates human rights principles and policy to enable effective legal and socio-economic resettlement of newcomers and refugees. IRCOM, in its work, applies values and principles in the common areas of social work practices and ethical responsibilities in professional working relationships to promote social justice for individuals, groups and communities. IRCOM challenges harmful discrimination, respects ethnic and cultural diversity, and advocates for equality in resource distribution while working towards an inclusive society.⁶¹ These constitute what is termed a human rights-based approach to programs which, in essence, work towards a standard set of universal values and principles that respect and protect cultural, religious, and political differences.⁶²

⁶¹ (Manitoba College of Social Workers, Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Ethical Practices, March 2015.)

⁶² (Moeckli Daniel, Sangeeta Shah, Sandesh Sivakumaran, 2022.)

7.2. Policy recommendations

7.2.1. Child care for mothers with young children.

Although language programs and classes are available through the New Literacy Initiative Program at IRCOM, the needs of diverse learners should be accommodated by giving special attention to the needs of mothers with children. It is important to facilitate their attendance to classes, and thus it is essential to provide more child-care options and to allow greater flexibility in class schedules and locations. Overall, transitioning from a “one size fits all” language learning approach to flexible classes that cater to diverse needs is crucial for removing barriers and enhancing integration and inclusivity.

7.2.2. Foreign credential recognitions

Additionally, with support from the government, settlement agencies need to support faster methods for recognizing foreign academic credentials and diplomas to help newcomer refugees gain access to a broader range of employment opportunities promptly.⁶³ Lengthy credential recognition delays employment and affects refugees economically during the period in which they have been allocated to integrate (which is about three years for newcomers housed at IRCOM).⁶⁴ The Government of Canada's Progress Report 2009, through the Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO), noted the importance of immigrants' skills. These skills are key sources of innovation, productivity, and connection to the global market but are underutilized due to processes and challenges with credential recognition.⁶⁵ Given this, I support the range of voices that are urging the proactive engagement and commitment of all levels of government to address credential recognition issues as fast as possible to facilitate faster and more meaningful resettlement and integration.

⁶³ (Morissette, Rene, 2017.)

⁶⁴ (Bevelander, Pieter, and Ravi Pendakur, 2014, pgs., 689-709.)

⁶⁵ (IRCC, A Commitment to Foreign Credential Recognition 2009).

7.2.3. Further Investments in housing projects.

Regarding transitional housing, the Government of Canada must invest further in housing projects and extend subsidies to newcomers with limited financial resources to secure safe and affordable accommodation. The housing market in provinces also presents barriers and challenges, such as the high cost of rent, housing shortages, and other forms of discrimination against refugees. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) reports that these discriminations may persist beyond the first years of arrival if not addressed, and points to the fact that, indeed, refugees can attain more affordable housing by their third year if investments are made into projects supporting housing.⁶⁶

7.2.4. Deliveries of hands-on support training courses

Notably, as previously discussed, there have been low employment rates for newcomer refugees in the early years after arrival in Canada due to, among other things, the need for credentials, Canadian work experience, and language barriers. It is therefore important for settlement agencies to support and deliver hands-on training courses that match refugees' existing skills and other vocational traits to the labour market in Canada so that refugees can be ready to work in the short term as they try to get their credentials recognized in regulated occupations. The need for regular career information sessions, coupled with financial training, is essential to help bridge these significant employment gaps.

7.2.5. Close monitoring of private sponsorship by the Government

The Government should also provide close monitoring for private sponsorship to carefully check and evaluate whether the privately sponsored refugees/newcomers are receiving necessary resettlement services from their private sponsors as expected, and it should immediately intervene when needed.⁶⁷ Again, the government strategies should also involve refugees more actively and

⁶⁶ (Silvius, Ray, 2019.)

⁶⁷ (Ervis Martini, 2020.)

frequently in resettlement plans. This could be done by improving and enhancing refugees' awareness of readily available support after their arrival, including an outline of what sponsorship means. The goal should be building and creating relationships between refugees and sponsors based on partnership rather than dependency.

7.2.6. Enhanced social housing capacities for privately sponsored refugees.

As noted by Ervis Martani,⁶⁸ housing is a challenge for government-assisted refugees. Still, the issue also affects privately sponsored refugees, whose sponsors arrange for and cover the cost of housing during the sponsorship year.⁶⁹ Social housing capacities should be enhanced to benefit privately sponsored refugees as well, and privately sponsored refugees should not rely solely on private sponsors for support; they must also have access to the settlement services provided to government-assisted refugees.

7.3. Conclusion

This research paper explored refugee resettlement, integration and socio-economic rights, focusing on the roles of settlement agencies in Winnipeg, Manitoba. IRCOM and other settlement agencies and organizations (Welcome Place, Seven Oak Settlement Services, Family Dynamics, Manitoba Start, MANSO, and New Journey Housing) have played critical roles in the lives of refugees while supporting them in navigating the complex journeys of rebuilding their lives in a new country with different contexts and backgrounds. This organizational support in life skills, employability programs, language training, transitional housing, and education, amongst others, works to address the many socio-economic barriers that newcomer refugees face. They support the immediate survival needs of refugees, as well as their long-term integration into Canadian society. Amidst all this, newcomer refugees still encounter several barriers, as seen above.

⁶⁸ (Ibid.)

⁶⁹ (Ibid.)

Settlement agencies are working tirelessly to address these barriers, but their efforts are being constrained by limited funding and extreme budget cuts. Recently, discussions and policies around a reduction in the number of immigrants and refugees have been prolific and public, as noted by John Longhurst.⁷⁰ Popular public sentiment has in a great way turned to believe that immigrants and refugees are problems to the Canadian economy despite compelling research that shows they are actually of economic benefit.⁷¹

Overall, the ever-increasing demand for settlement services means that policymakers must prioritize programs that address systematic barriers – such as the processes of credential recognition, increased investments in affordable housing, and making a concerted effort to address chronic discrimination and racism. Addressing these challenges and shortcomings will further Winnipeg’s reputation as a city that celebrates diversity, is inclusive and equitable, and is supportive of refugees trying to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of Manitoba and Canada as a whole.

8. References

- Alexander Wiseman, Joel C Bell. 2022. *Education without evidence: Gaps in data availability for refugee, asylee, and humanitarian migrant students in US schools*. Lubbock: file:///Users/Augustine/Downloads/wiseman-bell-2021-education-without-evidence-gaps-in-data-availability-for-refugee-asylee-and-humanitarian-migrant.pdf.
- Assembly, World Medical Association General. 2004. "Ethical Principles for Medication Research Involving Human Subject." *International Journal on Bioethics* 124-129.
- Bartko, Karen. 2024. *Global News*. September 13. Accessed January 28, 2025. (<https://globalnews.ca/news/10755411/alberta-asylum-seeker-immigration-policy/>).

⁷⁰ (John Longhurst, Nov.18th, 2024.)

⁷¹ (Ibid.)

- Bevelander, Pieter, and Ravi Pendakur. 2014. "The labour market integration of refugee and family reunion immigrants: A comparison of outcomes in Canada and Sweden." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (5): 689-709.
- Boli, Richard. 2016. "Refugee settlement services in Winnipeg." Approaches, programs and organizations. *Refugee Study* 7-8.
- Canada, Federal Government of. 2023. *Immigration and Refugees Protection Act*. Vol. Amended December 2023. Minister of Justice Canada, <https://laws.justice.gc.ca/PDF/I-2.5.pdf>.
- Canada, Government of. December 2014. *Employment and Social Development Canada*. Panel Online Consultation, https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/esdc-edsc/documents/programs/foreign-credential-recognition/consultations/emp-challenges/Summary_of_the_Panel's_Online_Consultation_WP-199_EN.pdf.
- . 2023. *Immigration and Refugees Protection Act (IRPA)*. Ottawa: Minister of Justice.
- . 2018. *UNHCR Resettlement Handbook*. Ottawa: <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/3c5e55594.pdf>.
- Canada, Statistic. 2016. *Age and Sex highlight table*. Government of Canada. Ottawa, Statistic Canada 2016 Census.
- Canada, Statistic. 2016. *Average and Median Age of Canadian Born and Refugees, 2011 to 2016*. Ottawa.
- . 2018. *IRCC Permanent Residents Data Base, "An Overview of Economic Outcomes and Contributions to Refugees: Towards an Impact Story," Canadian Council for Refugees Fall Consultation*. November 27.
- Canada, UNHCR. 2017. *Are Refugees good for Canada? A look at the Canadian Refugees Integration*. <https://www.unhcr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Are-Refugees-Good-for-Canada-A-Look-at-Canadian-Refugee-Integration-English.pdf>, 4-16.
- CBC. 2024. *Censorship, inequality, and racism top human rights concerns in Canada, survey suggests*. November 18.
- Centre, Refugee Study. 2017. *Forced Migration Review Report, Issue 54*. Review Report, Refworld.
- Chaudhary, Max. 2024. *Canada Refugee Changes in 2024*. September. Accessed February 21, 2025. (<https://chaudharylaw.com/canada-refugee-changes-in-2024-what-you-need-to-know>).
- Daniel Moeckli, Sangeeta Shah, Sandesh Sivakumaran. 2022. *International Human Rights Law*. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Ervis, Martini. 2020. "Rebalancing and improving refugee resettlement in Canada." *Policy Options Politiques*, November.
- ILO. 2021. "Regional Socio-economic Integration Strategies." Geneva.

- IRCC. 2009. "A Commitment to Foreign Credential Recognition." Annual Report, Ottawa.
- IRCC. 2024. *Standing Committee on Public Account Report 9*. Sectoral Report, Ottawa: IRCC.
- IRCOM. 2021. *Annual Report 2020-2021*. Annual Program Report, Winnipeg: IRCOM.
- John, Longhurst. 2024. *Proposed cuts to refugees numbers 'troubling,' Free Press*. Winnipeg, November 18.
- Kraft, Scott. 2006. *Writing Immigrant Winnipeg: a literary map of the city through the First World War.* Manitoba History. Winnipeg, Manitoba.
- LLC, 2010-2024 Macrotrends. 2024. *Canada Refugee Statistics 1960-2024*. Accessed 02 27, 2024. <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/CAN/canada/refugee-statistics#:~:text=Canada%20refugee%20statistics%20for%202022,a%2019.15%25%20increase%20from%202020>.
- Lu Feng, Wei Yang, Jianhui and Yan Zhang. 2024. "The path of social integration of migrants in poverty alleviation relocation: A case study of Dongguan from Yunnan plateau mountainous areas, 2024." *Journal of Rural Studies* (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2024.103381>).
- Charlotte. 2008. *The International and Regional Legal Frameworks*.
- Matthew Saltmarsh, Shabia Mantoo. 2023. *UNHCR: Forced displacement continues to grow as conflicts escalate*. October 25. Accessed February 27, 2024. <https://www.unhcr.ca/news/unhcr-forced-displacement-continues-to-grow-as-conflicts-escalate/>.
- Moeckli Daniel, Sangeeta Shah, Sandesh Sivakumaran . 2022. *International Human Rights Law*. . Edited by David Harris. Vol. 4th Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Momin, Suman. 2017. *A Human Rights Based Approach to Refugees; A Look a the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Response from Germany and the United States*. Vol. 9. North Carolina: <https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1066&context=dfllsc>.
- Morissette, Rene. 2017. *Barriers to labour mobility in Canada: Survey-based evidence*. Statistics Canada, Statistic Canada.
- Nadzeya Laurentyseva, Alessandra Venturini. 2017. *The Social Integration of Immigrants and the Role of Policy*. Vol. 52. 5 vols. Brussels: <https://www.intereconomics.eu/pdf-download/year/2017/number/5/article/the-social-integration-of-immigrants-and-the-role-of-policy-a-literature-review.html>.
- Nation, United. 1951. "Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Adopted July 28, 1951." July 28. Accessed December 04, 2024. <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/3b66c2aa10.pdf>.
- Silvius, Ray. 2019. "Making social housing friendly for resettling refugees. ." *Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*,

- UNHCR. 2020. *Are refugees good for Canada? A look at Canada Refugees Integration*. UNHCR Annual Report, Ottawa, Canada: <https://www.unhcr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Are-Refugees-Good-for-Canada-A-Look-at-Canadian-Refugee-Integration-English.pdf>.
- UNHCR. 2022. *Global Trends 2022 Report*. The Global Trends report and the Mid-Year Trends report., <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/global-trends-report-2022.pdf>, 2.
- . 1979. *Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status: Under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. Geneva: UNHCR.
- UNHCR. 2024. *Mid-year trends report 2024*. Mid Year Report, UNHCR, 6.
- . 1960. *The 1951 Convention relating to the status of stateless persons*. https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons_ENG.pdf.
- Wilmsen, Brooke & Gifford, Sandy & Wiseman, John & Casey. 2008. *Refugee Resettlement in Regional and Rural Victoria*. Impact and Policy Issues.
- Workers, Manitoba College of Social. 2015. *Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Ethical Practices*. Winnipeg, March.
- Ziersch, Anna, Moira Walsh and Clemence Due. 2023. "Having a Good Friend, a good neighbour, can help you find yourself." Social Capital and Integration for People from Refugee and Asylum seeking Background in Australia,." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (doi:10.1080/1369183X.2023.2177628) 49.