



THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

Master of Public Policy Capstone Project

Refugee Claims and Successful Claimants in Canada 2000-2014: A Description of a
Forgotten Reality in Canada

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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of PPOL 623 and completion of the
requirements for the Master of Public Policy degree.

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Acknowledgments

This study and the completion of my master's degree would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of many people throughout the entire process. In particular, I would like to thank the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary for letting me be part of their selected students and giving me invaluable tools to improve current policies and develop new and better policies when needed. To Dr. Ron Kneebone, who thanks to his experience, knowledge and comments contributed to the development and completion of the present Capstone Project.

Similarly, I would like to thank friends and acquaintances that through their personal refugee experiences and stories motivated the development of this research.

More importantly, I want to show gratitude my family in Colombia who would always be there encouraging me every moment. My family in Canada, and the Fridhandler family who patiently waited and supported me in countless ways for the completion of this study. And the Poitras family, who with enormous kindness always supported me and “pushed” me until the last period of this research... And of course Erika Poitras, for always being there for me with her endless support and smile.

Executive Summary

Current Canadian immigration and refugee provisions define two different types of refugees depending on where the applicants are located when submitting a claim (from within Canada or elsewhere), giving them different procedures and conditions to apply, as well as different benefits and support once their claim is approved. Thus, under the In-Canada Asylum Program, if the claim is successfully submitted in person from within Canada at any Port Of Entry (POE), the applicant receives a Refugee Claimant status and is entitled to stay in the country under certain conditions and limited rights while his/her application is processed. In turn, through the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program, if the applicant's claim is submitted from outside Canada, refugee applicants have to remain outside the country until a decision on his/her claim is reached.

Once a refugee claim submitted from outside the country is approved, the applicant is allowed to come to Canada and is eligible to be sponsored by private entities or public funds. These refugees are known as Sponsored Refugees or Resettled Refugees and are given particular benefits and support. Refugees granted status after applying from within Canada (Successful Refugee Claimants), on the other hand, are permitted to remain in the country but without any type of sponsorship and with different levels of support.

Using information provided to the author by Statistics Canada, this paper shows to be false the common perception that most refugees come to Canada after applying from overseas and arrive supported by the government or by private funds. In fact, the number of refugees annually given Refugee Claimant status in Canada significantly exceeds the number of Sponsored Refugees in the country. Moreover, the number of Successful Refugee Claimants is also greater than the number of Resettled Refugees in the country. As this research suggests, despite the efforts made by the government to reduce the number of claims submitted from within Canada along with the number of Successful Refugee Claimants, the Inland Refugee Program continues to be the main source of refugees in the country over the period 2000-2014.

Despite the importance of government and private sponsorships for those fearing persecution in their home country, the abundant attention given to these efforts has led to less attention being paid to the challenges faced by refugees making claims from within the country.

This study argues that the Canadian humanitarian tradition has been significantly affected by government policies enacted since 2001. Those policies, along with the implementation of the new Immigration and Refugee Act, have, in recent years, shaped a more selective and, in cases, discriminatory refugee policy. Specifically, through the establishment of two

different refugee programs, procedures and rights given to both refugees applications made and approved from within Canada and from specific world regions, Canada has toughened its refugee policies in an attempt to restrict the entrance of people with unfounded refugee claims who can possibly pose a threat to the security of Canadians.

This has indirectly (or directly) led to the establishment of two different classes of refugees. The first class is composed of Resettled Refugees sponsored by either the government or private funds, with different benefits and support during their settlement in Canada and with a likelihood of success in the country due to the support given. These are the refugees targeted and brought from overseas who, based on the level of support provided them, seem to be more desired and wanted. The second class of refugees is composed of those refugees who receive little support during their settlement in the country (Successful Refugee Claimants) and who as a result face greater difficulty in managing a successful integration into Canadian society. The latter class of refugees, due to its unattended nature and number leads to very distinct integration experiences among refugees compared to those of the first class, limits their contribution to the Canadian prosperity, increases their vulnerability in the country and significantly increases the burden on local and provincial governments in need of providing social assistance to those new residents of Canada as they are more likely to rely on social assistance and informal support for longer periods of time than their counterparts.

This paper aims to be a milestone to the limited knowledge existent on Refugee Claimants and Successful Refugee Claimants after their arrival in the country. It provides an analysis of the total number of refugee claims submitted from 2000 to 2014 across the country and provinces and territories as a whole. Similarly, this research examines the number of refugee claims processed, approved and refused in Canada over the period 2002-2014, as well as offers an analysis on the rate of approval and refusal of claims over that period of time. Each analysis provided in this paper takes into consideration the differences in numbers found by provinces, gender and country of persecution.

Recognizing the dimension in number and vulnerability, as well as increasing public awareness and research on Refugee Claimants and Successful Refugee Claimants, revisiting the current Canadian refugee policy, reexamining the standards used to consider countries as “safe”, and increasing the funds available to support the second class of refugees by engaging private donors as it has been done with resettled refugees throughout the years and more recently with Syrian refugees, are key elements to take into account in order to reduce the vulnerability that thousands of refugee claimants and successful claimants face in Canada.

Introduction

Canada is recognized for its humanitarian tradition in providing a safer place to live for people fearing persecution or afraid to return to their home country due to a war or violence taking place there. This humanitarian tradition historically has responded to violent events occurring around the world in countries where people have been systematically displaced and forced to leave.

Starting with refugees from the American Revolution in the late 18th Century, Canada has offered protection to people from almost every continent in the world. Polish, Jewish, Ukrainians, Chileans, Bengalis, Cambodians, and more recently Latin Americans, Eastern Europeans and Africans¹ have been some of the citizens and places where most of the refugees in Canada have come from. Each group of refugees has posed important challenges to the rights and policies offered to them when arriving in Canada, most of which have resulted in the adoption of international agreements² and its subsequent harmonization with the Canadian national regulations on immigration and refugee matters.³

Current Canadian immigration and refugee provisions define two different types of refugees depending on where the applicants are located when submitting a claim (from within Canada or elsewhere), giving them different procedures and conditions to apply, as well as different benefits and support once their claim is approved. Thus, under the In-Canada Asylum Program, if the claim is successfully submitted in person from within Canada at any Port Of Entry (POE), the applicant receives a Refugee Claimant status and is entitled to stay in the country under certain conditions and limited rights while his/her application is processed. In turn, through the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program, if the applicant's claim is submitted from outside Canada, refugee applicants have to remain outside the country until a decision on his/her claim is reached.

Once a refugee claim submitted from outside the country is approved, the applicant is allowed to come to Canada and is eligible to be sponsored by private entities or public funds. These refugees are known as Sponsored Refugees or Resettled Refugees and are given particular benefits and support. Refugees granted status after applying from within

¹ "Canada: A History of Refuge," last modified June 3, 2016, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/games/teachers-corner/refugee/refuge.asp>

² International regulations such as the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol (1967) and the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. These provisions establish minimum standards for the treatment of refugees and prevent their expulsion to countries where their lives could be at risk.

³ Some of them are the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Immigration Acts (1952, 1976, 2001), and their corresponding amendments and regulations.

Canada (Successful Refugee Claimants), on the other hand, are permitted to remain in the country but without any type of sponsorship and with different levels of support.

As will be discussed in this paper, despite the fact that the number of Refugee Claimants is almost double the number of Sponsored Refugees brought into Canada per year, and that the number of Successful Claimants from within Canada is similar to the number of Resettled Refugees in the country, the attention given to refugee matters in the country by different actors have mainly focused on the latter group of refugees.

This can be seen in the recent effort to bring to the country 25,000 Syrian refugees in response to the humanitarian crisis taking place in the Middle Eastern country with thousands of people displaced. In particular, as the Liberal government has committed to continuing Canada's humanitarian tradition and keeping the campaign promises made during the most recent federal election, private sponsors, non-governmental organizations, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments have been encouraged to get involved in welcoming the number of Syrian refugees targeted.⁴

Despite the importance that sponsoring and bringing new refugees to Canada have for those fearing persecution in their home country, the over-attention given to this has led to less attention being paid to Refugee Claimants and Successful Refugee Claimants and the challenges that they face in the country.

Academia, media and politicians have focused more on analyzing and working on Resettled Refugee related issues than on the “big picture” of all refugee matters in Canada. As a result, most of the public's attention has focused on those refugees brought in to Canada from abroad rather than on those currently living among us. The latter are too often forgotten and publically unattended.

This paper aims to expand the very limited knowledge that exists on Refugee Claimants and Successful Claimants after their submission within the country. Using data obtained from Statistics Canada,⁵ it will provide an analysis of the total number of refugee claims submitted from 2000 to 2014 across the country and provinces and territories as a whole. Similarly, this research will examine the number of refugee claims processed, approved and refused in Canada over the period 2002-2014, as well as offer an analysis on the rate of approval and refusal of claims over that period of time. Each analysis provided in this paper takes into consideration the differences in numbers found by provinces, gender and country of persecution.

⁴ “Backgrounder. #WelcomeRefugees to Canada,” last modified November 24, 2015, http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1021909&_ga=1.141215991.476349099.1331866809

⁵ Since this information is not available online, the data used was formally requested to Statistics Canada and received on September 2015.

As this research will discuss, recent immigration and refugee policies have contributed to shape a more selective and, in cases, discriminatory refugee policy, leading to the establishment of two different classes of refugees in the country, one implicitly deemed more desirable, better funded and better supported (Sponsored Refugees) than the other (Successful Refugee Claimants). However, despite the efforts made by the government to reduce the number of claims submitted from within Canada along with the number of Successful Refugee Claimants, the Inland Refugee Program continues to be the main source of refugees in the country over the period 2000-2014.

This analysis is divided in six parts. First, it offers a background of the immigration and refugee policy implemented over the period 2000-2014 in Canada, as well as a description of the refugee types under the current Canadian policy. Second, it delivers an overview on the number of Sponsored Refugees in the country considering mainly the country of origin and the province of destination of them. The third and fourth section provide recent numbers on Refugee Claimants and Successful Claimants over the period of time stated and taking into account the distribution of gender, the provinces of submission, approval and refusal of claims, and the country of origin of both the claims submitted and the claims approved and refused. Section four also includes an analysis on the rate of approval and refusal of the claims submitted by some applicants from certain countries of origin.

In section five, this study takes into consideration the numbers presented beforehand and proceeds to analyze the impact of the refugee policies implemented on the number of Refugee Claimants (amount of claims approved and refused) between 2000 and 2014. Finally, in section six, this research discusses the policy implications and challenges that the numbers described and the analysis made brings to the country. Some conclusion are made after this last section.

Canadian Immigration and Refugee Policy Background: 2000-2014

The current *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) replaced the past Immigration Act in 2001. The provisions of the new act represent an attempt to address issues such as complexity, difficulty to understand and lack of flexibility to allow effective actions.⁶ In particular, and due to the widespread threat of terrorism after 9/11, the IRPA successfully coped with the international expectations on fighting terrorism by matching part of its regulations to the international immigration standards, particularly to those established in the United States.

⁶ Estibalitz Jimenez and Francois Crepeau, "The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act," *Policy Horizons Canada*, accessed November, 2015, <http://www.horizons.gc.ca/eng/content/feature-columnist-%E2%80%93-immigration-and-refugee-protection-act>

Thus, while this new Immigration Act primarily focused on family reunification, the contribution of immigration to economic development, and the protection of refugees,⁷ it also addressed the possible risks and threats that permissive immigration measures could bring to Canadian security. In consequence, the new Immigration Act was harmonized to the “new Anti-Terrorism Plan (the *Anti-terrorism Act* and the new bill C-55, the *Public Safety Act*) and the two joint Canada-U.S. declarations (Joint Statement on Cooperation on Border Security and Regional Migration Issues and the Canada-U.S. Smart Border Declaration).”⁸

As will be mentioned, these measures brought significant consequences for future Refugee Claimants imposing provisions with stricter conditions of eligibility for them based on security grounds, tightening the border and implementing discretionary powers of detention which has shaped the Canadian refugee protection system in such a way that people in need of protection would be looked first as a potential threat than as human beings.

Concerns regarding immigration and the risk that having a lax immigration system could have for increasing the chance of terrorists coming to the country aroused in public opinion in Canada, reinforcing “negative perceptions of immigrants in general and threatens to make refugees the scapegoats for society’s collective insecurity.”⁹ In fact, people in favor of strengthening immigration policies and demanding “stricter controls” and less immigration increased in Canada after 9/11.¹⁰ As such, the government in order to cope with the demands of harmonization of immigration standards with the U.S. increased resources to improve security in the border and stop “those who pose any kind of security threat from coming to Canada.”¹¹

In consequence, “agent numbers along the border were tripled (from 300 to 900) (...), to close up the open prairie and to step-up security checks at busy border crossings, with enormous resultant delays.”¹² Similarly, over 3 billion dollars were allocated to improve border security with specific funds directed to x-ray machines, ion scanners and other detection equipment, as well as to speed up refugee and immigration screening as well as removal process and detention.¹³ Other measures such as asking airlines to provide passenger information prior arrival and implementing visa requirements for countries source of refugees were also implemented to prevent people from arriving or coming into Canada without proper documentation or possible links with terrorism.

⁷ Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Canada Facts and Figures. Immigrant Overview, Permanent Residents* (Canada: 2015), <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/2014-Facts-Permanent.pdf>

⁸ Jimenez and Crepeau, “The Immigration and refugee Act.”

⁹ Jimenez and Crepeau, “The Immigration and refugee Act.”

¹⁰ Howard Adelman, “Canadian Borders and Immigration Post 9/11,” *The International Migration Review*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Spring, 2002).

¹¹ Adelman, “Canadian Borders,” 21.

¹² Adelman, “Canadian Borders,” 20.

¹³ Adelman, “Canadian Borders,” 23-24.

Likewise, the provisions implemented through the IRPA made the submission of a claim in Canada more difficult and made it more difficult to be granted protection from within the country. Certainly, the IRPA “expands inadmissibility categories” on the basis of security, serious and organized criminality, health and financial reasons, and terrorism (although it is a concept not defined under the regulations or the Act).¹⁴ Among other changes, the consideration of a claim would be now suspended at any moment by the Refugee Protection Division and the Refugee Appeal Division if one of the grounds of inadmissibility is found during the process with no right to appeal the decision made. Similarly, “security screening will be initiated for refugee applicants as soon as they make their claim.”¹⁵

Furthermore, as Jimenez and Crépeau state, the IRPA also increased and strengthened powers of detention, toughened penalties for persons who break immigration laws, reinforced removal orders and strengthened interdiction provisions, imposing significant barriers to refugee claimants awaiting for a decision on their claims with the risk of being found ineligible and removed from the country¹⁶.

In addition to the provisions established through the IRPA, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) was created in 2003 with the purpose of “providing integrated border services that support national security and public safety priorities and facilitate the free flow of persons and goods.”¹⁷ This Agency was the result of the cooperation agreements referred with the United States and by which Canada agreed to undertake the measures needed to ensure the security of North America after 9/11.

Accordingly, among its duties, the CBSA, “with approximately 1,200 points across Canada and at 39 international locations” was made responsible for detaining those people who may pose a threat to Canada, removing those who are inadmissible to Canada, including those involved in terrorism, organized crime, war crimes or crimes against humanity.¹⁸ As such, and representing the interests of CIC, “the CBSA investigates, detects, and apprehends violators of the Immigration & Refugee Protection Act”, as well as “conducts lengthy and complex investigations of suspected war criminals, national security cases, and organized crime groups.”¹⁹

Likewise, the cooperation between Canada and the U.S. strengthened after 9/11 resulted in the so-called “Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement”, coming into effect on December 2005. Under this new agreement, both countries agreed on sharing responsibility

¹⁴ Jimenez and Crepeau, “The Immigration and refugee Act.”

¹⁵ Jimenez and Crepeau, “The Immigration and refugee Act.”

¹⁶ Jimenez and Crepeau, “The Immigration and refugee Act.”

¹⁷ “Canada Border Services Agency Act,” last modified June 3, 2016, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-1.4/page-1.html>

¹⁸ “Canada Border Services Agency. What We Do,” last modified March 27, 2012, <http://cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/agency-agence/what-quoi-eng.html>

¹⁹ “Canada Border Services Agency. What We Do.”

for refugee claims and better managing “the flow of refugee claimants at the shared land border”²⁰ and as such stated that “refugee claimants are required to request refugee protection in the first safe country they arrive in.”²¹ In practice, since both countries recognized each other as “safe” due to the “respect human rights” and “high degree of protection to asylum seekers”²² within their boundaries, potential refugee claimants are expected to apply for refugee protection in the country that they first reached, the United States or Canada. Hence, if a claim is submitted by an individual at any Canada - U.S. land-border it should not be considered unless the claimant meets at least one of the four types of exceptions established under the agreement.²³

Similarly, between 2010 and 2012, the Federal Government introduced a number of changes to the inland refugee determination process in Canada through the *Balanced Refugee Reform Act* (2010) and *Protecting Canadas’s Immigration System Act* (2012), both coming into force on June and December of 2012 respectively. Though the latter Act is intended to amend the former in different ways, both have the purpose of accelerating “the inland refugee determination process”, addressing “the problem of human smuggling”, dissuading “non-genuine refugees from applying for protection,”²⁴ and protecting “the safety and security of the Canadian public.”²⁵ In particular, as Bechard and Elgersma (2012) point out, the changes implemented to the refugee system resulted in creating groups of Refugee Claimants²⁶ giving them different treatment in terms of hearing timelines, appealing rights, detention and removal, and applications for work permit and permanent resident status.²⁷

²⁰ “Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement,” last modified July 23, 2009, <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/agency-agence/stca-etps-eng.html>

²¹ “Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement,” last modified July 24, 2015, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/departement/laws-policy/menu-safethird.asp>

²² “Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country.”

²³ These exceptions apply if the claimant has a family member in Canada, is an unaccompanied minor, holds a valid Canadian visa, work or study permit, has been charged with or convicted of an offence that could subject him/her to death penalty in the United States or a third country. Similarly, this agreement does not apply in the applicant has arrived by air or by water from the U.S. Up to 2009, nationals of a country to which Canada has temporarily suspended removals (Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Iraq, Liberia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe) were included in the exceptions of the agreement. For more information about the current exceptions of the agreement see: “Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country.”

²⁴ Julie Bechard and Sandra Elgersma, “Legislative Summary. Bill C-31: An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Balanced Refugee Reform Act, the Marine Transportation Security Act and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act,” accessed December, 2015, http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/LegislativeSummaries/bills_ls.asp?ls=c31&Parl=41&Ses=1

²⁵ “Backgrounder. Protecting our streets and communities from Criminal and National Security Threats,” last modified June 29, 2012, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/departement/media/backgrounders/2012/2012-06-29k.asp>

²⁶ These groups, as stated by Bechard and Elgersma (3) are: Standard Claimants, Designated Countries of Origin, Manifestly unfounded Claims, No Credible Basis, Designated Foreign Nationals, and Claimants under the exceptions of the Safe Third Country Agreement. See: “Legislative Summary.”

²⁷ “Legislative Summary.”

Specifically, the federal government established the categories of Designated Foreign Nationals and Designated Countries of Origin in an attempt to prevent possible “criminal and national security threats,”²⁸ as well as “deter abuse of the refugee system by people who come from countries generally considered safe.”²⁹ As such, through the first category, and in an effort to stop undocumented immigration in the country, government authorities would be entitled to detain, impose conditions of release, and remove³⁰ “members of a group that is designated by the Ministry of Public Safety as an ‘irregular arrival’.”³¹ In particular, these irregular arrivals potentially involved human smuggling or trafficking with no documents or fraudulently obtained documents making difficult for Canadian authorities to confirm their identity and, therefore, potential security and criminal threats.³² These individuals are prohibited to apply for permanent residence for five years even if their claim is accepted.³³

Likewise, the government created a list of safe countries of origin which include those “countries that do not normally produce refugees, but do respect human rights and offer state protection.”³⁴ Thus, refugee claims submitted by applicants from any of the listed countries will have their claims processed faster and be sent home quickly in case of being found ineligible, as well as will not be able to apply for a work permit upon arrival in Canada.³⁵ Currently this list, composed of 42 countries, include the United States, Mexico and Hungary, among others.³⁶

Refugee Types: Sponsored Refugees and Refugee Claimants

As a country party to the 1951 United Nation Convention Related to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, Canada has agreed to protect those “who have been forced to leave their country and who are afraid to return because of war, violence or persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.”³⁷ In order to protect refugees, the Canadian refugee system under the IRPA of 2002 establishes two different refugee programs by which people from within and outside

²⁸ “Backgrounder. Protecting our streets.”

²⁹ “Backgrounder. Designated Country of Origin,” last modified February 1, 2013, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/media/backgrounders/2012/2012-11-30.asp>

³⁰ “Backgrounder. Designated Country.”

³¹ “Legislative Summary.”

³² “Backgrounder. Protecting our streets.”

³³ “Claiming Refugee Protection Under the New System. A Basic Overview”, accessed November, 2015, <http://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/canadas-refugee-process/summary-of-the-process/>

³⁴ “Designated Countries of Origin,” last modified January 12, 2016, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/reform-safe.asp>

³⁵ “Designated Countries of Origin.”

³⁶ For a detailed list of the Designated Countries of Origin to date, see: “Designated Countries of Origin.”

³⁷ “Canada: A History of Refuge.”

Canada can apply so long the applicant fulfill certain requirements. These two programs are, namely, “the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program, for people seeking protection from outside Canada; and the In-Canada Asylum Program for people making refugee protection claims from within Canada.”³⁸

The first program is intended to grant protection to people that have been forced to leave their home country and in many cases happen to live in refugee camps along with their families. These refugees are identified and selected with the assistance of the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and resettled to Canada under the Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR) program providing them with immediate and essential services as well as income support under the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) to support their initial settlement in Canada.³⁹ Similarly, refugees selected from abroad can be supported by private sponsors⁴⁰ who are “responsible for providing financial and emotional support to privately sponsored refugees for the duration of the sponsorship period, or until the refugee becomes financially independent if this should occur during the sponsorship period.”⁴¹

The second refugee program, in turn, aims to provide “protection to people in Canada who have a well-founded fear of persecution or are at risk of torture, or cruel or unusual punishment in their home countries.”⁴² A claim for this type of refugee protection can be made by speaking to an officer at any inland office or port of entry (POE) (airport, seaport or Canada-United States border crossing).⁴³ This officer from the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA, for claims made at any POE), or Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC, for claims submitted at inland offices) will decide whether the claim is eligible or not to be referred to the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB).⁴⁴ If the claim is eligible, the applicant is officially considered a Refugee Claimant and receives a Notice to Appear for a Hearing that tells them when and where the claim will be heard by the Refugee Protection Division (RPD). The hearing is a very decisive moment in the refugee protection process since a member of the RPD decides whether or not the refugee claim is accepted.

³⁸ “The refugee System in Canada,” last modified May 13, 2016, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/canada.asp>

³⁹ “The refugee System.”

⁴⁰ There are currently four groups of private sponsors recognized in Canada, namely, Sponsorship Agreements Holders (SAHs), Constituent Groups (CGs), Groups of Five (G5), and Community Sponsors (CSs). For more general information about these groups see: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, “Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program,” (Canada: 2016), accessed February, 2016, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/ref-sponsor.pdf>

⁴¹ “The refugee System.”

⁴² “The refugee System.”

⁴³ “Claimant’s Guide,” last modified January 21, 2016, <http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/Eng/RefClaDem/Pages/ClaDemGuide.aspx#port>

⁴⁴ “Claimant’s Guide.”

Depending on the country of citizenship of the applicant,⁴⁵ the hearing would be scheduled within 60 days after the claim has been referred to the RPD.⁴⁶

Once the applicants are recognized as Refugee Claimants they are permitted to remain in Canada until a final decision on their claim is reached by the RPD. During this time, these claimants are given a temporary status in Canada by which they are entitled to pursue a short term education,⁴⁷ work (if granted a work permit),⁴⁸ and receive basic health care and prescription drug coverage only if required to prevent or treat a disease posing a risk to public health.⁴⁹

Though similar to Resettled Refugees when their application for refugee status is approved, Successful Refugee Claimants are granted the right to remain and live, work and study in Canada upon approval of permanent residency. However, unlike Resettled Refugees, Successful Refugee Claimants are offered different type of assistance in Canada. On the one hand, while the former receive immediate and essential services upon their arrival, monthly income support,⁵⁰ and assistance to help them to settle and adapt to life in Canada,⁵¹ the latter group are just entitled to the settlement and adaptation support with no income support or immediate services.⁵²

On the other hand, while Successful Refugee Claimants and protected status are given the same basic health care coverage they were receiving while waiting for a decision and until they qualify for provincial or territorial health insurance, Resettled Refugees are granted with the same basic coverage but also with supplemental and prescription drug coverage for as long as the they receive income support from the RAP or its equivalent in Quebec or under sponsorship, for up to a maximum of 24 months.⁵³

These differences might be considered subtle and justified by the idea that Resettled Refugees are taken out straight from the war zone where humanitarian crisis are taking place and that there is not any other way for them to cope with their vulnerability rather than keep

⁴⁵ If the applicant is national from a Designated Country of Origin (DCO) (countries that are not likely to produce refugees because they are considered as safe countries), his/her hearing would be held within 30 – 45 days after referral of the claim.

⁴⁶ “Claimant’s Guide.”

⁴⁷ “Study Permits: Refugee and Protected Persons,” last modified May 28, 2014, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/temp/students/protected.asp>

⁴⁸ “Know your rights – Refugees,” last modified April 26, 2016, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/arriving-rights.asp>

⁴⁹ “Interim Federal Health Program: Summary of Coverage,” last modified March 31, 2016, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/summary-ifhp.asp>

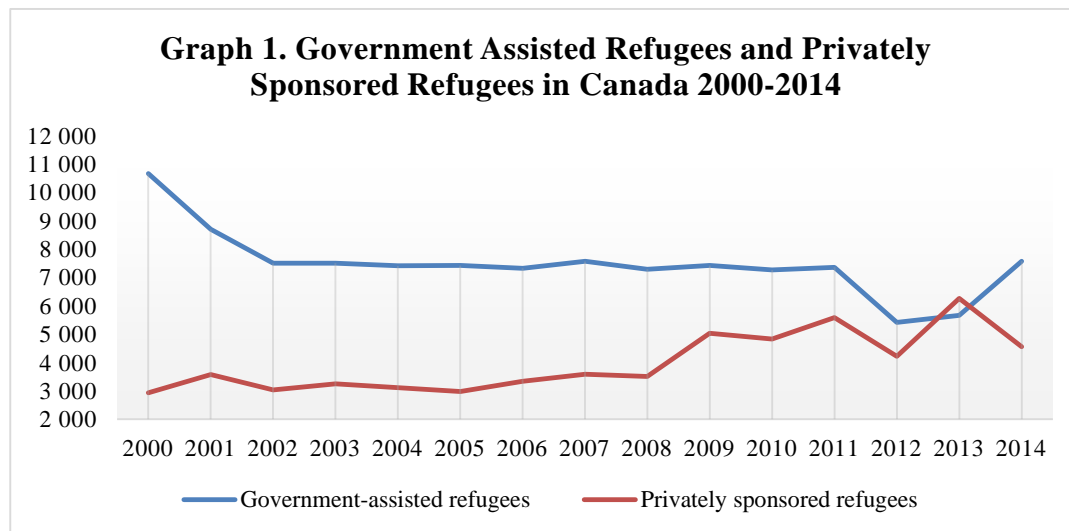
⁵⁰ This also includes temporary accommodation, help to find permanent accommodation, needs assessments, information and orientation, links to other federal and provincial programs, and other settlement services.

⁵¹ As well as language training, employment orientation, transportation assistance, translation and interpretation services, among others.

⁵² “The refugee System.”

⁵³ “Interim Federal Health.”

fleeing, and therefore they need more support. However, despite the fact that these ideas are well founded and have contributed, thanks to the media coverage, to increasing the awareness, concern and funding for those refugees, all the euphoria this generates, contributes to underestimate the vulnerability that Refugee Claimants face in the country, even when their claims are approved.



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Permanent Residents 1980-2014."

Different measures have been implemented over the period 2000-2014 in order to diminish the threat that lax immigration and refugee policies could bring to the security of Canadians with a significant emphasis on the possible risks that refugees could bring. The following section will briefly describe the flux of the number of Sponsored Refugees and, in greater detail, of Refugee Claimants over the period 2000-2014 in an attempt to later discuss to what extent the policies implemented during that period of time effectively affected positively or negatively the submission of claims in the country.

A closer view to the numbers will show that despite of the attention generated towards Resettled Refugees in Canada, Refugee Claimants also entail a significant challenge to the country in coping with their needs and reducing their vulnerability. In fact, the number of Refugee Claimants received in Canada almost double the total number of Resettled Refugees annually received. Moreover, the Refugee Claims annually approved is similar to the number of refugees resettled per year in Canada.

[Sponsored Refugees: An Overview](#)

According to Statistics Canada, from 2000 to 2014, 171,938 refugees were accepted to come into Canada through the Government-assisted refugee program and privately

sponsored refugee program. Of that total, 65.2% were assisted by the government and 34.8% by private funds.

Over this period of time, the government has assisted most of the Resettled Refugees in Canada with a steadily increase in the private sponsor participation in resettling refugees since 2008 with a slight drop in 2012 and a recovery in 2013. These fluctuations can be explained by the changes in the regulations made by the federal government in 2011 and 2012 limiting the amount and the source of refugees to be brought, making the refugee system in Canada “less global and more targeted.”⁵⁴ In particular, the elimination of the Source Country Class in 2011, by which the government and private sponsors were able to “resettle persons who are in a refugee-like situation but remain in their country of origin,”⁵⁵ contributed to decreasing the number of refugees resettled in Canada not only by private sponsors but mostly by the government.⁵⁶

Likewise, the imposition of caps on private sponsorship starting in 2011 for certain Canadian missions,⁵⁷ as well as the upsurge in the humanitarian crisis in Syria and Iraq urging for an increase in the quota for refugees from those countries, explains the fluctuation in the number of refugees privately and government sponsored from 2011 to 2014. Thus, as shown in graph 1, although between 2013 and 2014 the number of refugees privately sponsored reached 608 refugees more than those resettled by the government, in 2014 the number of government assisted refugees went up to 7,573 while the privately sponsored fell to 4,560.

Nonetheless, the recent call for actions to support Syrian refugees has echoed in the private sector expected to get involved along with the government in resettling refugees in the country. As a result, as of January 31, 2016, in order to reach the target of 25,000 Syrian refugees resettled by the end of February 2016, starting in November 4 2015, 15,157 refugees landed in Canada from which 8,767 are being government assisted and 5,341 privately sponsored.⁵⁸ This represents an increase of 3,024 (25%) Resettled Refugees (1,194 and 781 government assisted and privately sponsored respectively) compared to the total of refugees brought in 2014. This is a significant increase in the number of Refugees

⁵⁴ “Important Changes in Canada’s Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program,” last modified January, 2013, <http://ccrweb.ca/en/changes-private-sponsorship-refugees#FN7>

⁵⁵ “Operational Bulletin 346 – October 7, 2011. Repeal of the Source Country Class of Humanitarian-Protected Persons Abroad,” last modified October 7, 2011, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/manuals/bulletins/2011/ob347.asp>

⁵⁶ This changes in the regulation significantly affected applications made from Colombia where the applications submitted from 2005 to 2009 represented “more than the upper range set for all resettled refugees in Canada’s annual immigration plan.” For more information see: “Canada Gazette. Regulations Amending the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations,” last modified March 19, 2011, <http://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2011/2011-03-19/html/reg3-eng.html>

⁵⁷ “Important Changes.”

⁵⁸ “#Welcome Refugees: Key Figures,” last accessed January 31, 2016, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/milestones/data.asp>

Resettled in Canada if taking into account that the average of refugees resettled from 2005 to 2014 was over 11,400 refugees, and that this increase was reached in only two months.

Regarding the country of citizenship of the resettled refugees, from 1980 to 2010, most of them have predominately come from Asian, African and the Middle Eastern such as Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Iraq and Afghanistan,⁵⁹ as a result of the internal conflicts experienced in each of those countries. Only one Latin American country (Colombia) is part of the top ten countries of refugees sponsored to Canada.

Table 1. Top ten Privately and Government Sponsored Refugees by Country of Origin⁶⁰

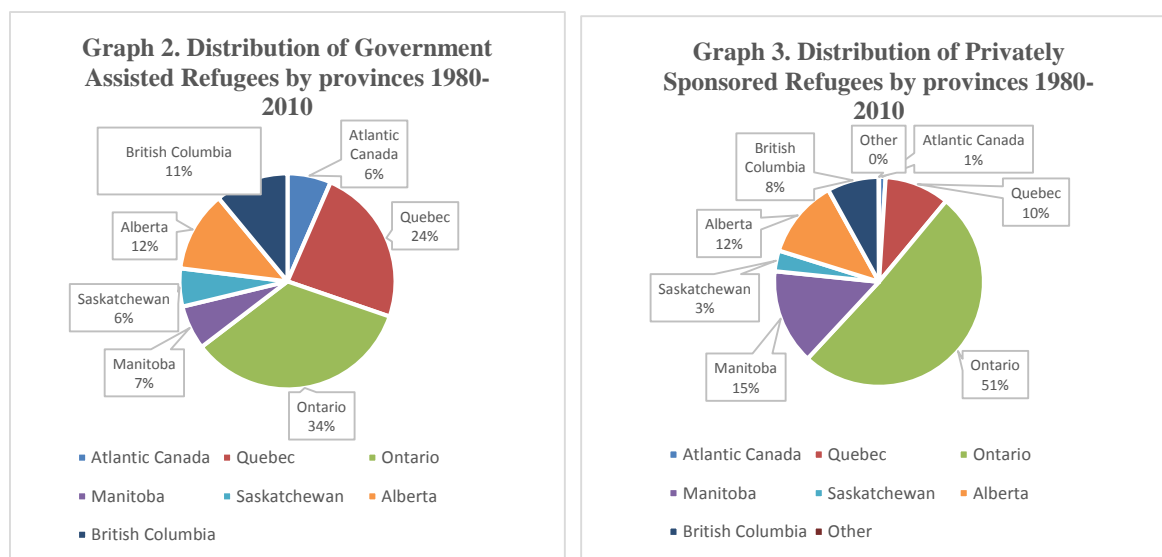
Top	Privately Sponsored	Government Sponsored
1	Sri Lanka	Turkey
2	Hungary	Iran
3	Syria	Colombia
4	Sudan	Ethiopia
5	Somalia	Myanmar (Burma)
6	Ethiopia	Afghanistan
7	Eritrea	Congo
8	Afghanistan	Somalia
9	Iraq	Bhutan
10		Iraq

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles. Government-Assisted Refugees* and *IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles. Privately Sponsored Refugees*

⁵⁹ Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles. Government-Assisted Refugees. Appendix: Data Tables* (Canada: 2012), last accessed January, 2016, http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/imdb/GAR_tables-e.pdf; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles. Privately Sponsored Refugees. Appendix: Data Tables* (Canada: 2012), last accessed January, 2016, http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/imdb/PSR_3.pdf

⁶⁰ The source used to elaborate this table did not have information available regarding the tenth country of origin with the most privately Sponsored Refugees in Canada.

These Resettled Refugees have been distributed in different provinces among the country with a great predominance of refugees settled in Ontario and Quebec. However, as shown in Graph 2 and 3, those refugees brought by the government seem to be more spread among the country than those brought by private sponsors. In fact, the latter group are more concentrated in provinces such as Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and Quebec.

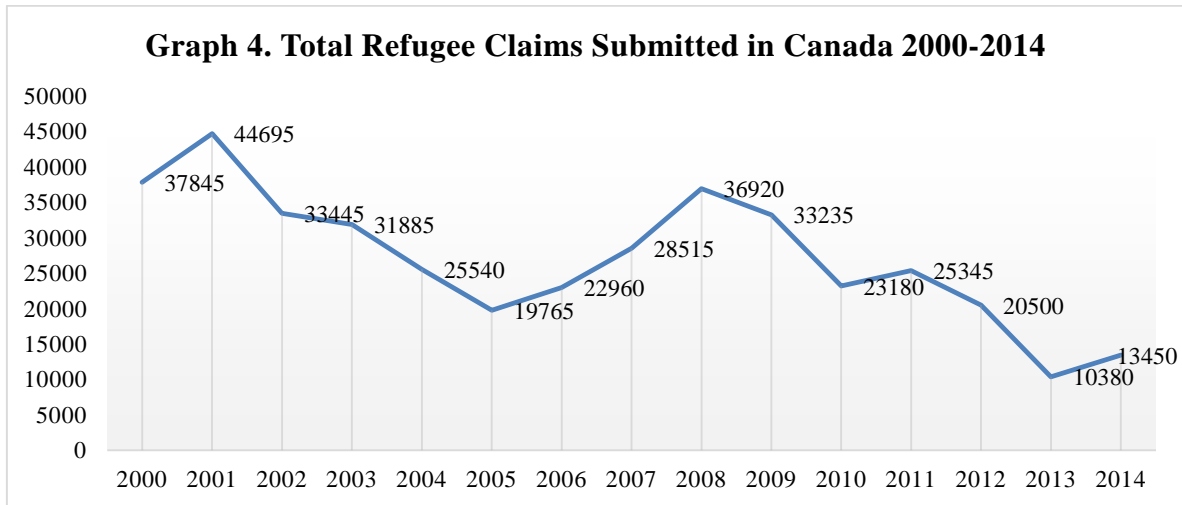


Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles. Government-Assisted Refugees* and *IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles. Privately Sponsored Refugees*

Refugee Claimants: The Numbers⁶¹

From 2000 to 2014, 407,750 refugee claims were submitted in Canada at Ports Of Entry (POE) and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) offices. As can be seen in graph 4, the number of claims submitted in the country has significantly fluctuated over that period of time with a gradual fall in 2005, decreasing by 24,930 (55.8%) the claims made in Canada compared to those made in 2001. A similar drop was experienced years later when the number of claims went from 36,920 in 2008 to 10,380 in 2013, falling by 26,540 (37.2%). However, as can be also notice, a significant increase of 86.8% in the claims submitted between 2005 and 2008.

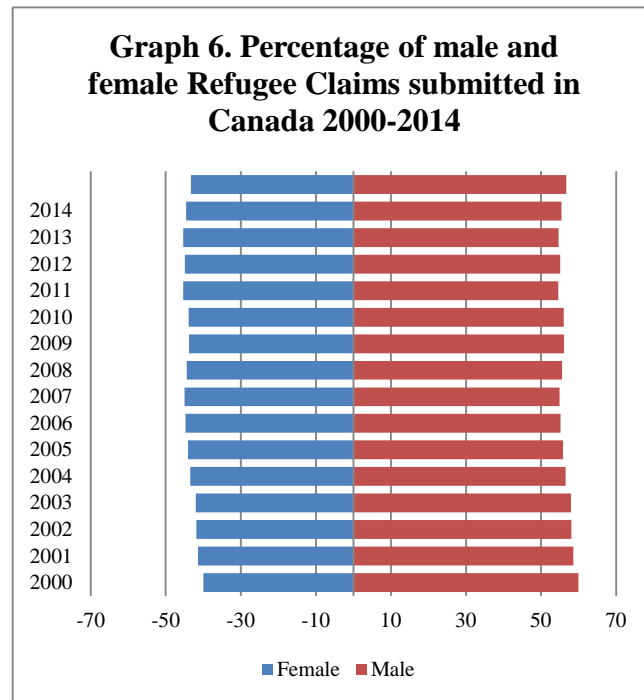
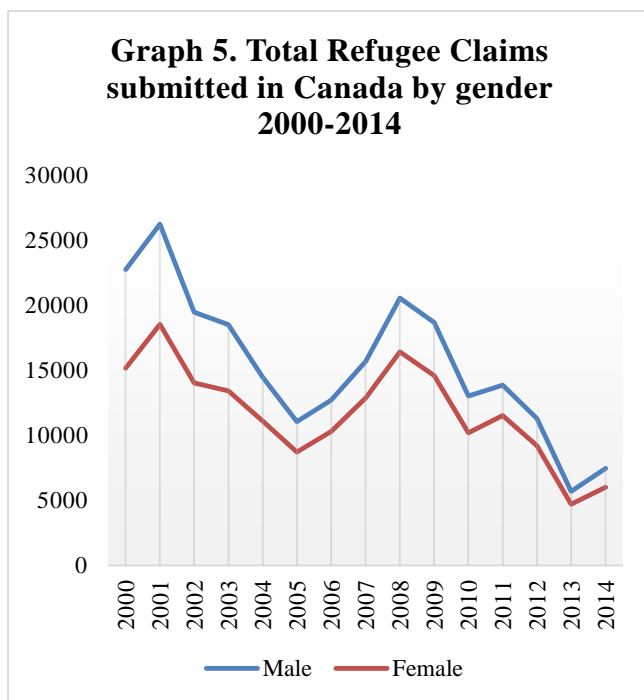
⁶¹ Unless otherwise specified, the data used in the following sections was provided upon request of information by Statistics Canada. It uses information from data bases such as CICEDW (EDW) and IRB. The numbers used in the data base provided have been subjected to random rounding and correspond to information obtained as for August 25 and 26, 2015. These are claims have been accepted at POEs and sent to the IRB.



These fluctuations are the result of some of the measures executed over the period 2000-2014. As can be seen, the implementation of the *Immigration and Refugee Act* in 2001 and 2002 drastically decreased the number of claims submitted in the country from 2001 to 2005. However, while measures such as Safe Third Country Agreement aimed to reduce the amount of claims made from within Canada by individuals coming from the United States, the numbers show that, in fact, more claims were submitted from 2005 to 2008.

Distribution of Gender

In terms of the distribution of the refugee claims submitted by gender, male and female applications have followed the same pattern as the total claims made in the country with its ups and downs as can be seen in graph 5. Nonetheless, despite the fact that male applications represented 60% of the claims in 2000, this difference between men and female applications started to slightly decrease reaching 55% by 2006. However, of the total claims made from 2000 to 2014, male applications accounted for 57%.



Distribution by Provinces

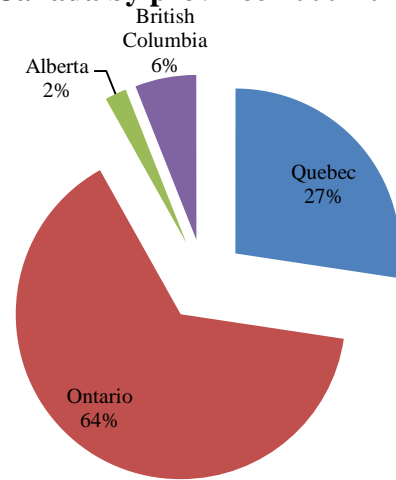
In relation to the provinces where the refugee claims have been submitted, over 99% of them have been primarily made in only four provinces: Ontario (64%), Quebec (27.2%), British Columbia (6%) and Alberta (2.1%). These provinces have in common having the busiest border crossings and the largest number of permanent residents in Canada.⁶² This is particularly important due to the likelihood of newcomers and refugees to first arrive and/or submit a claim from where family members, acquaintances or large communities of citizens from their own country reside.

⁶² As for 2014, the total number of people granted permanent resident in Canada in the provinces of Quebec (50,294), Ontario (95,814), Alberta (42,530) and British Columbia (35,170) accounted for 85.9% of the total number of people granted permanent resident in other provinces. See: "Facts and Figures 2014 – Immigration Overview: Permanent Residents," last modified August 1, 2015, <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2014/permanent/11.asp>

Table 2. Percentage distribution of refugee claims submitted in Canada by province 2000-2014

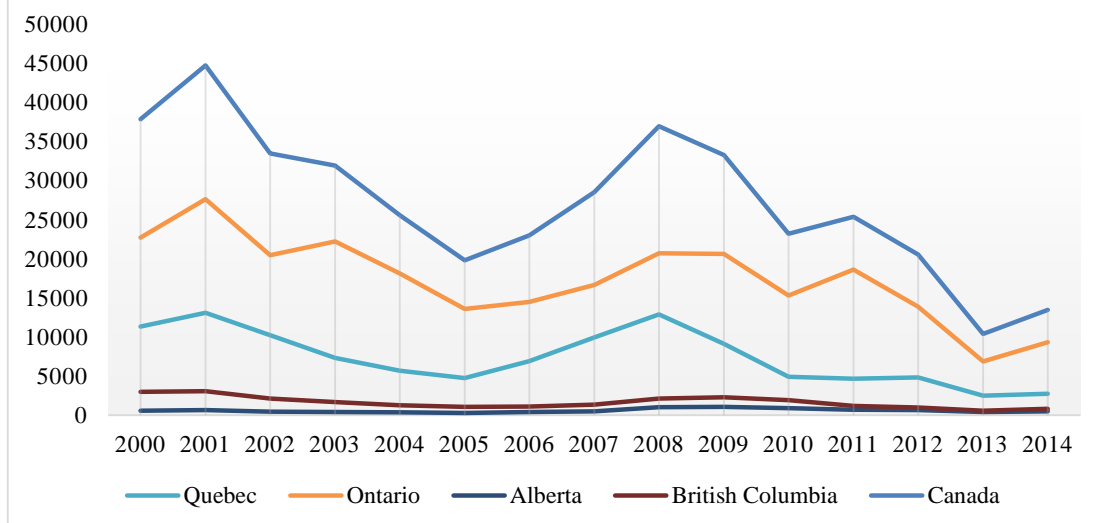
Province	Total	%
New Brunswick	345	0.1
Newfoundland and Labrador	160	0.0
Nova Scotia	790	0.2
Prince Edward Island	0	0.0
Quebec	110,715	27.2
Ontario	260,815	64.0
Alberta	8,555	2.1
British Columbia	24,275	6.0
Manitoba	1,710	0.4
Northwest Territories	0	0.0
Saskatchewan	385	0.1
Yukon	0	0.0
Total	407,750	100

Graph 7. Percentage distribution of refugee claims submitted in Canada by province 2000-2014



However, despite the concentration of refugee claims made in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta, as shown in graph 8, the submission of claims have fluctuated more in Ontario and Quebec than in Alberta or British Columbia where the claims submitted remained relatively steady over the period analyzed. Moreover, only the total number of

Graph 8. Total numbers of Refugee Claims Submitted in Canada by province 2000-2014



claims submitted in Ontario and Quebec register similar fluctuations to those experienced in Canada as a whole.

This similar fluctuations can be explained by the fact that more of the refugee claims have been made in those provinces (91%) and as such they have been more sensitive to the aforementioned changes in the legislation made by the federal government than their counter parts.

Countries of Persecution

Regarding the countries of citizenship of the claimants who submitted a refugee claim between 2000 and 2014, Mexicans lead the top ten of countries with the most claims over that period of time with 45,565 claims, followed by Colombians (25,495), Chinese (24,795), Pakistanis (20,740) and Hungarians (19,095). These five countries represent over 33% of the total claims made in Canada from 2000 to 2014. The top ten list is completed by Sri Lanka (16,455), Haiti (13,775), India (11,635), the United States (11,005), and Nigeria (10,155). This top ten accounts for 48.7% of the total refugee claims submitted in Canada over the same period.

Table 3. Top 10 Refugee Claims submitted in Canada by country of citizenship 2000-2014

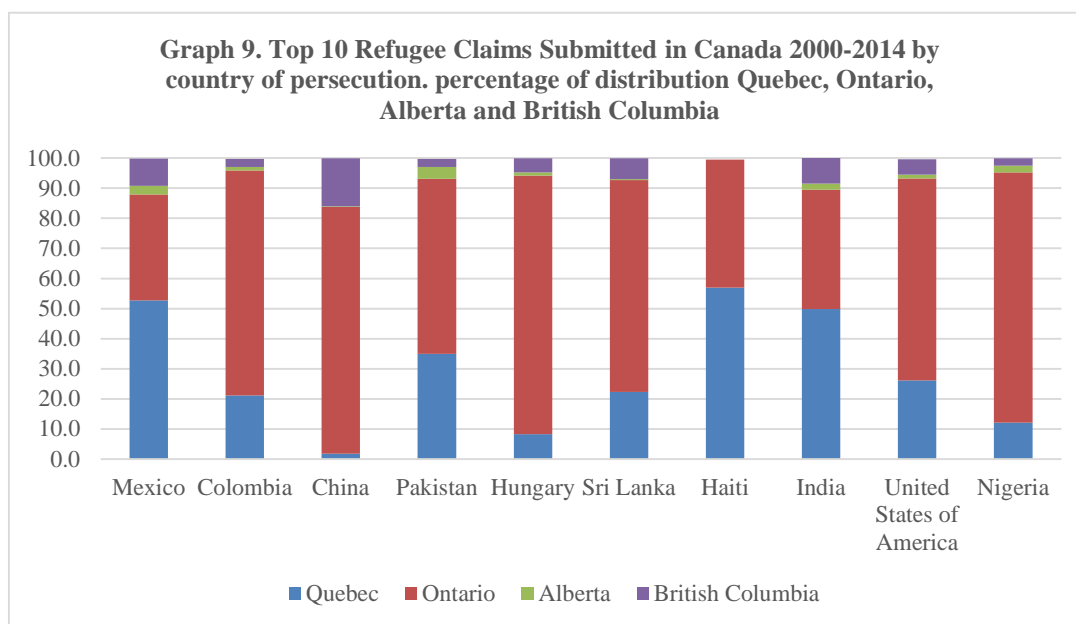
Top	Country	Total	% with respect to the total claims
1	Mexico	45,565	11.2
2	Colombia	25,495	6.3
3	China	24,795	6.1
4	Pakistan	20,740	5.1
5	Hungary	19,095	4.7
6	Sri Lanka	16,455	4.0
7	Haiti	13,775	3.4
8	India	11,635	2.9
9	United States of America	11,005	2.7
10	Nigeria	10,155	2.5

The table above allows to identify at least two interesting facts. On the one hand, as it was mentioned before when briefly referring to the Sponsored Refugees, the top 5 of countries from where those refugees have been resettled in Canada is composed by Colombia, China, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Haiti. Similarly, these countries are included in the top 10 of countries of origin of the individuals submitting refugee claims in Canada. This speaks on its own about the lack of respect and guarantee of human rights in those countries, the need

of protection of their citizens, and Canada's recognition of it. However, despite the number of refugee claims submitted by Mexicans and Hungarians from within Canada, these citizens are not recognized as at risk or in need of protection as the other countries mentioned. In fact, as it will be mentioned, Mexico and Hungary are considered as safe countries by the Canadian government and as such it is less likely for citizens of those countries to be accepted as a person in need of protection and resettled in Canada.

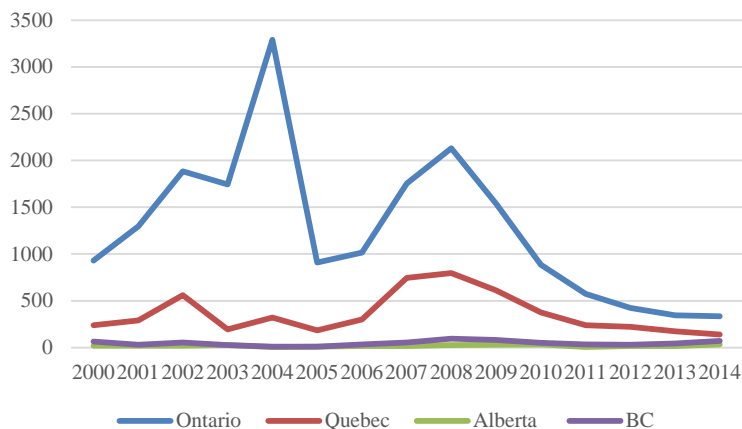
On the other hand, it is also interesting to notice that not only the United States appears as one of the countries of origin of people claiming refugee status in Canada, but also that it is ranked 9th on the top ten list referred. This is something that certainly has been overlooked and has not been documented or studied. Further research on this would be needed to initially inquire about the reasons why citizens from the United States would be applying for refugee status in Canada.

With respect to the provinces where citizens from the top ten have submitted their applications in Canada, though as expected the claims have been made mainly in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta, a closer view to the numbers shows interesting preferences by citizens of each of the countries listed. Thus, while 53% of the claims made by Mexicans from 2000 to 2014 have been submitted in Quebec, and 35% of them in Ontario, Colombians, on the contrary, have submitted 75% of them in Ontario and 21% in Quebec. Similarly, whereas Chinese (82%), Pakistanis (58%), Hungarians (86%), Sri Lankans (71%), U.S. citizens (68%) and Nigerians (83%) have submitted most of their claims in Ontario, Haitians (57%) and Indians (50%) have preferred Quebec.

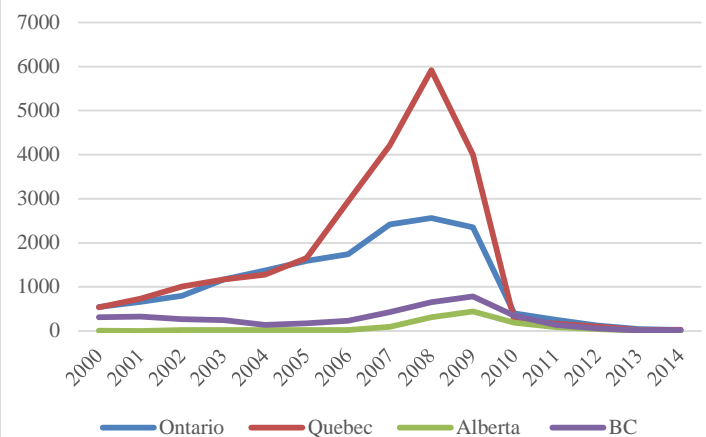


Interestingly enough, these preferences of citizens from certain countries to submit a claim in some provinces over others is a pattern that can be identified year by year over the period analyzed. Thus, from 2000 to 2014 Mexicans would submit most of their claims in Quebec, particularly from 2005 to 2009 (graph 10), and Colombians, in turn, would primarily do so in Ontario over Quebec or any other province (graph 11). Seemingly, Chinese, Pakistani, Hungarians, Sri Lankans, U.S. citizens and Nigerians would annually make most of their refugee claims in Ontario, as well as Haitians and Indians in Quebec.

Graph 11. Distribution of Refugee Claims submitted by Colombians in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and British Columbia 2000 - 2014

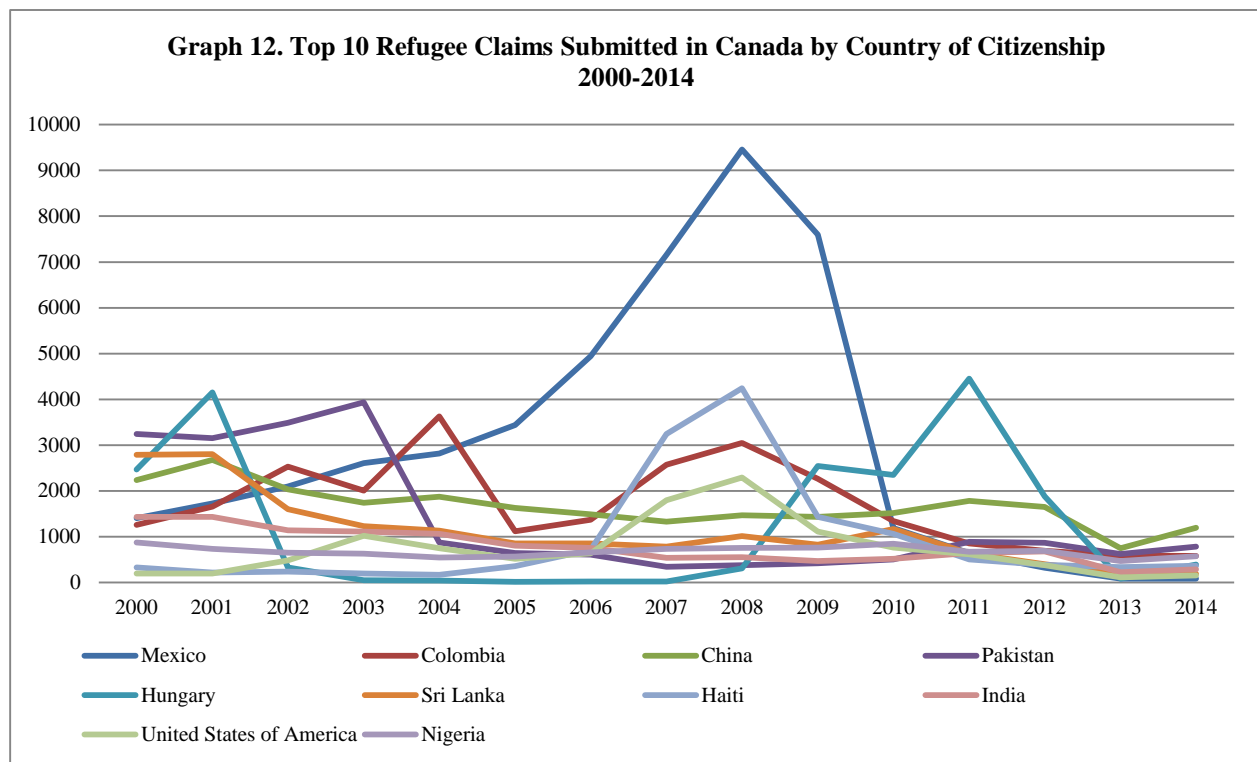


Graph 10. Distribution of Refugee Claims submitted by Mexicans in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and British Columbia 2000 - 2014



This pattern reinforces the tendency of citizens from certain countries of origin to make a refugee claim where their compatriots did taking into account those past experiences and the large communities of fellow citizens them residing in each province. This fact, as will be discussed later, is reinforced by the acceptance rate of the claims submitted by citizens of those countries in each province.

Taking a closer view of the number of claims submitted by the top ten of refugee claims submitted in Canada by country of citizenship provides a better understanding of the fluctuations in the total claims annually submitted in the country.



While recognizing that migration is a spontaneous and multifactor phenomenon, and as such not only the immigration policies implemented in Canada affect the movement of people to the country, the enactment of the regulations made by the federal government from 2001 to 2004, in an attempt to better regulate and deter people for claiming refugee status from within Canada, had an impact in the number of refugee claims annually submitted in the country. In fact, as can be seen in graph 12, after 2001 the refugee claims submitted in Canada by the nationals from the top ten of refugee claims in the country dropped and never reached again its number of claims made before 2001 with the exception of Hungary. In particular, while refugee claims submitted by citizens from India, Nigeria and Haiti slightly dropped by 365, 190 and 50 respectively from 2001 to 2004, those made by citizens from China and Sri Lanka considerably fell by 805 and 1,645 respectively. Pakistani and Hungarian refugee claims, however, drastically plunged by 2,280 and 4,110 in 2004 compared to 2001.

Similarly, from 2001, although with some subtle fluctuations, claims submitted by Indians, Sri Lankans and Chinese gradually dropped to date, with a modest increase in Chinese applications in 2014. Similarly, though Pakistani claims seemed to follow the same tendency, the steady decrease in the number of their refugee claims begin to appear from 2004 after a drastic fall started in 2003. Nigerian refugee claims, in turn, have remained stable between 500 and 900 claims per year from 2000 to 2014.

In addition, refugee claims made by citizens from Haiti and the United States (with a slight drop in 2003) continued to be relatively steady from 2000 to 2006, when they increased by almost 500% and 260%, respectively, by 2008 in compared to 2006.

Similarly, the claims submitted by Mexicans kept gradually rising since 2000, with a significant increment from 2005 to 2008. Specifically, Mexican applications increased by almost 600% from 2000 to 2008. Furthermore, Colombian applications, in turn, though augmented from 2000 to 2004, with a slim fall in 2003, and a considerable drop in 2005, their claims progressively increased from 2005 to 2008 (by over 170%).

Nonetheless, due to the large numbers of refugee claims reached in 2008 made mostly by Mexicans, the Federal Government decided to impose visa requirements to Mexicans wanting to come to Canada starting in 2009. Similarly, the exception under the Safe Third Country Agreement by which “nationals of a country to which Canada has suspended removals” were permitted to make a claim at any Canada – U.S. border crossing, was removed in 2009, affecting primarily Haitian applications.

These measures contributed to drastically reduce the amount of refugee claims submitted from within Canada from 2009 onward. In 2009, the number of claims submitted by Mexican and Haitian citizens dropped by 20% and 66% respectively with respect to those made in 2008. By 2010 Mexican and Haitians applications had registered a fall of 87% and 75% in 2010 with respect to the peak in 2008. Furthermore, Colombians and U.S. citizens applications were reduced by 26% and 52% in 2009 respectively, and 56% and 67% in 2010 compared to those in 2008. In total, the number of claims submitted by Mexicans, Colombians, Haitians and U.S. citizens as a whole plunged by 77% in 2010.

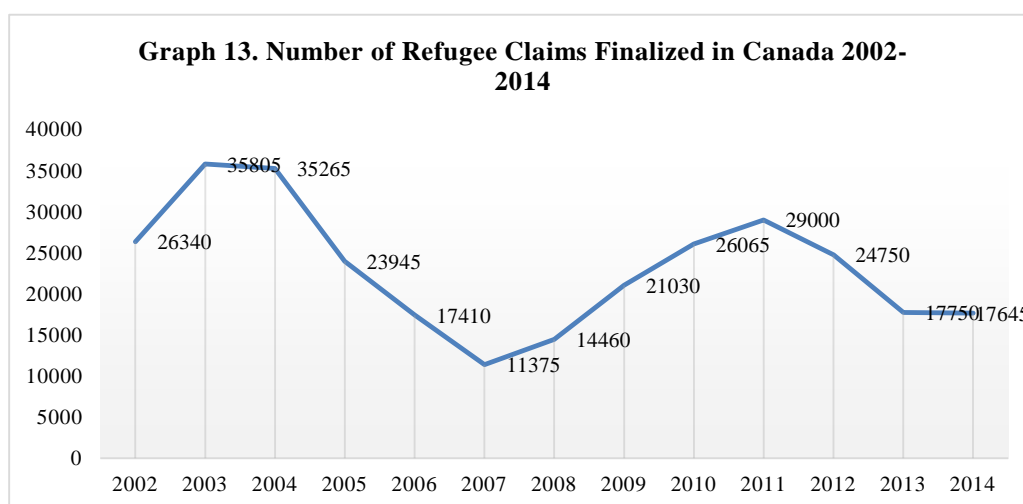
Hungarian claims, in turn, experienced an interesting behavior over the period analyzed. From 2001 to 2002, the total claims submitted by Hungarians dropped by 92% and remained in average between 15 and 50 claims from 2003 to 2008. From 2008 to 2011, these claims had increased by 4,145 followed by a steady fall the year after until 2013.

Successful Refugee Claimants: Refugee Claims Approved and Refused

Along with the striking numbers of refugee claims submitted in Canada between 2000 and 2014, it is pertinent to portrait the number of claims that have been finalized, approved and refused in the country. These numbers will allow to identify the number Successful Refugee Claimants and in consequence the number of new permanent residents that Canada annually receives from applications of refugee status submitted from within the country. As well, it permits to describe the distribution by gender and provinces of destination of those applicants approved.

Once a claim is accepted by an officer at POEs and is sent to the RPD, applicants become Refugee Claimants and receive specific timelines for their hearings along with certain rights and limitations as mentioned before on this paper. During this period of time, claims can be withdrawn by the claimant (if he/she does not want to continue with the claim), abandoned by the RPD (if the claimant does not provide information on time or does not go to his/her hearing), approved or refused by the RPD after a hearing.⁶³

Despite that not considering the number of claims abandoned or withdrawn from 2002 to 2014 limits the analysis of the claims in the country as a whole,⁶⁴ this section will take into account the total number of claims finalized over that period of time with either a positive (approved) or a negative decision (refused). This is an absolute indicative of the proportion of refugees that become permanent residents as their applications are approved.



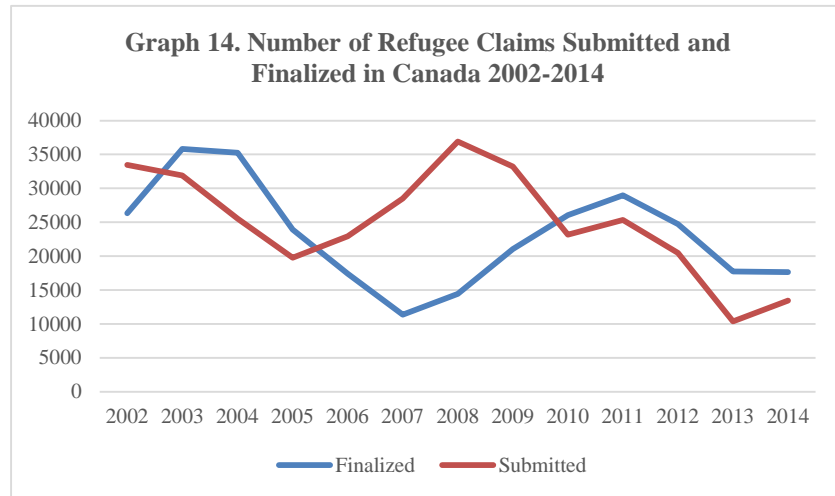
Between 2002 and 2014, 300,840 refugee applications were finalized. Of that total, 49.9% were finalized from 2002 to 2007 and the remaining 50.1% did so between 2008 and 2014.

It is interesting to note that compared to number of claims submitted in Canada from 2002 to 2014 (Graph 13), not only the claims finalized from 2002 to 2003 increased as the submission of claims decreased in the same years, but also the fact that from 2004 to 2007 the number of claims concluded dropped by 68% and the claims submitted rose by 87% from 2005 to 2008. Moreover, from 2005 to 2010, unlike the periods 2003-2005 and 2010-

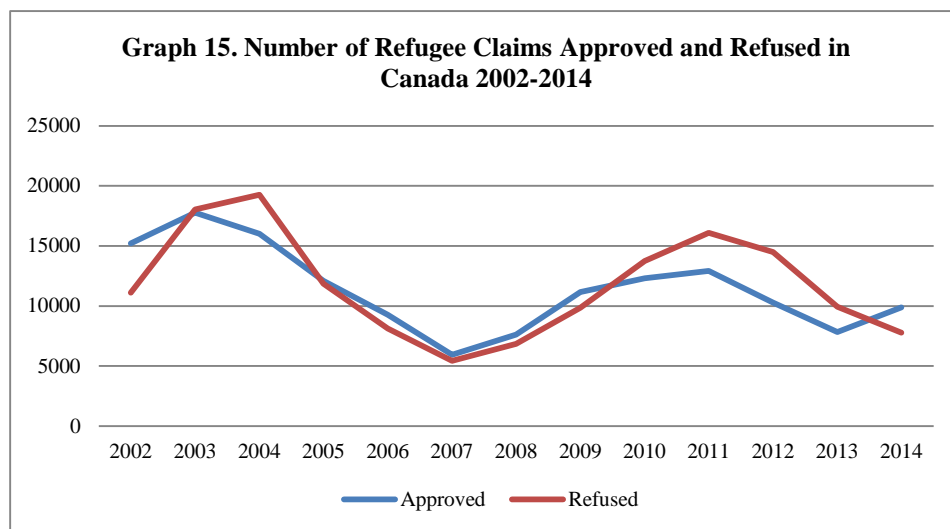
⁶³ Each of these decisions brings new rights and limitations to the claimants. Some of them can be found at: “Claimant’s Guide.”

⁶⁴ In particular, by focusing only on the number of claims finalized with positive or negative decisions for the claimants, this study omits the amount of claims that after being submitted are abandoned or withdrawn. This limits the approach to the state of the refugee claims after being submitted in the country.

2014, there have been more claims submitted than finalized in the country. As a result, 24,280 claims submitted from 2002 to 2014 were still in process by 2014.

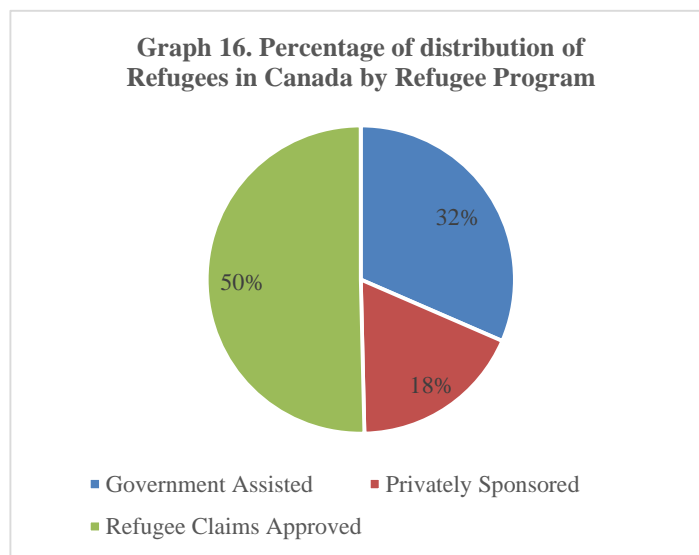


With respect to the number of claims approved and refused in the country, between 2002 and 2014, 51% (152,560) of the claims were refused compared to 49% (148,280) approved. In particular, from 2005 to 2010 greater amount of claims were approved than refused with a rate of approval ranging between 51% and 53%. Coincidentally, this is the same period of time in which more refugee claims were submitted in the country and less of them were finalized as it was mentioned before. Similarly, more claims were refused from 2010 when the number of claims made from within the country was dropping.



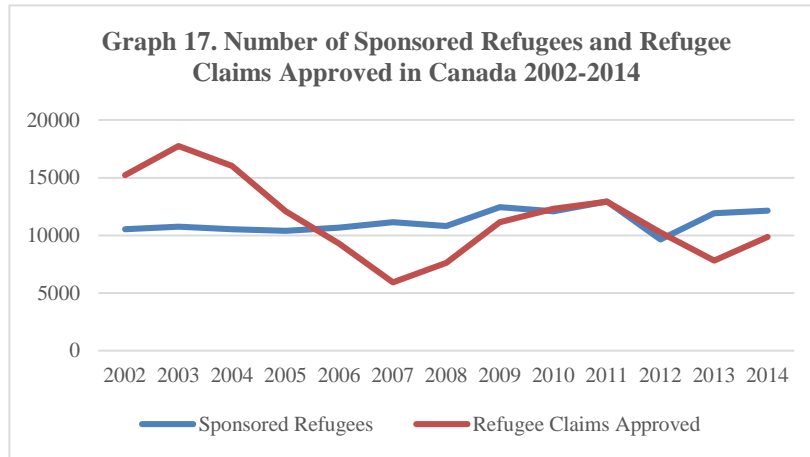
As can be seen, since the beginning of the implementation of the measures previously referred to limit refugee claims applications in the country, the number of claims processed has significantly dropped and went up when the number of claims submitted started to fall in 2007.

It is also relevant to notice the similar number of refugee claims accepted over the years to the number of Sponsored Refugees brought to the country. In particular, from 2002 to 2014, 146,063 refugees have been sponsored and brought to the country compared to 148,280 claims approved in Canada over the same period of time. Moreover, as shown in graph 16 Refugee Claimants approved accounted for 50.4% of the total number of refugees settled and accepted in Canada for the period 2002-2014.



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, “Permanent Residents 1980-2014.”; information provided to the author by Statistics Canada.

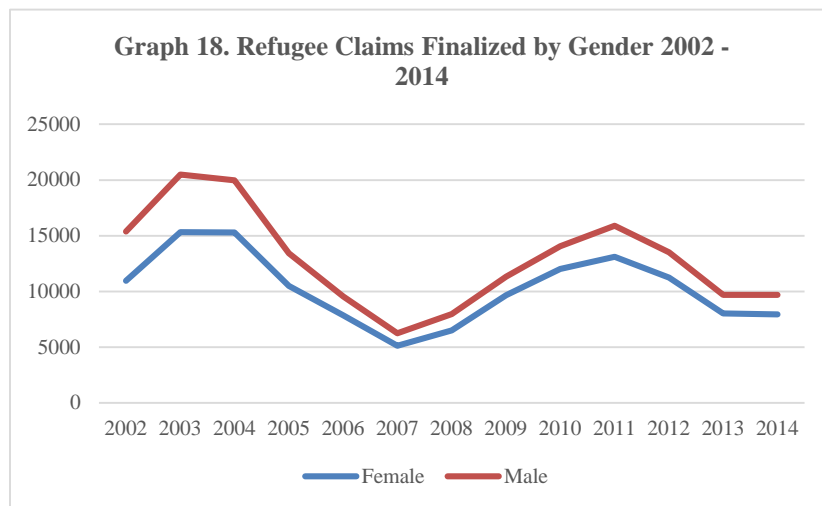
Similarly, it is also pertinent to refer to the fact that from 2002 to 2014, the number of refugee claims submitted from within Canada significantly dropped from 2003 to 2007 and modestly increase towards the end of the period of time analyzed, the number of resettled refugees in the country remain relatively steady over that period of time. As can be seen, the refugee measures implemented over the period 2002-2014 appear to have affected the amount of claims approved from within the country.



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, “Permanent Residents 1980-2014.”; information provided to the author by Statistics Canada.

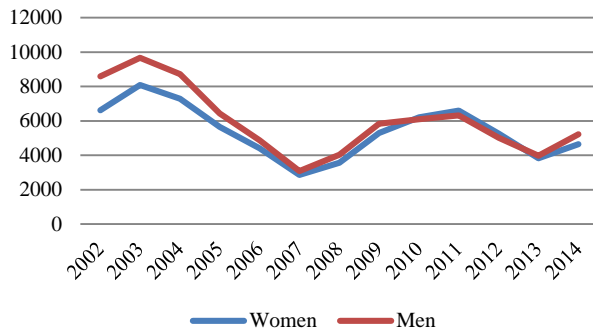
Distribution of Gender

In terms of gender distribution, over this period of time, greater amount of men claims have been finalized compared to those regarding women submissions. In particular, of the number of refugee applications finalized, 55.6% corresponded to claims submitted by men and 44.4% by women. This relates to the referred predominance of claims made by men in the country over similar period of time.

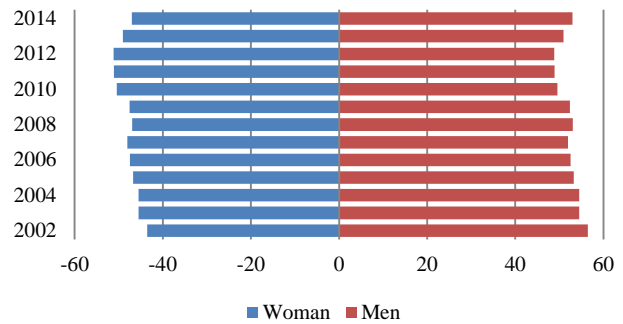


Refugee Claims There are, however, interesting differences among men and women with respect to the passed and failed refugee claims. For instance, as can be seen in the following graphs (19, 20, 21 and 22), while greater amount of refugee claims by men have been annually refused from 2002 to 2014 compared to claims made by women, the claims approved over the same period show similar numbers of claims approved to men and women in Canada particularly after 2007. Thus, while the rate of approval for men ranged from 56% to 61% over the period 2002 to 2014, this same rate decreased from 50% to 53% from 2007 onward.

Graph 19. Number of Refugee Claims approved by gender 2002-2014



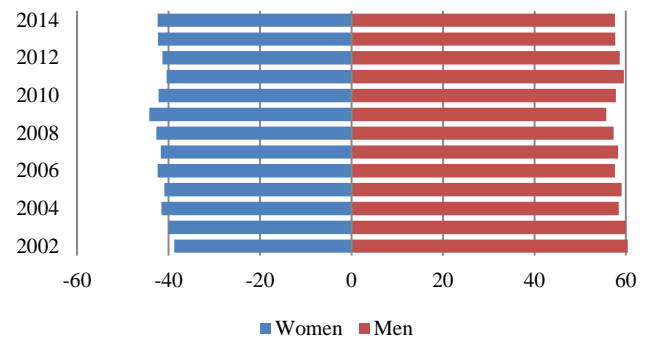
Graph 20. Percentage of Refugee Claims approved by gender 2002-2014



Graph 21. Number of Refugee Claims refused by gender 2002-2014

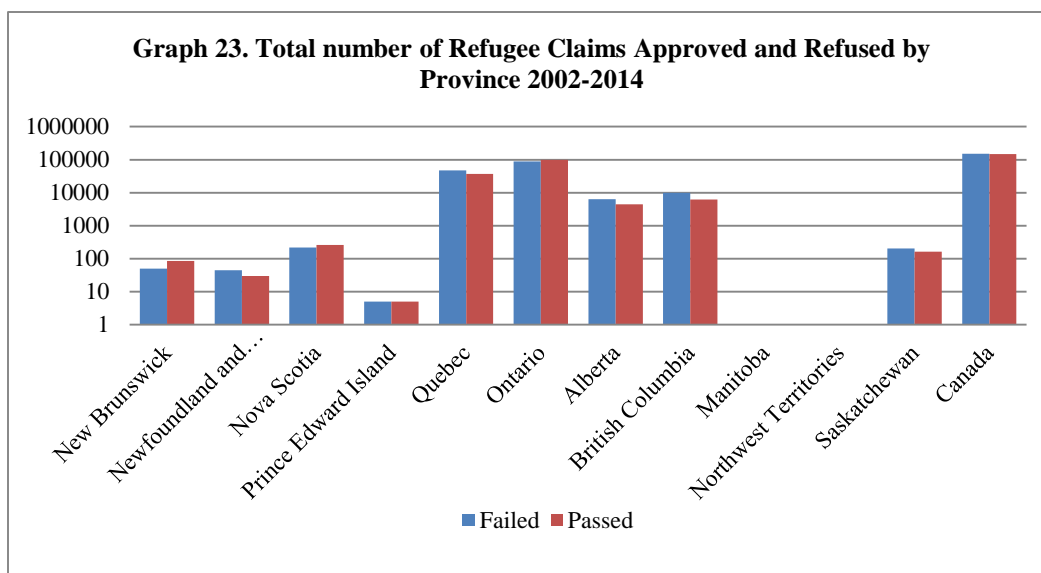


Graph 22. Percentage of Refugee Claims refused by gender 2002-2014

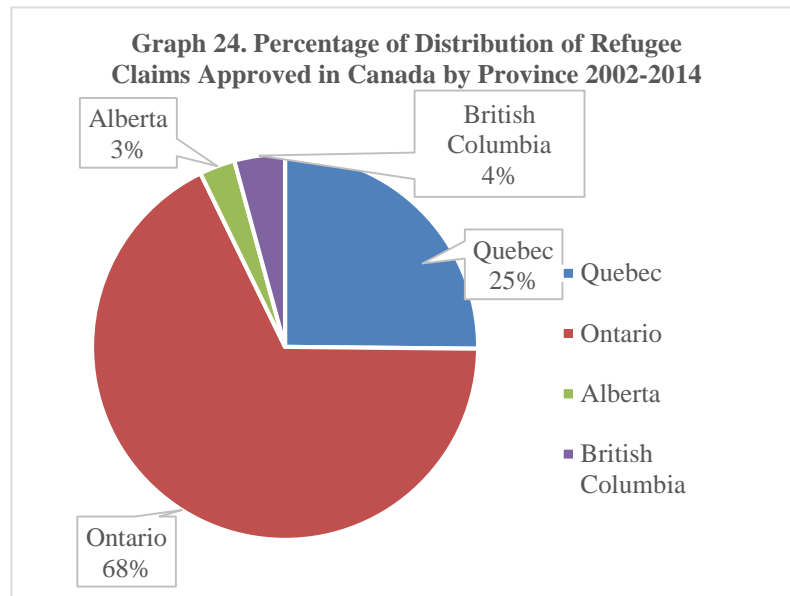


Distribution by Provinces

The distribution of passed and failed refugee applications among provinces slightly varies from the general picture previously described in Canada with 49% rate of approval and 51% of refusal. In particular, from 2002 to 2014, provinces such as British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Alberta, Quebec and Saskatchewan, experienced a rate of refused of 61%, 60%, 59%, 56% and 55% respectively. In contrast, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario have had an approval rate of 63%, 54% and 53%. However, as graph 23 depicts, most of the refugee claims (68%) have been approved in Ontario and one quarter of them in Quebec.



Similar to the government and private sponsored refugees who have been predominately brought and settled in provinces such as Ontario and Quebec (58% and 61%, respectively), most of the refugee claims have been mostly approved in those provinces. However, unlike government and private sponsored refugees, the concentration of the refugees accepted to remain in the country in those provinces reaches 93% (Graph 24).



Countries of Origin of Claims Approved and Refused

Some striking facts can be identified when considering the country of origin of those claims approved and refused in Canada over the period 2002-2014. First of all, of the total claims refused in the country over that period, citizens from over 40 countries have registered a rate of refusal of over 80%. Of them, twenty one countries recorded a refusal rate of 100% over the period stated. Despite the few number of nationals from some European countries applying for refugee status in the country, citizens from France, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Sweden, Estonia, Netherlands and the United Kingdom have experienced a refusal rate ranging from 88% to 100%. Likewise, nationals from the United States and Australia have faced a rejection of 100% of their claims from 2002 to 2014.

Table 4. Countries with over 80% Rate of Refusal 2002-2014

No.	Rate	Country	No.	Rate	Country
1	100	Turks and Caicos Islands	21	100	Seychelles
2	100	United States of America	22	95.44	Costa Rica
3	100	Australia	23	94.03	Philippines
4	100	Hong Kong (SAR)	24	93.94	Nicaragua
5	100	Japan	25	93.33	Panama
6	100	Laos	26	93.02	Chile
7	100	Taiwan	27	91.73	Argentina
8	100	Thailand	28	90.91	United Kingdom
9	100	Belgium	29	90.64	Brazil
10	100	Estonia	30	88.89	Netherlands
11	100	France	31	88.57	Dominican Republic
12	100	Germany	32	87.05	Uruguay
13	100	Greece	33	85.62	Korea R. (South)
14	100	Italy	34	85.28	Croatia
15	100	Montenegro	35	83.33	Dominica
16	100	Portugal	36	82.91	Trinidad and Tobago
17	100	Spain	37	82.05	Malaysia
18	100	Sweden	38	81.05	Czech Republic
19	100	Qatar	39	80.65	Grenada
20	100	Benin	40	80.65	Bosnia and Herzegovina

While this refusal rate can be explained by the Canada's consideration of those countries as safe and less likely source of refugees, the table above (4) also shows some other countries that have not been listed as safe countries. In particular, Latin American countries such as Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama, Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic and Uruguay have a failed rate of over 87%. This might indicate that these countries are implicitly consider safe and that in consequence these citizens have not been able to successfully prove the IRP the risks they could be facing in their home countries.

It is interesting to notice as well that nationals from Asian countries such as Thailand (100%), Laos (100%) and the Philippines (94%) have experienced high refusal rates despite the conflicts that have been affecting these countries and the number of displaced people and refugees residing in neighboring countries as a result.⁶⁵ Similar situation is seen in

⁶⁵ Specifically, the Philippines registers 120,000 displaced people as a result of the conflict taking place in the south of the country (See: Vivian Tan, "Fighting in Southern Philippines Island Displaces more than 120,000," *UNHCR*, March 20, 2015, <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2015/3/550c00ee9/fighting-southern-philippines-island-displaces-120000.html>). Similarly, in Thailand 35,000 people have been internally displaced (See: "Thailand. Country Information 2015," accessed January, 2016, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/country?iso3=THA>), and in Laos, 12,000 people have been displaced in a country with less than 7 million people (See: "Lao People's Democratic Republic. Country Information 2015," accessed January, 2016, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/country?iso3=LAO>)

claims submitted from Vietnamese since their claims have been rejected in 75.5%. Not surprising, however, is the rate of refusal of Japan (100%) and South Korea (85.6%) since both countries have been included in the list of safe countries by the Canadian government.

In contrast, countries with over 80% of approval rate, in turn, depicts a different panorama. As can be seen in table No. 5 while the claims with a high rate of disapproval where those made by citizens from European countries, Latin America and Asia, the countries with the highest level of approval have been primarily African and Middle Eastern.

Table 5. Countries with over 80% Rate of Approval 2002-2014

No.	Rate	Country	No.	Rate	Country
1	100	Myanmar, Burma	15	90.21	Afghanistan
2	100	Pitcairn Island	16	86.67	Belarus (Byelorussia)
3	100	Solomon Islands	17	84.31	Sudan
4	100	Denmark	18	84.29	Uganda
5	100	Bahrain	19	84.21	Saudi Arabia
6	100	Kuwait	20	83.63	Syria
7	100	United Arab Emirates	21	83.48	Azerbaijan
8	100	Central African Rep	22	82.95	Ethiopia
9	100	Equatorial Guinea	23	82.76	Swaziland
10	100	Malawi	24	82.39	Iraq
11	100	Niger	25	82.17	Nepal
12	100	Zambia	26	81.95	Palestine
13	94.67	Eritrea	27	81.82	Uzbekistan
14	91.69	Somalia			

Nationals from 27 countries have experienced a rate of approval of their claims of over 80%. Twelve of them have had 100% percent of their claims approved. Unexpectedly, Danish citizens have had all of their claims approved in Canada despite the fact that Denmark has been designated as a safe country by the Canadian government since 2012. Furthermore, none of the top ten countries of origin of refugee claims submitted in Canada is part of those 27 countries with over 80% rate of approval. Of them, only Sri Lanka and Colombia list close with a 73% and 77.2% rate of approval.

Similarly, despite the approval rate of these 27 countries, with the exception of Somalia, none of them is part of the countries with the highest number of refugee claimants with refugee status accepted in Canada. As table 6 illustrates, while the rate of refusal faced by some of the countries with the most refugee claims submitted is high, the majority of them lead the top ten of countries with claims approved in the country from 2002 to 2014.

Table 6. Top 10 number of Refugee Claims Approved in Canada 2002-2014

Top	Country	No. Claims Approved	Claims Processed	% Approved
1	Colombia	16940	23220	73.0
2	China	11555	19525	59.2
3	Sri Lanka	10105	13095	77.2
4	Pakistan	8620	15795	54.6
5	Mexico	7190	33525	21.4
6	Haiti	7045	13690	51.5
7	Nigeria	4690	8275	56.7
8	Zimbabwe	3910	4905	79.7
9	Somalia	3805	4150	91.7
10	Congo, Dem Rep (Zaire)	3285	5220	62.9

Compared to the top ten of refugee claims submitted in Canada from 2000 to 2014, while Mexicans would make the majority of the claims in the country, Colombians would have more refugee claims approved than any other citizens. In fact, Chinese, Sri Lankans and Pakistani would also have high numbers of nationals approved refugee status in Canada, leaving Mexico ranking fifth in the top ten of countries with the most refugee claims approved due to the low rate of approval (21.4%) that Mexicans have experienced over the period analyzed. Likewise, though India and the United States were included on the top ten of refugee claims submitted in Canada, the number of claims approved to nationals from those countries is lower than the top ten countries with the most refugee claims approved in Canada. In fact, zero claims were approved to U.S. citizens over that period of time.

This top ten of countries with the highest number of refugee claims approved in Canada also illustrates some differences between the countries of citizenship of the refugees accepted under the inland refugee program and those brought under the sponsorship program. As it was shown before, the government and privately sponsored programs have targeted refugees to resettle in Canada mainly from Middle Eastern and African countries, which follows the same pattern identified in the approval rates of the refugee claims submitted in the country where those with over 80% of approval rate were mainly from the same regions of the world. However, as presented in Table 7, the countries with the majority of refugee claims accepted in Canada diversify the sample of refugees settled in Canada as it includes more Latin American and Asian countries.

Table 7. Top ten privately, Government Sponsored Refugees and Refugee Claims approved⁶⁶

Top	Privately Sponsored	Government Sponsored	Refugee Claims approved
1	Sri Lanka	Turkey	Colombia
2	Hungary	Iran	China
3	Syria	Colombia	Sri Lanka
4	Sudan	Ethiopia	Pakistan
5	Somalia	Myanmar (Burma)	Mexico
6	Ethiopia	Afghanistan	Haiti
7	Eritrea	Congo	Nigeria
8	Afghanistan	Somalia	Zimbabwe
9	Iraq	Bhutan	Somalia
10		Iraq	Congo, Dem Rep (Zaire)

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles. Government-Assisted Refugees* and *IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles. Privately Sponsored Refugees*; Information provided to the author by Statistics Canada.

Government Policy and Refugee Flows

Some of the fluctuations experienced in the total number of claims submitted in Canada from 2000 to 2014, as well as the number of claims approved and refused from 2002 to 2014 can be explained as a result of the aforementioned changes and adjustments in immigration and refugee regulations made over those years. In the first place, as the objective of reducing security threats for Canadians and unfounded refugee claims in the country, one can affirm that as the number of claims submitted in the country significantly dropped over the years, the measures implemented effectively contributed to identify those threats and false claims that could not have been found prior their implementation.

However, taking a closer look to the numbers described before suggests a more targeted refugee policy aiming to reduce primarily the claims submitted from specific countries of origin such as those included in the top ten of countries with the most claims submitted in the country over the period analyzed. As has been identified, citizens from the top ten countries of origin of refugee claims in the country have been more drastically affected the number of claims submitted in Canada.

⁶⁶ See note 60.

In this regard, it is interesting to mention that though some of the measures implemented reduced the number of some of the claims made by citizens from some of the top ten countries of origin, claims made by nationals from some specific countries such as Mexico, Colombia, Haiti and the U.S. did not diminish but significantly increased from 2001 reaching a significant peak in 2008. As a result, policies such as the imposition of visa requirements and entry limitations to nationals from these particular countries were necessary to stop the influx of possible threats and unfounded claims submitted by citizens from some of these countries. Consequently, the reduction in the number of claims submitted by nationals from Mexico, Colombia, Haiti and the United States in 2010, compared to its peak in 2008, greatly reduced the total number of refugee claims made in Canada as a whole. More precisely, this drop accounted for 63% of the total decrease on the refugee claims in Canada as a whole between 2008 and 2010.

However, it is important to notice that the number of refugee claims made by Mexicans, Colombians, Haitians, and U.S. citizens significantly increased by 148% altogether from 2006 to 2008 (increasing also the total number of claims made in the country as a whole) and rapidly decrease the year after. This refers to the Safe Third Country Agreement implemented in 2005 and its effectiveness in reducing the number of claims submitted in the country primarily at border crossings. As some of the studies mentioned before point out, while the number of claims submitted at the border was significantly reduced, this research reinforces the idea of an increased number of undocumented immigrants in the country using unconventional and dangerous methods to enter the country.

Similarly, it is important to mention that those citizens are from countries located in the American Continent which could increase their likelihood to enter Canada and claim refugee status through the Canada – U.S. border crossings (with the exception of U.S. citizens whom would not require visa to come to Canada), either meeting the exceptions of the Safe Third Country Agreement (in the case of Haiti's refugee claims) or using non-conventional ways to enter the country and make a claim from within. This last approach seems to be supported by the referred fact that even though claims made at boarding crossings dropped after the implementation of such agreement, claims submitted from within the country did not stop but significantly increased.

Likewise, it draws attention the fact that the spike in refugee claims submitted not only by U.S. citizens, but also by Mexicans, Colombians and Haitians occurred from 2006 to 2008 years in which the most recent financial crisis in the United States began and reached its peak. Therefore, it is very likely that the crisis acted as a “push factor” of people from the United States to Canada in an attempt to escape the effects that the crisis was having and would have afterwards.

Similarly, along with the policies implemented in Canada to reduce the increasing numbers of asylum seekers and diminish the potential security threats, the aforementioned provision

of designating countries of origin in 2012 would also affect the applications annually submitted in the country. In fact, of the top ten countries of origin of the refugee claims submitted in Canada between 2000 and 2014, countries such as Mexico (since February 2013), Hungary (since December 2012) and the United States (since December 2012)⁶⁷ have been included in the list in an effort to reduce the claims made by nationals from those countries. As a result, the claims made by them fell by 75%, 78%, 59%, respectively, since the date they were included.

Likewise, while the most recent changes in the Canadian refugee system introduced in 2012 attempt to better regulate the submission of refugee claims from within Canada and reduce the number of applications annually received, the number of refugee claims submitted from 2013 to 2014 increased by 3,070 claims (29.5%). This could suggest that, similar to the increase of refugee claims submitted after the Safe Third Country Agreement came into force, either increasingly more individuals have met the strict eligibility requirements to submit a refugee claim within Canada, and/or undocumented migration continue to be an important issue.

In the case of the claims approved and refused over the period 2002-2014, the numbers depicted illustrate a correlation between the policies implemented and the number of claims finalized and submitted in the country. In particular, from 2002 to 2005, and from 2010 to 2014 as the policies introduced contributed to reduce the number of claims made within the country during those periods of time, the number of claims finalized followed the same trend as less claims were needed to be resolved. However, this pattern changed from 2005 to 2010 where the claims submitted in the country increasingly went up and those finalized kept going down until 2007. Possibly, the significant increment in the number of claims submitted in the country made difficult to those in charge of solving refugee claims to cope with such number of claims. Nonetheless, as the claims made in Canada decreased in number the amount of claims finalized increased as well.

Similarly, the number of refugee claims approved in Canada was significantly reduced compared to the number of Resettled Refugees as was mentioned. The numbers referred before illustrate how the policies implemented during the period 2002-2014 contributed to not only reduce the amount of claims approved from within Canada but to level them to the number of refugees approved to come from overseas. In practice, these measures reduce the level of involvement of the federal and local governments in supporting approved refugee claimants through social assistance, and encourage co-joint initiatives between private and public parties to support specific group of refugees to the country.

In terms of the countries of nationality of the approved and refused claims, it is important to emphasize the fact that the application for refugee status from within Canada of nationals

⁶⁷ “Designated Countries of Origin.”

from European countries but particularly from Latin America and Asia have been denied more often than those submitted by claimants from African and Middle Eastern countries. As has been mentioned, the rate of approval of claims submitted by citizens from Latin America and Asia is lower than that for nationals from African and Middle Eastern countries.⁶⁸

This is particularly interesting since, as has been stated, this is the same pattern of preference followed by the sponsorship refugee programs though which the same world regions are being recognized as critical source of refugees and, therefore, more likely to be given protection through the private and public resettlement refugee program in Canada. Nonetheless, despite the low rates of approval, nationals from Colombia, Mexico and Haiti, as well as from some African countries not often considered target for resettlement compose the top ten of nationals with the most refugee claims approved in Canada over the period 2002-2014.

Similarly, it is also interesting to mention that the implementation of such policies to deter people from coming to Canada to submit refugee claims from within the country has not been able to reduce significantly the number of refugees claimants approved compared the refugees resettled in the country. In fact, as mentioned, 51% of the total number of refugees approved by Canadian authorities from 2002 to 2014 correspond to those claims submitted from within the country. In other words, the Canadian inland refugee program appears to be the main source of refugees in the country contrary to the general belief.

Policy Implications and Challenges

The numbers described above display interesting features and differences about the refugee panorama in Canada regarding the number, origin and destination of privately and government Sponsored Refugees, Refugee Claimants, and Successful Refugee Claimants (those whose claims have been approved). However, despite its importance and implications, Refugee Claimants and approved claimants, and their reality face in the country, are usually overlooked and minimized by Canadian authorities and the public. Words such as “bogus” or “queue jumpers” used by politicians to refer to this sporadic migration constantly stigmatize refugee claimants, make them undesirable and reduce at its minimum public attention and government’s intervention.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Politically speaking, the common link of terrorism to Islamism usually stated by countries such as the United States and the stereotyping of nationals from Middle Eastern countries it involves, seems not to affect the enactment of immigration and refugee policies in Canada

⁶⁹ Tamara Baluja, “Tories Unveil Bill to thwart ‘bogus’ Refugees,” *The Globe and Mail*, February 16, 2012, accessed March, 2016, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/tories-unveil-bill-to-thwart-bogus-refugees/article546604/>

According to the findings of this research, this is a reality that should not be disregarded or approached as a minor issue in Canada. As shown, in average, between 2002 and 2014, Canada approved 294,328 refugees with permanent residence status. Of them, 50.4% correspond to refugee claimants with claims approved while the remaining 49.6% to privately and government sponsored refugees. In other words, these unexpected migrants are the main source of refugees in Canada and yet the lack of government's attention to this particular group of refugees not only take them off the grid but also increases their vulnerability in the country even once their claims are approved. In fact, the government's call for actions, efforts and funding towards refugees prioritize raising awareness and support to bring refugees from abroad and from specific countries and world regions than to assist those refugees already in the country in their different realities and needs.

In practical terms, prioritizing the resettlement and support to specific groups of people and translating it into immigration regulations and policies in Canada have indirectly (or directly) led to the establishment of two different classes of refugees. The first class is composed by those privately and government sponsored, with special rights and support throughout the refugee status application and settlement process in the country. This is, precisely, the group of refugees for which public and private funds are available in the country, along with institutional support upon their arrival. In fact, as seen currently in the media, the government has actively encouraged private sponsors to support refugees to be brought to the country according to the government's interests and targets on refugees around the world. This class of refugees, is, in consequence, more desired and wanted and, therefore, better funded and supported.

On the other hand, as referred before on this paper, recent amendments to regulations and new policies have shaped, mainly during the conservative government, an immigration and refugee system with limited rights and much less benefits to those unwanted refugees: the Refugee Claimants and approved refugees in Canada. This constitutes a second class of refugees who, due to the sporadic nature of their migration, are granted less rights and given significantly less support during their settlement in the country.

Research on refugees in Canada has emphasized on the effects that limited rights and support have on refugee claimants and refugees with claims approved in the country. As Hynderman points out in her report on "recent evidence-based research on refugee policy and integration in Canada,"⁷⁰ while resettled refugees are found to face integration and affordability of basic needs issues, the impact of these issues on refugee claimants is significantly greater even after being granted permanent resident status. In particular, feelings of economic uncertainty, difficulty in the labour market, issues in affordability of housing, child and health care services and food needs, low paid incomes and limited social

⁷⁰ Jennifer Hyndman, et al., *Final Report. Refugee Research Synthesis 2009-2013* (Canada: CERIS, 2014), 3.

assistance are common issues found among Refugee Claimants and approved refugees.⁷¹ According to Morantz et al. (2013, cited in Hyderman) “these challenges reduce household income, limit language acquisition and decrease social integration, leading to heightened feelings of social isolation and depression”.

Similarly, these challenges faced by Refugee Claimants and Successful Refugee Claimants increase the burden on provincial and local governments in an attempt to cope with their social needs. As has been described, refugee claims have been mainly submitted and approved in Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta increasing not only their population thank to this international migration, but also the demand of social services. According to Hynderman, the uncertainty and limited rights and assistance that not only Refugee Claimants but also claimants approved experience, rise their vulnerability and reliance on social assistance.⁷² In consequence, this increases their likelihood of facing social and affordability issues in such provinces due to the sporadic nature of their migration and the lack of funding available to deal with this unexpected increase of population.

It is interesting to note that though this extra burden on provinces is one of the reasons why this sporadic migrants are unwanted and subject to policies limiting social assistance and rights looking to stop them from coming to Canada, those regulations seem not to considerably reduce the number of Refugee Claimants in the country. On the contrary, these policies appear to greatly affect those refugees that have successfully claimed refugee protection from within the country and been granted refugee status. While measures to prevent people from submitting unfounded refugee claims is desired, the reduction in funding towards this second class of refugees in Canada not only does not stop the influx of unexpected immigrants but also increases the burden on provinces as this group of refugees tend to rely more on social assistance or unconventional ways to live.

Correspondingly, possible security threats, commonly associated to these sporadic arrivals, have also forced the implementation of measures to stop the influx of refugee claimants in the country. However, as has been mentioned, while some of those policies have partially reduced the number of claims made in the country, it has led to an increment in the number of irregular immigrants in the country. Moreover, while the implementation of Safe Third Country Agreement succeeded in reducing the number of claims made at the Canada-U.S. border (going from between 6,000 and 14,000 per year before the agreement, to 4,000 after it came into effect),⁷³ as this research has shown, the number of claims submitted from

⁷¹ Hyndman et al., *Final Report*.

⁷² Hyndman et al., *Final Report*.

⁷³ Efrat Arbel and Alletta Brenner, *Bordering on Failure. Canada-U.S. Border Policy and the Politics of Refugee Exclusion*, (USA: Harvard Law School, 2013), <https://harvardimmigrationclinic.files.wordpress.com/2013/11/bordering-on-failure-harvard-immigration-and-refugee-law-clinical-program1.pdf>

within the country rose by 86.8% from 2005 to 2008. This reinforces the idea of an increment in undocumented immigration and human smuggling⁷⁴ in the country after the implementation of the Agreement and some other measures.

These adverse results could be reversed not by the elimination of such policies but by the consideration of broader categories of admissibility and inadmissibility of refugees, as well as making sure that applications made at any Canada-US border crossing receive the same treatment as if they were submitted from inside the country. The reduction of claims made at border crossings, its increment from within Canada, and the increase numbers of undocumented immigration in the country could suggest an awareness from potential refugees about the likelihood of being turned back at the border and the better chances that claiming refugee protection once inside the country could have. This can be reinforced by the number of claims submitted from inside Canada suggesting that even though the same policy and regulations should be applied at the border crossings or inside the country, the likelihood of successfully submitting a claim is greater when it is made from within Canada than from any of the border crossings, from where you can be turned back.

On the other hand, targeting refugees around the world through the government and private sponsor program has been a practice carried out by the Canadian government since 1979 beneficiating thousands of people around the world in response to social and political events in different countries. In particular, as shown, over the last 10 years, mostly citizens from Sri Lanka, Hungary, Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Turkey, Iran, Colombia, Ethiopia and Myanmar (Burma) have been targeted and brought to the country according to the government's understanding of the facts and realities occurred in such countries.

However, recognizing the importance and need of protection that citizens from those countries require, the country of origin of the total claims submitted and approved in the country depicts the importance of revising the standards taken into account to target countries source of refugees. Specifically, the number of claims submitted by Chinese, Pakistani, Haitians, Mexicans, Nigerians and Hungarians and their rate of acceptance over the last 10 years suggest the need of considering some nationals of those countries as target of support, mostly taking into account recent events of human rights violations and displacement of hundreds of people in those countries.⁷⁵

Moreover, recent research have found that successful integration of refugees not only depends on the social support given by the government but also on the “social capital available in existing ethno-cultural communities” due to the similar cultural background shared.⁷⁶ Thus, considering the large numbers of Asian and Latin American citizens

⁷⁴ Hyndman et al., *Final Report*.

⁷⁵ “World Report 2015: Nigeria,” last accessed February, 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2015/country-chapters/nigeria>

⁷⁶ Hyndman et al., *Final Report*.

residing permanently in the country,⁷⁷ targeting more refugees from those regions could increase the likelihood of a successful integration in the country for them. In particular, in the case of those refugees from the second refugee class, it has been found that these refugees “often relied on members of their established communities for settlement assistance.”⁷⁸ In fact, as Hyndman states, “strong social networks within refugee groups which share similar backgrounds, between groups from different backgrounds, and with the long-term community all correlate with better outcomes.”⁷⁹ To some extent, bringing more refugees from these regions would lead to a more effective policy aiming for a better and successful integration of refugees in Canada.

This poses the need of reevaluating the standards taken into account by Canada to consider countries as safe as it obstructs the access to refugee protection to nationals from different countries and, in many cases, closes the door to those with well-founded fears. This is the case of citizens from Mexico and Hungary who, despite the number of refugee claims submitted and approved in Canada, are still considered as not trustworthy sources of refugees.

Similarly, this context raises questions about the fairness, generosity and compassion of the refugee system in Canada as claimed by Canadian officials. In particular, the fact that this second group of refugees are given different treatment and rights even when their claims are approved seems to be a punishment for refugees and their families based on the way they found to enter the country. While different policies and regulations are desired aiming to prevent people from submitting unfounded refugee claims, the system fails not only in making less likely for real refugees to come and apply for refugee status, but also in granting them very limited rights while awaiting for their refugee claims to be processed making the settlement process of those who would have their claims approved more difficult.

In an attempt to reaffirm the principles of fairness and compassion that have guided immigration policies in Canada, policies aiming to end the existent disparities among refugees in the country and equal the support given to them are desired. One way to achieve such an objective is by increasing the funding available to this second class of refugees in order to support a more successful integration. This can be done by recognizing the dimension of the vulnerability face by Refugee Claimants and Successful Refugee Claimants in the country and encouraging private donors and support to contribute to this cause as it has been done with Resettled Refugees throughout the years and more recently

⁷⁷ According to Statistics Canada, from 2005 to 2014, 1,299,886 and 262,598 new residents from Asia and Pacific region, and South and Central America became permanent residents. See: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2014/permanent/08.asp>

⁷⁸ Hyndman et al., *Final Report*. 24

⁷⁹ Hyndman et al., *Final Report*. 40

with Syrian refugees. Incentives for private groups or people interested in supporting this second class of refugees is also needed.

In addition, policies targeting two different classes of refugees difficult the implementation of the immigration and refugee policy. As referred before, having two classes of refugees attempt on the purposes of a Canadian growth and economic prosperity through immigration. In fact, the differences in rights and support received by refugees of the first and second class impede their successful integration and contribution to that Canadian prosperity and economic growth. As Hyndman's report concludes,⁸⁰ refugees brought from overseas and supported once in the country are less likely to live in homeless-like situations and poverty, as well as are deemed to face less social challenges than their counter parts of the second class of refugees. To date, it seems to be less interest of a successful integration of the second refugee class than of the first class of refugees.

Conclusions

Canada is recognized for its historical humanitarian tradition and offering reliable solutions for thousands of people fearing for their lives around the globe. As a result, people from every continent in the world have been able to find a safer place in Canada and save their lives. Unarguably, Canada has a very unique and composition of refugees in the country with enormous contribution to the Canadian prosperity for generations.

However, as this research has identified, this tradition has been significantly affected by policies that from 2001, along with the implementation of the new Immigration and Refugee Act, have, in recent years, shaped a more targeted, restrictive, selective and, in cases, discriminatory refugee policy for refugees looking to save their lives in Canada. In particular, through the establishment of two different refugee programs, procedures and rights given to both refugees applications made and approved from within Canada and from specific world regions, Canada has toughened its refugee policies in an attempt to restrict the entrance of people with unfounded refugee claims who can possibly pose a threat to the security of Canadians.

Canada has slowly evened out the number of refugees approved from within Canada to those resettled and approved outside of the country and sponsored by private and public funds. Increasing public awareness about difficult situations faced by people in targeted countries, along with incrementing the involvement of private sponsors into the refugee cause while making more difficult for possible genuine refugees to submit a refugee claims from within Canada, has contributed to that end. However, as this research shows, despite the efforts to keep low the number of approved refugee claimants, the inland refugee program by which *bona fide* refugees get access to refugee protection after submitting a

⁸⁰ Hyndman et al., *Final Report*.

refugee claims from within Canada appears to be the main source of refugees for Canada. Yet, funds, public awareness and, primarily, rights are restricted to these refugees who seem to be punished based on the way they got to make a refugee claim in the country as has been discussed.

This has indirectly (or directly) led to the establishment of two different classes of refugees with a first class composed by resettle refugees sponsored by either the government or private funds, with different benefits and support during their settlement in Canada and with a likelihood of success in the country due to the support given. These are the refugees targeted and brought from overseas who seem to be more desired and wanted. The second class of refugees, on the other hand, is formed by those unwanted refugees with little support during their settlement in the country and making difficult their successful integration. The latter class of refugees, due to its unattended nature and number leads to very distinct integration experiences among refugees compared to those of the first class, limits their contribution to the Canadian prosperity, increases their vulnerability in the country and significantly increases the burden on local and provincial governments in need of providing social assistance to those new residents of Canada as they are more likely to rely on social assistance and informal support for longer periods of time than their counterparts.

As this research has pointed out, these differences among the two classes of refugees in Canada represent an important challenge for policy makers in the country since despite the media coverage on refugees brought from abroad and supported once in Canada, the refugees from the second class of refugees remain as the main source of refugees in the country. Specifically, this second class of refugees account for 50.4% of the total refugees approved with refugee status in Canada.

Similarly, interesting characteristics are found regarding gender distribution, provinces of destination and origin of Refugee Claimants and Successful Refugee Claimants in Canada. First of all, both the claims submitted in the country and the claims approved share a predominance of claims made by and approved to men from 2002 to 2014. However, while 57% of the total number of refugee claims submitted in the country correspond to men's applications, this prevalence of men over women is reduced to 55% once the claims are finalized. In other words, compared to women, men had more claims refused and therefore more equal numbers of claims approved are experienced between men and women over the period referred.

Secondly, despite the interest of the Canadian government in targeting refugees from specific world regions and countries, this research has shown that the sporadic arrivals of Refugee Claimants has contributed to diversify the sample of refugees in the country, as well as pay attention to some other regions and countries from where thousands of people annually flee to save their lives have a safer place to live in Canada. According to the

numbers provided in this paper, while government and privately sponsored programs target refugees to resettle mainly from Middle Eastern and African countries, Latin American and Asian citizens are also found as main sources of refugee claimants and claimants approved in Canada. However, it is also interesting to notice that regardless of the number of Asian and Latin American nationals claiming refugee status from within Canada, claims submitted by citizens from Middle Eastern and African countries experienced higher rates of approval between 2000 and 2014.

Thirdly, with respect to the provinces of destination, this research has shown that unlike the sponsored refugees in Canada, most of the claims in the country have been approved in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. In particular, while the refugees brought from abroad are resettled in different provinces across Canada, 93% of the total refugee claimants have been approved in such provinces. As it is discussed in this paper, this poses particular challenges for these provinces due to the demand of social services these new residents will need and the minimum support receive by authorities for their settlement in the country.

As well, as some studies cited in this research suggest, measures such as the Safe Third Country Agreement seem to have contributed to reduce the number of claims submitted specially at border crossings. However, the numbers obtained for this study show and increments in the number of claims made from within Canada in the years followed the implementation of the agreement. As has been mentioned before, this not only support the idea of an increasing undocumented immigration in the country after the implementation of the agreement, but also speaks about the real effectiveness of the policy in trying to reduce the number of people submitting refugee claims in the country.

Despite the current media coverage on Syrian refugees and the public awareness generated as a result of the difficult situations faced by millions of displaced people from the middle eastern country, this research has aimed to elucidate the number of refugee claimants that annually are given refugee protection in the country become Canadian permanent residents but are usually forgotten and unattended due to the government's priorities on refugee matters.

This study is just a milestone intending to contribute to the lack of knowledge existing about Refugee Claimants and the number of them currently approved and recognized as refugees but with limited rights and support. Undoubtedly, more research need to be done on the effect that such numbers have on local, provincial and federal governments and the effectiveness of increasing the support for refugees accepted from within Canada could bring to reduce their vulnerability, reduce an extra-burden on local governments and increase the likelihood of successful integration for those refugees. This will also bring interesting recommendations and facts that social agencies dealing with refugee issues in the country could use to offer better services to refugees and obtain better outcomes.

Likewise, similar studies should be conducted to determine the number of refugee claims submitted and approved in each province and main cities in Canada to determine how the policies implemented have impacted the refugee panorama in each of those places. As well, more studies are needed, at most, to establish the magnitude of undocumented migration, the number of refugee claims accepted to people meeting the exceptions of the Safe Third Country Agreement, the trajectories and needs of Refugee Claimants in Canada from the submission of a claims to the decision made on it, the homelessness-like situations among Refugee Claimants and Successful Refugee Claimants, poverty, language and social barriers, discrimination against this particular group of people, the number of claims specifically submitted at Canada-U.S border crossings and different ports of entry, the amount of claims withdrawn and abandoned, among other important topics etc.

The Canadian humanitarian tradition is currently threatened by the existence of distinct refugee programs one more generous and supportive than the other. Carrying out more research on Refugee Claimants and Successful Refugee Claimants in Canada will contribute to the implementation of better policies seeking for an increase in public awareness and interest on this particular group of people, improve their quality of life, reduce their marginalization and lack of support, looking to guarantee the desired Canadian prosperity through more equal, inclusive and fairer immigration and refugee policies in the country.

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