

Refugee Integration & Long-Term Health Outcomes in Canada (SyRIA.lth)

What it is:

Refugee Integration and Long-term Health Outcomes in Canada is a pan-Canadian longitudinal study funded by The Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR). The project is a partnership between settlement service agencies and academic research institutions in three of Canada's largest refugee resettlement provinces: British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec.

We are looking at how different resettlement programs support the social integration of Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) and Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) and the impact of integration pathways on their long-term physical and mental health. Our goal is to improve the health and well-being of new Canadians by understanding what leads to successful integration outcomes and for whom so that we can tailor resettlement programs to best suit newcomers' needs and circumstances.

Our research goals:

To produce knowledge that will:

- Inform promising practices for refugee resettlement and integration
- Strengthen knowledge exchange in the settlement sector
- Identify the impact of settlement policies on refugee health and well-being
- Deepen our understanding of the influence of social conditions on long-term health and well-being

Our approach:

Interviews will be collected once a year for four years with Syrian adults who resettled in Canada between 2015 and 2017. In year two and year four, we will also conduct focus groups to gain more insight into the nature of people's experiences.

These interviews will follow key integration markers at the material or functional level (e.g., employment, housing and social services accessed), the social level (e.g., social networks, discrimination), and the subjective or psychological level (e.g., sense of belonging, stress).

Project Updates

Work to date:

1,932 individuals from 869 different households participated in year 1 survey (See table below for regional participation)

Next steps:

- **Preliminary analyses are under way** (See next page for demographic initial results)
- **Data collection**
 - I.Focus groups with sub groups of research participants (winter 2018)
 - II.Round 2 survey data collection (spring 2018)
 - III.Some sites will also conduct focus groups with service providers (fall 2017)
- **Early findings dissemination:**
 - I.Community meetings with service providers
 - II.Fact sheets and webinars to different stakeholders
 - III.Academic papers
 - IV.Brief information WhatsApp blast with early findings to participants
- **Submitting conference abstracts:**
 - I.20th National Metropolis Conference, March 2018
 - II.Canadian Association on of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, May 2018
 - III.International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM), July 2018
- **Upcoming national face-to-face team meeting in Toronto November 14th to develop data analysis framework**

Year 1 participation

Site	Total
Kitchener	141
Montreal	697
Okanagan Valley	67
Toronto	546 + 24 pilots
Vancouver	246
Windsor	235
National (all sites)	1,932 + 24 pilots

Initial Results

Sponsorship

Site	GAR	PSR	BVOR
Kitchener	86	48	5
Montreal	67	625	1
Okanagan Valley	24	22	21
Toronto	315	187	39
Vancouver	186	48	11
Windsor	185	45	5

Gender

Site	Male	Female
Kitchener	66	75
Montreal	325	371
Okanagan Valley	34	33
Toronto	268	276
Vancouver	131	115
Windsor	116	119

Age

Site	Age (mean)
Kitchener	36
Montreal	42
Okanagan Valley	35
Toronto	37
Vancouver	36
Windsor	37

Recent Studies

“Recent studies indicate that post-migration factors determine mental health outcomes post-resettlement via two pathways:

- 1) Moderating the impact of pre-migration trauma on mental health
- 2) Directly influencing mental health

Dr. Michaela Hynie

The Pre-migration and Post-migration Factors Associated with Mental Health in Humanitarian Migrants in Australia

Current research findings suggest that post-migration resettlement-related stressors were the most important correlates of mental health in humanitarian migrants, accounting for both direct and indirect associations. Specifically, economic stressors, loneliness, discrimination, family conflicts in Australia, concerns about family in Australia, and worrying about family or friends overseas were positively related to PTSD and severe mental illness.

Targeting resettlement-related stressors through augmenting psychosocial care programs and social integration would be a key approach to improve humanitarian migrants' mental health.

Read the full article text on: [The Lancet](#)

The Relationship Between Post-Migration Stress and Psychological Disorders in Refugees and Asylum Seekers

While pre-migration trauma is recognized as a key predictor of mental health outcomes in refugees and asylum seekers, research has increasingly focused on the psychological effects of post-migration stressors in the settlement environment. This article reviews the research evidence linking post-migration factors and mental health outcomes in refugees and asylum seekers. Findings indicate that socioeconomic, social, and interpersonal factors, as well as factors relating to the asylum process and immigration policy affect the psychological functioning of refugees.

Read the full article text on: [springer.com](#)

Spotlight on Refugee Integration: Findings from the Survey of New Refugees in the UK

This report summarizes the results of the Survey of New Refugees (SNR), a longitudinal study of refugee integration in the UK. Integration was considered in terms of the English language skills, employment and housing of new refugees.

Read the full report on: [ResearchGate](#)

Predictors of Secondary School Completion Among Refugee Youth 8 to 9 Years After Resettlement in Melbourne, Australia

Being able to attend school and achieve an education is one of the most desired opportunities among resettled refugee young people. However, turning educational aspirations into reality is not straightforward. There is a large body of research documenting the barriers associated with educational achievement among refugees who resettle as teenagers, both in Australia and internationally. No studies, however, have identified the factors that predict completion of secondary school among resettled refugee youth over time. This paper reports the predictors of completion of secondary school among a cohort of 47 refugee youth resettled in Melbourne, Australia. Eight to 9 years after resettlement, 29 (62 %) had completed secondary school and 18 (38 %) had left school prior to completing year 12. Age on arrival and experiences of discrimination in Australia were significant predictors of secondary school completion. Older refugee youth (on arrival) and those who reported experiences of discrimination over the first 8 to 9 years in Australia were significantly less likely to complete secondary school. This longitudinal study confirms that, as a group, refugee youth are particularly at risk of not completing secondary school education, which can have an impact on their wellbeing and long-term socio-economic standing in their settlement country.

Read the full article text on: [springer.com](https://www.springer.com)

Engaging Communities in Refugee Protection: The Potential of Private Sponsorship in Europe

This policy brief explores the broad spectrum of approaches to refugee settlement that include elements of community-based or private sponsorship—from the large and well-established Canadian program to smaller-scale and ad hoc initiatives in Europe. While these approaches vary widely in scope and the types of responsibilities sponsors take on, the author finds that governments and their civil-society partners generally face three common challenges when implementing them: balancing thorough program design with pressure to act quickly, providing government oversight and support without displacing willing community leaders, and cultivating strong working relationships between all parties involved.

Read more on: [migrationpolicy.org](https://www.migrationpolicy.org)

Relevant Reports

The impact of the Syrian refugee influx on local systems of support- Disruption leading to innovation in Waterloo Region

CCBR, together with several local organizations, conducted a research project to explore the disruptive impact of the recent Syrian refugee influx on the way local communities support newcomers. This was done in order to: (1) determine innovations in how local communities can better support refugees, and (2) determine how public policy can reinforce these innovations.

This nine-month project kicked off in September 2016 and followed a community-based research (CBR) approach. We collected data through a document review, interviews with 11 key informants, focus groups with 25 resettlement leaders, and a community survey filled out by 38 individuals and organizations.

Project partners included: Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership, Reception House Waterloo Region, Mennonite Central Committee of Ontario, Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support, Waterloo Region Public Health, and Muslim Social Services Kitchener Waterloo.

This project was funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Read the report on: cbr.ca

Exploring the Syrian Refugee Experience in Waterloo Region

CCBR is leading two projects in Waterloo Region, both funded by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada. One project is exploring the barriers (and successes) faced by local Syrian refugee parents - who stay at home with their children - and Syrian refugee older adults. The second project is exploring the barriers faced by Syrian refugee youth.

Each project follows a community-based research approach, meaning CCBR is working with several local organizations as well as members of the Syrian community to design the project, gather information, and mobilize the findings. Syrian refugee parents and youth have been hired as Community Researchers and have been actively involved throughout the research process.

Read the reports on: cbr.ca

Our team's work



Jusoor Conference 2017

Five years ago, Jusoor set out to educate Syrian students through their scholarship programs in North America, Europe and the Arab world. In that time span, they educated 490 Syrian university students around the world; and 3,412 children in our Lebanon schools. Jusoor conference took place on October 14th, 2017 at the University of Toronto.

We are excited to share with you or colleague **May Massijeh** story, profiled in Jusoor's 2016 Annual report!

When May graduated from the [University of Damascus](#) in 2014 with a degree in electrical engineering, she decided to pursue a master's degree in the same field. That year, May started working on a research project investigating the way dust and pollutants interfere with the efficiency of solar cells. But when her project stalled because of a lack of resources and mentorship, May decided it was time to look elsewhere. May applied to a master's degree in environmental studies at [York University](#) in Toronto, Canada and to [Jusoor's 100 Syrian Women, 10,000 Syrian Lives Scholarship program](#). She found that her new degree was an opportunity to reignite her passion for community work- work she had left behind when she was focused solely on engineering.

Over the past year, May worked closely with [Culture Link](#), a resettlement agency in Toronto, as a program manager for their [Baraka Bites program](#), which helps refugees start their own culinary ventures. She has also worked as a research assistant at [SyRIA.lth](#), a five year pan-Canadian study funded by The Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR), looking at the long term health outcomes of Syrian refugees.

“My master's degree has been my opportunity to rediscover my hidden talents,” explains May, who has been working with groups outside of the university to help refugees who have recently arrived in Canada. “I switched back to social work, community work and environmental work in general.”

Congratulations May from the SyRIA.lth team!

Read the full report on: jusoorsyria.com

Visit Jusoor conference website: <https://jusoorsyria.com/fifth-annual-global-conference/>

News & Events

Cap on Refugee Sponsorships Means Syrians in Canada Remain Separated from Family

Two years after welcoming 48,000 Syrians into Canada, Ottawa is faced with the "echo effect" a surge in demand to sponsor the resettled refugees' family members.

Read more on: thestar.com

Continuing Education Opportunities:

Course/ Webinar	Website
Refugee Mental Health: Focus on Syrian Refugees, by CAMH	rmhp/courses
Torture, Trauma, Psychosocial Impact and Mental Health: Meeting the Needs of War and Torture Survivors	ccvt.org

Upcoming Events:

Date	Event	Location	Website
March 22-24	20th National Metropolis Conference 2018	Calgary Canada	metropolisconference.ca
May 21-25	Canadian Association on of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies	Ottawa Canada	http://carfms.org/
July 24-27	International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM)	Thessaloniki Greece	iasfm.org/iasfm17/



416 736 2100 ext. 22054



syrialth@yorku.ca



www.yorku.ca/syrialth

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SyrialthToronto



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