

# Study: The long-term labour market integration of refugee claimants who became permanent residents in Canada

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Canada offers refugee protection to individuals who have a well-founded fear of persecution or face other personal dangers in their home country. Although refugee claimants seek asylum in Canada for humanitarian reasons, their labour market outcomes play a crucial role in successful integration.

A new Statistics Canada study, conducted in collaboration with Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, is the first to compare the long-term labour market outcomes of refugee claimants who eventually became permanent residents in Canada (RC-PRs), with those of government-assisted refugees (GARs) and privately-sponsored refugees (PSRs), as well as refugee claimants who did not become permanent residents in Canada (RC-NPRs). Based on landing records and personal taxation data, the study follows refugee claimants and refugees for up to 13 years after making their initial claim or landing back in 2003.

The findings indicate that one year after making their refugee claim, RC-PRs were far more likely to collect social assistance and considerably less likely to report employment income than PSRs one year after landing. At this point, 66.5% of RC-PRs collected social assistance, compared with 18.4% of PSRs. Meanwhile, 62.0% of RC-PRs reported employment income—well below the 81.6% of PSRs who did the same.

The superior labour market position of PSRs shortly after landing compared with the other groups studied is not surprising, as they initially had a sponsor who volunteered to help them financially or otherwise for up to one year. However, over time, the labour market situation of RC-PRs improved at a much faster rate, eventually surpassing that of PSRs.

After four years following a claim or landing, the proportion of RC-PRs (21.1%) and PSRs (21.0%) who collected social assistance was almost identical. At the 13-year mark, RC-PRs (11.4%) were somewhat less likely to collect social assistance than PSRs (14.3%).

A similar trend was seen with employment income. By four years out, roughly the same proportion of RC-PRs (80.4%) and PSRs (81.4%) reported employment income. After 13 years, RC-PRs were moderately more likely to report employment income (82.6%) than PSRs (79.5%).

As a group, GARs were significantly more likely to collect social assistance and generally less likely to report employment income than all other groups examined. Moreover, their situation did not improve as rapidly over time as it did for RC-PRs.

While RC-NPRs were about as likely as RC-PRs to collect social assistance throughout the 13-year timeframe, they were considerably less likely to report employment income. In fact, the proportion of RC-NPRs who reported employment income hardly increased throughout the period. At the end of the 13-year period, 52.9% reported employment income, far behind the next lowest rate of 72.4% (registered by GARs).

## Note to readers

*The study uses the Longitudinal Immigration Database, which contains landing records and personal taxation data. A refugee claimant is a person who has submitted a refugee claim but has not yet received legal status from the government. In this study, this group is divided into two: those who eventually became a permanent resident during the time frame, and those who did not. A government-assisted refugee is a refugee whose initial resettlement in Canada is entirely supported by the Government of Canada or Quebec through the Resettlement Assistance Program, and is also a permanent resident. A privately-sponsored refugee is a refugee whose initial resettlement in Canada is supported and funded by Canadian citizens and permanent residents, who may sponsor a refugee as members of organizations, associations and groups. They too are permanent residents.*



The study "[The Long-term Labour Market Integration of Refugee Claimants Who Became Permanent Residents in Canada](#)," part of the *Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series* (**11F0019M**), is now available.

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