

Rapid Evaluation of the Ukraine Response

Evaluation and Performance Measurement Division
Audit and Evaluation Branch
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

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Executive summary

This report presents the findings of the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) Rapid Evaluation of the Ukraine Response. The evaluation was conducted in fulfillment of requirements under the Treasury Board's Policy on Results and covered the period from March 2022 to March 2023.

Summary of Evaluation findings

Overall, the Ukraine Response has thus far been successful in facilitating the arrival of Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) holders to Canada. Early settlement and integration outcomes of CUAET holders are trending in a positive direction. In addition, the Ukraine Response experienced strong collaboration among partners and stakeholders.

However, there were significant impacts on IRCC, including a strain on staff and resources as well as operational challenges that required substantial modification to policies, programs and services across all levels of government. This created challenges with central accountability and slow communication in the early stages of the response. In addition, the CUAET measures were perceived by some as unfair and inequitable, particularly in comparison to other humanitarian responses and services offered to temporary residents.

Summary of lessons

Six lessons were identified from the Ukraine Response, which were seen as best practices or approaches to consider in future similar responses. These lessons were centred around priority setting within IRCC, hotel accommodations, relationships with partners and stakeholders, and sharing and analyzing information.

Lessons 1: Urgent response situations may necessitate that departmental priorities be purposefully reviewed recalibrated, ensuring dedicated resources can adequately address the situation.

Lesson 2: The department would benefit from strongly considering operational and other targets for future emergency response situations to better allow for adequate planning and resourcing.

Lesson 3: A longer duration for temporary hotel accommodations would be advantageous in providing individuals adequate time to find permanent accommodations.

Lesson 4: A formal working group with representatives from all levels of government and key stakeholders is beneficial to support urgent response situations in timely information-sharing, decision-making and issues management.

Lesson 5: It is essential that key information be communicated to partners and stakeholders as quickly as possible to ensure that they have adequate time to respond to and support urgent response situations.

Lesson 6: It is essential that IRCC quickly and consistently extract information from its administrative data to facilitate reporting and analysis purposes.

Summary of recommendations

In addition, there are four areas of recommendations for IRCC to undertake in preparation for a future crisis. These recommendations focus on crisis response management and framework, access to IRCC-funded settlement services and housing.

Recommendation 1: IRCC should identify and implement a crisis management response infrastructure to ensure adequate departmental readiness and resources to respond in emergency situations.

Recommendation 2: IRCC should develop and implement a crisis management framework.

Recommendation 3: IRCC should further explore providing federally-funded settlement services to other temporary resident populations displaced as a result of a crisis.

Recommendation 4: When emerging situations involve accommodations for newcomers, IRCC should formalize its relationship with other government departments (OGD) partners related to housing (i.e., Infrastructure Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation) to ensure that expertise and benefits from a whole of government approach are being optimized.

Rapid Evaluation of the Ukraine response – Management Response Action Plan (MRAP)

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: IRCC should identify and implement a crisis management response infrastructure to ensure adequate departmental readiness and resources to respond in emergency situations.

This should include:

- An identified senior management lead (ADM level)
- An identified group of staff, including representatives from policy, operations, and internal services (i.e., data, communications) to support the implementation of the response, in a surge capacity
- A plan and resources for monitoring the CUAET population (and other future crises cohorts), including the medium to long term impacts of the response on programs and policies

Response: IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

Presently, IRCC is completing a Strategic Immigration Review, which aims, in part, to enhance its crisis response mechanisms and renew its organizational framework for crisis management to better enable more nimble and sustainable immigration responses to humanitarian crises.

IRCC is in the process of creating and establishing a crisis management response infrastructure to respond to emergency situations. In doing so, IRCC will identify a lead Sector/ADM and identify a group of multi-disciplinary staff to support the implementation of crisis responses.

While this work is underway, details and responsibilities are being reviewed. When responsibilities are defined, IRCC will review these action items to ensure that the appropriate accountabilities are in place.

Action	Accountability	Completion date
IRCC will identify an ADM to lead the implementation of a crisis management response infrastructure(s) will be identified following the upcoming reorganization. IRCC will identify/create a group of representatives from policy, operations and internal services and other sectors as needed, based on the upcoming reorganization.	Lead: International Affairs and Crisis Response Sector Supporting branches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Affairs Branch • Migration Response Policy Branch • International Crisis Response Branch • Service Delivery Branch • Policy Branches • Data Branches • Communications Branches • Finance Sector • Settlement Branches • Evaluation Division • Digital Strategy, Services and Innovation Sector 	Q4 2023–2024

Recommendation 2: IRCC should develop and implement a crisis management framework.

The framework:

- Articulates policy and program tools and options, an operational readiness plan to mobilize IRCC and coordinate with other government departments and external partners, and resourcing and engagement plans;
- Includes objective monitoring and assessment criteria to help evaluate emerging situations and inform departmental directions and decisions

Response: IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

IRCC is advancing a new Crisis Response Framework that will help guide the departmental response to emerging humanitarian situations. As part of this framework, we will be looking closely at our toolkit to ensure that policies and programs are built to address the needs of now and in the future.

As part of the Crisis Management Framework, IRCC will explore objective and evidence-based monitoring and assessment criteria to help support ongoing analysis of emerging crises and inform potential recommendations to the Minister on immigration response is warranted. It will include a Crisis Response playbook and measures to improve operational readiness and identify potential new tools to provide facilitative pathways to Canada. As part of the Framework, IRCC will consider the development of a suite of supports, including in-Canada, along the immigration continuum for cohorts arriving.

Policy authorities for the Framework will be sought in 2024-2025, with implementation to follow.

Action	Accountability	Completion date
Develop a crisis management framework, a 'playbook' to coordinate within IRCC and with other government departments (OGDs) and external partners, and related funding and human resource strategies. Develop monitoring and assessment criteria to be included in the Framework.	Lead: Migration Response Policy Branch Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Crisis Response Branch • International Affairs • Temporary Policy Branch • Family and Social Policy Branch • Immigration Program Guidance Branch • Admissibility Branch • Resettlement Policy Branch • Resettlement and Asylum Strategic Operations Branch • Global Network • Mass Arrivals Settlement Branch • Migration Health Branch • Intergovernmental Relations & Engagement Branch • Digital Strategy, Services and Innovation Sector 	Q3 2024–2025

Recommendation 3: IRCC should further explore providing federally-funded settlement services to other temporary resident populations displaced as a result of a crisis.

Response: IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

As part of a crisis response, extraordinary measures were taken to temporarily extend settlement services to Ukrainian temporary residents. Similar global crises are likely to occur in the future and IRCC recognizes there is a continued need to provide adequate supports to people in Canada who are displaced temporarily, in collaboration with other partners.

To date, significant work has advanced across jurisdictions to gain a better understanding of the programming that is available to temporary resident sub-populations across the country, and analysis demonstrated that a wide range of services were available. As part of the development of the crisis management framework, IRCC will continue to explore the appropriate types of federal supports that can be provided to temporary residents in crisis situations.

Action	Accountability	Completion date
As part of the development of a crisis management framework (Recommendation 2), IRCC will examine the role of overseas and in-Canada supports in the response framework, and leverage evidence from the Ukraine response in the design.	Lead: Settlement and Integration Policy Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Settlement Network• Mass Arrivals Settlement Branch• Francophone Immigration and Official Languages Branch• Immigration Program Guidance Branch• Migration Response Policy Branch• Financial Strategy Branch	Q3 2023–2024

Recommendation 4: When emerging situations involve accommodations for newcomers, IRCC should formalize its relationship with OGD partners related to housing (i.e., Infrastructure Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation) to ensure that expertise and benefits from a whole of government approach are being optimized.

Response: IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

An interdepartmental ADM-level committee on Housing and Homelessness (co-chaired by senior officials of Infrastructure Canada and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation) was established in Spring 2023 to advance a unified approach to address housing challenges. A DM-level committee on Housing and Homelessness is currently being formalized and will be supported by established ADM-level committee. IRCC is a member of both of these committees.

These committees will continue as a forum through which federal departments and agencies can develop comprehensive policy responses to housing and homelessness challenges and opportunities, including building federal awareness of major trends and challenges related to housing, as well as allowing for enhanced coordination and alignment of federal initiatives through a whole of government approach.

Action	Accountability	Completion Date
IRCC will continue to utilize the existing Committees on housing to stabilize and formalize its relationship with OGD partners related to immigration, (re)settlement, and housing.	Lead: Strategic Policy and Planning Branch Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settlement, Integration and Francophone Affairs Sector • Asylum Policy Branch • Digital Strategy, Services and Innovation Sector 	Completed

List of acronyms

CBSA	Canada Border Services Agency
CUAET	Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel
CUTAI	Canada-Ukraine Transitional Assistance Initiative
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
iCARE	Immigration Contribution Agreement Reporting Environment
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
ISED	Innovation, Science and Economic Development
OGD	Other Government Departments
OUSH	Operation Ukrainian Safe Haven
PT	Provinces / Territories
RAP	Resettlement Assistance Program
SPO	Service Provider Organization
UCC	Ukrainian Congress of Canada

Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel Measures

Launched in March 2022 to support of those affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) created the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) measures, ensuring Ukrainian nationals and their family members can come to Canada temporarily, and were able to work and study during their stay.

Through CUAET measures, Ukrainian nationals and their family members overseas could apply for a special temporary resident visa, free of charge, to be authorized to stay and work or study in Canada for up to three years. Ukrainians nationals and their family members already in Canada could apply in Canada for open work permits, study permits, or extend their stay for up to three years.

Breakdown of CUAET immigration measures

- **CUAET Temporary Resident Visa (Overseas):** Eligible individuals could apply for a free visitor visa (with some requirements waived) and could be allowed to stay in Canada for up to 3 years.
- **CUAET Open Work Permit:** Ukrainians with temporary resident visas had the option to apply, free of charge, for an open work permit with their visa application.
- **CUAET Extensions (In-Canada):** Those who had temporary resident status prior to CUAET measures could apply to extend that status for up to 3 years, could leave and return to Canada at any time while their visa is valid, may renew their work or study permit free of charge, and may apply for a new work or study permit free of charge.

There was no limit placed on the number of Ukrainians and family members who could apply for the CUAET visa overseas or extend temporary residence status in Canada. As of May 2, 2023, 151,800 CUAET holders arrived in Canada.

CUAET measures

To streamline visa processing, temporary public policies were implemented to facilitate the emergency travel objectives. These public policies:

- exempted overseas CUAET applicants from the requirement to complete an Immigration Medical Exam prior to coming to Canada;
- waived the application fees and the requirement to assess financial means of clients; and,
- for a those 17 years of age and younger, and 61 years of age and older, exempted the requirement to enroll their biometrics during the application process.

Key partners and stakeholders

A variety of partners and stakeholders were engaged to operationalize the Ukraine Response. Within the federal government, IRCC led the response, with support from Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)/Service Canada, and Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED).

As with all immigration and settlement initiatives, partnerships with provinces and territories (PT) were relied heavily upon to ensure successful integration of CUAET holders into communities across Canada. As well, traditional immigration and settlement partnerships were engaged among the non-government organizations, particularly settlement service provider organizations (SPO). Additional stakeholders were engaged, including the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), and the Canadian Red Cross.

While these are the key partners, this is not an exhaustive list of all partners involved in the Ukraine Response, though most participated in the Operation Ukrainian Safe Haven (OUSH) table.

CUAET responses and supports

As the Ukraine Response evolved, additional integration supports were initiated and created as part of the CUAET measures.

IRCC-funded settlement services

Eligibility for IRCC-funded settlement services was amended to temporarily to allow CUAET holders to access the same settlement supports provided to permanent residents.

Reception services

IRCC contracted third party service providers (i.e., the Canadian Red Cross and SPOs) to offer airport reception services to CUAET holders arriving at specific ports of entry (Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver), which included a welcome package with information about how to get Canadian identification (i.e., Social Insurance Number, health card, and driver's license), where to access settlement services, etc.

Temporary hotel accommodations

IRCC provided up to 14 nights of emergency temporary hotel accommodations to eligible CUAET holders in nine cities (Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Halifax and St. John's), along with associated services such as transportation. Temporary hotel accommodations also acted as a referral point to settlement service provider organizations.

Canada-Ukraine Transitional Assistance Initiative (CUTAI)

Administered by ESDC/Service Canada through an IRCC grant, CUTAI provided a one-time payment of transitional financial assistance for Ukrainians and their dependants to ensure their basic needs were met upon arrival in Canada. Adults (18 or older) could receive CAN\$3,000, and children (17 and under) CAN\$1,500.¹

Federal charter flights

In Spring 2022, the Government of Canada provided three charter flights from Poland to Winnipeg, Montreal, and Halifax.

Job bank's jobs for Ukraine

Led by ESDC, employers wishing to support Ukrainians through offers of employment could register available jobs using Job Bank's Job for Ukraine webpage.

Canadian industry for Ukraine donation portal

Led by ISED, this online portal allowed Canadian businesses to provide offers of high-priority goods and services to support displaced Ukrainians and the organizations providing aid and services.

¹ Canada, IRCC (2022). News Release – Financial assistance now available for Ukrainians in Canada.

Provincial and territorial supports

PTs provided a range of supports and access to services including health coverage, social assistance, education, disability support, housing and provincial settlement services. As outlined in Annex A, each province had updated and modified existing settlement, integration, and social supports within their respective jurisdictions.

A few specific examples of additional supports offered and measures taken by PTs include:²

- sending a team of officials to Poland to promote Canada as a place of safe haven (i.e., Newfoundland and Labrador)
- providing medical supplies (i.e., Ontario)
- creating and mobilizing their own reception services specifically for CUAET holders (i.e., Quebec and Manitoba)
- organizing charter flights for Ukrainians (i.e., Saskatchewan).

Operation Ukrainian Safe Haven (OUSH)

The OUSH Table was an avenue for IRCC, PTs, other government departments (OGD) and stakeholders to receive updates on Ukraine immigration related issues; raise local and regional challenges and look for national solutions and approaches; and facilitate links between national bodies and local initiatives.

² Canada, IRCC (2023). IRCC Deputy Minister Transition Binder 2022: IRCC Response for Ukraine.

Evaluation scope and design

Overview

The aim of this evaluation was to provide real-time results on the CUAET initiative and obtain perspectives of provinces and territories to support the Forum of Ministers Responsible for Immigration. The Rapid Evaluation examined early information as available, focusing on CUAET management, partnerships, and early settlement results of CUAET visa holders who arrived in Canada.

Evaluation scope

The evaluation examined the period from the launch of CUAET in March 2022 to approximately March 2023, acknowledging that the response was ongoing and continued to evolve.³

Evaluation focus

The evaluation was undertaken in two phases:

- **Phase 1** reviewed the management of the initiative, including governance and partnerships, as well as the impact on the department and provinces/territories.
- **Phase 2** focused on early results of Ukrainians who arrived in Canada through the CUAET measures since March 2022. It examined early settlement and integration, including incidence of employment, financial assistance usage, uptake of settlement services, among others.

Evaluation questions

1. To what extent has the design of the Ukraine Response been effective and facilitated efficient temporary residence in Canada? Have the management, governance and partnerships effectively supported the Ukraine Response?
2. To what extent does IRCC and its government partners (i.e., OGDs and PTs) have the capacity to administer the Ukraine Response (i.e., funds, employees, impacts to existing programming, etc.)?
3. To what extent are CUAET Ukrainians accessing and benefiting from federal and provincial settlement and integration initiatives and services (i.e., financial assistance, provincial social assistance, settlement services), and integrating (economically, socially, culturally) into Canada?

³ CUAET measures were extended in March 2023, allowing: (1) Ukrainians and their family members overseas to apply for CUAET until July 15, 2023; (2) anyone holding a CUAET visa to travel to Canada under special measures until March 31, 2024; and, (3) those already in Canada to extend or adjust their temporary status until

March 31, 2024. These extensions were not under the scope of the evaluation, and therefore are not examined. Source: IRCC (2023). News Release - Canada extends support for those fleeing Russia's illegal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine.

Methodology

Document review

An in-depth review of relevant documents was undertaken, including internal documentation, public announcements, operational guidance and reports.

Key informant interviews

A total of 63 individuals were interviewed, capturing a broad range of perspectives and experiences. This included interviews with:

- IRCC staff;
- Staff in other federal government departments (CBSA, ESDC, Service Canada, ISED, Public Health Agency of Canada);
- External stakeholders (i.e., settlement umbrella organizations, settlement service providers, Canadian Red Cross, UCC); and
- Provincial and territorial representatives.

Administrative data review

Internal administrative data was analyzed to provide a socio-demographic profile of the 88,456 CUAET holders who arrived in Canada between March 17, 2022 and December 11, 2022.

In addition, information via the Immigration Contribution Agreement Reporting Environment (iCARE), which is a web-based platform used by IRCC-funded settlement service provider organizations to capture settlement program data and report back to IRCC, was analyzed to provide an understanding of CUAET holder usage of IRCC-funded settlement services.

A review of available monitoring data (i.e., CUTAI, processing times, international comparisons) was undertaken. As data is collected via various sources, with different data collecting time periods, the most recent information available was provided.

Survey of CUAET holders

Between February 20 and March 8, 2023, an online client survey was sent by IRCC to 67,351 adult CUAET holders who had a valid email address on file and who had arrived in Canada between March 17, 2022 and December 11, 2022. A total of 15,348 individuals completed the survey, resulting in a 23% response rate. A comparison of the available administrative socio-demographic data and the survey socio-demographic data indicates that the survey respondents were very comparable of the broader surveyed CUAET population.

Limitations and mitigations

Due to the **ongoing nature** of the Ukraine Response, the initiative continues to evolve and individuals continue to arrive in Canada. The evaluation captured the Ukraine Response at a point in time, while acknowledging that the response is still evolving and ongoing (i.e., announcement of the CUAET Extension in March 2023).

Due to the transitory nature of temporary residents and visitors, **IRCC collects less data from temporary residents than it does from permanent residents. As a result, information about temporary residents**, such as province of intended destination, arrival date in Canada, and education, are not available in IRCC's administrative data. The evaluation mitigated this data gap by collecting this information, as well as additional socio-demographic information, through the client survey.

Additionally, while CUAET holders are identified in the administrative data, there are difficulties in being able to quickly and consistently extract this information for **reporting and analysis purposes**. A lack of clear definitions of who is included in the CUAET population resulted in various groups across IRCC using different data proxies to determine who is part of the CUAET cohort. For example, some data reporting has utilized Ukrainian citizenship in the absence of a clear and available CUAET definition, making it challenging to definitively identify the entire CUAET cohort, particularly family members accompanying Ukrainians who do not have Ukrainian citizenship.

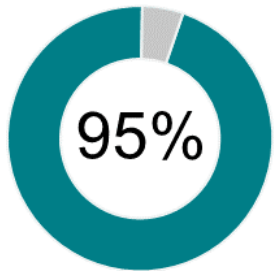
The **CUAET data proxy used by the evaluation** included Ukrainians and accompanying foreign nationals who received a visa through CUAET, and were identified as having arrived in Canada.

Though the evaluation was not without limitations, the mitigations put in place ensured **the findings and results were robust and can be used with confidence**.

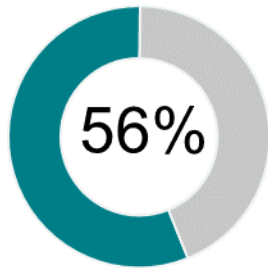
Profile of CUAET Holders

Based on administrative data as of December 11, 2022, **88,456 individuals** arrived in Canada via CUAET measures.

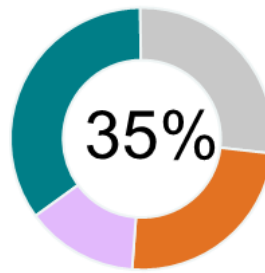
Of those, 81% had a work permit, 15% had a visitor record, 4% had a study permit, and less than 1% had a temporary resident permit.



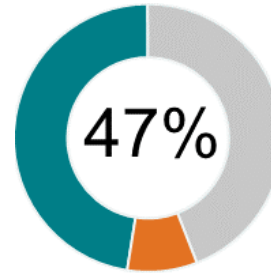
Almost all (95%) of CUAET holders have **Ukrainian Citizenship**, with 5% from other countries.



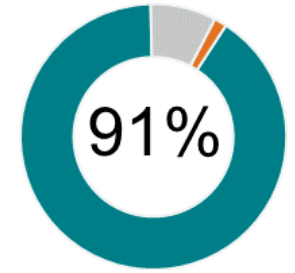
Over half (56%) of CUAET holders are **female**.



Over one third of CUAET holders are between the **ages of 20 and 34**, followed by 27% aged 35 to 49, 24% under the age of 20 and 14% over 50 years of age.

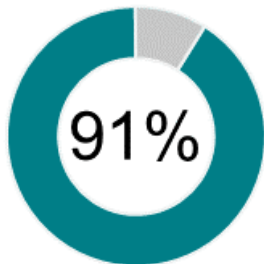


Almost half (47%) of CUAET holders were **married** or common law, followed by 44% who were single and 8% who were separated, divorced or annulled.

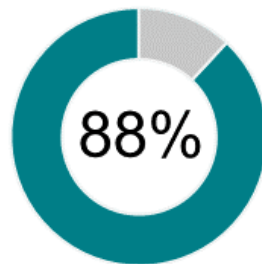


A majority (91%) self-declared a knowledge of **English**, with 8% unspecified and 2% French.

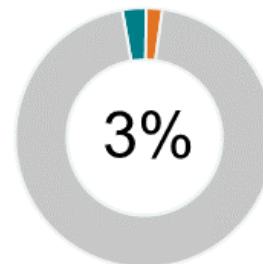
Based on the survey of CUAET holders, additional socio-demographic information was obtained.



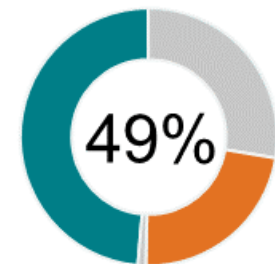
Almost all (91%) had some form of **post-secondary education**. 16% had a college degree, 28% had a Bachelor's degree, 45% had a Master's degree, and 2% had a Doctorate.



A majority (88%) identified their ethnicity / race as **white**.



3% self-identified as **2SLGBTQI+**.



Almost half (49%) completed the survey in **Ukrainian**, with 28% completing the survey in Russian, 23% in English, and 1% in French.

Evaluation findings

Design of the Ukraine response

Finding 1: The provision of large-scale humanitarian support through a temporary resident model required substantial modifications to existing policies, programs, and services across all levels of government.

Canada has previously addressed large scale humanitarian situations by providing permanent residence status through Refugee Resettlement Programming (Government Assisted Refugee, Privately Sponsored Refugee and Blended-Visa Office Referred Refugee). These programs include the built-in provision of [Interim Federal Health](#), [Resettlement Assistance Program \(RAP\)](#), and [settlement services](#). Many PT supports are also tied to the permanent resident model, with limited or no services offered to temporary residents.

Interviewees highlighted that implementing a temporary resident stream differed from using permanent resident streams, as was the model used during the Syria and Afghanistan humanitarian movements. As a result, the magnitude and scale of the work undertaken by IRCC went beyond a normal humanitarian situation response and required a significant reallocation of resources.

Temporary resident model

CUAET was implemented using a [temporary resident model](#), supporting the arrival of Ukrainians and their families on a temporary basis. When the CUAET measures opened for intake in March 2022, it did so to immediate and significant interest, with 337,641 applications received in the response's first 100 days.

The 'refugee-like' situation faced by the Ukrainian population led to CUAET holders requiring more support than traditional temporary residents would typically receive. Despite having similar needs, CUAET holders were not able to access the supports designed for refugees (e.g., those offered through RAP), due to CUAET's temporary resident model.

Modifications to programming

As there was no precedent for providing safe haven through a temporary stream of this magnitude, modifications to existing IRCC programming was required to operationalize the Ukraine Response and to ensure adequate authorities and supports were available.

Major modifications to programming was required by IRCC, OGDs, and PTs.

- [Related to immigration](#): temporary public policies related to exemptions of immigration requirements were launched (i.e., biometrics, immigration medical exams, requirement that or a foreign national to establish they will leave Canada by the end of the period authorized for their stay, the requirement for a foreign national not to be inadmissible for financial reasons, fee waivers for travel documents).
- [Related to federally-funded settlement services](#): the Settlement Program Terms and Conditions were modified to temporarily allow CUAET holders access to services; RAP Terms and Conditions were modified to administer one-time payments of financial support (CUTAI) via ESDC/Service Canada.

- **Related to PT jurisdictions:** PTs and stakeholders created, expanded, and modified structures and supports that are traditionally offered to refugees to fit the design of CUAET and the needs of the population (i.e., regulatory amendments to provide health insurance).

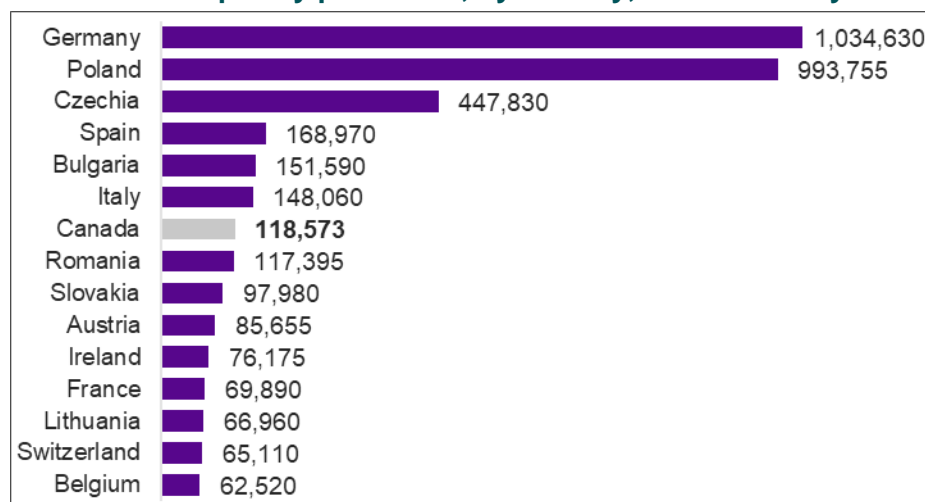
These modifications required a significant lift for IRCC. Additional information regarding the magnitude and scope of the work undertaken by IRCC can be found in Annex B.

Planning the Ukraine response

Finding 2: IRCC does not have an urgent response framework in place to respond to crises or emerging situations through a temporary residence model.

Canada's immigration approach to the situation in Ukraine aligned with partner countries, particularly European countries. The European Union activated the 2001 *Temporary Protection Directive*, which allowed for the unlimited admission of Ukrainians while protecting their respective asylum systems from being overwhelmed with protection requests.⁴ Similar to CUAET, it was active for one year, and was extended in March 2023.

Figure 1: Number of individuals who fled Ukraine and were under temporary protection, by country, as of February 2023



Source: European Union, Eurostat (2023). *Temporary Protection for Persons Fleeing Ukraine - Monthly Statistics, February 2023*; IRCC (2023). GCMS, February 2023.

Note: Data indicates the number of individuals who fled Ukraine and were under temporary protection in EU countries between March 2022 and February 2023. IRCC data indicates the number of CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between March and February 2023.

Development of an urgent response

CUAET was announced publicly prior to measures being developed and communicated internally and with stakeholders. Compounding this issue was that as of February 2022, IRCC did not have a framework to implement and support emergency responses to situations using temporary resident models, nor a framework embedded into its policy and programs toolkit. This resulted in a lack of clear accountabilities and deliberate and strategic approaches available to invoke during a crisis response, with ad hoc approaches having to be developed quickly.

Design

As there were no existing legal authorities to implement a crisis response through a temporary model, IRCC used discretionary tools under the minister's authority, primarily public policies, to create and implement the CUAET measures. These public policies focused on waiving certain immigration requirements for eligible individuals. Interviewees noted that reacting to a humanitarian crisis through designing a temporary solution using public policies was setting a precedent for the federal government to respond to future crises in a similar manner.

In addition, interviewees highlighted potential **legal challenges** for PTs in designing PT support services for CUAET holders, as their regulations did not allow for services to be offered to visitors (e.g., health insurance). Interviewees also discussed potential human rights challenges, and noted that some PTs obtained legal advice when making policy changes, as they were allowing a specific nationality to access services while the same support is not offered to temporary residents of other nationalities.

⁴ David De Coninck (2022) The Refugee Paradox During Wartime in Europe: How Ukrainian and Afghan Refugees are (not) Alike. *International Migration Review* 1-9.

Operationalizing the Ukraine response

Finding 3: The absence of a framework for urgent responses through a temporary model meant that CUAET measures were implemented with limited time to adequately plan or anticipate potential issues, resulting in the Government of Canada mitigating risks as they arose.

Implementing CUAET measures through public policies allowed for eligibility requirements to be temporarily modified to facilitate the entry of Ukrainians and their families into Canada. In order to facilitate the process, as well as to alleviate the demand overseas, various processing requirements were temporarily adjusted.

- Due to the high demand of CUAET, there was an overwhelming demand for **biometrics** appointments. Canada's overseas service delivery network was unable to keep up with the volume of biometrics collections.⁵ Therefore, lower-risk CUAET applicants (those 17 years of age or younger and those 61 years of age or older, as well as anyone who was approved for a Canadian visitor visa in the past 10 years) were exempted from undergoing biometrics screening.
- Due to the limited availability of IRCC designated panel physicians in the region affected by the conflict, IRCC waived the requirement to undergo a **Immigration Medical Exam (IME)** for overseas CUAET applicants where applicable, as this process could have delayed safe and timely departure to Canada.⁶ However, some CUAET holders were subject to a medical diagnostic test once in Canada, given Ukraine is considered a Tuberculosis-endemic country, though the waiving of the IME requirement before arrival posed potential health risks to Canada.
- In addition, interviewees highlighted that exempting CUAET holders from the requirement to establish that they will **leave Canada at the end of their authorized stay** presented a future risk to the Government of Canada, as it may make enforcing overstays difficult. This may set precedents for future crisis responses.
- While the issue of unaccompanied minors is not unique to CUAET and is a concern that is intrinsic to temporary resident processing more generally, interviewees highlighted that **unaccompanied minors** were a concern with CUAET due to the lack of time given to plan for the public policy. Documentation also articulated the safety risks for unaccompanied minors, as they are not tracked once in Canada.⁷ This places the Government of Canada and IRCC at risk of negative public perception if the safety of an unaccompanied minor becomes compromised.
- Additionally, interviewees noted that while the CUAET population were not classified as refugees, their refugee-like situation made them a vulnerable population, increasing risk and chances of being put in dangerous situations. For example, interviewees noted that homestay arrangements found via social media, increased the risk of experiencing **human trafficking, exploitation, or violence** for those who were seeking out accommodations this way.

⁵ Canada, IRCC (2022) *Public Policy to exempt lower-risk Ukrainian nationals applying under CUAET measures from the biometrics collection requirement.*

⁶ Canada, IRCC (2022) *Temporary public policy to exempt Ukrainian nationals from various immigration requirements in support of the Canada-Ukraine authorization for emergency travel.*

⁷ Peel CAS' Child Welfare Immigration Centre of Excellence (CWICE) and Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS) Toronto. (2022). *Unaccompanied and Separated Children Under CUAET: All call to position Canada as Best in Class Leader in the protection and welfare of children and youth. Report to IRCC.*

Impacts

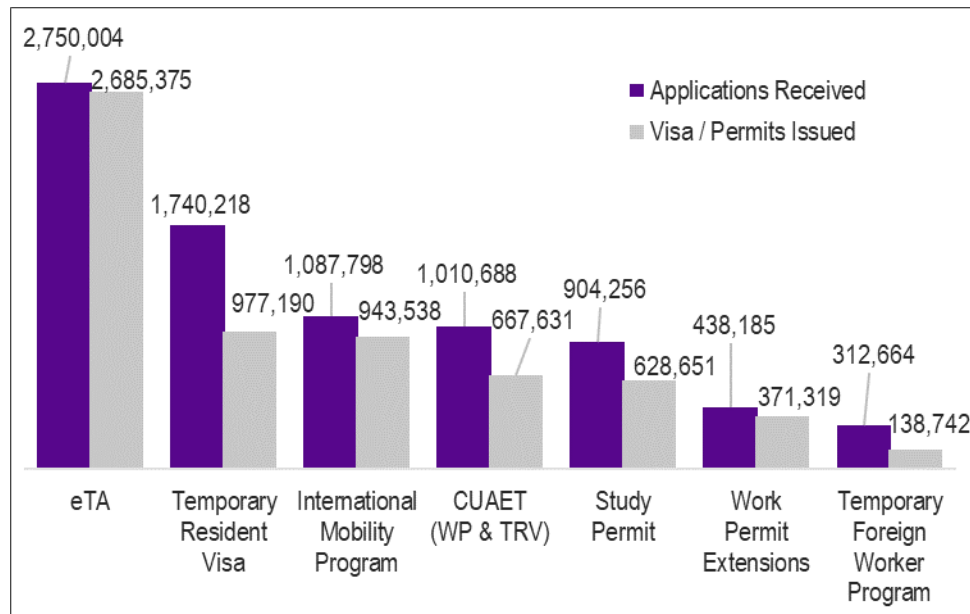
While measures were implemented to facilitate entry into Canada, the residual impacts of the risks IRCC and Government of Canada undertook will need to be monitored moving forward.

Impact of the Ukraine response

Finding 4: While IRCC continued to advance its top priorities in addition to the Ukraine response, there were some operational impacts.

In 2022, CUAET was the **fourth largest 'program'** in terms of number of applications received and processed, only surpassed by Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA), temporary resident visas, and the International Mobility Program. Recognizing that CUAET was developed to process applications for individuals from predominantly one nationality, this demonstrates the impact the CUAET had on processing at IRCC.

Figure 2: Number of applications received versus visas/permits issued in 2023



Source: IRCC, EDW (CBR). Data as of January 2023.

Note: Data includes applications received and visas/permits issued by IRCC between January and December 2023.

Operational impacts

Despite the significant volume of CUAET applications, IRCC was able to advance its top priorities, continuing to resettle refugees from Afghanistan and deliver on multiple Immigration Levels Plan commitments.

However, interviewees and documents highlighted that CUAET impacted the department in a number of additional ways, including:

- affecting the ability to meet processing time standards for other lines of business;
- additional growth in the inventory of visitor visa applications;
- pause intake for the International Experience Canada program; and
- risking the timely processing of (non-Ukrainian) work permits and study permits.⁸

Interviewees also highlighted that the Ukraine Response had an impact at the border, contributing to airport delays. For example, as CUAET holders were arriving on regular passenger flights in addition to charter flights, CBSA had difficulties predicting when large groups of CUAET holders would arrive, creating custom clearance delays for others arriving in Canada.

In addition, interviewees highlighted that there was **limited re-prioritization of departmental priorities** or diverting of resources from other priorities. This resulted in a strain on IRCC staff, especially for those who engaged with clients and stakeholders from other lines of business (i.e., international students, temporary workers).

⁸ Canada, IRCC (2022). *IRCC Deputy Minister Transition Binder 2022: IRCC Response for Ukraine*.

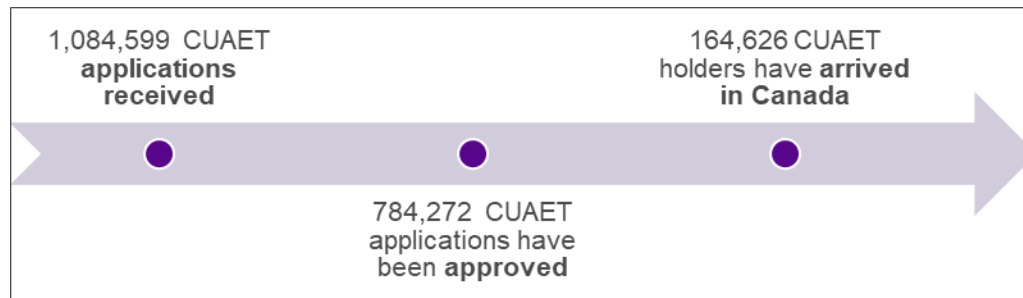
Capacity to undertake the Ukraine response

Finding 5: The design and implementation of CUAET measures resulted in a strain on IRCC and partner resources, particularly due to the response’s high demand and unlimited intake model.

Unlimited intake model

Unlike with urgent responses via permanent resident models, IRCC **did not have a cap on the number of CUAET applications it would accept**. The unlimited nature of the response, combined with significant uptake, was identified by interviewees as a key challenge experienced throughout the CUAET initiatives. They noted that other similar movements were capped and had intake targets which helped to better identify, allocate, and manage resources. For example, Operation Syrian Refugees had an initial target of 25,000, and when that was achieved, a new target was set but the expectation around processing times and settlement services (i.e., flights to Canada, pre-arrival services) reflected this change. CUAET’s unlimited intake model generated many unknowns around planning and resourcing.

Figure 3: CUAET applications, approvals and arrivals, as of June 27, 2023



Source: IRCC, EDW (CBR). Data as of June 27, 2023.

Note: Data includes: (1) number of CUAET applications received and approved between March 17, 2022 and June 27, 2023; (2) number of CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between February 24, 2022 and June 27, 2023

Capacity of staff

Despite being a departmental priority, IRCC interviewees expressed that **few resources** were dedicated to the Ukraine Response. Many interviewees noted that there was no recalibration of priorities, resulting in CUAET initiatives being added to existing workloads.

Interviewees highlighted that while IRCC has many dedicated employees, concurrent crises (i.e., COVID-19, Afghanistan, Ukraine) have led to fatigue, leaving little operational capacity to undertake crisis responses and in some cases led to IRCC employees experiencing **burn out**.

Capacity of PTs

Interviewees from across PTs highlighted the impact on resources, in terms of both funding and staff, as well as the **impacts on provincial programming** (i.e., health care, housing, settlement programming, etc.). Similarly to IRCC, putting a cap on CUAET arrivals would have helped PTs allocate resources more effectively and reduce resourcing challenges. The additional workload and the reactive nature of the response caused pressure on staff, resources and funds. Many staff took on new additional responsibilities, while others shifted roles entirely.

Management and coordination

Finding 6: Roles and responsibilities within IRCC were not clear due to a lack of central accountability and authority. This was compounded by IRCC simultaneously having to undertake roles beyond its mandate (i.e., accommodations and chartering flights).

Roles, responsibilities, and coordination

In the absence of a designated lead for the Ukraine Response, interviewees noted that **roles and responsibilities were vague and unclear** throughout IRCC, meaning that foundational work, policy direction and guidance documents were developed among different groups across the department rather than in one centralized unit or with a cohesive lens. This caused confusion internally and impacted timelines, as staff working on CUAET initiatives did not always know where to go to ask questions, collaborate, or facilitate decision-making, which in some cases led to duplication of efforts.

Unlike with other initiatives such as Afghanistan and Syria, there was a **lack of central accountability and authority** associated with the Ukraine Response within IRCC at the senior management level (i.e., Assistant Deputy Minister, and dedicated Directors General and teams). There was no dedicated team within IRCC created (either permanently or temporarily) to focus on the whole Ukraine Response, making it difficult to mobilize quickly and coordinate corporate enablers. For example, interviewees reported delays in communicating public information and difficulty in accessing relevant and accurate administrative data.

Whole of government approach

Interviewees and documents highlighted that while the Ukraine Response was a **whole of Canada initiative, it was mainly IRCC's priority**, which was not necessarily the case for other federal partners.

The federal **Government Operations Centre** was invoked for the Ukraine Response, particularly with the announcement of the federally-supported hotels, chartered flights, and financial assistance. However, interviewees noted that it was quickly disbanded as OGDs did not see themselves as primary contributors, as immigration was not within their mandates.

This resulted in **IRCC undertaking work and managing risk outside its mandate** in order to adequately focus on the response (i.e., coordinating hotels for a temporary movement, organizing chartered flights). It also meant that because this was mainly just a priority for IRCC, barriers existed in allowing Ukrainians to access some non-IRCC programming.

Although the Government Operations Centre was disbanded, **IRCC did receive support from several federal departments**. For example, Service Canada, ESDC and ISED provided supports related to administering CUTAI, Jobs for Ukraine, and the Canadian Industry for Ukraine Online donation portal.

Figure 4: Key federal government departments and their supports administered for CUAET



Communication and information sharing

Finding 7: While interviewees reported that the Ukraine Response experienced strong collaboration among those involved, the lack of early information created operational planning challenges.

Communication

Two main avenues were used for communicating with external partners and stakeholders:

1. Forum of Ministers Responsible for Immigration
 - FMRI is a federal-provincial-territorial decision-making body with the goal of supporting a flexible, timely and effective immigration system in Canada.
 - Information regarding the Ukraine Response was regularly communicated at this forum.
2. Operation Ukrainian Safe Haven
 - OUSH is a table that met weekly and was comprised of PTs, OGDs, and key stakeholders.
 - It provided a place to give regular updates, as well as a platform for sharing information and raising challenges.

Interviewees from all stakeholder groups commended the OUSH approach to communication and felt it enabled strong collaboration across stakeholder groups.

Information sharing

While interviewees understood the ‘all-hands-on deck’ nature of the Ukraine Response and that it was a continuous work in progress, they highlighted the **desire and need for earlier and clearer information** and decision-making from the beginning.

By using a temporary resident stream to facilitate the Ukraine response, there was **limited client information collected and available for IRCC and partners to plan and make fully informed operational decisions**. For example, interviewees highlighted that a lack of arrivals information made it difficult for PTs to adequately plan and prepare their supports (i.e., requiring more spaces in hotels) as well as allocating resources to the initiative.

In some cases, the lack of timely information and decision-making on federal supports led to **duplication of efforts**, as PTs were proactive and provided similar supports before the federal supports were announced. As well, the lack of information regarding the ending or extension of the CUAET response was a common frustration among PTs, as it inhibited their ability to fully plan their resources and financial allocations for the following fiscal year.⁹

Additionally, temporary streams have limited information readily available on intended **province of destination**, and unlike with resettled refugees, they are not ‘destined’ to a city/province for initial resettlement. This meant that PTs and stakeholders were unable to predict and plan for arrivals, and had a difficult time understanding and reporting on the numbers of CUAET holders that were arriving in their PT.

⁹ The Government of Canada announced on March 22, 2023 that it would continue accepting applications for CUAET until July 15, 2023. They will have until March 31, 2024 to travel to Canada

under the special measures, and extend or adjust their temporary status through CUAET, free of charge. Source: Canada, IRCC (2023). *News Release – Canada extends support for those fleeing Russia’s illegal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine*.

Perceptions of the Ukraine response

Finding 8: The CUAET measures are perceived by some as unfair and inequitable, particularly in comparison to other humanitarian responses and services offered to other temporary residents.

There is a perception of unfairness regarding the treatment of the Ukrainian population compared to other global humanitarian situations which was highlighted by almost all interviewees, from IRCC and OGDs to PTs and settlement stakeholders. The measures have also been criticized by the media and academics as being inequitable.

Perspectives within IRCC

When discussing the nuances around inequitable treatment, comparisons were often made to other global populations in need of humanitarian assistance. Interviewees felt that there was an inequitable response in comparison with the Afghan movement, which was also a priority for IRCC at the time. The acceptance of an unlimited number of CUAET applications and arrivals was also noted, as other recent humanitarian responses typically have caps and targets.

Given the work taking place within IRCC regarding anti-racism and equity, many IRCC interviewees perceived CUAET as a privileged initiative for a mostly white population, and raised it as a concern in undertaking the response.

Interviewees also felt that CUAET introduced inequities to the broader temporary resident population, as CUAET holders currently have special exemptions to access federally-funded settlement services, and access to provincial services such as health care insurance, whereas other temporary residents do not.

External perspectives

PT-specific actions, in addition to those undertaken by the federal government, were also raised as unfair to other groups of temporary residents. PTs highlighted the legal concerns of making policy changes to allow Ukrainians to access PT services, as the changes could be viewed as being made based on nationality, as the same service is not offered to other nationalities. For example, allowing Ukrainian drivers licenses to be recognized while still requiring other temporary residents to obtain Canadian licenses was a concern.

It was noted that the unlimited nature of CUAET applications may lead to future inequities regarding transitioning to permanent residence. For example, some provinces may be seen as choosing Ukrainians over other types of immigrants through transitioning Ukrainians to permanent residence via their allocations under the Provincial Nominee Program. The concern is two-fold - that there will be a perception that Ukrainians will be chosen because PTs perceive them to be better able to integrate into Canadian society while others recognize that because of the unlimited nature of CUAET, more Ukrainians will be eligible for nominations than non-Ukrainians, which could lead to disproportionately more nominations for CUAET holders than for other groups of temporary residents.

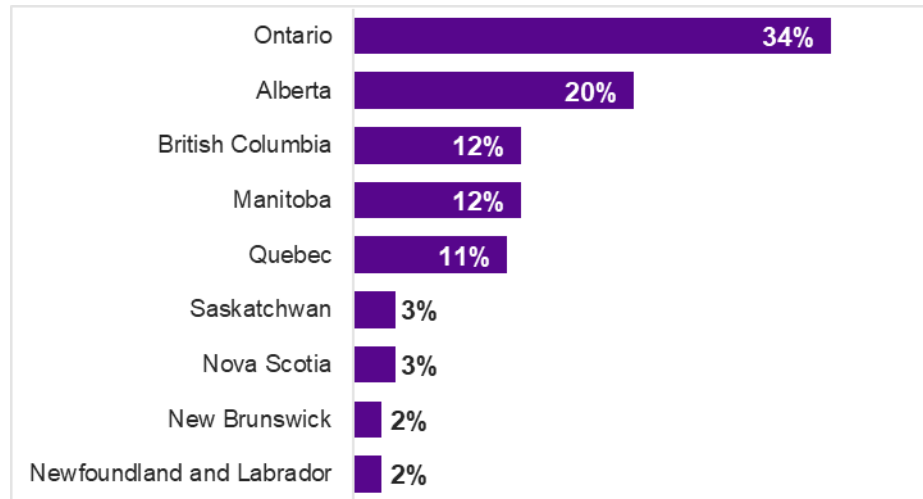
Settlement service providers also faced challenges in terms of public support, and experienced pressure from non-Ukrainian temporary residents concerned about being ineligible for services, despite having similar needs. Settlement providers were particularly concerned about goods and service donations destined specifically for Ukrainians, while other refugees, asylum seekers, and individuals in need could have also benefited. SPOs highlighted that they tended to provide these donated goods to anyone who was in need.

Geographic distribution of landed CUAET holders

Finding 9: While most surveyed CUAET holder respondents reported living in Ontario or Alberta, other provinces across Canada are attracting individuals and experiencing regional distribution of CUAET holder arrivals.

Over half (54%) of surveyed CUAET holders reported living in Ontario and Alberta.

Figure 5: Percentage of CUAET survey respondents who self-reported living in the following provinces

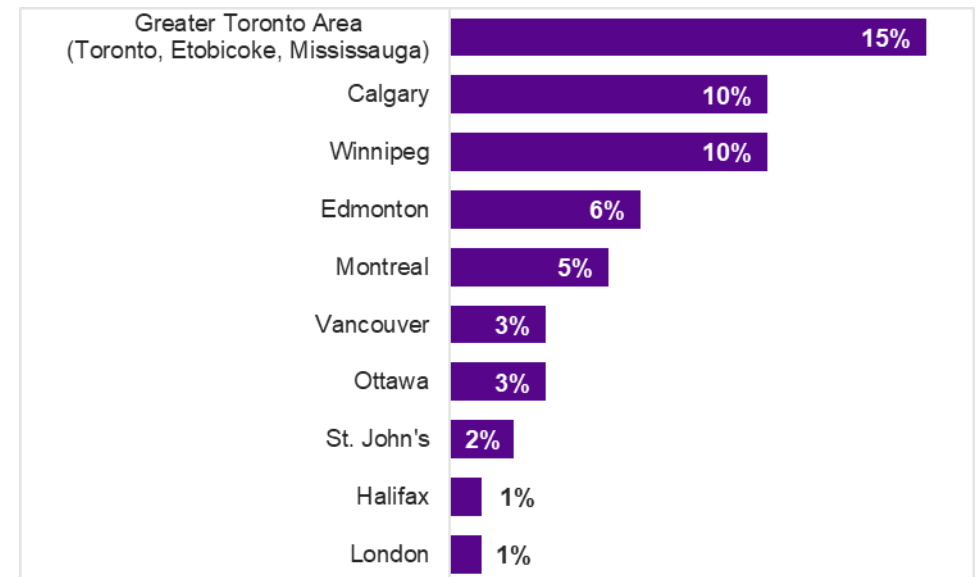


Source: IRCC (2023) Survey of CUAET Holders.

Note: Survey was conducted in February-March 2023 with CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between March 17, 2023 and December 11, 2023 and were 18 years of age or older.

Most reported living in Greater Toronto Area, Calgary, and Winnipeg. While smaller provinces do not represent a large percentage of surveyed CUAET holders, their major cities (i.e., Winnipeg, St. John's, Halifax) are attracting a sizable proportion of CUAET holders.

Figure 6: Percentage of CUAET survey respondents who self-reported living in the following cities



Source: IRCC (2023) Survey of CUAET Holders.

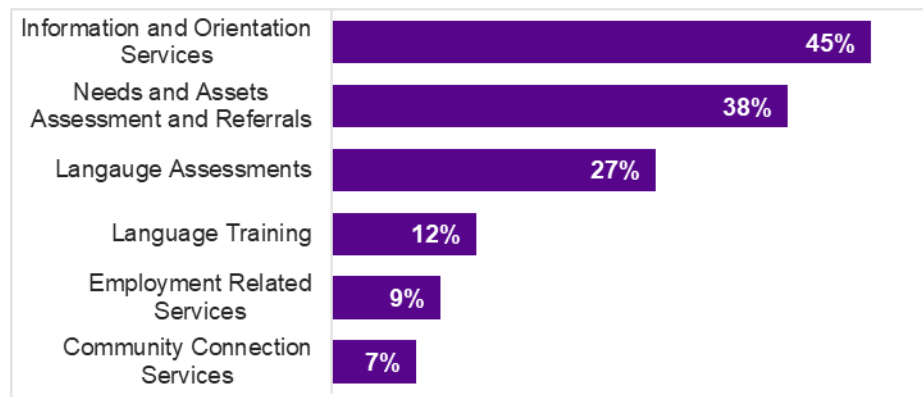
Note: Survey was conducted in February-March 2023 with CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between March 17, 2023 and December 13, 2023 and were 18 years of age or older.

Accessing IRCC-funded settlement services

Finding 10: Over half of adult CUAET holders in Canada have accessed at least one IRCC-funded settlement service, which suggests that a sizable portion of the CUAET population are getting settlement supports early in their integration journey.

Over half (55%) of adult CUAET holders in Canada have accessed at least one IRCC-funded settlement service¹⁰. Of those, the most accessed settlement service had been Information and Orientation Services.

Figure 7: Percentage of adult CUAET holders who accessed Settlement Services as of December 2022

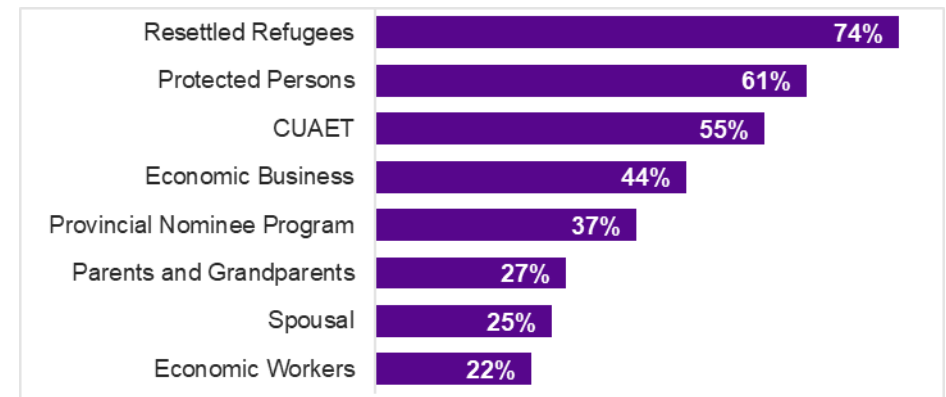


Source: IRCC, iCARE data, Extracted in February 2023.

Note: iCARE data is based on adult CUAET holders who arrived in Canada between March 17, 2022 and December 11, 2022 who accessed an IRCC-funded settlement service between March 17, 2022 and December 31, 2022.

Compared to permanent residents who arrived in Canada during the same time period, CUAET holders had a lower uptake of settlement services than resettled refugees (74%) and protected persons (61%), but a higher uptake than economic workers (22%) as well as spousal reunification (25%) and parent and grandparent (27%) newcomers.

Figure 8: Percentage of adult newcomers who accessed Settlement Services as of December 2022, by immigration category



Source: IRCC, iCARE Data. Extracted in February 2023 (CUAET) and May 2023.

Note: Data includes adults who had arrived in Canada between March and December 2022, and accessed IRCC-funded settlement services.

¹⁰ Through the Settlement Program, IRCC funds service provider organizations to deliver language learning services to newcomers, community and employment services, path-finding and referral services in support of foreign credential recognition, settlement information and support services that facilitate access to

settlement programming. Eligible newcomers can receive multiple services from IRCC-funded settlement service provider organizations at any point during their integration journey.

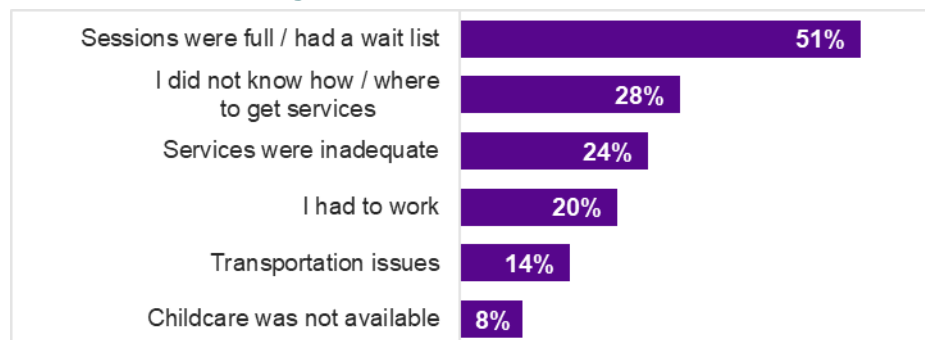
Difficulties accessing settlement services

Finding 11: Of those who are not accessing federal or provincially funded settlement services, the most commonly identified difficulty was that the sessions were full or had a waitlist.

Similar to IRCC-funded settlement service uptake rates, 57% of surveyed CUAET holders indicated that they accessed settlement services (either provincially or federally funded).

Of those who accessed or wanted to access settlement services but did not, 21% of reported that they had difficulties getting the settlement services they wanted or needed.

Figure 9: CUAET survey respondents' main difficulties in accessing settlement services



Source: IRCC (2023) Survey of CUAET Holders.

Note: Survey was conducted in February-March 2023 with CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between March 17, 2023 and December 11, 2023 and were 18 years of age or older.

Of those who reported having difficulties, the main difficulty in accessing services was that the sessions were full or there was a waitlist (51%). Long waitlists and full classes were also highlighted by interviewees who indicated that there is an increased demand for language services (assessment and training, in particular), causing a backlog in some jurisdictions.

Interviewees noted other support gaps that may affect the settlement and integration of CUAET holders:

- CUAET holders moving to rural communities where formalized settlement services are less accessible;
- a lack of available and affordable housing options;
- a lack of long-term financial assistance;
- timely access to Immigration Medical Exams in Canada and removal of the associated work-restriction on the CUAET work permits.

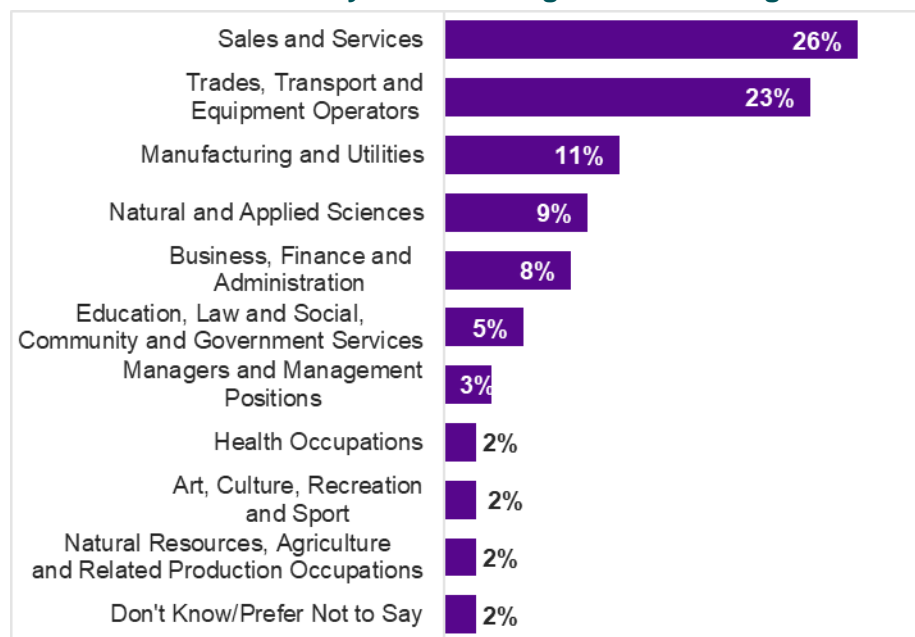
Employment

Finding 12: A majority of surveyed CUAET holders reported working in Canada, mostly in the sales and services sector followed by trades, transport, and equipment operator sectors.

71% of surveyed CUAET holders reported that they are **working in Canada**, with 82% of those indicating that they are working on a full-time basis.

Over half (59%) of those who are working indicated that they are **working in the same sector as they were before coming to Canada**, most commonly in the sales and services sector followed by the trades, transport and equipment operator sectors.

Figure 10: Percentage of surveyed CUAET respondents who indicated they were working in the following sectors



Source: IRCC (2023) Survey of CUAET Holders.

Note: (1) Survey was conducted in February-March 2023 with CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between March 17, 2023 and December 11, 2023 and were 18 years of age or older.

(2) 8% of respondents indicated 'Other'.

(3) Sectors were defined in the survey based on NOC 2021 categories

Of those who indicated they were **not currently working in Canada**, the main reason was because they were looking for work (47%), followed by child care responsibilities (20%). Of those not working, 19% indicated they were about to start work in the near future.

Facilitative Factors

A few interviewees suggested that the high level of **knowledge of English** may have helped to facilitate workforce participation. This is somewhat supported by surveyed CUAET holders' self-reported knowledge of English, where 23% indicated they were fluent, 36% indicated they could communicate at an intermediate level, and 30% indicated they could communicate at a basic level in English.

Most survey respondents reported that they could not communicate in **French**, though 9% indicated they could do so at a basic level, 2% indicated they could at an intermediate level, and 1% indicated they were fluent in the language.

Some provinces had networks with employers which helped contribute Ukrainians obtaining employment within Canada, which may have also helped to facilitate the high employment rate.

Challenges to Participating in the Work Force

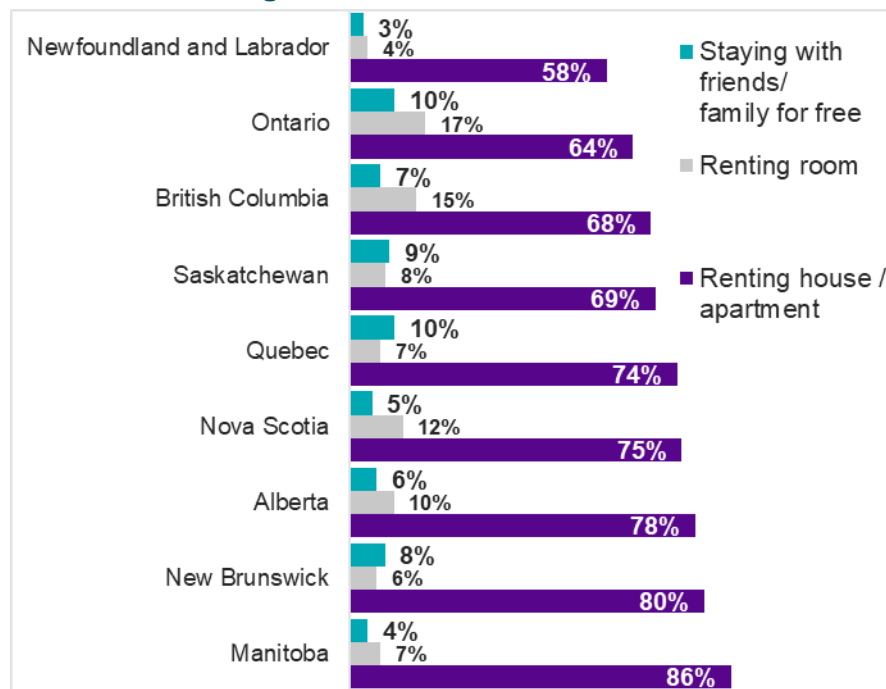
Although most surveyed CUAET holders were able to participate in the workforce, PT and external interviewees noted that some CUAET holders faced challenges when it came to accessing employment. In particular, the waiving of the immigration medical exam requirement overseas meant that some qualified individuals were not able to work in Canada in certain sectors without first conducting an immigration medical exam in Canada, which were not always accessible. In addition, it was noted that credential recognition was still challenging for some.

Housing and temporary accommodations

Finding 13: Obtaining timely and affordable housing was a challenge for some CUAET holders.

When asked about their current housing situation, most (71%) CUAET survey respondents said they were **currently renting an apartment or house**, 12% indicated they were renting a room, and 7% indicated that they were staying with friends or family for free. These numbers vary slightly by province.

Figure 11: Percentages of CUAET holders reporting various housing situations



Source: IRCC (2023) Survey of CUAET Holders.

Note: Survey was conducted in February-March 2023 with CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between March 17, 2023 and December 11, 2023 and were 18 years of age or older.

Interviewees cited that **finding adequate housing in a timely manner** is a challenge for CUAET holders. However, they also noted that adequate housing is a pan-Canada issue due to the current housing market, and not necessarily unique to the CUAET population.

Despite the difficulties across Canada to access the housing market, two-thirds of surveyed CUAET holders reported **finding a place to live within their first month in Canada**, however, a third (31%) indicated it took more than one month to find a place to live.

Most (73%) surveyed CUAET holders reported that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their housing situation. The aspect of their living situation that respondents were most dissatisfied with was the affordability of their housing, with 28% reporting being somewhat or very dissatisfied with the affordability, while 19% felt neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Temporary hotel accommodations

From July 4, 2022 to June 25, 2023, 21,925 clients received **federally-funded temporary hotel accommodation** up to 14 nights, with 129,433 total nights booked.¹¹

Temporary accommodations operated in 10 cities across Canada – St. John’s, Halifax, Moncton, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

Interviewees noted that two weeks in an IRCC-funded temporary accommodation **may not be a sufficient amount of time**, and 64% of CUAET holders said it took them longer than two weeks to find accommodations. With a gap in affordable housing across Canada, there was a risk that individuals could be in the shelter system, homeless, or in an increasingly vulnerable situation.

¹¹ Note: IRCC is not tracking hotel occupancy (in/out), but rather how many required accommodations.

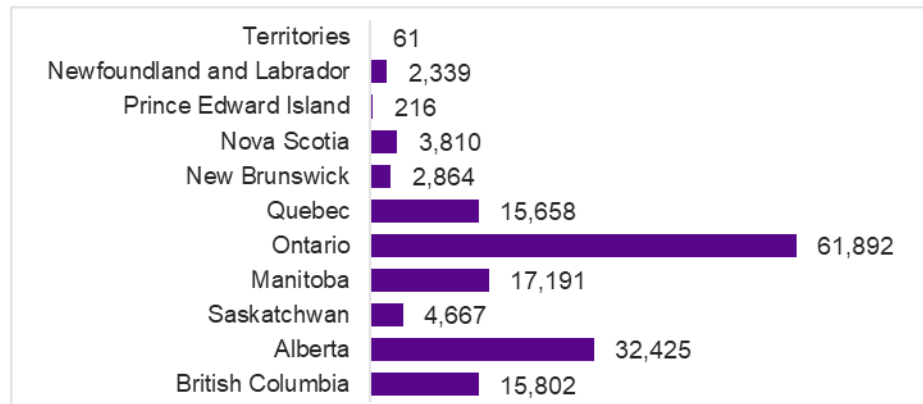
CUTAI and financial assistance

Finding 14: Almost half of surveyed CUAET holders who accessed the Canada-Ukraine Transitional Assistance Initiative found it met some of their basic needs.

Foreign nationals who have been facilitated under CUAET measures, have arrived in Canada, and have been granted temporary resident status on or before March 31, 2024 are eligible to receive a one time payment through the Canada-Ukraine Transitional Assistance Initiative (CUTAI). Adults (18 or older) receive CAN\$3,000, and children (17 and under) receive CAN\$1,500.

As of May 2, 2023, 156,915 individuals were approved for payments under CUTAI, for a total anticipated pay out of \$417 million.

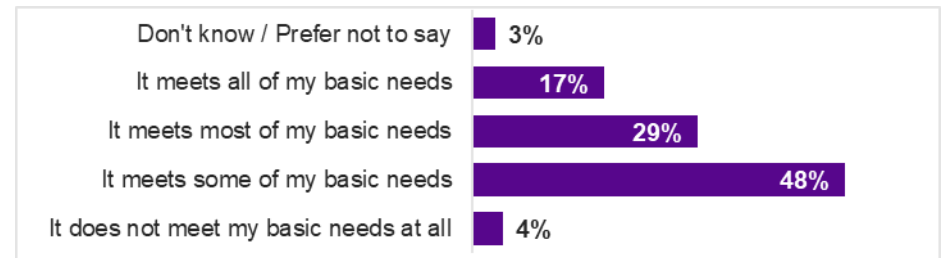
Figure 12: Numbers of administered CUTAI payments, by province



Source: ESDC Ukraine Support Activities, as of May 2, 2023. Prepared by Strategic Directions and Partnership Management Directorates, CSB.

Of the surveyed CUAET holders, 98% reported accessing CUTAI. Almost half (48%) of those who had accessed CUTAI found it had met some of their basic needs (i.e., food, housing utilities and clothing), followed by 29% finding it met most and 17% found it met all of their basic needs.

Figure 13: The extent to which CUTAI met CUAET survey respondents' needs

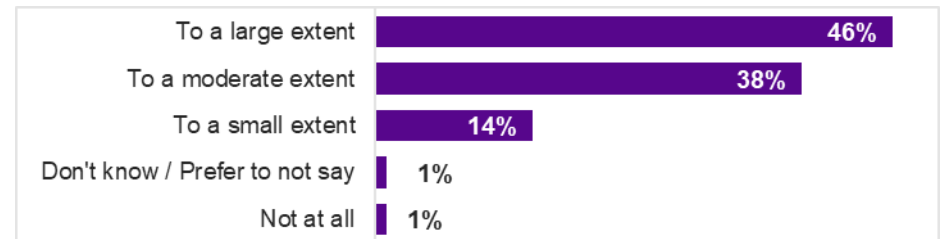


Source: IRCC (2023) Survey of CUAET Holders.

Note: Survey was conducted in February-March 2023 with CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between March 17, 2023 and December 11, 2023 and were 18 years of age or older.

Of the survey respondents who accessed CUTAI, nearly half (46%) indicated that the financial assistance made it easier to transition to life in Canada to a large extent, while 38% indicated it helped them to a moderate extent.

Figure 14: Extent to which CUTAI helped CUAET survey respondents transition to life in Canada



Source: IRCC (2023) Survey of CUAET Holders.

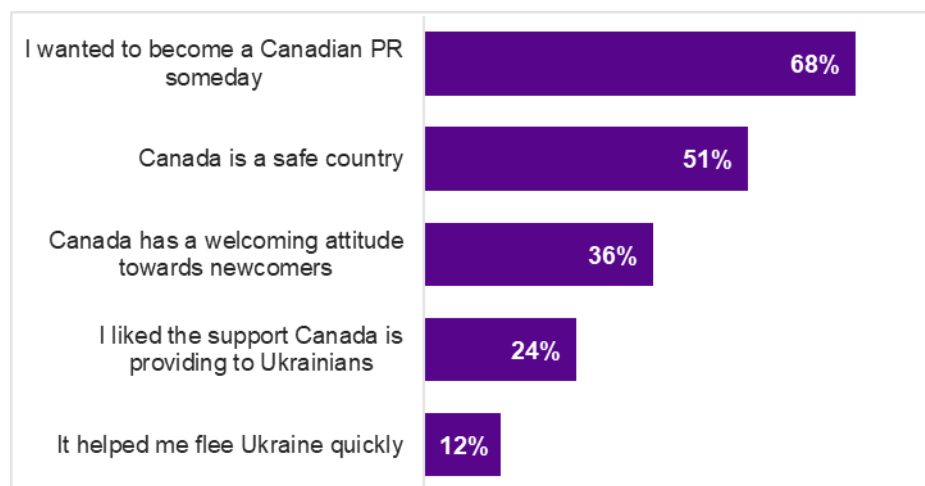
Note: Survey was conducted in February-March 2023 with CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between March 17, 2023 and December 11, 2023 and were 18 years of age or older.

Future outlook

Finding 15: Almost all survey respondents are considering becoming permanent residents. Many would meet eligibility criteria for existing immigration programs should they decide to remain in Canada.

When asked why they applied to come to Canada, 68% of survey respondents said it was because they **wanted to become a permanent resident** of Canada someday.

Figure 15: Reasons CUAET survey respondents applied to come to Canada



Source: IRCC (2023) Survey of CUAET Holders.

Note: Survey was conducted in February-March 2023 with CUAET holders who had arrived in Canada between March 17, 2023 and December 11, 2023 and were 18 years of age or older.

When asked if they had considered moving to Canada temporarily or permanently prior to March 2022, 54% reported that they had considered it.

When asked if they were considering becoming a permanent resident, 91% said they were. These statistics indicate that there was and is **an intent of CUAET holders to come to and remain in Canada.**

Meeting eligibility for existing programming

Almost all CUAET survey respondents were working age, with 80% being between the ages of 18 and 44, with a median age of 35. The majority of respondents (71%) also reported currently working in Canada, with 60% of those indicating that they were working in the same field as before coming to Canada. These CUAET holders are **gaining Canadian work experience necessary to be eligible for economic permanent residence streams** (i.e., Provincial Nominee Program).

These individuals are also highly educated, with 17% reporting having a college diploma or a trade, and 74% reporting being educated at the University-level (Bachelors, Masters or PhD).

Given that CUAET temporary status documents are valid for up to three years, many CUAET holders would meet the time, education, and experience requirements for existing permanent immigration programs, should they wish to apply to become permanent residents in Canada.

Conclusions and recommendations

The Ukraine Response has thus far been successful in facilitating the arrival of CUAET holders to Canada. While early settlement and integration outcomes are trending in a positive direction, there are areas for improvement regarding IRCC's approach to undertaking future emergency responses.

Theme 1: Crisis response

CUAET required significant policy and program adaptations, which led to resourcing and operational challenges, and a perceived bias and lack of transparency.

The department would benefit from developing a more deliberate and strategic approach for future emergency response situations, and should include a sustainable crisis management response, adequately staffed from all key departmental areas, who have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, reporting structures, and accountabilities for when a future emergency response occurs.

In addition, IRCC would benefit from developing and establishing a crisis response framework to ensure that an appropriate policy and program toolkit is developed to effectively guide and manage future emerging situations, as well as a plan for reporting and measuring outcomes.

Recommendation 1: IRCC should identify and implement a crisis management response infrastructure to ensure adequate departmental readiness and resources to respond in emergency situations. This should include:

- a) An identified senior management lead (ADM level).
- b) An identified group of staff, including representatives from policy, operations, and internal services (i.e., data, communications) to support the implementation of the response, in a surge capacity.
- c) A plan and resources for monitoring the CUAET population (and other future crises cohorts), including the medium to long term impacts of the response on programs and policies.

Recommendation 2: IRCC should develop and implement a crisis management framework, that:

- a) Articulates policy and program tools and options, an operational readiness plan to mobilize IRCC and coordinate with other government departments and external partners, and resourcing and engagement plans;
- b) Includes objective monitoring and assessment criteria to help evaluate emerging situations and inform departmental directions and decisions.

Theme 2: Priority setting

The demands on immigration programming and operations caused by urgent responses to humanitarian and emergency situations has put mounting pressure on IRCC priorities and resources in recent years. While situations are difficult to forecast, IRCC would benefit from recalibrating its priorities and clearly communicating that shift in focus internally and externally (i.e., communicating with staff and stakeholders what business lines will be impacted with increased processing times).

The unlimited nature of the CUAET response, combined significant uptake, created staffing and human resources challenges, including staff burnout. As well, the lack of targets for the CUAET measures created resource burdens and certain operational unpredictability for the department.

Lesson 1: Urgent response situations may necessitate that departmental priorities be purposefully reviewed recalibrated, ensuring dedicated resources can adequately address the situation.

Lesson 2: The department would benefit from strongly considering operational and other targets for future emergency response situations to better allow for adequate planning and resourcing.

Theme 3: Settlement

While it is early in the settlement and integration journey of landed CUAET holders in Canada, initial results are indicating that CUAET holders are benefiting from settlement services provided by both IRCC and PTs. Given the uptake of federally funded settlement services and the temporary resident status of CUAET holders, there is indication that providing IRCC-funded settlement services to temporary residents beyond CUAET holders would be beneficial.

CUAET holders experienced challenges finding affordable housing, and while they were provided temporary accommodations, two weeks may not have been sufficient. In addition, more broadly, Canada is experiencing an affordable housing shortage, exacerbating Ukrainian newcomers' search suitable accommodations.

Recommendation 3: IRCC should further explore providing federally-funded settlement services to other temporary resident populations displaced as a result of a crisis.

Lesson 3: A longer duration for temporary hotel accommodations would be advantageous in providing individuals adequate time to find permanent accommodations.

Theme 4: Consultations and Communications

There are numerous partners and external stakeholders involved in delivering resettlement, settlement and integration services, all of whom benefit from timely communication with IRCC and an avenue to communicate their needs, successes and challenges. The OUSH Table was viewed by many as a best practice, as it provided IRCC, partners, and stakeholders a platform to share information in a timely fashion to the necessary individuals within and outside the department.

In addition, IRCC would benefit from expanding its list of Government of Canada partners, particularly among federal government departments at the outset, to ensure effective coordination and delivery emerging initiatives that benefits from a broader, whole-of-government approach.

Lesson 4: A formal working group with representatives from all levels of government and key stakeholders is beneficial to support urgent response situations in timely information-sharing, decision-making and issues management.

Lesson 5: It is essential that key information be communicated to partners and stakeholders as quickly as possible to ensure that they have adequate time to respond to and support urgent response situations.

Recommendation 4: When emerging situations involve accommodations for newcomers, IRCC should formalize its relationship with OGD partners related to housing (i.e., Infrastructure Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation) to ensure that expertise and benefits from a whole of government approach are being optimized.

Theme 5: Monitoring

IRCC experiences have shown that urgent responses require a rapid design and implementation. However, the need for timely socio-demographic information on clients is crucial to supporting well informed evidence-based decision making, particularly during urgent responses.

IRCC would benefit from ensuring that administrative data is quickly and accurately extracted to support reporting and analysis purposes on client populations who are identified as part of urgent responses. This would support immediate evidence-based decision making, but also through medium and long term monitoring of individuals (i.e., transitioning to permanent residence, uptake of settlement services, accessing social services) and understanding of analysis of outcomes to inform future situations.

Lesson 6: It is essential that IRCC quickly and consistently extract information from its administrative data to facilitate reporting and analysis purposes.

Annex A

Table 1: Breakdown of provincial/territorial services

Province / territory	Health enrollment	Health coverage	Language training	Other settlement services	Social assistance	Education (K-12)	Disability support	Housing
British Columbia	9,909 (Dec. 2022)	Eligible	Partial	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Hotels; Hosting
Alberta	16,298 (Dec. 2022)	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	In Progress	Settlement
Saskatchewan	2,808 (Dec. 2022)	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible with OWP	Eligible if WP or SP holders	Eligible	Provincial
Manitoba	11,112 (Jan. 2023)	Eligible	Not Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible if children of CUAET OWP	Eligible	Provincial
Ontario	36,378 (Jan. 2023)	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Settlement
Quebec	7,477 (Nov. 2022)	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	N/A	Hotels
New Brunswick	1,623 (Jan. 2023)	Eligible with OWP	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	In Progress
Nova Scotia	2,245 (Jan. 2023)	Eligible with OWP	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Hosting; Provincial
Prince Edward Island	1,236 (Dec. 2023)	Eligible with OWP	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible with OWP	Eligible	Eligible with OWP	Provincial
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,741 (Oct. 2022)	Eligible with Conditions	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Settlement

Note: Based on information and data collected in early 2023

Annex B

Overseas response

- Canada's Embassy in Kyiv closes (February 8, 2022), followed by the Visa Application Centres (VAC) in Kyiv and Lviv (February 24, 2022).
 - Embassies across Europe (Warsaw, Berlin, London) take on workload and staff up for response.
- Canadian Biometrics Operations Centre (CBOC) opens in Warsaw and Berlin to support biometric processing (April 13, 2022)
- VAC pops up in Bratislava (Apr. 20, 2022); Budapest (April 25, 2022); Krakow (April 27, 2022)
- Canada Information Centre opened in Poland to provide essential information, including guidance on pre- and post-arrival services and support (May 4, 2022)

Policy adaptations

- CUAET announced (March 3, 2022) with temporary public policies created to support the launch on March 17, 2022.
 - Temporary Public Policy – applying for Temporary Residence (March 14, 2022)
 - Temporary Public Policy – exempt from various immigration requirements (March 17, 2022)
 - Temporary Public Policy – exempt lower risk CUAET from biometrics requirements (April 25, 2022)
- CUAET extension announced (March 20, 2023), effective April 1, 2023.
- IRCC Terms and Conditions modified
 - Settlement Program – Ukrainian TRs eligible for IRCC-funded settlement services (April 13, 2022)
 - Resettlement Assistance Program – CUTAI to be administered to CUAET holders

Integration supports

- Arrival Services at Airports
 - Provided by Canadian Red Cross through Vote 1 Funding (Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver)
- IRCC-led Federal Charters
 - 3 Flights (Winnipeg – May 23, 2022; Montreal – May 29, 2022; Halifax – June 2, 2022)
 - Additional Flights
- Transitional Financial Assistance (CUTAI) from federal government announced
- Required an MOU with Service Canada
- Temporary Accommodations
 - RFP Launched to expand accommodations to 500 block booked hotel rooms (August 26, 2022)
 - Temporary accommodations increased to 9 cities across Canada (October 11, 2022)
- ISED Canadian Industry for Ukraine Donation Portal launched (May 11, 2022)
 - MOU with ISED

Management

- Regular FMRI meetings (DG, ADM, DM and Ministerial Levels)
- Operation Ukrainian Safe Haven (OUSH) Table is created (March 29, 2022), meeting weekly with PTs, OGDs, SPOs, UCC
- Weekly dashboards provided to PCO on applications, arrivals, etc.
- Launching and disbanding of the Government Operations Centre with Transport Canada, CMHC
- Working with non-traditional immigration players (i.e., ISED)
- Building relationships with new stakeholders (i.e., UCC)
- IRCC senior management changes requiring briefings, transitions, etc. (e.g., new Deputy Minister and Associate Deputy Minister, new ADM Operations, etc.)"