

# Supplementary Information Tables:

Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada's

2023–24

Departmental  
Plan

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Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada

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## **Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do**

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### **Raison d'être**

Canada is a country that has been positively impacted by immigration, welcoming 19 million people since Confederation and home to over 200 ethnic communities. Immigration has been crucial in shaping Canada into the diverse and prosperous nation it is today and, looking forward, stands to be equally fundamental to Canada's future social cohesion and economic prosperity. To this end, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada facilitates the entry of temporary residents, manages the selection, settlement and integration of newcomers, grants citizenship and issues passports to eligible citizens. The Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship is responsible for this organization.

Note: Until the establishing legislation is amended, the legal name of the Department for the purposes of appropriation acts remains Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

### **Mandate and role**

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) selects and welcomes, as permanent and temporary residents, foreign nationals whose skills contribute to Canadian prosperity.

It also reunites family members and maintains Canada's humanitarian tradition by welcoming refugees and other people in need of protection, thereby upholding its international obligations and reputation.

IRCC, in collaboration with its partners, conducts the screening of potential permanent and temporary residents to protect the health, safety and security of Canadians. IRCC is also responsible for the Canadian passport program and issuance of other travel documents that facilitate the travel of Canadian citizens, permanent residents and protected persons.

The Department builds a stronger Canada by helping all newcomers settle and integrate into Canadian society and the economy, and by encouraging, granting and providing proof of Canadian citizenship.

Lastly, IRCC provides evidence-based, results-based strategic policy advice on immigration, settlement and integration issues for Francophone immigrants; and through IRCC's Action Plan for Official Languages.

IRCC offers its many programs either directly or through contract, grant or contribution agreement, or in partnership with other government departments.

Immigration services are offered through the [IRCC website](#), by telephone during local business hours within Canada, or by email, as well as at 28 in-Canada points of service and 61 points of service in 50 countries. As of August 2022, there were 166 visa application centres in 111 countries that are providing services to clients, offering biometrics

collection among other services, 130 application support centres<sup>1</sup> in the United States, and a network of just over 2,900 panel physicians operating in 178 countries. Settlement and integration services are offered prior to arrival in Canada and across the country, outside Quebec, through a network of over 500 service provider organizations across Canada.

The Department also works with [Employment and Social Development Canada](#) to deliver in-Canada biometrics collection and domestic passport service delivery, leveraging the latter's extensive network of passport processing centres and walk-in sites (24 Service Canada Centres – passport services and 318 Service Canada Centres with 11 offering full passport services). IRCC also partners with [Global Affairs Canada](#), which provides passport services abroad in 206 different locations in 144 countries.

## Operating context

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Canada continues to be a top choice for people looking for a new place to work, study and build their lives with their families. Newcomers and visitors fuel the Canadian economy and add vibrancy to Canada's communities.

In 2023–24, IRCC will continue to strengthen Canada's immigration system by focusing on people, families and communities. This will capitalize on Canada's advantage in the global race for talent, support our industries, and enable us to be flexible to respond to global humanitarian crises and help people when they need it most.

While we are still in pandemic recovery, the Department has been marked by global humanitarian crises, namely in Afghanistan in 2021, and Ukraine in 2022. More specifically, as part of the Government of Canada's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, IRCC has introduced special programs to help thousands of Ukrainian nationals and their family members find safety in Canada. In response to the fall of Kabul in August 2021, IRCC committed to resettling at least 40,000 Afghans by the end of 2023.

The Department balances competing pressures, notably: responding to domestic labour market demands and an increasingly mobile work force; contributing to overall economic growth; and addressing efforts to streamline service delivery and enhance the client experience, while responding to complex safety and security challenges.

IRCC interacts annually with millions of individuals. These individuals include those seeking temporary or permanent resident entry into Canada and subsequently settling into Canadian society, those pursuing Canadian citizenship, Canadians seeking a Canadian passport, and or other individuals seeking travel documents such as a certificate of identity or a refugee travel document.

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<sup>1</sup> Application support centres in the United States offer biometric collection services for temporary resident applicants.

To ensure the successful integration of newcomers into the Canadian economy and society, IRCC engages regularly and extensively with federal partners, provinces and territories, and other stakeholders on a variety of key immigration-related topics. These include immigration levels planning, economic immigration, and settlement and integration of newcomers, including refugees and protected persons.

IRCC also ensures the best possible client experience through an array of online and advanced analytical tools designed to maintain a positive client experience and an ongoing trend of lower processing times and reduced application inventories.

In recent years, with the exception of 2020, the Department experienced significant year over year increases in some of its most important lines of business as many around the world seek to enter Canada temporarily or permanently.

IRCC plans to welcome historic numbers of newcomers in 2023–24. In recent years, the Department has added resources, embraced new technology, streamlined processing, and brought more processes online. These changes are all important improvements to Canada’s immigration system, and will support IRCC’s operations in 2023–24.

IRCC’s challenge is to effectively manage increases in application volumes across all of its lines of business as international travel returns to pre-pandemic levels and Canada’s economic recovery takes hold, while working with stakeholders to ensure that newcomers have the best opportunities to succeed in Canada’s economic recovery following the negative economic impacts due to COVID–19.

## **Details on transfer payment programs**

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### **Transfer payment programs spending of \$5 million or more**

#### ***Canada-Quebec Accord Grant / Subvention versée en vertu de l’Accord Canada-Québec***

##### **General information**

##### **Name of program:**

*Canada-Quebec Accord Grant / Subvention versée en vertu de l’Accord Canada-Québec:*  
Voted

##### **Start date:**

Financial compensation to the province (in the form of a grant) is based on the *Canada-Québec Accord relating to Immigration and Temporary Admission of Aliens*, which came into force on April 1, 1991.

**End date:**

Ongoing

**Type of transfer payment:**

Grant

**Type of appropriation:**

The program is appropriated annually through Government of Canada Estimates.

**Fiscal year for terms and conditions:**

Ongoing

**Link to Departmental result:**

Permanent residents are welcomed and benefit from settlement supports

**Link to Department's program inventory:**

Settlement, Resettlement

**Purpose and objectives of transfer payment program:**

Under the *Canada-Quebec Accord*, signed in 1991, Canada has devolved settlement and resettlement responsibility to Quebec, and provides Quebec with an annual grant that notionally covers settlement and integration services to permanent residents in the province.

The objectives of the Accord are the preservation of Quebec's demographic importance within Canada; and the integration of immigrants into that province in a manner that respects the distinct identity of Quebec.

Under the Accord, Canada is responsible for defining overall immigration objectives, national immigration levels and admissibility, selecting applicants in the family category, determining in Canada protected person status, and granting citizenship.

The Accord provides Quebec with exclusive responsibility for selecting economic immigrants and resettled refugees destined to the province, as well as the settlement and integration of all permanent residents. This program uses transfer payment funding from the grant for the *Canada-Quebec Accord on Immigration*.

In accordance with section 26 and Annex B of the *Canada-Quebec Accord*, Canada is required to provide compensation to Quebec for these services, where it is established that:

- the reception and integration services (referred to in sections 24 and 25 of the Accord) offered by Quebec correspond, when considered in their entirety, to those offered by Canada in the rest of the country; and
- those services are offered without discrimination to any permanent resident in the province, whether or not that permanent resident has been selected by Quebec.

**Expected results:**

The Government of Quebec is responsible for developing and publishing its own immigration legislation and policies. It reports to the provincial National Assembly on its own expected results and spending related to immigration.

While Quebec has jurisdiction over settlement and integration of permanent residents destined to the province, the Accord specifies that the services covered by the grant must correspond to services offered by Canada in the rest of the country. To that end, Canada and Quebec collaborate on conducting regular comparative studies of their respective settlement and integration services to ensure that comparable services continue to be offered to newcomers across the country. Under the *Canada-Quebec Accord*, the Joint Committee, co-chaired by Assistant Deputy Ministers of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration, is mandated to jointly carry out the comparison of services. Since 2014, the Joint Committee has tabled six comparative studies that show reception and integration services for newcomers to be generally comparable in both jurisdictions, therefore meeting the requirements of the Accord. The last comparative study, covering April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021, was tabled at the Joint Committee meeting on November 1, 2022.

**Fiscal year of last completed evaluation:**

The evaluation of the grant to Quebec is conducted every five years. The last evaluation was completed in 2019–20.

**Decision following the results of last evaluation:**

Continuation

**Fiscal year of next planned evaluation:**

The next evaluation of the *Canada-Quebec Accord* Grant is planned for completion in 2025–26.

**General targeted recipient groups:**

The Government of Quebec is the only recipient of the grant.

### Initiatives to engage applicants and recipients:

The Accord provides for a joint committee and an implementation committee comprising members of the Government of Quebec and the federal government. Those committees as well as ad hoc meetings of the parties take place several times per year. The next Canada-Quebec comparative study of settlement services will be tabled to the Joint Committee in fall 2024.

### Financial information (dollars)\*

Type of transfer payment	2022–23 Forecast spending	2023–24 Planned spending	2024–25 Planned spending	2025–26 Planned spending
<b>Total grants</b>	726,729,000	726,729,000	726,729,000	726,729,000
<b>Total contributions</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total other types of transfer payments</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total program</b>	726,729,000	726,729,000	726,729,000	726,729,000

\*Pursuant to the Accord, the federal government increases the annual compensation paid to Quebec based on a combination of two factors contained in the formula, which are:

- the variation in the number of non-francophone immigrants that Quebec receives between the two previous calendar years; and
- the variation in the federal expenditures less services of the debt (net expenditures) as reported in the Public Accounts of Canada between the two previous fiscal years.

In any given year, the amount of the grant cannot be reduced from the previous year. It can only increase or remain constant. When either condition from the formula above is negative, it is deemed to equal zero and cannot be negative.

For 2022–23 and onwards, the table shows the minimum amounts; any adjustments due to the formula will be appropriated through the Supplementary Estimates process.

### International Migration Capacity Building Program

#### General information

#### Name of transfer payment program:

International Migration Capacity Building Program: Voted

(Known prior to April 2019 as the “Migration Policy Development Program.”)

**Start date:**

In February 2003, the program was first launched as the Migration Policy Development Program. In 2019, it was renamed the International Migration Capacity Building Program (IMCBP).

**End date:**

Ongoing

**Type of transfer payment:**

Grant

**Type of appropriation:**

Funds are appropriated annually through Government of Canada Estimates.

**Fiscal year for terms and conditions:**

2019–20

**Link to Departmental result:**

Potential permanent residents are selected for immigration to Canada

**Link to Department’s program inventory:**

Asylum

**Purpose and objectives of transfer payment program:**

The purpose of the IMCBP is to provide funding for initiatives that advance global migration policies and programs, in support of Canada’s migration and humanitarian objectives.

The main objective of the IMCBP is to support the development of well-managed migration systems that facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration through:

- membership in international organizations related to migration
- the advancement of capacity building efforts
- an increase in the development and exchange of migration-related information and expertise

**Expected results:**

Expected results for the IMCBP are:

- strengthening migration and refugee protection systems in sending, transit and receiving countries
- facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration, while deterring irregular migration
- promoting open, evidence-based discourse on migration and refugee issues

**Fiscal year of last completed evaluation:**

2021–22: Evaluation of the International Migration Capacity Building Program – Funded Projects Component

2021–22: Evaluation of IRCC’s Memberships in International Forums and Organizations

**Decision following the results of last evaluation:**

Following the evaluations of the program in 2021-22, IRCC will continue to address the key evaluation recommendations in 2022-23, as stipulated in the Management Response Action Plan. This includes by conducting an assessment of the objectives and scope of the program and of its terms and conditions, in consultation with IRCC stakeholders.

**Fiscal year of next planned evaluation:**

For the overall IMCBP, the next planned evaluation will take place in 2026–27.

Evaluation of the Migration Cooperation and Engagement Envelope (MCEE) is planned for 2023–24.

**General targeted recipient groups:**

- International organizations and other foreign grant beneficiaries;
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), institutions, organizations, and agencies that are not for profit, operating at the international level from within or outside Canada; and
- Individuals and private sector organizations operating at the international level from within or outside Canada.

**Initiatives to engage applicants and recipients:**

The IMCBP promotes Canada’s priorities related to well-managed migration and protection by funding migration and protection related capacity building projects. It also pays membership fees to allow Canada to be a member of key international forums and organizations.

IRCC provides support to four established migration-related multilateral organizations with which the Department has long-standing engagement and that help advance departmental

priorities: the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC), and the Migration Policy Institute (MPI). IRCC regularly attends and is an active participant in the governance meetings of these organizations, exchanges information on best practices in migration policy and management, and uses the multilateral platforms provided through Canada's membership in these organizations to advance Canadian migration priorities and strengthen bilateral partnerships with other countries.

The capacity building projects and initiatives undertaken through the IMCBP are divided into funding streams.

The only permanent funding stream is a core budget of \$1M, leveraged to pay membership fees and fund small- scale projects that support the development of well-managed migration systems that facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration. These projects are selected following thorough consultations with various IRCC branches and developed with key implementing partners.

IRCC's other funding streams include:

- The Migration Cooperation and Engagement Envelope (MCEE), which was approved as part of the Border Action Plan (now referred to as Border Enforcement Strategy) and designed to increase migration and border management cooperation with selected countries. The MCEE includes CAD \$21 million in funding over six years which is scheduled to sunset in 2024–25.
- The Venezuela Crisis Capacity Building Program Envelope supports targeted host countries (i.e., Peru, Colombia and Panama) to better respond to the migration and protection needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees, and mitigate irregular migration in the region. This Envelope includes CAD 3.5 million in funding over 2 years, starting 2021–22, where projects will be ongoing into 2023–24.
- IRCC also supports the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Comprehensive Action Plan for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries (CAP), and has committed CAD \$21 million in funding over three years, starting in 2022–23. This funding supports projects under the CAP in support of migration-related and humanitarian activities and initiatives to assist Afghan nationals affected by the situation in Afghanistan.
- Additionally, starting in 2022–23, a new funding stream is dedicated to Capacity Building in the Americas. This envelope includes CAD \$75 million over six years to help address irregular migration and forced displacement in the hemisphere.

As a result of the growth of the IMCBP, and in response to the 2021–22 evaluations, IRCC will continue to examine the program's governance to ensure appropriate oversight and monitoring. This will include reviewing processes, such as those related to project selection, to ensure that they are efficient while offering good program management.

Where possible, the Department will engage targeted countries through meetings, reporting and country visits to ascertain their needs and priorities. The Department will engage directly with potential programming partners regarding country and regional needs, and will invite organizations to submit concept notes outlining main objectives and scope of the proposed initiatives prior to requesting full proposals. If aligned with program objectives and Terms and Conditions, the Department requests full proposals which will be consistently assessed against eligibility, strategic priorities, host country needs and priorities, impact and value for money. This approach will ensure organizations only invest a high level of effort into proposals if they receive a positive signal check from IRCC.

Throughout each project’s implementation, there is regular contact between IRCC and recipient organizations to ensure progress against expected results and compliance with the terms and conditions outlined in the grant arrangement. Monitoring is done through direct contact with applicant (videoconferences, email, phone, etc.); support from Canadian missions (International Network and Government of Canada partners, such as the Canada Border Services Agency); in-country monitoring; and reporting. For smaller scale capacity building projects, monitoring is performed through mid-year reporting and end of project reports, pursuant to the grant arrangement. Larger projects may involve more frequent engagements and reporting requirements.

For all projects, the monitoring focus maintains awareness of projects’ implementation status through open communication with implementing partners, and ensures that on issues or /challenges that could impact project implementation are effectively mitigated. This ensures that the Department receives regular updates on projects’ execution and preliminary results, as well as any implementation delays, risks and challenges, significant adjustments in activities, and funding expenditure.

#### **Financial information (dollars)**

<b>Type of transfer payment</b>	<b>2022–23 Forecast spending</b>	<b>2023–24 Planned spending</b>	<b>2024–25 Planned spending</b>	<b>2025–26 Planned spending</b>
<b>Total grants</b>	19,650,000	24,950,000	26,200,000	16,000,000
<b>Total contributions</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total other types of transfer payments</b>	0	0	0	0

## Financial information (dollars)

Type of transfer payment	2022–23 Forecast spending	2023–24 Planned spending	2024–25 Planned spending	2025–26 Planned spending
<b>Total program</b>	19,650,000	24,950,000	26,200,000	16,000,000

## Resettlement Assistance Program

### General information

**Name of transfer payment program:**

Resettlement Assistance Program: Voted

**Start date:**

1951 as the Adjustment Assistance Program; Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) in its current form was implemented in 1998

**End date:**

Ongoing

**Type of transfer payment:**

Grants and Contributions

**Type of appropriation:**

The program is appropriated annually through Government of Canada Estimates.

**Fiscal year for terms and conditions:**

2018–19

**Link to Departmental result:**

Permanent residents are welcomed and benefit from settlement supports

## **Link to Department's program inventory:**

Refugee Resettlement Program

## **Purpose and objectives of transfer payment program:**

RAP's objective is to meet the resettlement needs of clients by funding refugee resettlement activities and services for clients, the delivery of immediate and essential services and providing direct financial support. RAP supports activities related to resettled refugee identification, referrals and pre-departure refugee resettlement activities and services for individuals identified for or being considered for resettlement to Canada. Eligible clients include Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs) and certain persons in refugee-like situations admitted to Canada under a public policy consideration. The province of Quebec receives a separate funding allocation as part of the *Canada-Quebec Accord* to provide similar services to eligible refugees destined to that province.

This funding supports key international resettlement partners including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other referral organizations for the identification and referral of refugees to Canada annually and the International Organization for Migration for its work to provide direct pre-departure support globally to refugees. Immediate and essential services after arrival in Canada are delivered through contribution agreements with RAP Service Provider Organizations (SPOs). RAP services include, but are not limited to: overseas and in-Canada orientation sessions; port of entry services; temporary accommodation and assistance in securing permanent accommodation; assistance opening a bank account; life skills training; links to mandatory federal and provincial programs; and to settlement programming.

Income support is administered directly by the Department and can be provided for up to 12 months, depending on client eligibility, if the RAP client's income is insufficient to meet their own needs and/or the needs of any accompanying dependants. In most cases, RAP clients also receive start-up allowances for expenses related to furniture and other household supplies.

Limited services (port of entry services) are provided under RAP to all resettled refugees. Refugees resettled under the Blended Visa Office-Referred Refugees (BVOR) Program may receive up to six months of RAP income support.

RAP also funds certain in-Canada activities to support the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (e.g., the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program), as well as activities overseas, such as those administered by the International Organization for Migration to support resettlement and RAP objectives.

## **Expected results:**

RAP is an element of the overarching Refugee Resettlement Program. The immediate outcomes for the broader Refugee Resettlement Program are that resettled refugees

receive timely protection and their immediate and essential needs are met. The intermediate outcome is that resettled refugees have the tools to live independently in Canadian society. The ultimate outcome is that resettled refugees live independently in Canadian society.

**Fiscal year of last completed evaluation:**

Evaluation of the Resettlement Programs (GAR, Private Sponsorship of Refugees, BVOR and RAP) – completed in 2016–17

Evaluation of the BVOR Program – completed in 2021–22

**Decision following the results of last evaluation:**

Not applicable

**Fiscal year of next planned evaluation:**

The evaluation of the Refugee Resettlement Program is currently underway which includes an evaluation of the RAP. The evaluation is expected to be completed in 2023–24.

**General targeted recipient groups:**

RAP targets three types of recipients: (1) resettled refugees and persons admitted to Canada under similar circumstances; (2) service providers that provide immediate and essential services to eligible clients; and (3) service providers engaged in activities that support the Refugee Resettlement Program more broadly (e.g., funding to international organizations to facilitate the overseas processing of refugees and to the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program to support private sponsors in Canada).

**Initiatives to engage applicants and recipients:**

Refugees receiving RAP services are engaged throughout their resettlement journey, starting with overseas processing of refugees with international organizations (e.g., International Organization for Migration) and intake assessment upon arrival in Canada of refugees to determine the level of support needed and the types of services required. The Department works closely with international organizations (e.g., United Nations Refugee Agency) to plan annual targets as well as the timing of services to assist refugees during the application process and pre-departure. The Department maintains close collaboration and regular communication with international organizations and SPOs in order to adequately respond to resettled refugee needs.

**Financial information (dollars)**

<b>Type of transfer payment</b>	<b>2022-23 Forecast spending</b>	<b>2023-24 Planned spending</b>	<b>2024-25 Planned spending</b>	<b>2025-26 Planned spending</b>
<b>Total grants</b>	539,035,458	232,315,930	46,306,019	26,346,157
<b>Total contributions</b>	625,485,568	304,516,274	154,709,357	153,435,925
<b>Total other types of transfer payments</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total program</b>	1,164,521,027	536,832,204	201,015,377	179,782,082

**Settlement Program**

**General information**

**Name of transfer payment program:**

Settlement Program: Voted

**Start date:**

May 15, 2008

**End date:**

Ongoing

**Type of transfer payment:**

Grants and Contributions

**Type of appropriation:**

The program is appropriated annually through Government of Canada Estimates.

**Fiscal year for terms and conditions:**

2019–20

**Link to Departmental result:**

Permanent residents are welcomed and benefit from settlement supports

**Link to Department's program inventory:**

Settlement

**Purpose and objectives of transfer payment program:**

For Canada to realize the economic, social and cultural benefits of immigration, newcomers must integrate successfully into Canadian society. Integration is a two-way process that involves commitment on the part of immigrants to adapt to life in Canada, and on the part of Canada to welcome and adapt to new peoples and cultures. Settlement refers to a short period of mutual adaptation between the newcomers and the host society, during which the government provides support and services to newcomers.

IRCC Settlement Program plays a major role in the integration of newcomers by assisting immigrants and refugees to overcome barriers specific to them so that they can fully engage in social, cultural, civic and economic life in Canada. The program aims to provide newcomers with support prior to their arrival in Canada. Once in Canada, the program provides needs, assets assessments and information required to make informed decisions, develop and leverage employment and language skills, and support to build networks within their new communities. The program also supports the integration of French-speaking newcomers through the Francophone Integration Pathway, which consists of a suite of settlement services in French, offered by Francophone communities outside Quebec, and aimed at facilitating reception, support, economic and socio-cultural integration, as well as the creation of lasting ties between newcomers and Francophone communities. IRCC funds the delivery of settlement programming across the country and outside Canada, and contributes to the capacity enhancement of recipient organizations.

**Expected results:**

The Settlement Program's ultimate outcome is as follows: successfully integrated and settled clients benefit Canada.

**Immediate outcomes:**

- Access to IRCC-funded settlement services is facilitated

- IRCC increases its understanding of client settlement needs and appropriate linkages to other services
- Clients increase knowledge of life in Canada
- Clients improve official language skills
- Clients acquire knowledge, skills, and connections to prepare for the Canadian labour market
- Clients increase participation in communities and social networks
- Partners deliver responsive and coordinated settlement and community services

**Intermediate outcomes:**

- Clients access services that meet their needs
- Clients make informed decisions about life in Canada
- Clients use an official language to function in Canadian society
- Clients participate in the Canadian labour market
- Clients are connected to communities and institutions
- Communities foster welcoming environments for immigrants

**Fiscal year of last completed evaluation:**

- 2020–21 for the Evaluation of Language Training Services
- 2021–22 for the Evaluation of Settlement Workers in Schools
- The most recent evaluation of the Settlement Program was completed in 2017–18.

**Decision following the results of last evaluation:**

Continuation.

**Fiscal year of next planned evaluation:**

- The Evaluation of the Settlement Program is expected to be completed in 2025–26.
- The Rapid Evaluation of the Ukraine Response evaluation in 2023–24.

**General targeted recipient groups:**

To fulfill IRCC’s objective of promoting the successful integration of permanent residents into Canada, IRCC uses grants and contribution agreements. These agreements may be signed with the following eligible recipients for settlement services:

- Provincial, territorial or municipal governments
- International organizations
- Not-for-profit organizations including non-governmental organizations, non-profit corporations, community groups, umbrella organizations, regulatory bodies and apprenticeship authorities

- Businesses, including those that provide indirect services (such as assisting employers in hiring newcomers, private language schools, conference organizers, Web or production firms for tool development)
- Educational institutions (including school boards, districts and divisions)
- Individuals

**Restrictions:**

- Unless specifically allowed in the grant and contribution agreement, no user fees can be charged to clients for services funded by IRCC.
- For-profit organizations may be eligible for funding provided that the nature and the intent of the activity is non-commercial and, not intended to generate profit and that it supports program priorities and objectives.

**Initiatives to engage applicants and recipients:**

IRCC funds over 500 different organizations, including nearly 80 francophone organizations located in Francophone minority communities, to deliver a diverse range of services that support the settlement and integration of newcomers to Canada. Settlement SPOs vary in size, which has an impact on the type and scope of services that they offer to newcomers.

IRCC plays a key role in the disseminating and sharing information to and among SPOs and other settlement organizations in a variety of ways, formally and informally at both the national and regional levels. IRCC has a number of forums that bring together SPOs from the National Settlement and Integration Council, which is a pan-Canadian mechanism for ongoing national dialogue, collaboration, consultation, planning and information exchange among governments and key partners and stakeholders, to newly established regional summits designed to address region-specific information needs. Before COVID-19, much of this engagement was in person, but the pandemic has forced the Department shift to virtual engagement, which allows more partners and stakeholders to be engaged proactively and more often.

IRCC engages in extensive consultations before and after it launches intake processes under the Settlement Program. Engagement with service providers supports IRCC's information gathering to inform open and transparent intake processes to establish grant and contribution agreements and improves delivery methods to carry out IRCC programming priorities.

The most recent intake processes include a 2018 Expression of Interest for Pre-arrival Settlement Services, with five year agreements that began on January 1, 2019; proposals solicited in November 2018 for language training services adapted to the needs of French-speaking newcomers, in support of the Francophone Integration Pathway to last until 2023 and funded through the Government of Canada's Action Plan for Official Languages (2018–

23); and a national call for proposals for the Settlement Program launched in February 2019 for 5-year agreements that began on April 1, 2020.

For the first time, following a high degree of engagement and co-planning with Francophone-minority communities, the Department introduced a “by and for Francophones” lens/priority in the 2019 call for proposals process. In parallel, it experimented with a community-based funding model through the Welcoming Francophone Communities Initiative. This initiative moved away from the traditional intake process approach, to fund community plans featuring activities/projects that the communities themselves have identified to best meet their needs in terms of welcoming and integrating French-speaking newcomers. Community plans were initially funded over a 3-year period (beginning in April 2020) and have subsequently been extended until March 2024.

In April 2020, the Department launched the Comité consultatif national en établissement francophone with the mandate to provide recommendations to IRCC by Spring 2023, for a national coordination and support model for the Francophone settlement sector and on the development of policies and programs to improve direct Francophone settlement services to immigrants.

#### Financial information (dollars)

Type of transfer payment	2022–23 Forecast spending	2023–24 Planned spending	2024–25 Planned spending	2025–26 Planned spending
<b>Total grants</b>	55,000,000	55,000,000	55,000,000	55,000,000
<b>Total contributions</b>	1,042,686,852	1,048,071,586	1,028,479,332	1,025,642,955
<b>Total other types of transfer payments</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total program</b>	1,097,686,852	1,103,071,586	1,083,479,332	1,080,642,955

#### Transfer payment programs spending of under \$5 million

## **Annual Assessed Contribution to the International Organization for Migration**

### **General information**

#### **Name of transfer payment program:**

Annual Assessed Contribution to the International Organization for Migration (IOM): Voted

#### **Start date:**

The IOM is the leading United Nations agency in the field of migration, having joined the UN system as a related organization in 2016. Canada was a founding member of the IOM in 1951, but withdrew membership in 1962. Canada subsequently rejoined the organization as a full member in 1991 and has paid its annual Assessed Contributions ever since.

#### **End date:**

Ongoing

#### **Type of transfer payment:**

Contribution<sup>2</sup>

#### **Type of appropriation:**

Funds are appropriated annually through Government of Canada Estimates.

#### **Fiscal year for terms and conditions:**

2010–11

#### **Link to Departmental result:**

Potential permanent residents are selected for immigration to Canada

#### **Link to Department's program inventory:**

Asylum

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<sup>2</sup> Canada's assessed contribution rate is a percentage of the IOM's annual administrative expenses, determined by IOM on a capacity to pay basis. To determine a state's capacity to pay, and resulting contribution rate, IOM relies upon the United Nations contribution rates, established by United Nations resolution (also determined on a capacity to pay basis).

## **Purpose and objectives of transfer payment programs:**

Contributions to the IOM allow Canada to:

- Participate in the organization's governance and decision-making mechanisms, including evaluation and audit, and budget setting practices.
- Enhance its knowledge on global trends and approaches to managed migration.
- Advance its international priorities on migration, which include: helping to ensure the orderly and humane management of migration; promoting international cooperation on migration issues; and assisting in the search for practical solutions to migration problems.
- Provide humanitarian assistance for migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons.
- Deliver IRCC programs in the areas of resettlement, migration health and capacity building.

As an IOM member, the Department has an increased capacity to meet its objectives related to:

- Managed migration that promotes Canadian interests and protects the health, safety and security of Canadians.
- International recognition and acceptance of the principles of managed migration consistent with Canada's broader foreign policy agenda.

## **Expected results:**

The expected results are to:

- Allow IRCC to influence IOM programs and policies in order to ensure Canada's own objectives, values and interests are reflected in the IOM's approach to global migration.
- Gain knowledge and understanding of global migration and insights on the migration policies, activities and priorities of other countries, in order to inform IRCC policies and programs.
- Advance Canada's position on managed migration and international protection in multilateral fora.

## **Fiscal year of last completed evaluation:**

Evaluation of IRCC's Membership in International Forums and Organizations was completed in 2021–22.

## **Decision following the results of last evaluation:**

Continuation

**Fiscal year of next planned evaluation:**

The next evaluation of the IOM assessed contribution is scheduled to take place in 2026–27.

**General targeted recipient groups:**

International organizations.

**Initiatives to engage applicants and recipients:**

IRCC officials actively monitor, engage and consult with the IOM through institutional and ad hoc meetings.

On an ongoing basis, IRCC participates in the two IOM governing bodies: (1) the Council and the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance, and (2) the organization's formal working groups on Partnerships Governance and Organizational Priorities and Budget Reform. This participation allows Canada to play a role in the organization's governance and decision-making, including that related to budget issues. Moreover, IRCC is present at all informal consultations organized by the IOM.

Government of Canada senior officials meet with the IOM senior management to discuss shared priorities and ways to strengthen the bilateral relationship between Canada and the IOM. Continuous and ongoing open communication between IRCC and IOM takes place at the working level on a regular basis.

While IRCC is the lead in the overall Government of Canada–IOM relationship, Global Affairs Canada also maintains a strong relationship with the IOM as they partner in the delivery of development and humanitarian assistance.

The evaluation of the IOM Assessed Contribution in 2021–22 found that Canada derives high value from its membership in the IOM in meeting IRCC and whole-of-government objectives.

To note, following several years of negotiations, a Member State decision was made in 2022 for the IOM to increase membership dues starting in IRCC's FY 2022–23 to account for USD \$60 million of a \$75 million deficit to their core administrative budget. For Canada, this means the total budget for IOM membership dues will rise from approximately CAD \$2.2 million to CAD \$4.2 million by FY 2026–2027 and ongoing; additional funding to cover this increase has been received through the 2022–24 Immigration Levels Plan.

## Financial information (dollars)

Type of transfer payment	2022–23 Forecast spending	2023–24 Planned spending	2024–25 Planned spending	2025–26 Planned spending
<b>Total grants</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total contributions</b>	2,533,654	2,947,103	3,360,551	3,774,000
<b>Total other types of transfer payments</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total program</b>	2,533,654	2,947,103	3,360,551	3,774,000

## Gender based analysis Plus

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### Institutional GBA Plus Capacity

Gender, diversity and intersectionality are key considerations in the work of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), given its global mandate and its impact on newcomers, refugees and Canadians. IRCC's Equity Policy and GBA Plus unit is the Department's GBA Plus focal point, and is part of the Strategic Policy and Planning Branch. The team promotes and supports the Department's application and implementation of GBA Plus.

The Director General of the Strategic Policy and Planning Branch is responsible for GBA Plus functional guidance to the Department. IRCC's GBA Plus Departmental capacity is also supported by an Anti-Racism Task Force, as well as equity champions at the senior management level. The champions provide additional guidance and support on diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility issues, and also represent and advocate for members of the Department's employee networks.

Employee networks are critical for surfacing GBA Plus considerations. They represent diverse employees from across IRCC, and include Pride@IRCC, the Indigenous Peoples Circle, the Black Employees Network, the Racialized Employees and Allies Network, the

Persons with Disabilities Network, and the Women’s Network. Employee networks are organized and chaired by volunteer employees who do this work as part of a personal commitment to improving equity within the public service, based on their own lived experiences.

Since 2001, IRCC has had a legislative requirement under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) to report on GBA in the Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration. The Department has extensive data that is disaggregated by gender, as well as other intersectional factors such as age and country of citizenship in order to better support the evidence-based analysis that underpins GBA Plus. In addition, IRCC is working to further incorporate GBA Plus into performance measurement and evaluation processes to ensure that IRCC programs address GBA Plus considerations.

### **Highlights for 2023–24:**

In 2023–24, IRCC will continue to advance the implementation of GBA Plus governance. Further embedding consideration of gender, diversity, inclusion and accessibility in policies, programs, and operations will be achieved by:

- Strengthening institutional capacity and competence for GBA Plus through the IRCC GBA Plus Working Group. The group fosters closer collaboration within specific functional and enabling areas in IRCC (e.g., data, digital policy, evaluation, communications, workforce) and contributes to mainstreaming the practice of GBA Plus across the Department.
- Completing internal consultations on a review of the Department’s GBA Policy (2011). The review will focus on further embedding the application of GBA Plus in IRCC’s policy and program development cycles to advance evidence-based analysis of intersectional factors beyond gender (i.e., race, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, age, income, etc.). Intersectionality is a critically important analytical lens as IRCC undertakes to modernize its programs and services through the use of automation, advanced analytics and artificial intelligence.
- Continuing to build engagement between the Equity Policy and GBA Plus unit and various lens leaders at IRCC and across the Government of Canada, such as Departmental focal points for Anti-Racism, for the Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex (2SLGBTQI+) community, persons with disabilities, women, and Indigenous peoples, in order to deepen the application of intersectionality in migration policy and program analysis.
- Refining and iterating the Department’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2.0 in collaboration with IRCC’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion employee networks, management, business lines, functional communities (Professional Development Network, Middle Managers, Executives) and other federal government organizations, and through consultations with external stakeholders including non-profits, other levels of government, unions, academic and legal community.
- Connecting program policy experts with relevant disaggregated data to encourage rigorous GBA Plus and consideration of equity. This includes leveraging Statistics

Canada's Disaggregated Data Action Plan to gain greater insights using Census 2021 data, as well as creating new data linkages with other government departments and agencies.

- Promoting GBA Plus tools and resources, and providing functional guidance on how to apply them to IRCC's policies, programs, and operations. These tools help to strengthen departmental capacity for uncovering and monitoring differential outcomes related to gender, diversity, equity and accessibility. Outreach by the Equity Policy and GBA Plus unit will continue to include workshops and presentations to various groups at IRCC on how to use the tools and resources.
- Providing feedback and functional guidance on policy, program, operational, and IRCC workforce initiatives, to ensure GBA Plus considerations are adequately surfaced in Memoranda to Cabinet, Treasury Board Submissions, and Federal Budget Proposals.
- Working closely with Departmental data and performance measurement experts to develop new methods to monitor GBA Plus implementation across IRCC. Systematic monitoring of the Department's progress on GBA Plus in the future will enable IRCC to highlight successes, best practices, as well as identify gaps and new priorities.

## **Highlights of GBA Plus Results Reporting Capacity by Program**

### **Core Responsibility 1: Visitors, International Students and Temporary Workers**

#### **Visitor**

IRCC's Visitors Program seeks to achieve a balance between facilitating the travel of foreign nationals while maintaining the integrity of the immigration and asylum system. Despite the shorter-term duration of stay in Canada facilitated by the program, the Visitors Program can support the Gender Results Framework's pillars on education and skills development, economic participation, and eliminating Gender-based Violence (GBV), and promoting access to justice.

There are several notable ongoing initiatives that will help to improve and expand the Visitors Program's capacity to report and monitor impacts based on gender and diversity factors.

For example, the Visitors Program currently collects gender, age, and language data through the annual Citizenship and Immigration Client Experience Survey and new data will be available mid-2023. In 2021, IRCC began the first update to the survey to collect data on additional intersectional factors (such as accessibility, disability and ethnicity) that will support better analysis on client satisfaction, including clients who applied to visit Canada. This initiative has ultimately expanded the Program's capacity to report on impacts by gender and diversity. With respect to the Department's efforts to modernize the

Visitors Program, disaggregated data collection and GBA Plus will be key components for monitoring the program's performance and modernization outcomes (e.g., client satisfaction and accessibility of new tools disaggregated based on gender and other key factors).

In 2022, the Visitors Program announced its commitment to conducting an internal review in order to examine its Performance Measurement Strategy Framework from a GBA Plus and Anti-Racism perspective. The review and a summary of findings report is expected to be complete in 2023. The overall goal of the review is to achieve a more equitable and inclusive Visitors Program in terms of who is facilitated and who is impacted by managed migration.

### **International Students**

IRCC facilitates the entry of students who wish to study at a designated Canadian educational institutions through the International Student Program (ISP), which is a demand driven temporary residence program. The ISP contributes to the Gender Results Framework pillars on education, skills development and gender equality around the world. A review of the International Student Program is underway and GBA Plus considerations are being integrated into this work. The Department collects disaggregated data on study permit holders and Post-Graduate Work Permit (PGWP) holders that can be broken down by gender, age and country of origin. This data will be used to inform the ISP policy review throughout 2023–24. GBA Plus will continue to be integrated in the development and assessment of policy tools and options for the program (e.g., increasing acceptance rates in specific areas and dedicated pathways for underrepresented groups) that will help strengthen the diversification of the international student population.

This program currently collects gender, age, and language data through the annual Citizenship and Immigration Client Experience Survey. Current initiatives also expand the program's capacity to report on impacts by gender and diversity, by collecting data on accessibility/disability and ethnicity. New data will be available mid-2023.

### **Temporary workers**

IRCC facilitates the entry of foreign nationals who wish to work temporarily in Canada through two main streams: the Temporary Foreign Workers Program (employer-specific work permits), and the International Mobility Program (employer-specific work permits and open work permits). Through IRCC's Global Case Management System, IRCC collects several socio-economic variables on work permit holders that allow for monitoring, reporting and analysis of program impacts by gender and diversity. These variables include gender, age, country of birth, country of residency, official language, language spoken at home, and family status.

This program currently collects gender, age, and language data through the annual Citizenship and Immigration Client Experience Survey. Current initiatives also expand the

program's capacity to report on impacts by gender and diversity, by collecting data on accessibility/disability and ethnicity. New data will be available mid-2023.

### **Open Work Permit for Vulnerable Workers**

The Open Work Permit for Vulnerable Workers (OWP-V) program contributes to the Gender Results Framework pillar on eliminating Gender-based Violence (GBV) and access to justice. In particular, access to justice is a key point for OWP-V holders, as the work permit helps to facilitate Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) in leaving abusive employment and gives TFWs the ability to work for another employer, without compromising their authorization to work in Canada. Overall, the OWP-V program promotes the security of TFWs. In 2021, there were 589 vulnerable workers who were open work permit (OWP-V) holders.

Specifically for the OWP-V holders, qualitative and quantitative data on gender, age, country of citizenship, ability to speak in English/French, prior work permits, and location of work (in Canada) is collected. This information is used to inform program management and policy work. Significant data analysis continues to be conducted to better understand program barriers for clients and identify opportunities to improve the OWP-V program for clients. For example, the continued delivery of training provides support to immigration officers through the provision of a decision-making framework and procedures for following up with clients to address systemic barriers that prevent vulnerable TFWs from applying and being successful in obtaining an OWP-V GBA Plus data collection plan.

Significant data analysis of anonymized data on gender, age, country of citizenship, ability to speak in English/French, and location of work (in Canada) has been conducted to better understand program barriers for clients. This analysis also helps to identify opportunities to improve the OWP-V program for clients, including the development of training to support immigration officers when assessing applications for the OWP-V.

### **International Experience Canada**

International Experience Canada (IEC) offers Canadian citizens aged 18 to 35 the opportunity to work and travel abroad in one of 36 countries and territories through youth mobility arrangements. As these youth mobility arrangements are reciprocal, it also allows IEC to provide foreign youth with the opportunity to travel and work in Canada.

IRCC's approach has been to focus on signing and maintaining youth mobility agreements with countries and territories that can typically promote equal opportunities for a diverse Canadian population. Going forward, IRCC will continue to include annual review mechanisms in new and existing agreements to provide officials with the opportunity to address issues, including those related to GBA Plus that could impact barriers to participation.

A key objective of IEC is to ensure that Canadians are aware of, and can benefit from, these international opportunities abroad. Past promotional and stakeholder engagement opportunities demonstrated the need to ensure that IEC's engagement activities are as inclusive as possible. Promotional and engagement activities will continue to include initiatives and research directed at various communities of interest, including Indigenous youth, youth who identify as part of the 2SLGBTQI+ communities, young women, and disadvantaged youth.

IRCC collects disaggregated data on IEC participants to enable monitoring and reporting on the program's impacts. In 2023–24, the Department will continue to review its research, metrics, and data to further expand on its reporting capabilities. The gender distribution of IEC work permit holders (i.e., inbound foreign youth) has been evenly split at 50/50 over the past decade. However, data on outbound Canadian youth is limited because Canada does not track Canadian youth going abroad as part of its youth mobility agreements and not all of Canada's youth mobility partners have the systems in place to share the demographic characteristics of Canadian participants entering those countries.

## **Core Responsibility 2: Immigrant and Refugee Selection and Integration**

### **Federal Economic Immigration**

In accordance with Canada's Immigration Levels Plan, IRCC facilitates the admission of a targeted number of permanent residents under the federal economic immigration programs. Federal economic immigrants seek to live and work permanently in Canada. IRCC selects candidates based on their ability to establish themselves in Canadian labour markets and contribute to Canada's economic growth and prosperity. Eligibility criteria consist of a combination of an applicant's human capital characteristics (e.g., education, official language proficiency level, age), work experience, employer job offer, age, and/or other factors.

Data on permanent residents admitted under federal economic immigration programs is analyzed on a regular basis by various individual variables, such as age, gender, highest education level, official language (i.e., English, French, bilingual, or neither), country of citizenship, country of birth, country of residency, intended occupation, destination in Canada, family status (i.e., principal applicant, spouse, or dependent), and marital status (i.e., married/common-law union, single/separated/widowed, or unspecified) for each federal economic immigration program.

Economic outcomes (e.g., wages, industry sector of employment) of federal economic immigrants may be analyzed by individual characteristics (e.g., age, gender, education, official language) for specific program evaluation or review purposes.

Most federal economic immigrants are facilitated through the Express Entry application management system. That system is mandatory for all applications made under the Federal Skilled Worker Program, the Federal Skilled Trades Program, the Canadian

Experience Class, and a portion of the Provincial Nominee Program. Candidates must meet criteria for one of the three federal programs, and then are ranked according to their total score. Top ranked candidates are then invited to apply for permanent residence. The Express Entry Year-End Report is published annually, and provides an overview of Express Entry data from across all stages of the Express Entry continuum, including profile submissions, invitations to apply, applications, processing times, and admissions. Throughout the report, historical and gender-disaggregated data is presented alongside the reporting year figures to provide additional context.

This program currently collects gender, age, and language data through the annual Citizenship and Immigration Client Experience Survey. Current initiatives also expand the program's capacity to report on impacts by gender and diversity, by collecting data on accessibility/disability and ethnicity. New data will be available mid-2023.

### **Regional Economic Immigration**

Regional economic immigration programs, namely the Provincial Nominee Program, Atlantic Immigration Program, and Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, are designed to allow delivery partners, (i.e., provinces, territories, and communities) to select immigrants with the skills and experience needed to fill labour market needs in local and regional labour markets. Additionally, regional programs support the full economic participation of women and diverse groups of people, which contributes to the Gender Results Framework, particularly the pillar on economic participation and prosperity.

Furthermore, the Atlantic Immigration Program and the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot look beyond immigrant selection, to settlement of both the principal applicant and their family members in sponsoring regions and communities. For example, the Atlantic Immigration Program requires that Atlantic employers work with the program applicant to develop a settlement plan that captures the needs of the entire family, and not just the principal applicant.

When the usefulness of these settlement plans was assessed, respondents reported that they and their families felt supported using them. This demonstrates the value in these settlement plans as they support the Department's efforts to fulfill commitments in the Gender Results Framework.

Building off this model, the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot matches community partners and immigrants to ease the transition for the principal applicant and their family into their new community. By taking a whole-of-family approach to ensuring that newcomers have the support they need upon arrival, the potential for economic participation from accompanying spouses in these programs is maximized.

Through Ministerial Instruction amendments in September 2022, the Department introduced an exception to the work experience requirements for certain health-care occupations, specifically nurses, nurses' aids, and home support workers, making it easier for candidates who worked overseas to have their work experience recognized and work

within their health-care field in Canada. While this amendment will expand access to permanent residence within the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, it is expected to have disproportionately gendered impacts, as women who predominantly work within these health-care fields.

The Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot (EMPP) combines refugee resettlement and economic immigration. It is a pathway that helps skilled refugees immigrate to Canada through existing economic programs, and gives employers access to a new pool of qualified candidates to fill job openings. The EMPP provides refugees with alternate avenues to immigration to support them with some of the barriers they may face as they apply to existing economic programs such as the Provincial Nominee Program, the Atlantic Immigration Program and the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot.

IRCC collects data showing the gender breakdown of the primary applicants (male/female) who apply to and land in Canada using the EMPP, as well as their dependants. However, since the pilot started in April 2018, the number of admissions have been low, and the number of female primary applicants even lower. Of the 43 primary applicants who have landed in Canada under the EMPP, 8 have been female, which is just under 19%. The number of female dependents is higher than the number of male dependents for those who have been admitted under the EMPP. Of the 73 total spouses and dependents, 50 are female (68%).

We are closely tracking this gender breakdown and expect to have ongoing discussions with the UNHCR and other partners to identify potential systemic barriers should the female-to-male ratio continue to be low. We have seen applications and landings from female primary applicants increase in phase 2 of the pilot, and expect these numbers to continue to grow over time.

IRCC is currently developing a holistic methodology to report on all regional economic programs, which will allow the Department to better understand the outcomes of these programs by gender, enhance its reporting on GBA Plus results, and ensure that future policy development is inclusive and intersectional.

## **Family Reunification**

IRCC facilitates the admission of a targeted number of permanent residents under the family reunification category. Candidates include spouses, partners and dependent children, parents, grandparents, and certain other relatives (e.g., an orphaned relative) wishing to join their family in Canada.

Having family members already in Canada assists the sponsored newcomers (spouses/partners) with initial settlement, helping them to successfully integrate into society as well as the labour market. Similarly, sponsored parents and grandparents also provide emotional support, in addition to providing childcare in many cases. Their presence often allows their sponsor to pursue further education or labour market participation which supports the family's economic success. As most Family Class

immigrants are female, Family Class immigration also supports the economic integration, potential educational development, and well-being of women specifically (i.e., pillars of the Gender Results Framework).

For the Family Reunification Program as a whole, IRCC collects disaggregated data on the gender of sponsors, co-signers (when applicable), and applicants (i.e., principal applicants and accompanying family members). The Department also collects data on the age and country of citizenship of applicants.

In addition, IRCC will finalize an evaluation of the Family Reunification Program in 2023. This evaluation will take into account various GBA Plus considerations for the program in accordance with the Treasury Board Secretariat Directive on Results.

On-going implementation of mandatory electronic applications across the Department includes Family Class. This allows IRCC to ensure that alternative formats are made available to foreign nationals, sponsors, and their representatives who, for a reason such as a disability, are unable to apply online, ensuring equal access.

This program currently collects gender, age, and language data through the annual Citizenship and Immigration Client Experience Survey. Current initiatives also expand the program's capacity to report on impacts by gender and diversity, by collecting data on accessibility/disability and ethnicity. New data will be available mid-2023.

### **Humanitarian/Compassionate and Discretionary Immigration**

In accordance with Canada's Immigration Levels Plan, IRCC facilitates the admission of a targeted number of permanent residents based on humanitarian and compassionate grounds or public policy considerations. These provisions allow the Minister to address exceptional circumstances by granting an exemption from certain criteria or obligations of IRPA or by granting permanent or temporary residence.

Many humanitarian-based public policies are used to facilitate immigration for at-risk populations with protection needs. These provisions allow IRCC to grant permanent residence or exemptions to certain immigration program requirements in exceptional circumstances. They have been used to uphold Canada's humanitarian tradition and can respond to a myriad of situations for which gender and diversity considerations are a factor.

With regard to humanitarian and compassionate consideration, this tool provides the ability to address exceptional situations where a foreign national does not qualify for other immigration programs, on a case-by-case basis, based on unique circumstances and factors provided by the applicant. Factors that can be considered vary depending on personal circumstances and may include (but are not limited to) a person's establishment or ties to Canada, the best interest of children directly affected, and country conditions in their country of origin.

The public policy provisions provide the IRCC Minister with the authority to grant permanent resident status to a foreign national or an exemption from any criteria or obligations of IRPA or the accompanying Regulations, if the Minister is of the opinion that it is justified by public policy considerations. While each public policy has distinct conditions and eligibility criteria, they usually target a group of foreign nationals in similar circumstances.

Public policy has been used, and continues to be used to address multiple situations, such as: facilitating administrative processes during the COVID-19 pandemic; addressing a short-term disaster or crisis situations; facilitating immigration for at-risk populations with protection needs; and helping to support family reunification goals by providing access to the Family Class program to out-of-status spouses or partners.

Gender and diversity perspectives will continue to be considered in IRCC's discretionary program as part of the development of these tools and monitoring their results, including the use of disaggregated data such as gender, age, and country of origin.

This program currently collects gender, age, and language data through the annual Citizenship and Immigration Client Experience Survey. Current initiatives also expand the program's capacity to report on impacts by gender and diversity, by collecting data on accessibility/disability and ethnicity. New data will be available mid-2023.

## **Refugee Resettlement**

IRCC facilitates the admission of a targeted number of permanent residents under the refugee resettlement category. Refugees are individuals residing outside of their home country who are unable to return for fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular group. Refugees are also admitted through the Country of Asylum class, which recognizes individuals in refugee-like situations, fleeing armed conflict or massive violations of human rights.

Refugee resettlement impacts every pillar in the Gender Results Framework: education and skills development; economic participation and prosperity; leadership and democratic participation; elimination of gender-based violence and promoting access to justice; and poverty reduction, health, and well-being. It does so by protecting those refugees who are most in need, such as persons who are disproportionately facing difficulty related to their gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, and mental or physical disability. By resettling these persons to Canada, where the rights of refugees are protected by law, the indicators under these pillars of the Gender Results Framework are ameliorated.

Through the Resettlement Assistance Program, IRCC funds Service Provider Organizations (SPOs) to provide immediate and essential settlement services (such as, airport reception, provision of temporary accommodation, assistance in locating permanent accommodation, information and orientation services, etc.) to government-assisted refugees and other eligible clients in the first four to six weeks after their arrival to Canada.

These services take into account the gender and diversity of refugees by providing female staff and interpreters, ensuring that appropriate accommodations are made for single mothers, and by conducting a targeted needs assessment. Through this assessment, refugee women may be referred to particular services offered in the community or by the settlement provider, which may include women's support groups and workshops that help refugee women find employment.

Refugees resettled to Canada land as permanent residents, with all of the rights and freedoms that entails, including access to the entire suite of Settlement Program services to assist in their integration journey. They have access to educational opportunities, may freely participate in economic life, have access to avenues to citizenship that allow for full participation in Canadian democracy, benefit from the full protection of Canadian law from gender-based violence and its assistance in access to justice, and gain access to health services. The act of resettlement in itself, by moving persons from places where they may face persecution to a society where they are protected from it by law, is significant; the growth of the Refugee Resettlement Program over the past five years allows these positive and wide-ranging impacts to reach a greater number of beneficiaries.

In addition to the effects of the resettlement program writ large, several of its specific aspects also carry benefits to diverse groups facing persecution.

Persecution on the basis of gender is one of the grounds upon which a person may be granted Canada's refugee protection. Within Canada's Government-Assisted Refugee stream, officers have the ability to tag cases as "Assistance to Women at Risk" recognizing that women and girls are often particularly vulnerable in refugee situations where they are not part of a conventional family unit. Applications may be prioritized on the basis of risk and vulnerability faced, and gender is one of a number of factors taken into account. Cases tagged with "Assistance to Women at Risk" may also be provided with additional settlement support services once in Canada through the Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program or through gender-specific settlement services and supports.

The Joint-Assistance Sponsorship program provides additional settlement support to refugees with exceptional needs, including individuals with disabilities. Under this program, eligible refugees receive up to two years of income support through the Resettlement Assistance Program as well as being matched with a private sponsorship group who provides additional settlement assistance, emotional support, and help with adjusting to life in Canada.

Refugees are exempt from the requirement that individuals not place excessive demand on medical services, which means that Canada can resettle refugees with disabilities or medical concerns that would otherwise be inadmissible in other immigration categories. Refugees still undergo a medical examination overseas and must meet the remaining admissibility criteria related to health.

Canada's Urgent Protection Program provides protection to persecuted persons who are facing immediate threats to their life, liberty, or physical safety. The expedited processing

provided under the Urgent Protection Program helps refugees find safety when they would otherwise be likely to be killed, subjected to violence, sexual assault, or arbitrary imprisonment, or returned to their country of nationality or former habitual residence.

Resettled refugees are also eligible for the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP). IRCC collects and analyzes gender and age disaggregated IFHP data on a quarterly basis to identify any changing patterns in claims, access, and usage, and monitors GBA Plus impacts that the Program may have on eligible beneficiaries.

Through the Human Rights Defenders (HRD) stream, Canada aims to resettle human rights defenders who are most at risk around the world, regardless of where they come from or their profession. Particular attention is being placed on those who are less visible or marginalized, including women and 2SLGBTQI+ human rights defenders.

IRCC's humanitarian commitment to welcome at least 40,000 Afghan refugees and those in refugee-like situations by December 2023 includes a focus on diverse priority populations that have experienced increased marginalization and discrimination, including women and girls, religious and ethnic minorities, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. The Afghan resettlement initiative advances GBA Plus goals for Canada overall by offering protection and support to these vulnerable Afghans and settling them in Canada permanently.

Gender is tracked for each arrival, and some sponsoring groups in Canada focus exclusively on resettling vulnerable 2SLGBTQI+ refugees. Canada does not collect immigration data disaggregated by race when refugees apply overseas, but using newcomers' original country of nationality as a proxy suggests that the majority of refugee newcomers are racialized individuals. The Department will work with internal research and evaluation partners to ensure relevant data is collected in regular performance monitoring and evaluation cycles, including an upcoming Gender Based Analysis Plus of the resettlement program. The Newcomer Outcomes Survey collects outcome information from permanent residents who arrived in Canada as refugees and covers collection of additional data elements to enable analysis of outcome of refugees depending on race, gender, membership in the 2SLGBTQI+ community, disabilities, family status, and income.

In addition, program data is collected from commissioned survey data obtained from Sponsorship Agreement Holders<sup>3</sup> (SAHs)—the [Canadian Council for Refugees](#) position papers and surveys, as well as international sources such as the [United Nations Refugee Agency](#) (UNHCR) issue papers and UNHCR and [International Organization for Migration](#) annual reports on resettlement.

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<sup>3</sup> SAHs are the individuals or groups having an agreement with IRCC to be a sponsor of privately sponsored refugees.

## Asylum

IRCC is accountable for the overall delivery of the in-Canada asylum system by which foreign nationals may seek refugee protection from within Canada — either at a port of entry or at an inland office. An individual can make a claim for protection to either the [Canada Border Services Agency](#) (CBSA) at the border or to IRCC at an inland office. Officers determine whether a claimant is eligible to make a claim; if so, the file is referred to the [Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada](#) (IRB), which is an independent administrative tribunal that adjudicates claims. GBA Plus considerations at each step on the asylum continuum include the individual's sex, gender and sexual orientation but also extend to their language, economic status, education, geography, race/ethnicity, religion, disability and age.

The Asylum Program contributes to the Gender Results Framework pillar of poverty reduction, health, and well-being, and the pillar on gender-based violence and access to justice. By providing fair and fast decisions on asylum claims, the Program contributes to fewer vulnerable individuals lacking stable, safe, and permanent housing; support for victims of intimate partner violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and child maltreatment— leading to improved overall health outcomes (including mental health) and well-being.

The Asylum Program provides protection to persons fleeing persecution and/or risk of torture, risk to life, or risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment. The in-Canada Asylum System provides gender-specific protection to in-Canada refugee claimants fleeing gender-based conflicts or fragile states. This is supported by the IRB Chairperson's Guidelines on women refugee claimants fearing persecution on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. Moreover, IRCC has developed specific program delivery instructions when processing the asylum claims of minors and other vulnerable persons.

Asylum claimants are eligible for the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) for the full duration of the refugee determination process. IRCC collects and analyzes gender and age disaggregated IFHP data for this population on a quarterly basis to identify any changing patterns in claims, access, and usage, and monitors GBA Plus impacts that the Program may have on eligible beneficiaries.

While IRCC collects data that is disaggregated by sex, country of origin, and other key indicators, it continuously strives to find ways to measure GBA Plus performance and progress.

The In-Canada Asylum Program also advances GBA Plus analysis by regularly monitoring countries around the world through a human rights perspective to identify populations experiencing individualized risks based on gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, or other intersectional identity factors. In the past, this country monitoring has led to the implementation of a Pre-Removal Risk Assessment Bar Exemption for nationals of Brunei and Russia on the basis of individualized risks to members of the 2SLGBTQI+ population.

## **Settlement**

GBA Plus is an important lens for the Settlement Program, which benefits from data collected by the Department on all clients during their immigration process. In 2019, in addition to the sex-at-birth options of identifying as female or male, IRCC provided the option of identifying one's gender as another. Therefore, the data collected through the Immigration Contribution Agreement Reporting Environment (iCARE) on clients and services can be disaggregated by sex-at-birth, and partially for gender. Data for additional intersecting characteristics such as age, immigration category, education levels, and family status, are available for those clients accessing specific settlement services, including language classes, short-term counselling, or community connections.

To understand the effects of the Settlement Program for newcomers, IRCC will continue to conduct its annual survey of newcomers, clients and non-clients of the Settlement Program. In 2023–24, IRCC will collect outcome information to inform reporting as well as program development and design. In addition, collecting race, community level responses, sexual orientation and additional gender and sex identifiers will allow for in-depth analysis of intersectional outcomes and barriers to settlement. The Settlement Program also collects activity and output data on funded activities targeting the needs of specific populations with intersecting characteristics, such as refugees, racialized women, members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community, persons with disabilities, and seniors.

To deepen our understanding of the differences in settlement outcomes among newcomers, IRCC will continue to conduct its annual outcomes survey of newcomers, clients and non-clients of the Settlement Program, while enhancing data analysis. Collecting race, community-level responses, sexual orientation and additional gender identifiers as well as disability, family composition and income information will allow for in depth analysis of intersectional outcomes and barriers to settlement. In 2023–24, IRCC will use outcome findings from the survey to inform reporting on results as well as future program development and design, priority setting and preparations for the next program intake.

## **Welcoming Communities**

Community Connections are services that help to connect clients with the broader community, public institutions, and community organizations. These services also provide opportunities for partners, volunteers, and local community members to be actively engaged in settlement programming. Data on the use of eligible services under Community Connections, such as peer-to-peer support and family matching, informal language learning, and group events and activities, can be disaggregated based on a variety of intersectional characteristics of clients. Information is collected through iCARE, the Newcomer Outcomes Survey, and through the Longitudinal Immigration Database, which links immigration information (client characteristics such as sex, gender, age, etc.) with settlement service and income tax information.

## **Education and Skills Development**

Language training and the development of essential skills are primary settlement services. Data on access to language training can be disaggregated according to immigration characteristics, such as sex at birth, gender, age, education, and other intersectional characteristics. Data on learning outcomes can be disaggregated by race. Similarly, data on access to essential skills development activities is also being collected and can be disaggregated by a variety of intersectional characteristics.

## **Economic Participation**

As a core component of the Settlement Program, employment-related services support clients in acquiring knowledge and skills to help them to overcome barriers in accessing the labour market. Data on access to employment-related services, as well as data to enable the analysis of employment outcomes (working, looking for work, income sources and amount, social assistance rates), can be disaggregated. This information is collected through various sources, including iCARE, the Newcomer Outcomes Survey, and the Longitudinal Immigration Database.

## **Poverty Reduction, Health, and Well-being**

While services that address health and well-being fall mainly under provincial jurisdiction, the Settlement Program collects data on the number of individuals receiving short-term counselling, mental health and well-being supports, and referrals to health and mental health services. However, given obvious privacy concerns, there are challenges with collecting this data.

In terms of poverty reduction, IRCC has the ability to track the use and duration of social assistance. This information is available through the Longitudinal Immigration Database.

IRCC is committed to strengthening the ongoing collection of disaggregated data used to inform policies and programs. This includes, for example:

- Collecting disaggregated race data in the annual Newcomer Outcomes Survey
- Capturing more robust and complete information on specific populations (e.g., 2SLGBTQI+) by providing improved definitions.

## **Gender**

The [Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report \(2021\) \(PDF, 4.2 MB\)](#) shows that settlement programming design, such as when and where service delivery is provided, can have an impact on the ability of newcomer women to access services. A shortage of available childcare services can have gendered effects, for example, as women are typically the primary childcare providers.

Data from iCARE show that, in 2021–22, women participated in employment activities at a higher percentage than men. Research, including lessons learned from the Racialized Newcomer Women Pilot, will garner insight on effective approaches for helping this newcomer population gain meaningful employment.

Immigrant and refugee women contribute greatly to Canadian communities, but they often face systemic and institutional barriers to their full participation in Canadian society. Challenges confronting newcomer women can include family and gender-based violence; lower levels of official language proficiency and varying levels of literacy; unequal access to socio-economic opportunities; dependency on family members; family-related responsibilities including caregiving for children and the elderly; social isolation; and health and mental health challenges with less access to mainstream services. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated gender inequalities for women, including racialized newcomer women in Canada. Economic gender disparities had been identified as particularly notable for immigrant women prior to the pandemic, irrespective of how long they have been in the country, and immigrant women are often concentrated in labour market sectors that saw significant job loss during the pandemic. As part of Canada’s pandemic recovery, settlement services will continue to play an important role in helping to ensure that all newcomers, including newcomer women, have the supports they need to successfully integrate both socially and economically into their new communities.

### **Sexual and Gender Minority Communities**

Members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community experienced socio-economic inequities during the COVID-19 pandemic and may continue to face barriers in successfully integrating to Canada due to discrimination. These barriers can include mental health issues and social isolation because of stigmatization within their ethnic community or family; challenges securing affordable housing; and difficulties accessing economic opportunities, health care, and other relevant community resources. This population is also at a higher risk of experiencing loss of employment during the pandemic, such as lay-offs or reduced employment hours.

While IRCC collects information on participation in activities geared towards the 2SLGBTQI+ population, the most recent version of the Newcomer Outcomes Survey asks clients to voluntarily identify as belonging to this particular social group. This new data will be available in the 2023–24 to inform the analysis of outcomes for this group of respondents.

### **Seniors**

Some senior newcomers continue to face settlement and integration challenges and are often less visible within Canadian society. Although senior newcomers often play key roles within their families, providing care for their grandchildren and allowing one or both parents to work, the support they provide may complicate their settlement trajectories. Seniors over the age of 60 are not generally in the labour market and may have experienced

little economic disruption throughout the pandemic. However, in the post-pandemic context and in the face of current strains on the health-care system, they may experience impacts to their health and life expectancy, well-being, and quality of life. Immigrant seniors have reported lower levels of social support than Canadian-born seniors.

A small portion of Settlement Program clients are seniors. For example, in 2021–22, only 5% of clients were aged 60 years and older. IRCC will use the Newcomer Outcomes Survey results to examine the outcomes of newcomers by age, including seniors.

## **Youth**

Settlement barriers for youth include lower levels of proficiency in Canada’s official languages, intergenerational and cultural integration challenges, and difficulties navigating the school system or finding employment. Immigrant youth in Canada are more susceptible to unemployment than Canadian-born youth, particularly racialized female youth, due to persistent gender inequalities. In 2021–22, 35% of Settlement Program clients were under 30 years of age. IRCC will continue disaggregation of data by age at the service level. However, examination of outcomes is limited to those who were age 18 and over when they responded to the survey. This may prevent in-depth analysis of outcomes of services provided to younger populations.

The Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) initiative and similar programming assists newcomer youth and families by addressing “newness to Canada” as a barrier to school success. SWIS workers act as cultural liaisons and system navigators between the school and newcomer families. SWIS promotes student achievement by enabling youth to integrate more easily while supporting families and school staff. It is a cross-stream initiative that is tracked in iCARE under Needs and Assets Assessment and Referral Services, Information and Orientation, Community Connections, and Employment-Related Services.

The first formal evaluation of the SWIS initiative was released in February 2022. The primary focus of this evaluation, covering fiscal years 2017–18 to 2020–21, was to assess the design, implementation and effectiveness of SWIS, including how SWIS is delivered across regions in terms of activity types and delivery models. The evaluation also included a GBA Plus lens, as well as considerations of COVID-19 impacts on SWIS design and delivery. Findings and recommendations from the evaluation will pave the way for improved data collection on priority populations, including youth.

As a partner department under the ESDC-led Youth Employment and Skills Strategy, IRCC will continue to support employment-related services tailored to newcomer youth.

## **Racialized Newcomer Women Pilot**

Racialized newcomer women often face multiple barriers when accessing the Canadian labour market, including gender and race-based discrimination, precarious or low-income employment, and lack of affordable childcare. To address these challenges, IRCC

launched the Racialized Newcomer Women Pilot in December 2018 to support the employment and career advancement of racialized newcomer women.

In 2023–24, IRCC will continue to support employment-related services tailored to racialized newcomer women, while also integrating the learnings from the Racialized Newcomer Women Pilot into the upcoming Settlement and Resettlement Program’s intake process.

This initiative supports the overall objective under Canada’s Gender Results Framework on economic participation and prosperity by increasing labour market opportunities and participation for racialized newcomer women.

### **Addressing Gender-based Violence**

Under Canada’s Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-based Violence (GBV), announced in 2017, IRCC continues to fund a unique, first-time collaborative partnership between the settlement and anti-violence sectors to support newcomers in situations of gender-based violence. This work has included the establishment of a common base of knowledge on GBV and training for front-line settlement workers to assist with identifying abuse.

These efforts continue through funding of \$2 million for 5 years, provided under Budget 2021, to extend the GBV Partnership and continue building the capacity of the sector through additional training, resources, and strengthened cross-sector collaboration.

This initiative continues to support the overall objective under Canada’s Gender Results Framework on GBV and access to justice by providing supports and resources to newcomers experiencing violence and abuse.

## **Core Responsibility 3: Citizenship and Passport**

### **Citizenship**

#### **Consolidating data within IRCC**

In 2022–23, the Citizenship Program worked with departmental partners to better consolidate citizenship data in order to support GBA Plus and Anti-Racism research priorities. Using this disaggregated data, the Program will continue to identify potential barriers to citizenship in 2023–24, and work with partners to address existing data gaps and further develop its data infrastructure.

#### **Accessing data from Statistics Canada**

In 2022–23, the Citizenship Program worked with Statistics Canada to obtain citizenship uptake data by various metrics, including place of birth, age, sex, and visible minority

status. This data has expanded the program's capacity to report on outcomes disaggregated by these identity factors, and in 2023–24 will support review of program performance indicators.

### **Client Experience Survey**

The Citizenship Program currently collects gender, age, and language data through IRCC's annual Client Experience Survey. In 2022–23, client experience data was further disaggregated by accessibility and whether clients experienced discrimination. In 2023–24, the Program will examine new and complementary measures to include in the Client Experience Survey in an effort to expand its capacity to report on impacts based on disaggregated data analysis.

### **Assessment of Racism Equity Diversity and Inclusion (REDI)**

In 2022–23 the Citizenship Program launched a Racism Equity Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) assessment of the citizenship grants line of business. The assessment aimed to identify any barriers to accessing citizenship faced by racialized people and equity seeking groups and to assess the current status of any systemic racism and or biases within the Program. In 2023–24 the Citizenship Program will develop and begin implementing an action plan for the program to address barriers and support opportunities identified in the REDI assessment and identify any further areas for evaluation.

### **Passport**

IRCC collaborates with Service Canada and Global Affairs Canada to facilitate travel for Canadians and contribute to a safe and secure travel regime by issuing Canadian travel documents that are internationally recognized and respected.

The Passport Program contributes to the Gender Results Framework pillar on eliminating GBV and promoting access to justice. In accordance with the [Canadian Passport Order](#) and agreements with enforcement and security agencies and other levels of government, individuals that are convicted of the maltreatment of children (transnational sex offenders, child-related sex offenders, facilitating human smuggling or trafficking) may be subject to sanctions or to provisions under the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*, resulting in the refusal, revocation or cancellation of their passport.

The Passport Program collects disaggregated data on gender, age, etc., as well as data on the number of refusals/revocations/cancellations related to cases where individuals engage in child maltreatment (i.e., transnational sex offenders, child-related sex offenders). It also collects data on the number of travel documents where the status is changed to suspended and where the passport issuance is refused pursuant to the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*. Actions to enable monitoring, reporting and capacity to assess impacts of policies are currently underway, which include

modernization initiatives to change to a new passport issuance platform that should enable the Passport Program to better use the data it collects.

In addition, the Passport Program developed operational policies that support gender diversity, equality, and inclusiveness. Examples include operational policies and guidance that support the issuance of passports or other travel documents printed with an 'X' gender identifier. Since June 2019, the Program has offered 'X' (another gender) as an identifier option to better accommodate those who do not identify exclusively as female or male.

The Passport Program collects several key data elements through the application form, such as sex, date of birth (age), and place of birth. Additional client demographics are collected through the annual client experience survey. This enables GBA Plus analysis through various stages of client interactions with the Program.

The collected data shows that applicants come from diverse family structures, which highlights the need to carefully consider inclusive data collection methods. For example, a recent policy change recognized that requiring data on an applicant's "mother's maiden name" is not inclusive terminology, as some families are made up of same-sex male parents. Another analysis found that asking for "parents' surname at birth" better represents a diverse population and uses modern language that is acceptable to more people.

The Program has developed a risk-based operational policy plan with the following GBA Plus related objectives:

- Reducing barriers for disadvantaged groups;
- Improving access for individuals with disabilities;
- Recognizing diverse family structures including custody, foster care, adoption and surrogacy; and
- Eliminating prejudices.

In 2021, IRCC responded to Call to Action 17 (CTA-17) from the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, in an effort to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the reconciliation process in Canada. Our response will enable survivors of residential schools and their family members to replace existing valid IRCC-issued identity documents — including passports — with their reclaimed Indigenous name, free of charge. This client-centric process will waive associated fees for passports, permanent resident cards, and proof of Canadian citizenship certificates, from May 31, 2021, until May 30, 2026. CTA-17 will be monitored to allow ongoing analysis of this initiative, including work to further integrate non-Latin characters into IRCC systems and programs, with the view to further support Indigenous persons in reclaiming their name and identity.

In 2023–24, the Passport Program will apply a Racial Impact Assessment Tool<sup>4</sup> to all of its existing operational policies. This initiative will complement the Department’s broader intersectional GBA Plus commitments by taking concrete actions to address any issues of systemic racism and racial inequality in Passport Program policies and procedures.

In addition, the Passport Program is building up internal capacity for facial recognition system research and development. One of the key research priorities will be taking a closer look at potential impacts of bias from an input perspective (photo quality), a system perspective (algorithm accuracy), and a user perspective (manual system output review). Research results will be leveraged to inform procedural, policy and system changes. Research in this area will align with biometric industry standards and best practices.

### **Facial Recognition Solution**

IRCC uses the photo provided by travel document applicants to conduct facial biometric comparisons using its Facial Recognition Solution (FRS), which helps to screen and validate their identity as part of the Passport Program’s identity management framework.

The program has always mitigated against risks stemming from algorithmic bias by having a human operator review the system’s finding for further analysis. Only designated employees of IRCC, formally trained to conduct facial comparison analysis, can make a determination on whether a potential match from FRS consists of two identities bearing the same photo. IRCC will leverage an anticipated upgrade of the algorithm that supports FRS to replicate portions of the GBA Plus research project to assess this new version’s ability to further reduce bias.

IRCC has started the process of building a Research and Development environment that may be used to research industry trends in facial recognition and test continuous FRS enhancements. This will lead to improved integrity, identity management, and client service. One of the key research priorities will be taking a closer look at potential impacts of bias from an input perspective (photo quality), a system perspective (algorithm accuracy), and a user perspective (manual system output review). Research results will be leveraged to inform procedural, policy and system changes. Research in this area will align with biometric industry standards and best practices.

The Department strives to have more control over the scope, research methodology, and testing ability as well as the monitoring of the Passport Program’s FRS algorithm. Key conclusions will then be drawn from data obtained from its own system and clients rather than extrapolating from third-party reports.

Research and development will be integral to providing data-driven, evidence-based answers to inquiries regarding the use and efficacy of facial recognition technology on

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<sup>4</sup> Created by Service Delivery Sub-Committee, Anti-Racism Task Force, Immigration, Refugees Citizenship Canada.

demographic equity/bias. Evidence-based analysis and the use of facial recognition technology is required to meet the Department's call to incorporate GBA Plus into daily work to produce better outcomes and help mitigate any unintended potential concerns for IRCC clients.

## **Internal Services**

### **Engagement in international fora**

IRCC continues to engage with international partners to advance Canada's international protection obligations, which includes the protection of refugees, particularly vulnerable women and children. This includes advocating for the implementation of the gender responsive Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) that better protects and empowers vulnerable refugees, affirms international legal obligations, and increases international cooperation to better enable comprehensive refugee responses, as well as bilateral, regional, and multilateral discussions.

Canada has continued to demonstrate its commitment to a feminist assistance policy through its tenure as Chair of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS by its Spanish acronym) Support Platform. During Canada's tenure as Chair, the identified theme was the "Protection and Empowerment of Women and Girls on the Move." Gender considerations and topics drawing attention to the international protection needs of women and girls were integrated in the activities implemented throughout Canada's tenure as Chair, such as technical workshops. In addition, during its tenure, Canada increased visibility and awareness of the forced displacement situation in the Central American region, with a focus on women and girls on the move during a high-level event organized in December 2021. With this event, the Platform joined the UN Refugee Agency's 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, to draw attention to the international protection needs and the importance of empowering refugee women and girls in the region, as well as the need to protect the human rights of migrant women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals in vulnerable situations.

IRCC will continue some of those efforts in our current role as past-chair of the MIRPS support platform as well as in other forums. IRCC also continues to support a gender-responsive approach to the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, including integrating and highlighting gender considerations.

### **Global Compact for Migration**

Canada continues to support a gender-responsive approach to international migration management and refugee protection by integrating and highlighting gender considerations in bilateral, regional, and multilateral discussions.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) is the main intergovernmentally negotiated agreement on common approaches to international

migration in all their dimensions. The GCM identifies gender-responsiveness as a crosscutting and guiding principle in migration.

As the department that leads Canada's participation in the GCM Champion Countries initiative, IRCC has identified a number of priorities to guide its GCM engagements internationally, including the promotion of gender responsive migration programs and policies. IRCC will continue building on its 2022–23 efforts to promote an inclusive approach to migration. These past efforts included hosting a side event to encourage the gender-responsive implementation of the Global Compact for Migration at the Spring 2022 International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), where Canada showcased the work of [Gender + Migration Hub](#) by the International Migration Research Centre, migrant women voices, and took on an informal rapporteur role on gender-responsiveness at the IMRF.

IRCC also continues to actively invest in capacity building activities through the International Migration Capacity Building Program (IMCBP) as a way to support the development of well-managed migration systems that facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration globally. The program application process requires applicants to provide a GBA Plus assessment of their proposed interventions to ensure that project development takes into account gender considerations.

Additionally, some of IRCC capacity building projects actively seek to contribute to gender equality. In March 2022, through the IMCBP Migration Cooperation and Engagement Envelope, Canada started funding a two-year capacity building project with the International Organization for Migration to enhance the capacities of the Government of Bangladesh to deliver gender-responsive integrated services for safe and regular migration, and welfare of migrants, returnees and communities, especially women.

While seeking to improve service delivery throughout the migration cycle in Bangladesh, the project encompasses a gender perspective to promote equitable access to services to all, with a focus on women migrant workers and other vulnerable migrants and returnees. IRCC's funding will support a pilot roadmap for a gender-responsive service delivery mechanism, including redesigning service centres with gender-sensitive spaces, counselling services, sensitization and training.

Additionally, IRCC funding is supporting the validation of the all-inclusive, gender-sensitive National Reintegration Policy, including sessions on the gender dimensions of this policy and its impact on women migrant workers and other vulnerable groups. The initiative will be measured by mid and final reports that will include disaggregated data and gender-specific indicators.

### **Evaluation and performance measurement**

IRCC developed an Evaluation and Performance Measurement GBA Plus Protocol. It contains a series of considerations, key questions, and guiding principles to apply to the planning, conduct and reporting phases of program evaluations and in support of performance monitoring.

The protocol is applied to current evaluations, which bolsters the GBA Plus analysis and information in the final reports, supporting the collection and reporting of evidence to contribute to program improvements.

GBA Plus considerations are also applied to Performance Information Profiles of IRCC's programs, including indicators, as applicable.

### **IRCC Workforce – Future IRCC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)-related Initiatives**

The Department will continue to honour its commitments aimed at building a more diverse workforce, at all levels, that is representative of the Canadian population through several initiatives including the implementation of a plan that will enable IRCC to achieve its Employment Equity (EE) Representation Baseline objectives by 2024. This plan will focus on providing key stakeholders with access to disaggregated summary EE data to support a more effective action plan and better people management decision-making related to recruitment, promotion, learning and development. The plan will also focus on the development of an accountability model and customized training and tools for managers and human resources professionals.

EE self-identification data is voluntary and has been managed by IRCC to-date. However, to align with the launch of the modernized self-identification questionnaire by the Treasury Board Secretariat, IRCC will be implementing its own comprehensive engagement strategy in 2023 to increase awareness about the importance of self-identification and promoting culture change in support of a more inclusive workplace.

As part of IRCC's Anti-Racism Strategy 2.0, systemic biases in employment systems will continue to be addressed for improving the representation of Indigenous, Black and other racialized employees at all levels of the organization through targeted recruitment, retention and talent management of equity-deserving groups. Engagement sessions, town halls, targeted workshops and focus groups will continue to be held to deepen the awareness and understanding of racism at all levels, and equip employees with enhanced tools and mechanisms to prevent, respond to and address incidences of racism and discrimination

In addition, IRCC will be conducting a review of existing developmental pilot programs (e.g. Mentorship Plus Program) that support the career development of EE groups in support of increasing their representation in the middle and senior career levels; increasing the Department's visibility at career fairs, events, and within various communities; as well as exploring partnership opportunities with stakeholders within the public and private sector to leverage various innovative recruitment and development initiatives.

Furthermore, IRCC will undertake an Employment Systems Review (ESR) in 2023 which will enable the department to better understand the reasons for major gaps in representation, and to serve as the basis for developing a multi-year Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (ARDEI) Plan that will address barriers faced by employment equity groups. In addition, following the approval of IRCC's Accessibility Strategy, in accordance with the

new Accessibility Canada Act, IRCC will make public its multi-year plan in order to identify, prevent, and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.