

# The Labour Market Vulnerabilities of Refugees in Canada: Impacts of Entry Programs

**RESEARCHERS:** Monica Boyd<sup>1</sup> and Shawn Perron<sup>1</sup>

**AFFILIATION:** University of Toronto<sup>1</sup>

**KEYWORDS:** refugees, entry program, entry visas, economic outcomes, gender, gender inequalities in economic outcomes, socioeconomic integration, employment, income, labour force participation, Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs), Government Assisted Refugees (GARS), Protected Persons in Canada (PPC), quantitative methodology

## WHAT THE RESEARCH IS ABOUT

**OVERVIEW:** This study focused on three types of humanitarian entry programs between 1980 and 2014: government-assisted refugees (GARs), privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) and migrants who applied for asylum in Canada and became protected persons in Canada (PPC). The study looked at whether entry programs and gender created differences in labour market integration and economic outcomes among refugees.

**OBJECTIVE:** to analyze and describe how different entry programs affect socioeconomic integration, and to demonstrate the additional impacts of gender on economic outcomes of refugees.

**RESEARCH JUSTIFICATION:** Research has shown that refugees who arrive under the Private Sponsorship (PSR) entry program have the best economic outcomes, and that male refugees fare better in the labour market than women. This study tests whether differences in entry programs and gender affect refugees' economic integration.

## HOW THE DATA WAS OBTAINED

This study combines data from IRCC's entry visa information and the 2016 census of population records. It looks at first-generation refugees who immigrated at age 20+, between 1980 and 2014, and are currently aged 20-64 and residing in Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs). The research team created 6 main groups of interest from the intersection of gender (male or female) with the three refugee classes (GAR, PSR, or PPC). Bi-variate analysis was used to produce informative cross-tabulations, charts and short summaries for a non-academic audience. Multivariate analyses (ordinary least squares' logistic regression, multinomial regression) were conducted on a smaller subset of indicators (labour force participation, occupational location and earnings).

## WHAT THE STUDY FOUND

- Among refugees, GARs have the lowest labour force participation and the lowest occupational socioeconomic scores. Female GARs are least likely to be part of the labour force.
- Among all refugee groups, educational differences were important for understanding occupational status differences among men; this was not true for women
- PPC refugees are the least likely to hold low skill occupations, which may reflect Canadian work experience acquired as a refugee claimant.
- Women earn less than men in every refugee admission class.
- Overall, although entry status differences are small within the refugee population, PSRs still tend to have earnings and occupational advantages when factors such as country of origin, demographic, and human capital characteristics are taken into account.
- Findings from this study lend support for the perspective that the integration of refugees is shaped by the resources and programs made available through their entry statuses.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- To lessen the gap between economic outcomes of GARs and other refugee groups, more programs and supports are needed to help GARs enter and succeed in the labour market.
- There is a need to better understand and address the challenges that women with refugee experience face in the labour market.



[View Project Webpage](#)

## ABOUT CYRRC

The Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRRC) is a network of researchers, service providers, and government partners working together to produce and share research that facilitates the integration of young refugees and their families in Canada and beyond.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition.

---

This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada



UNIVERSITY OF  
TORONTO