



Refugee  
Response Team  
FRASER VALLEY

# ONLINE SURVEY: SECOND QUARTER Key Findings Report



**DIVERSECITY**  
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## About The RRT-FV

The Refugee Response Team – Fraser Valley (RRT-FV) works with local communities to identify, prioritize and address the needs and challenges of refugees in the Fraser Valley.

### Background

Recognizing the severity of the crisis in Syria, the Province of British Columbia set up a one-time investment to enhance federal and provincial refugee programs and provide additional resources for communities welcoming refugees. Refugee Response Teams (RRTs) were formed in five regions of the province, including the Fraser Valley.

### Purpose

- » To develop and implement a *Community Refugee Response Action Plan*
- » To act as a local resource for information and communications about refugee resettlement in the Fraser Valley

### Vision

Fraser Valley service providers, sponsors, stakeholders and refugees will have access to the information, services and supports they need in order to facilitate the resettlement of refugees and ensure their successful integration into the community.

### Community Refugee Response Action Plan

Through a community consultation process, six priority issues were identified for the *Community Refugee Response Action Plan*, including data collection and information sharing, public education, housing, healthcare access, language assessment and training, and employment and labour market attachment.

For more information, please visit [fraservalleyrrt.ca](http://fraservalleyrrt.ca).

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Executive Summary ..... 4
- Introduction ..... 5
- Methodology ..... 5
- Respondents ..... 6
- Key Findings ..... 8
  - Housing ..... 8
  - Healthcare Access ..... 10
  - Language Assessment and Training ..... 12
  - Employment and Labour Market Attachment ..... 14
  - Other Service Needs ..... 16
- Appendix I – Overview of Syrian Refugee Arrivals in The Fraser Valley ..... 17
- Appendix II – RRT-FV Online Survey Questions ..... 18
- Appendix III – List of Organizations / Private Sponsors ..... 28
- Appendix IV – New Refugee Programs / Supports ..... 29

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Refugee Response Team – Fraser Valley (RRT-FV) Online Survey* was created to better understand the service needs, challenges and issues of refugees in the Fraser Valley. Responses were obtained from a variety of service providers and stakeholders involved in the resettlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley, and this report summarizes the key findings that emerged from the survey responses. The results will be used not only to inform the work of the RRT-FV, but also by communities and government in their planning and delivery of refugee services and supports throughout the region.

The online survey was divided into six sections to match the priority areas of the RRT-FV's *Community Refugee Response Action Plan*:

- » Background Information
- » Housing
- » Healthcare Access
- » Language Assessment and Training
- » Employment and Labour Market Attachment
- » Other Service Needs

It was open from October 24 to November 8, 2016 and received a total of 34 completed responses from individuals representing 24 organizations and private sponsor groups in the Fraser Valley.

## Summary of Key Findings:

Close to 90% of respondents feel that **access to safe, affordable and appropriate housing** and subsidized housing / rental subsidies continues to be a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley, and the majority believe that there have been no improvements. Over three-quarters of respondents also feel that refugees continue to face discrimination or abuse by landlords, though close to a quarter believe that it has somewhat improved since June 2016.

The majority of respondents feel that **access to healthcare** continues to be a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley, notably access to family physicians / medical services accepting Interim Federal Health (IFH) coverage, mental health / trauma services, and professional interpretation for medical services. While there have been some improvements, over 40% of respondents do not feel improvements have been made in this area.

**Access to language assessment and training** also continues to be a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley. Over 60% of respondents feel that better access is needed for language assessment, pre-literacy / literacy services and workplace-related / employment-focused language training, as well as childminding services and transportation to attend English language training programs. Less than half of respondents feel that access to lower level Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes is an issue, with over 40% noting improvements since June 2016.

More than half of the respondents feel that access to pre-employment and employment programs, skills training and work experience opportunities continues to be a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley, and over 80% feel that access to employment opportunities and foreign credential / qualification / skill recognition continues to be an issue. Some improvements to **employment and labour market attachment** were noted, including access / availability of pre-employment and employment programs, skills training, work experience opportunities, connections between employers and refugees, and employment opportunities.

Each of the findings is further explained in the body of the report.

## INTRODUCTION

The *Refugee Response Team – Fraser Valley (RRT-FV) Online Survey* was created to better understand the service needs, challenges and issues of refugees in the Fraser Valley. The survey was distributed to a broad range of service providers and stakeholders involved in the resettlement and integration of refugees in different communities of the Fraser Valley.

In this survey, the second in a series of four surveys, stakeholders were asked to rate the challenges and issues identified in the *RRT-FV Online Survey: First Quarter*, as well as any improvements. Respondents were also asked to share information about new services, supports and resources that were developed for refugees in their communities / sectors since June 2016, and a list can be found in *Appendix IV*.

The report summarizes the key findings that emerged from the survey responses. The results will assist the RRT-FV in bringing forward information and making recommendations to different levels of government and other key stakeholders in support of refugees in the Fraser Valley, and will also help to measure and demonstrate any improvements to services for refugees over the next year.

## METHODOLOGY

The *RRT-FV Online Survey* was open from October 24 to November 8, 2016, and responses were collected via Fluid Surveys, an online survey tool. To ensure broad distribution, the survey was sent to the RRT-FV membership, which includes representation from service providers and stakeholders involved in the resettlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley. The survey was also sent to respondents from the *RRT-FV Online Survey: First Quarter* and participants of RRT-FV meetings and events. Recipients were asked to distribute the survey within their networks.

Responses were obtained from a variety of service providers and stakeholders, including settlement service providers, employment service providers, language service providers, healthcare service providers, school districts, municipalities, private sponsors and community partners.

The survey was divided into six sections – background information, housing, healthcare access, language assessment and training, employment and labour market attachment, and other service needs – which match the priority areas of the *Community Refugee Response Action Plan*. Each section (except background information) included four questions; the full list of survey questions can be found in *Appendix II*. Respondents had the option of completing one or more sections, depending on their knowledge of the subject area.

The survey received a total of 34 completed responses from individuals representing 24 organizations / private sponsor groups from across the communities of the Fraser Valley. The list of organizations / private sponsors can be found in *Appendix III*.

# RESPONDENTS

Survey respondents represented the different communities of the Fraser Valley, as well as the various sectors involved in the resettlement and integration of refugees to the region. They are also involved in providing services or supports to one or more “categories” of refugees.

## Communities

| COMMUNITY                  | COUNT | PERCENTAGE |
|----------------------------|-------|------------|
| Abbotsford                 | 7     | 20.6%      |
| Chilliwack                 | 7     | 20.6%      |
| Delta                      | 6     | 17.6%      |
| Langley                    | 9     | 26.5%      |
| Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows | 9     | 26.5%      |
| Mission                    | 4     | 11.8%      |
| Surrey                     | 13    | 38.2%      |

## Sectors

| SECTOR                | COUNT | PERCENTAGE |
|-----------------------|-------|------------|
| Settlement            | 19    | 55.9%      |
| ESL / LINC            | 9     | 26.5%      |
| Employment            | 9     | 26.5%      |
| Education             | 6     | 17.6%      |
| Healthcare            | 1     | 2.9%       |
| Local Government      | 2     | 5.9%       |
| Private Sponsor / SAH | 2     | 5.9%       |
| Business Community    | 1     | 2.9%       |
| Other                 | 6     | 17.6%      |

## Types of Refugees Served by Respondents

| TYPE OF REFUGEE                      | COUNT | PERCENTAGE |
|--------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Government-Assisted Refugee          | 29    | 85.3%      |
| Privately Sponsored Refugee          | 27    | 79.4%      |
| Blended Visa Office Referred Refugee | 17    | 50.0%      |
| Refugee Claimant                     | 15    | 44.1%      |
| Other                                | 3     | 8.8%       |

# KEY FINDINGS

Responses from the *RRT-FV Online Survey: Second Quarter* were compiled and organized to match the priority areas of the *Community Refugee Response Action Plan*. The opinions and perspectives of survey respondents are summarized below.

## Housing

The following refugee-specific housing challenges and issues were identified in the *RRT-FV Online Survey: First Quarter* by stakeholders involved in the settlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley. Respondents were asked if these challenges and issues applied in their community / sector and if they had noticed any improvements. They were also asked to share additional service challenges and issues not previously identified. The responses are summarized below.

### Safe, affordable and appropriate housing

87% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees to find safe and appropriate housing in the Fraser Valley with the financial assistance provided, while 9% somewhat disagree. 13% of respondents feel that access to safe and appropriate housing has somewhat improved since June 2016, while 70% feel that it has not improved at all.

### Appropriate housing for large family units

91% of respondents strongly agree that it is a challenge for refugees with large family units to find appropriate housing in the Fraser Valley, while 9% somewhat disagree. 91% of respondents also feel that access to appropriate housing for refugees with large family units has not improved since June 2016.

### Subsidized housing and rent subsidies

91% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access subsidized housing or rent subsidies, while 5% somewhat disagree. 9% of respondents feel that access to subsidized housing or rent subsidies has somewhat improved since June 2016, while 70% feel that it has not improved at all.

### Discrimination / abuse by landlords

77% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that refugees in the Fraser Valley face discrimination and/or abuse by landlords, while 5% somewhat disagree. 22% of respondents feel that discrimination and/or abuse by landlords has somewhat improved since June 2016, while 48% feel that it has not improved at all.

“Metro Vancouver is too expensive for large refugee families... Many large families are living in two-bedroom basement suites – often that are unregistered so they are below standards.”

“Some landlords don't want to rent to larger families. If the house is large enough for a larger family, it's usually too expensive for a refugee family... [In one case, the] landlord lowered the rent to make his house affordable specifically because they were refugees, but I think that's the exception.”

## Incentives for landlords to rent their properties to refugees

70% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that there is a lack of incentives for landlords in the Fraser Valley to rent their properties to refugees, while 4% somewhat disagree. 4% of respondents feel that incentives for landlords to rent their properties to refugees has somewhat improved since June 2016, while 52% feel that there has been no improvement at all.

### New / emerging needs, challenges and issues

- » The cost of rent continues to increase.
- » Some landlords do not want to rent their properties to refugees with large family units.
- » Some refugee clients are unsatisfied with their current housing situation and would like to move. Settlement service providers are supporting these families to find new housing and move homes, in addition to assisting new refugee families settling in the region.

## Healthcare Access

The following refugee-specific healthcare access challenges and issues were identified in the *RRT-FV Online Survey: First Quarter* by stakeholders involved in the settlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley. Respondents were asked if these challenges and issues applied in their community / sector and if they had noticed any improvements. They were also asked to share additional service challenges and issues not previously identified. The responses are summarized below.

### Complex health issues

86% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that many refugees who have recently arrived to the Fraser Valley have complex health issues, while 5% somewhat disagree.

### Emergency services in hospitals

59% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees to access emergency services in hospitals in the Fraser Valley, while 14% strongly or somewhat disagree. 21% of respondents feel that access to emergency services in hospitals has somewhat improved since June 2016, while 58% feel that it has not improved at all.

### Family physicians and/or medical services accepting IFH coverage

86% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees to access family physicians and/or medical services accepting Interim Federal Health (IFH) coverage in the Fraser Valley, while 10% somewhat disagree. 38% of respondents feel that access to family physicians and/or medical services accepting IFH coverage has somewhat or significantly improved since June 2016, while 43% feel that it has not improved at all.

### Dentists and/or dental specialists accepting IFH coverage

71% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees to access dentists and/or dental specialists accepting IFH coverage in the Fraser Valley, while 14% strongly or somewhat disagree. 19% feel that access to dentists and/or dental specialists accepting IFH coverage has somewhat or significantly improved since June 2016, while 62% feel that it has not improved at all.

### Pharmacies accepting IFH coverage

57% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees to access pharmacies accepting IFH coverage in the Fraser Valley, while 19% strongly or somewhat disagree. 24% of respondents feel that access to pharmacies accepting IFH coverage has somewhat or significantly improved since June 2016, while 43% feel that it has not improved at all and 5% feel that it does not need improvement.

“If we want our clients to settle well, adjust, learn the language, work and be productive members of the society, we need to first tap into the mental health of clients and connect them with counselling services in their language, to deal with war trauma, separation from family, PTSD, etc. Many teenagers and children who have been out of school for such a long time need some support groups to help them deal with this as well.”

“Mental health is deserving of a separate focus – innovative practice needs to be funded! Trauma groups and trauma management skills can be delivered within a reasonable funding level with significant impact.”

### Confusion about IFH coverage

90% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that there is confusion about the services covered under the IFH Program.

### Mental health and/or trauma services

86% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees to access mental health and/or trauma services / supports in the Fraser Valley, while 5% somewhat disagree. 18% of respondents feel that access to mental health and/or trauma services / supports has somewhat improved since June 2016, while 73% of respondents feel that it has not improved at all.

“Many cultures do not necessarily address mental health and so there has to be some education / information provided to families about how it is important before counselling can even be considered.”

### Professional interpretation for medical services

86% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees to access professional interpretation services for medical appointments / services in the Fraser Valley. 23% of respondents feel that access to professional interpretation services for medical appointments / services has somewhat improved since June 2016, while 73% feel that it has not improved at all and 5% feel that it does not need improvement.

### Transportation to get to/from medical appointments

76% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access transportation to get to/from medical appointments, while 10% somewhat disagree. 5% of respondents feel that access to transportation to get to/from medical appointments has somewhat improved, while 68% feel that it has not improved at all.

### New / emerging needs, challenges and issues

- » Some medical facilities are not fully aware about the IFH Program.
- » Some medical facilities, including ERs, refuse to call interpreters for refugee clients.
- » Lack of information / focus on the mental health of refugee families, children and youth.
- » Lack of no-cost counselling services for refugee clients experiencing trauma and/or mental health challenges, as well as supports in different languages or with access to interpretation.
- » Lack of opportunities to develop innovative mental health / trauma services for refugee clients.
- » Mobility aids for refugee clients.

## Language Assessment and Training

The following refugee-specific language assessment / training challenges and issues were identified in the *RRT-FV Online Survey: First Quarter* by stakeholders involved in the settlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley. Respondents were asked if these challenges and issues applied in their community / sector and if they had noticed any improvements. They were also asked to share additional service challenges and issues not previously identified. The responses are summarized below.

### English language proficiency

84% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that many refugees have recently arrived to the Fraser Valley with no / limited English language proficiency, while 13% somewhat disagree. 63% of respondents also strongly or somewhat agree that many refugees have recently arrived with no / limited literacy skills in their mother tongue, while 27% strongly or somewhat disagree.

### Language assessment

62% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access language assessment, while 21% strongly or somewhat disagree. 35% of respondents feel that access to language assessment has somewhat or significantly improved since June 2016, while 31% feel that it has not improved at all.

### Pre-literacy / literacy services

60% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access pre-literacy or literacy services / supports, while 20% strongly or somewhat disagree. 36% of respondents feel that access / availability of pre-literacy or literacy services / supports has somewhat or significantly improved since June 2016, while 29% feel that it has not improved at all and 4% feel that it doesn't need improvement.

### English language training

45% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access lower level Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes, while 29% strongly or somewhat disagree. 43% of respondents feel that access to lower level LINC classes has somewhat or significantly improved since June 2016, while 23% feel that it has not improved at all. 28% of respondents also feel that access to non-LINC language programs / supports in the Fraser Valley has somewhat or significantly improved, while 45% feel that it has not improved at all.

### Workplace-related or employment-focused language training

77% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that there is limited availability of workplace-related or employment-focused language training programs for refugees in the Fraser Valley, while 10% strongly or somewhat disagree. 21% of respondents feel that access / availability of workplace-related or employment-focused language training programs has somewhat improved since June 2016, while 41% feel that it has not improved at all and 3% feel that it doesn't need improvement.

“It was a chaotic start up to the new school year on Sept 12. The first two days the Syrian refugees didn't come to class due to their Muslim holiday. The mothers that needed to put their children in childcare at our LINC program were frequently called out of class for the first couple of weeks as their children made the difficult transition of being separated from them. Many refugees had medical or dental appointments and needed to leave class early or arrive late.”

### **Childminding services while attending LINC classes**

74% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access childminding services while attending LINC classes, while 13% strongly or somewhat disagree. 21% of respondents feel that access to childminding services while attending LINC classes has somewhat or significantly improved, while 41% feel that it has not improved at all and 7% feel that it does not need improvement.

### **Transportation to attend English language training programs**

65% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access transportation to attend English language training programs, while 13% strongly or somewhat disagree. 24% of respondents feel that access to transportation to attend language training programs has somewhat or significantly improved, while 38% feel that it has not improved at all and 7% feel that it doesn't need improvement.

#### **New / emerging needs, challenges and issues**

- » Lack of family literacy programs that teach literacy skills concurrently to all family members, engage both parents and include childminding.
- » Lack of support for community-based (non-LINC) English language programs, including training and coordination for volunteer tutor programs.
- » Evening and higher level LINC classes had to be closed to accommodate more lower level LINC classes in some communities.
- » Insufficient LINC classes available in some communities. For example, some refugee clients in Mission are required to travel by bus to Abbotsford to participate in LINC.
- » Services for refugee clients are not equitable. Syrian refugee clients are receiving more support for language training than other refugee communities.

## Employment and Labour Market Attachment

The following refugee-specific employment challenges and issues were identified in the *RRT-FV Online Survey: First Quarter* by stakeholders involved in the settlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley. Respondents were asked if these challenges and issues applied in their community / sector and if they had noticed any improvements. They were also asked to share additional service challenges and issues not previously identified. The responses are summarized below.

### Employment readiness

85% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that many refugees who have recently arrived to the Fraser Valley are not yet employment ready, as they still need to address other settlement needs.

### Foreign credential, qualification and/or skill recognition

81% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to get their foreign credentials, qualifications and/or skills recognized. 24% of respondents feel that foreign credential, qualification and/or skill recognition has somewhat improved since June 2016, while 44% feel that it has not improved at all.

“Many people (both refugees and employers) seem to expect that refugees can just fit into a job here, once they have some language. There is a huge difference between Canadian Employment Culture as a mindset, and the countries where most refugees have come from.”

### Specialized pre-employment or employment programs

58% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access specialized pre-employment or employment programs / supports, while 15% strongly or somewhat disagree. 48% of respondents feel that access / availability of specialized pre-employment or employment programs / supports has somewhat or significantly improved since June 2016, while 36% feel that it has not improved at all.

### WorkBC programs

50% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access WorkBC programs / supports, while 20% strongly or somewhat disagree. 40% of respondents feel that access to WorkBC programs / supports has somewhat or significantly improved since June 2016, while 20% feel that it has not improved at all and 8% feel that it doesn't need improvement.

“We are in the early stages of connecting with employers to explore the development of onsite workplace language training specifically for learners with limited language and/or literacy skills (in partnership with particular employers, work environments and industries known to have work opportunities for this client group). Dedicated funding to develop this critical piece is not yet available, so is moving forward at a slow pace.”

### Skills training and/or work experience opportunities

73% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access skills training and/or work experience opportunities. 36% of respondents feel that access / availability of skills training and/or work experience opportunities has somewhat or significantly improved since June 2016, while another 36% feel that it has not improved at all and 4% feel that it doesn't need improvement.

“The settlement language skills required for success in the Canadian workplace include cultural practices and concepts such as time, safety, benefits and unions. There appears to be a level of cultural dissonance (which is augmented by low level language and literacy skills) that cannot be addressed in ‘one-off’ or short-term workshops offered with interpretation by employment related services / supports that are separated from settlement language training.”

### Connections between employers and refugees

46% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge to identify and/or engage with employers in the Fraser Valley who have employment opportunities for refugees, while 23% strongly or somewhat disagree. 50% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for employers to connect with refugees in the Fraser Valley who are employment ready, while 31% strongly or somewhat disagree. 56% of respondents feel that connections between employers and refugees who are employment ready have somewhat or significantly improved, while 24% feel that they have not improved at all.

### Access to employment opportunities

85% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that it is a challenge for refugees in the Fraser Valley to access employment opportunities. 44% of respondents feel that access / availability of employment opportunities has somewhat or significantly improved, while 28% feel that it has not improved at all and 4% feel that it doesn't need improvement.

## New / emerging needs, challenges and issues

- » Language and literacy are the biggest barriers to accessing WorkBC services, skills training and employment opportunities. Many refugee clients are focused on improving language / literacy skills rather than looking for employment opportunities.
- » Lack of funding to develop onsite workplace language training programs for refugee clients with limited language and/or literacy skills, in partnership with employers.
- » Lack of mentorship opportunities for refugee clients.
- » Some employers would like to hire / support refugees, but cannot realistically accommodate low-level English speakers. Others have no clear idea of what it entails.
- » Lack of cultural awareness training both for refugee clients and employers.
- » Some employment opportunities / supports have been made available to Syrian refugees in the Fraser Valley; however, there has been no uptake from this group.
- » Some skilled refugees who have secured employment are not being paid the standard market rate that should be paid to skilled workers, which impacts motivation to work.
- » Challenges accessing reliable transportation to get to/from WorkBC services, training and employment opportunities for refugee clients living in remote areas.

## Other Service Needs

In addition to addressing the priority areas of the *Community Refugee Response Action Plan*, respondents were asked to provide input on any other service needs, challenges and issues impacting refugees in the Fraser Valley, as well as if they had noticed any improvements since June 2016. The following is a summary of those responses.

### New / emerging needs, challenges and issues

- » Increase in references to episodes of domestic violence. These cases are challenging, as the norms vary between cultures. How to address the issues in a way that does not result in the breakup of families and cause further grief?
- » Some refugees are reporting difficulties in obtaining a driver's licence. Interpretation is allowed for the written test, but not the driving test.
- » Lack of programs / services that bring together refugee families and community members from different cultural or language groups to support adaptation, integration and social cohesion.
- » Lack of communication between private sponsors and settlement organizations. Both could work better together to share knowledge and expertise.
- » Large caseloads for settlement workers. More funding is needed to hire more settlement workers.

“The settlement success of the seven refugee families in Chilliwack (GAR, BVOR and PSR) is largely due to the private informal groups who have stepped in to support them and the support those groups have received from Chilliwack Community Services and others.”

### Improvements

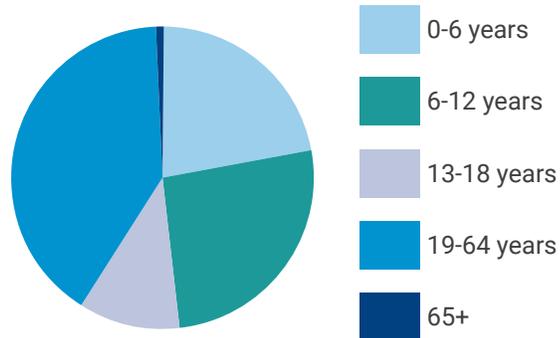
- » Volunteer-based support has been very strong for Syrian refugees. Many community members have donated items or money towards supporting families.
- » Settlement agencies are more organized and have hired specialized staff, such as housing workers, crisis workers, etc.
- » Increase in supports for refugee clients (that fall outside of the Settlement Program and Resettlement Assistance Program).

# APPENDIX I – OVERVIEW OF SYRIAN REFUGEE ARRIVALS IN THE FRASER VALLEY

## Syrian Refugee Arrivals to BC (November 4, 2015 to October 30, 2016)

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| <b>Total:</b>  | 2,988 |
| <b>Government Assisted Refugees (GARs):</b>          | 2,088 |
| <b>Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs):</b>          | N/A   |
| <b>Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) Refugees:</b> | N/A   |

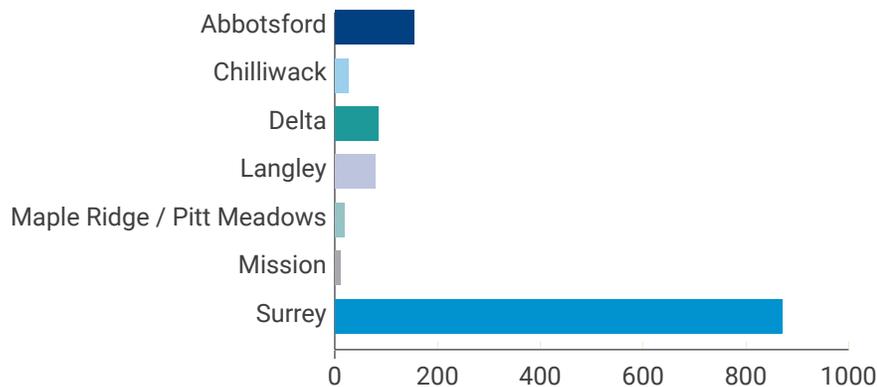
Age of Syrian GARs on Arrival in BC:



## Syrian Refugee Arrivals to the Fraser Valley (November 4, 2015 to October 30, 2016)

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Total:</b>  | 1,371 (46% of Syrian refugee arrivals to BC)                |
| <b>Government Assisted Refugees (GARs):</b>          | 1,243 (91% of Syrian refugee arrivals to the Fraser Valley) |
| <b>Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs):</b>          | 84 (6% of Syrian refugee arrivals to the Fraser Valley)     |
| <b>Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) Refugees:</b> | 44 (3% of Syrian refugee arrivals to the Fraser Valley)     |

## Syrian GAR Settlement Patterns in the Fraser Valley (November 4, 2015 to October 30, 2016)



Source: ISSofBC "Refugee Readiness Fund Newsletter #14" and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada #WelcomeRefugees.

# APPENDIX II – RRT-FV ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONS

## Background Information

1. Personal information:  
*(NOTE: This information will be kept confidential. It will only be used if additional information or follow up is required)*
  - a. Name
  - b. Organization
  - c. Email
  - d. Phone
  
2. Sector:  
*(Please check all that apply)*
  - a. Settlement
  - b. ESL / LINC
  - c. Employment
  - d. Education
  - e. Healthcare
  - f. Local government
  - g. Private sponsor / Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH)
  - h. Business Community
  - i. Other (please specify):
  
3. Community(s) Served:  
*(Please check all that apply)*
  - a. Abbotsford
  - b. Chilliwack
  - c. Delta
  - d. Langley
  - e. Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows
  - f. Mission
  - g. Surrey
  
4. Types of refugees served:  
*(Please check all that apply)*
  - a. Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)
  - b. Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs)
  - c. Blended Visa Officer Referred (BVOR) Refugees
  - d. Refugee Claimants
  - e. Other (please specify):

## Employment and Labour Market Attachment

- The following **refugee-specific employment challenges** and issues were identified by stakeholders involved in the settlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley. Do they apply in your community / sector? Please select a rating for each.

|  | STRONGLY DISAGREE | SOMEWHAT DISAGREE | NEUTRAL | SOMEWHAT AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | DON'T KNOW |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| Many refugees are not yet employment ready (i.e. still need to address other settlement-related needs)     |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to get credentials, qualifications and/or skills recognized.                |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access specialized pre-employment or employment services / supports.     |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access WorkBC programs / supports.                                       |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access training and/or work experience opportunities.                    |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access employment opportunities.   |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge to identify and/or engage with employers who have employment opportunities for refugees. |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for employers to connect with refugees who are employment ready.                         |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |

- Since June 2016, have any **new** refugee-specific employment needs, challenges or issues emerged in your community / sector that are **not included above**? If yes, please explain.

3. Have you noticed any **improvements** to the following employment challenges or issues faced by refugees in your community / sector? Please select a rating for each.

|   | NOT IMPROVED | SOMEWHAT IMPROVED | SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED | DOESN'T NEED IMPROVEMENT | DON'T KNOW |
|---|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Foreign credential, qualification or skill recognition                                |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to WorkBC programs / supports  |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access / availability of specialized pre-employment or employment programs / supports |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access / availability of skills training and/or work experience opportunities         |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Connections between employers and refugees who are employment ready                   |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access / availability of employment opportunities                                     |              |                   |                        |                          |            |

4. Please list any **new employment programs or services for refugees** that have been put in place in your community / sector.

## Language Assessment and Training

- The following **refugee-specific language assessment and training issues** were identified by stakeholders involved in the settlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley. Do they apply in your community / sector? Please select a rating for each.

|   | STRONGLY DISAGREE | SOMEWHAT DISAGREE | NEUTRAL | SOMEWHAT AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | DON'T KNOW |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| Many new refugees have no / limited English language proficiency.   |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| Many new refugees have no / limited literacy skills in their mother tongue.                                       |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access language assessment.   |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access pre-literacy or literacy services / supports.                            |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access lower level Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes. |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| There is limited availability of workplace-related / employment-focused language training.                        |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access childminding services while attending LINC classes.                      |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access transportation to attend language training programs.                     |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |

- Since June 2016, have any **new** refugee-specific language assessment / training needs, challenges or issues emerged in your community / sector that are **not included above**? If yes, please explain.

3. Have you noticed any **improvements** to the following language assessment / training challenges or issues faced by refugees in your community / sector? Please select a rating for each.

|   | NOT IMPROVED | SOMEWHAT IMPROVED | SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED | DOESN'T NEED IMPROVEMENT | DON'T KNOW |
|---|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Access to language assessment   |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access / availability of pre-literacy or literacy services / supports             |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to lower level Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to different options for LINC (i.e. evening classes, different levels)     |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access / availability of (non-LINC) language programs / supports                  |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access / availability of workplace-related / employment-focused language training |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to childminding while attending LINC classes                               |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to transportation to attend language training programs                     |              |                   |                        |                          |            |

4. Please list any **new language training programs or services for refugees** that have been put in place in your community / sector.

## Healthcare Access

- The following **refugee-specific healthcare access challenges and issues** were identified by stakeholders involved in the settlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley. Do they apply in your community / sector? Please select a rating for each.

|  | STRONGLY DISAGREE | SOMEWHAT DISAGREE | NEUTRAL | SOMEWHAT AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | DON'T KNOW |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| Many refugees arriving with complex health issues.   |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access emergency services in hospitals.  |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| Challenges accessing family physicians who are accepting new patients.   |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access family physicians and/or medical specialists that accept Interim Federal Health (IFH) coverage. |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access dentists that accept IFH coverage.  |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access pharmacies that accept IFH coverage.  |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| There is confusion about services covered under the IFH program.   |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access mental health or trauma services / supports.  |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access professional interpretation services for medical appointments / services.                       |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access transportation to get to/from medical appointments.   |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |

2. Since June 2016, have any **new** refugee-specific healthcare access needs, challenges or issues emerged in your community / sector that are **not included above**? if yes, please explain.
  
3. Have you noticed any **improvements** to the following healthcare access challenges or issues faced by refugees in your community / sector? Please select a rating for each.

|  | NOT IMPROVED | SOMEWHAT IMPROVED | SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED | DOESN'T NEED IMPROVEMENT | DON'T KNOW |
|--|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Access to emergency services in hospitals  |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to family physicians accepting new patients   |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to physicians and/or medical services accepting Interim Federal Health (IFH) coverage |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to dentists and/or dental specialists accepting IFH coverage                          |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to pharmacies accepting IFH coverage  |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to mental health or trauma services / supports  |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to professional interpretation services for medical appointments / services           |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to transportation to get to/from medical appointments                                 |              |                   |                        |                          |            |

4. Please list any **new healthcare services / supports for refugees** that have been put in place in your community / sector.

## Housing

- The following **refugee-specific housing challenges and issues** were identified by stakeholders involved in the settlement and integration of refugees in the Fraser Valley. Do they apply in your community / sector? Please select a rating for each.

|   | STRONGLY DISAGREE | SOMEWHAT DISAGREE | NEUTRAL | SOMEWHAT AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | DON'T KNOW |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| It is a challenge for refugees to access safe and appropriate housing with financial assistance provided. |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees with large family units to find appropriate housing.                       |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| It is a challenge for refugees to access subsidized housing or rent subsidies.                            |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| Refugees face discrimination and/or abuse by landlords.   |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |
| There is a lack of incentives for landlords to rent their properties to refugees.                         |                   |                   |         |                |                |            |

- Since June 2016, have any **new** refugee-specific housing needs, challenges or issues emerged in your community / sector that are **not included above**? If yes, please explain.

3. Have you noticed any **improvements** to the following housing challenges or issues faced by refugees in your community / sector? Please select a rating for each.

|   | NOT IMPROVED | SOMEWHAT IMPROVED | SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED | DOESN'T NEED IMPROVEMENT | DON'T KNOW |
|---|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Access to safe and appropriate housing with the financial assistance provided |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to appropriate housing for large family units                          |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Access to subsidized housing or rent subsidies                                |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Discrimination / abuse by landlords   |              |                   |                        |                          |            |
| Incentives for landlords to rent their properties to refugees                 |              |                   |                        |                          |            |

4. Please list any **new housing services or supports for refugees** that have been put in place in your community / sector.

## Other Service Needs

1. Since June 2016, have any **other** refugee-specific needs, challenges and/or issues have emerged in your community / sector (that were **not included in previous sections**)? If yes, please explain.
2. Have you noticed any **improvements** to other programs / supports for refugees in your community / sector (that were **not included in previous sections**)? If yes, please explain.
3. Please list any **new** programs or services for refugees that been put in place in your community / sector (that were **not included in previous sections**).

## APPENDIX III – LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS / PRIVATE SPONSORS

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**1.** Abbotsford Community Services

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**2.** Avia Employment Services

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**3.** Chilliwack Community Services

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**4.** Chilliwack Learning Society

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**5.** Corporation of Delta

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**6.** DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society

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**7.** Fraser Health Authority

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**8.** Fraser Point Church

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**9.** Fraser Valley Regional Library (Maple Ridge)

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**10.** Fraser Valley Regional Library (Pitt Meadows)

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**11.** GT Hiring Solutions (2005) Inc.

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**12.** Islamic Society of Ridge Meadows

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**13.** ISSofBC

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**14.** Langley Community Services Society

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**15.** Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Community Services

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**16.** Mennonite Central Committee of BC

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**17.** Mission Community Skills Centre Society

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**18.** Muslim Food Bank and Community Services

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**19.** Options Community Services

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**20.** School District #35 (Langley)

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**21.** SUCCESS @ School District #42  
(Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows)

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**22.** Umoja Operation Compassion Society

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**23.** WorkBC – Cloverdale

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**24.** WorkBC – Maple Ridge

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# APPENDIX IV – NEW REFUGEE PROGRAMS / SUPPORTS

## Healthcare Access

- » Transition nurse in Fraser Health to assist refugees in connecting with community family physicians
- » Medical brochure that lists all Arabic-speaking doctors, as well as doctors who accept IFH
- » Quarterly dental camps that provide dental assessments for refugee clients as well as referrals to dental clinics

## Language Assessment and Training

- » New pre-literacy classes
- » Additional LINC classes (e.g. new literacy / LINC 1 classes in some communities)
- » English language programs for refugee clients who are waiting to join LINC classes or to augment English language training provided through LINC

## Employment and Labour Market Attachment

- » Pre-employment / employment readiness workshops, as well as supports through volunteers
- » Job search information specifically for refugee clients through WorkBC
- » Additional hours for settlement staff to assist with employment counselling
- » One-on-one career planning with the help of a volunteer interpreter
- » Triangle Community Resources

## Other

- » Group sessions for Syrian refugees that include settlement themes within a trauma-informed context
- » Peer support worker that helps connect refugee youth experiencing mental health challenges
- » Safe space for refugee youth to discuss challenges
- » One-on-one support for refugee families visiting the food bank. Case workers conduct needs assessment, identify strengths, discuss challenges and provide referrals to community supports.
- » Additional services provided to refugee clients through the MLA office during the summer