

Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program Sponsor Engagement Meetings

Resettlement Operations Division
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

February – March 2020



Outline and Objectives

Objectives:

- Information sharing from IRCC to sponsors
- Forum for sponsor feedback about the PSR program
- Find a way forward to work together and alleviate challenges

Outline:

1. IRCC key messages
2. Open forum

What we will not cover:

- x Case specific enquires

PSR Program Updates: 2019 Year in Review

- Growth in PSR Program:
 - PSR arrivals
 - Higher SAH cap and space usage
 - Number of SAHs
- Ongoing and new program assurance activities undertaken
 - Reported cases
 - Organization monitors
 - Proactive monitoring
- Engagement with sponsors
 - Direct emails, webinars, tools developed

SAH Annual Reports - 2019

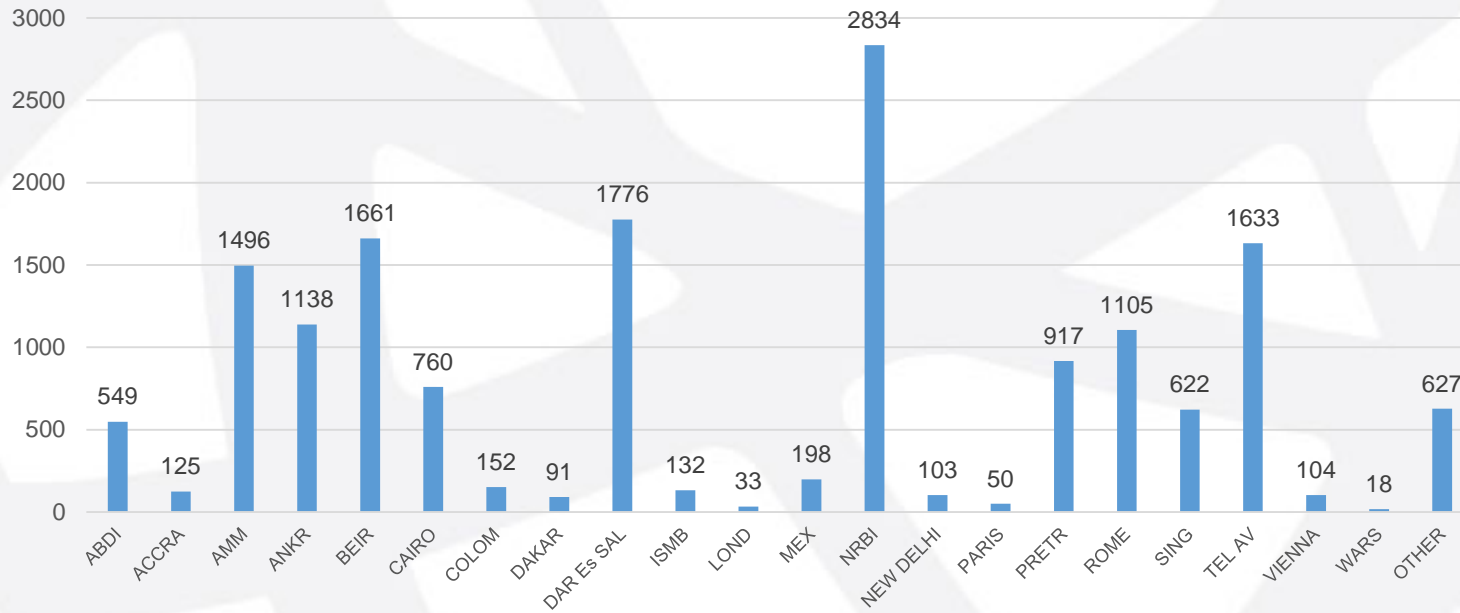
- SAHs are required, as per their Agreement, to submit an Annual Report to IRCC
- 122/124 SAHs submitted their 2019 Annual Report
- Expressions of Interest were used as the basis to advance cap spaces for use in early 2020
- Consolidated results to be shared with SAH Council

2020 Expressions of Interest by Area

Overview

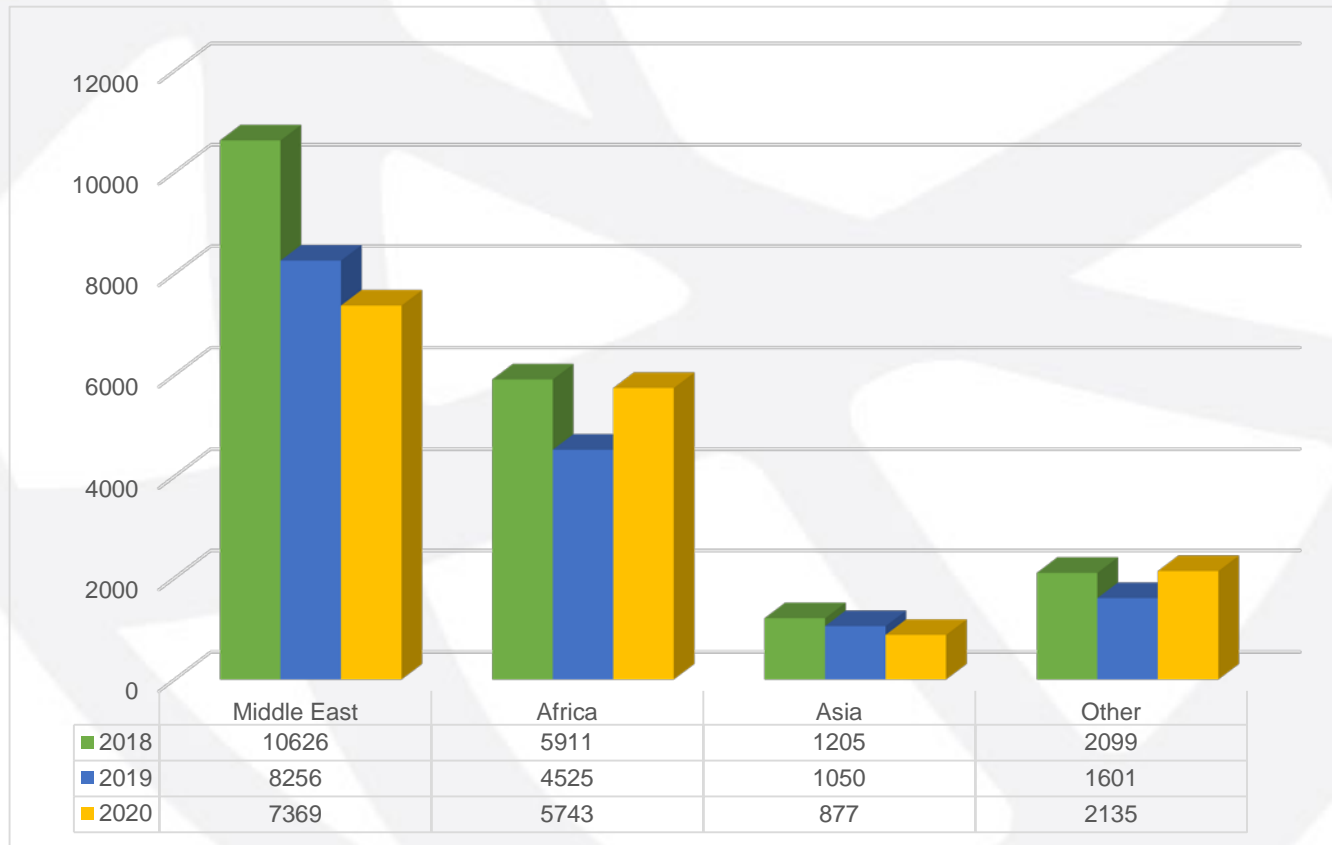
AREA (Cities)	2020 SPACES REQUESTED
Latin America and the Caribbean (Mexico)	198
North Asia and Oceania (Beijing, Canberra, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Seoul, Shanghai, Sydney, Tokyo)	0
South Asia (Colombo, New Delhi)	255
South-East Asia (Manila, Singapore)	622
North Europe (London, Moscow, Vienna, Warsaw)	155
Southern Europe and the Magreb (Paris, Rabat, Rome)	1155
Sub-Saharan Africa (Accra, Abuja, Dakar, Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Pretoria)	5743
Middle East (Abu Dhabi, Ankara, Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Islamabad, Tel Aviv)	7369
Not specified	627
Grand Total	16124

2019 Expressions of Interest by Migration Offices Overview



2020 Expressions of Interest by Area

2018-2020 Overview



TOTAL ■ 2018 - **19841** ■ 2019 - **15432** ■ 2020 - **16124**

2020 Interest in BVOR and JAS Programs

- 22 out of 122 SAHs (18%) expressed potential interest to sponsor 66 JAS cases
- 53 out of 122 SAHs (43%) expressed potential interest to sponsor 314 BVOR cases

2019 Sponsorship Activity - SAH reported withdrawals

- 36 SAHs reported withdrawals in 2019.
- 103 PSR cases withdrawn:

Withdrawal Reason	Cases
Applicant(s) no longer in need of resettlement*	57
Sponsorship issues (lack of finances to add dependents, concerns with CGs, misrepresentation from refugees)	13
Loss of contact with applicant(s)	4
Other**	29
TOTAL	103

*Most common reason is durable solution in another country (commonly Australia, Germany, USA) and voluntary repatriation (commonly to Syria)

** Reasons including changes in refugee personal circumstances

2019 Sponsorship Activity - SAH reported Breakdowns

- 31 SAHs reported breakdowns in 2019.
- 65 PSR cases broken down:

Breakdown Reason	Cases
Secondary migration	39
IRCC-declared breakdown	10
Family separation	7
Other*	9
Total	65

* Misrepresentation

SAH Training

- 110 SAHs participated in training and/or webinars in 2019

Training Interest in 2020	
Navigating the Case Review Process	62
What to do for Secondary Migrations	58
Understanding PSR Financial Guidelines	57
How to better oversee co-sponsors and CGs	56
How to Use the Minimum Financial Support Calculator Tool	35
Completing Forms and Electronic Submission of Applications	33
Calculating Start-up support	30
Other (e.g. add dep/OYW, in-kind donations, mental health, LGBTQ, after 12 month support)	13

2019 SAH Annual Report - Additional Comments

75 SAHs provided additional comments

Primary Comments – IRCC-SAH relations	#
Positive comments about PSR program and stakeholder relations (e.g. great program, enhanced process, personal contact at SAH conference and roadshows)	29
Concerns related to PSR assurance activities and changes to SAH agreement (e.g., suggestion to relax rules, enhance respectful/positive communication, concerns about the perceived administrative burden, imposing fear on refugees)	21
Positive comments on application processing at ROC-O and Migration Offices (e.g. improved communications, faster processing and electronic application submission)	16
Migration Office related requests (e.g. decreased processing time, continuity across Migration Offices, cc SAHs on all correspondence)	12

2019 SAH Annual Report - Additional Comments

Primary Comments – Caps and Allocations	#
Not enough spaces to meet demand	6
BVOR program related concerns	4
Concerns related to increase in paperwork, change of forms and application of RAP rates	3
Benefits of RSTP training	3

Sponsorship Agreement reminders

- Sponsors should not profit financially from the sponsorship of refugees
- The SAH and/or CG and Co-sponsor must reside in the community of settlement or have at least 2 representatives to meet residency requirements
- The SAH will ensure that a Settlement Plan is developed for each Sponsorship Undertaking
- The SAH will encourage the refugees to access settlement and other support services prior to seeking employment
- Where the CG or Co-sponsor is no longer able to support, the SAH will be held solely responsible for making all alternative arrangements or assume full liability
- The SAH must ensure that it's CGs and Co-sponsors have adequate resources and arrangements to fulfil sponsorship responsibilities
- The SAH will provide its CGs and Co-sponsors with organizational assistance, advice, information and support throughout the sponsorship process
- The SAH is responsible for monitoring its CGs or Co-sponsors and the refugees to ensure adequate support is provided and integration is successful

PSR Program Updates: 2020 look-ahead

- Caps and allocations
 - Advancement of cap space
 - Application submission and use of cap space
- New SAH assessment process is under development and will be shared soon
- Ongoing Program Assurance activities (i.e., reported cases, organizational monitors, proactive monitoring)

Application Intake

- ***IRCC does not want to return applications:*** we recognize a high return rate is a reflection of a lack of information or clarity around the application process
- Top reasons for returns:
 - Missing or invalid email addresses
 - Missing or invalid forms
 - Information does not match across forms
 - Unsigned or signature of forms is outdated (e.g. Undertaking more than 90 days)
- Other reasons for returns:
 - Incorrect application category
 - Unanswered questions on the forms
 - Family member does not meet the definition of a family member as per the IRPR
 - Handwritten forms

Sponsorship Application: group & settlement plan

- Creating a sponsorship group:
 - Everyone who signed the Sponsorship Undertaking remains equally responsible – sponsors are assessed individually and as a whole.
 - Include everyone who will be contributing to the sponsorship.
 - Representatives are not a party to the sponsorship nor are they liable to fulfill the sponsorship obligations—this responsibility still rests with the sponsorship group.
- Writing your settlement plan:
 - Each settlement plan must address the unique needs of the refugees in each sponsorship application. Your answers should not be copied from other settlement plans.
 - If you are listed on multiple sponsorship applications, list which applications and how you will be able to provide settlement support to everyone you are sponsoring.
 - Every member of the group needs to provide support.

General Reminders: what we want to see in an application

- ✓ All required forms and documents listed in the sponsorship guides are included in the application package.
- ✓ All information is consistent in all documents submitted (ex. spelling of names, addresses of sponsors).
- ✓ Contact information is accurate and up-to-date.
- ✓ The settlement plan is detailed, realistic and demonstrates that the sponsors have made efforts to prepare.
- ✓ Any information that could be of concern to a ROC-O officer is clarified through supporting documentation such as a cover letter.

General Reminders: case status requests & preparedness

- For case status requests please contact ROC-O or the IRCC office abroad.
 - Please email for a status request only if necessary. Too many requests can take staff away from processing and lead to overall delays.
- What can you do to help your application (before you submit and after):
 - Read and follow the sponsorship guides.
 - Participate in RSTP workshops, webinars and e-trainings.
 - Let IRCC know as soon as possible if your contact information changes or is out-of-date.

Reminders from Migration Officers

- IRCC forms are available to everyone on the IRCC or RSTP website
- Applicants must be honest in their verbal and written testimonies (forms and during interview)
- Applicants must declare all accompanying and non-accompanying dependents

Sponsorship Fraud: two categories

There are generally two categories of fraud in the PSR program:

1. Violating the Immigration and Refugees Protection Act (IRPA) when submitting an application
2. Violating another Act of Parliament (ex. the Criminal Code) when no application was submitted

Sponsorship Fraud: four main types

- Theft/Fraud/Failure to render services
- Extortion
- Misrepresentation (including counselling)
- Operating as an unauthorized immigration representative

Sponsorship Fraud: reporting & next steps

- First point of contact should be the Resettlement Operations Centre in Ottawa (ROC-O)
 - Email: IRCC.INROCO-CORORI.IRCC@cic.gc.ca
- The Resettlement Operation Division conducts an initial review of the allegations.
 - IRCC may refer the case to: the Case Management Branch, Canada Border Services Agency, or the local law enforcement for possible charges
- Refugees in Canada should always feel comfortable contacting IRCC/ROC-O or local law enforcement to report misuse of the program.
- ROC-O will always be able to either refer the case or suggest who else should be contacted to deal with any elements of fraud or misuse.

PSR Post-Arrival Support and Program Requirements

- Financial Support:
 - Start-up
 - Monthly support for basic needs, shelter and transportation
 - Level of support may vary based on in-kind supports provided
 - Refer to FAQs on Financial Support, Financial Support Calculator
 - Level of support to be provided does not differ for family linked cases
- Non-Financial Support

Note: all parties who sign the undertaking are liable for providing support – those who are not on the undertaking are not liable.

Program Assurance activities and the case review process

- Why program assurance? To ensure that refugees are being adequately supported.
- You may be contacted if there is a potential concern with one of your cases.
- If you are contacted, please remember that there has not necessarily been confirmation that there is in fact a problem. No decision has been made - you will be provided with multiple opportunities to confirm support or address deficiencies, if applicable. Receiving a letter ≠ a problem!
- Contact information is available – reach out by email or phone as officers are here to work with you.
- Please respect timelines – these are carefully determined weighing newcomers needs with sponsor capacity to submit a response.

Case review process – best practices and reminders

- Keep track of support provided; an officer reviewing a case is not familiar with your organization and your case, and may be receiving different information from the newcomer.
 - Written statements and narratives are considered but if there is contradictory information, this is not sufficient proof.
 - Deductions to financial support – track and be able to explain.
 - Understand program requirements – minimum financial support must be provided and letting the newcomers manage funds helps support self-sufficiency.
- ❖ **If concerns are identified, our primary goal is to work with the sponsor to resolve any issues.**

Secondary Migration

- Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations require that sponsors are in the community of settlement in order to assist the refugee with their settlement and integration.
- There are options provided to you in order to satisfy this requirement.
- Appointment of Representatives form can be completed.
- Remember to always advise IRCC if the refugees moves or if you, as the sponsor, moves.

Available Resources and Tools

- RSTP website
- Minimum Financial Support Calculator tool
- Reference documents:
 - Key Contacts
 - PSR Assurance Activities
 - Residency requirements
- Case Review Processing Timeline
- RSTP webinars

Resettlement Services Assurance Team (RSAT):

IRCC.PSRCCaseReview-RevuedecasPSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca

Contact Information

- Resettlement Operations Centre in Ottawa (ROC-O)
 - Receives and assess all PSR sponsorship applications.
 - Responds to inquiries on PSR cases.
 - Processes withdrawals, adding dependents and one year window cases.
 - IRCC.INROCO-CORORI.IRCC@cic.gc.ca
- Private Sponsorship of Refugees Team
 - Deals with SAH agreement management, inquiries and actions.
 - Assesses applications for organizations applying to become SAHs.
 - Manages global cap and allocations.
 - IRCC.INPSR-PPPRRI.IRCC@cic.gc.ca
- Resettlement Services Assurance Team (RSAT):
 - Conducts PSR/BVOR program assurance activities on cases post-arrival.
 - Provides guidance to sponsorship groups on post-arrival program requirements, and issues.
 - IRCC.PSRCasereview-RevuedecasPSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca

Open Forum

- What has been your experience with IRCC?
- What is unclear and what are your challenges?
- How can IRCC best address these issues?
- What is the best way for IRCC information to get to you and those who sponsor under your SAH – direct from IRCC to you as SAH reps? RSTP website? From Council/Secretariat? Other?
- What gaps in information still exist?
- Are there any additional training needs to better clarify requirements?
- What additional supports would be beneficial or help you?