



# BVOR NEWS

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## 35 Syrian BVOR refugees arrive in Winnipeg



*Kurdish Initiative for Refugees provides settlement support.*

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) of Manitoba (a sponsorship agreement holder) sponsored 35 Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) Syrian refugees with Lifeline Syria BVOR funding. They arrived in Winnipeg this month, in collaboration with the Kurdish Initiative for Refugees. The Kurdish Initiative will provide settlement support for the newly-arrived refugees. “None of the 35 Syrian refugees who were supported by the Kurdish Initiative for Refugees are related to any member of the organization. Their members are acting totally selflessly,” says Arisnel Mesidor of MCC Manitoba. “They embody the great Canadian spirit of helping those in need. This story represents one of many ways in which those who came to Canada as sponsored refugees are giving back, often after only a couple of years of being in the country.”

## Lifeline Syria BVOR Funds are still available!

Thanks to a donation of nearly 500,000 from the Lifeline Syria Fund (hosted by the Toronto foundation) sponsorship groups across Canada will be able to sponsor UNHCR referred refugees to Canada. Lifeline Syria funds have been donated by generous Canadians from all backgrounds.

Through this initiative the start-up costs and half of the first year of the newcomer's incomes support will be covered by Lifeline Syria foundation.

The government of Canada will provide the other 6 months of income support for the sponsored Syrian newcomers under the BVOR program. Private sponsors will provide up to one year of social, emotional and logistical settlement support.

For more information, visit: <https://www.unhcr.ca/news/new-initiative-to-sponsor-100-syrian-bvor-refugees/>

### The Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) Program

The BVOR Program helps resettle refugees identified by United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) as the most vulnerable in need of resettlement. It is called blended because it is a cost sharing arrangement. Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) provides up to six months of income support for the newcomers, while private sponsors provide another six months of financial support, start-up costs and up to one year of social and emotional support.

## Featured BVOR family

**Syrian family of four.** This 49 year old mother fled Syria with her three children, two boys ages 13 and 19 and a girl age 17, because she feared for her family's safety. They are in Jordan and have been referred by UNHCR for resettlement to Canada. They are now waiting for sponsors. Once a sponsor is found they can arrive in Canada within 6-12 weeks.

According to UNHCR Jordan, the majority of Syrian refugees in that country live in urban areas. Over 80 percent live below the poverty line. 51 percent of refugees are children, and 4 percent are elderly. Livelihood opportunities for Syrian refugees remain limited in countries such as Jordan, placing them in a precarious situation. Refugees adopt negative coping strategies such as child marriage, child labour and begging in order to survive. (UNHCR *Global Resettlement Needs Handbook, 2018*).

Your sponsorship will give this family a better future.

## Refugee populations in the BVOR program include:

- Syrian, Iraqi, Iranian
- Congolese, Ethiopian, Eritrean
- Somali, Colombian, Sudanese

## Particular vulnerabilities or reasons for resettlement include:

- Women and girls at risk
- Survivors of violence and/or torture
- Lack of foreseeable alternative solutions

To learn more about the countries BVOR refugees come from, visit:

<http://www.rstp.ca/en/refugees/country-condition-information/>

**Every Canadian refugee resettlement space is important. Each one gives a refugee a chance at a building a future for themselves and their families.**

29 profiles of BVOR refugees needing sponsors can be found in the RSTP-BVOR Matching Database : <https://cathcrosscultural.sharepoint.com/rstp>

## Did you know?

- There are more than 25.4 million refugees in the world
- Six percent of the global refugee population are in need of resettlement
- Fewer than one percent of all refugees will ever find a permanent home

Refugee  
Sponsorship  
Training  
Program



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada

For more information, visit: <http://www.rstp.ca/en/special-initiatives/blended-vor-program/>  
or e-mail: [bvor@rstp.ca](mailto:bvor@rstp.ca)