



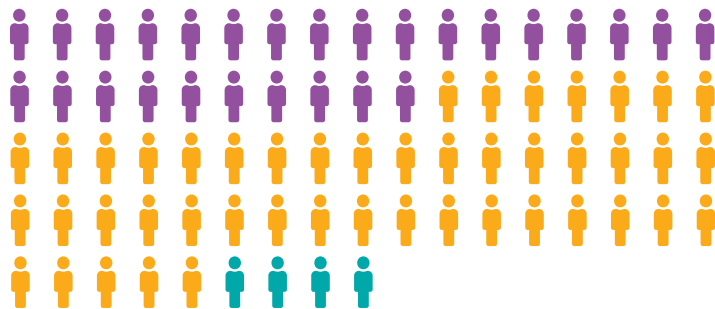
What is the Syrian refugee Crisis?

In March 2011, the Syrian government violently responded to public demonstrations in support of a group of teenage boys who were arrested for writing graffiti in support of the Arab Spring. Since then, more than half of all Syrians have been forced to flee their homes because of war — 5.6 million have fled the country. The Syrian conflict created one of the worst humanitarian crises of our time.

Lifeline Syria Cape Breton

Lifeline Syria Cape Breton emerged in 2015 out of a community desire to act in response to the Syrian refugee crisis. It represents the belief of many Cape Bretoners that we had both a responsibility and a capacity to respond to the crisis with open doors and open arms.

14 families came to Cape Breton from Syria and 11 continue to stay. These families were comprised of 27 adults, 46 children — and 4 more children have been born since arrival.



Lifeline Syria Cape Breton helped raise more than \$120,000 from 104 donors for the resettlement of families on the Island. This represents only a portion of the money raised across the Island for the welcoming and resettlement of Syrian refugees. Many thousands more were raised independently in the Island's many communities engaged in the resettlement efforts.

How did the families get here?

10 volunteer sponsorship groups across the Island were independently created in response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Some sponsorship groups welcomed more than one family. The families that came here did so through private sponsorship¹ or a blended visa² program.

In both scenarios, the community had to raise a substantial amount of money to be able to sponsor a family for resettlement in Cape Breton (\$15,000–\$40,000/family).

1 Through the **Private Sponsorship of Refugees program**, Canadian citizens and permanent residents can engage in the resettlement of refugees. The PSR program does not rely on public resources, but rather taps the energy and funds of faith communities, ethnic groups, families and other benevolent associations. These groups typically raise funds or use their personal income to provide for and support the sponsored individual or family for their first year in Canada.

2 The **Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) program** is designed to resettle refugees identified by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and referred to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). It is "blended" because the Government of Canada and a private sponsorship group share the financial costs of supporting a refugee family for their first year in Canada, though the sponsorship group retains responsibility for daily settlement and integration support.

Where did families settle?

Baddeck, Cheticamp, Isle Madame, Mabou, Margaree, Marion Bridge, Port Hawkesbury, Port Hood (2), Sydney, Sydney Mines (3), Westmount



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