

After the First Year

What you need to know about New Nova Scotians

After 1 year, most new Nova Scotians who arrived as refugees:

Finances



Transition towards employment (depending on language and employment options) or begin to receive social assistance as federal government Refugee Assistance Program ends and Private Refugee Sponsorship commitments are complete

Receive similar levels of financial support, as Social Assistance rates are similar to RAP and sponsorship commitments

Settlement



Will continue to be able to access settlement services (language, employment counselling, etc) until such time as they become Canadian citizens (minimum 4 years of permanent residency in Canada until they are eligible)

Language



Continue to require language training (generally it takes 2-3 years of language school to become proficient enough to obtain employment or access training/education if they arrive with little or no English)

Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) standard is the level in which someone is able to speak, read, listen and write in English as an Additional Language (EAL).

- In order to apply for Citizenship, people are required to have Level 4 in speaking and listening
- In order to apply for college or university, people must have Level 8 or 9
- On average it takes 250-450 hours of instruction to move through a CLB level (assuming there aren't any health/financial/family or trauma issues impacting their class and study time)

Employment



Are actively seeking or wanting to seek employment:

ISANS employment support programs include:

- **Employment counseling** provides one on one counseling support to assist new Nova Scotians to access employment
- **Bridge to work program** helps new Nova Scotians gain local work experience in entry level positions.

Health Care



Interim-Federal Health program ends at 12 months and they must transition to MSI Nova Scotia health system. Access to certain dental benefits ends, and they must apply for PharmaCare program to cover prescriptions

Are connected to the supports and equipment they may need if they face disabilities or challenges (eg. Fitted for wheelchairs, connected to health supports)

Housing



May move to a new location

Can apply for public housing after 6 months of living in Nova Scotia

Schools



May have to change schools if the family relocates

Integration



Become more familiar with their surroundings and their understanding of Canadian cultures, practices and customs

Are very resourceful – connecting on their own terms and developing their own areas of interest, engagement and involvement in Canadian life

Will still long for home, and miss foods, customs, language and celebrations that are familiar

Are still in a process of adapting to the new culture and their success in adapting to Canada is determined by their migration story, access to housing, education, income, community supports, language acquisition, whether they have family/friends still in danger at home, etc.

Once immediate needs are met, secondary conditions may surface (trauma, concern around ongoing situation in home country, etc)

Are looking for connections and friends from the wider Canadian community (many new Nova Scotians often say they have no “Canadian” friends)

What You Can Do Through ISANS

Be a friend to a new Nova Scotian

Volunteer – join ISANS team of volunteers who support newcomers

Invite newcomers to attend community events and activities, like SupperNova – a large community potluck for newcomers and Canadians

Hire a new Nova Scotian

Learn about newcomer traditions and culture and share your own! Take our Building Inter-Cultural Competence workshops or become a Welcome Ambassador

Consider sponsoring a refugee family to come to Canada

Visit www.isans.ca for more information or contact us at info@isans.ca