

Changing Faces, Changing Neighbourhoods

Government Assisted Refugee Settlement Patterns in Metro Vancouver
January 2005 – December 2009



IMMIGRANT SERVICES SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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MESSAGE FROM ISSofBC

ISSofBC has been at the forefront of welcoming and supporting the immediate needs of government assisted refugees (GARs) for close to four decades. Over 4,000 GARs were resettled to BC between 2005



Patricia Woroch (CEO) and Jim Tallman (President)

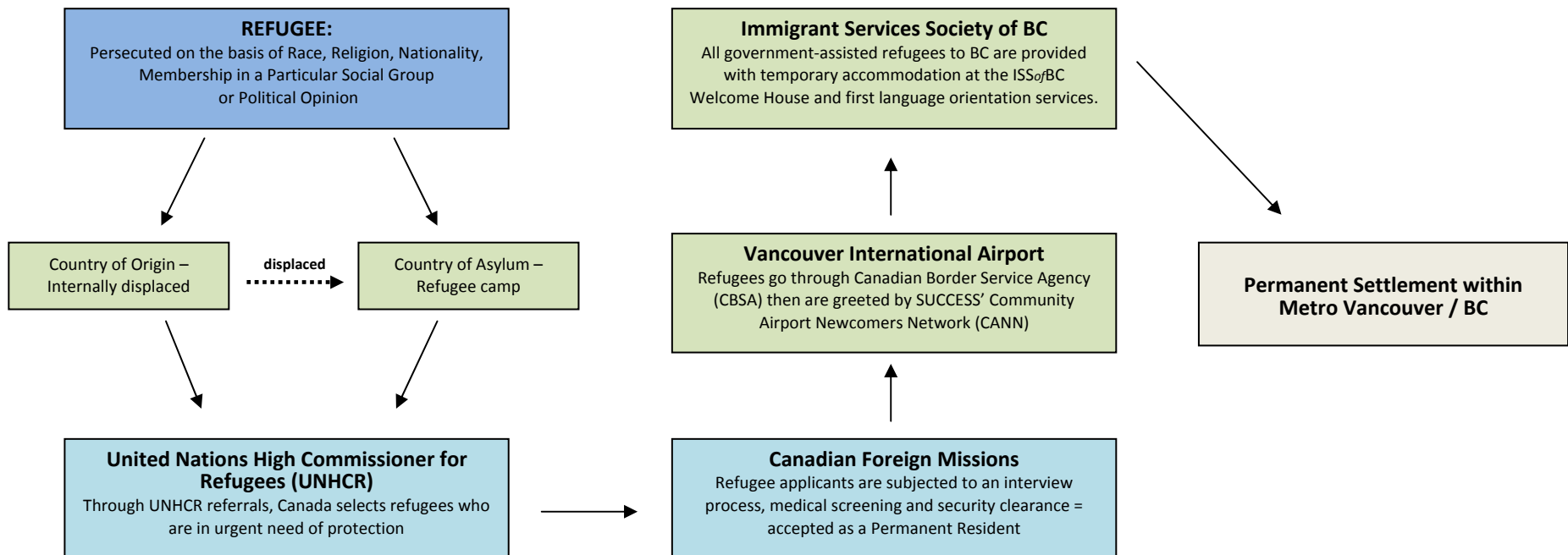
and 2009 from close to 50 different source countries. Although GARs have tremendous life experiences and resilience, since the new Immigration Act (IRPA) was passed in June 2002, ISSofBC has continued to observe GARs with significant settlement and adjustment challenges due to protracted refugee camp situations, various medical conditions, illiteracy, lack of family support, lack of English or French language skills, etc.

The purpose of *Changing Faces, Changing Neighbourhoods* is to highlight some of the settlement patterns and trends of GARs settling in Metro Vancouver based on the mapping of a snapshot of GAR postal codes taken in April 2010. Do settlement patterns indicate any locations of specific GAR ethnic clustering? What are the source countries of GARs coming to BC? Which cities and neighbourhoods have higher concentrations of GARs? This publication attempts to address these questions. It is our hope that this information will both increase the level of knowledge of GARs in the broader community as well as assist community based agencies, public institutions, and the three levels of government to explore the need for enhanced supports to this refugee population in BC.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

The focus of this publication is on **government assisted refugees** (GARs) and the **resettlement assistance program** (RAP). Government assisted refugees are refugees who are usually referred to Canada by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) from abroad and resettled to Canada, arriving as permanent residents. GARs differ from **refugee claimants** (refugees who seek asylum in Canada and undergo a hearing with the Immigration and Refugee Board) and **privately sponsored refugees** (refugees who are sponsored independently by organizations such as religious associations) in that their initial resettlement to Canada is financially supported by the Government of Canada.

The chart below outlines the immigration process for government assisted refugees:



SOURCE COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Each year approximately **7,300-7,500** government assisted refugees (GARs) arrive in Canada and are destined to one of 36 communities across the country. **800-900** individuals, or around 11% of the national target, are ‘destined’ to British Columbia; the majority landing in Vancouver, making it the largest GAR receiving city in Canada. In 2009, GARs represented close to **2%** of the overall immigration levels to BC (estimated at 41,438 new permanent residents in 2009). The number of GARs resettled to Canada is expected to increase by 500 starting in 2011 to upwards of 8,000 individuals annually.

Between January 2005 and December 2009, the federal government represented through the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) destined **4,026 individuals** composed of **1,740 family units** from **46 different countries** to British Columbia. This table shows an overview of GARs from various source countries. The top five source countries are highlighted in blue.

The last source country entry – “other” – includes 23 countries from which 5 or less households arrived; 6 are in Africa, 5 in the former Soviet Union, 4 in the former Yugoslavia, 3 in Asia, 2 in the Middle East, 2 in South America, and 1 in the Caribbean.

Looking ahead to 2011, ISSofBC is anticipating an increase in the numbers of GARs from Iraq, Bhutan and various countries in Africa while those from Myanmar will decrease.

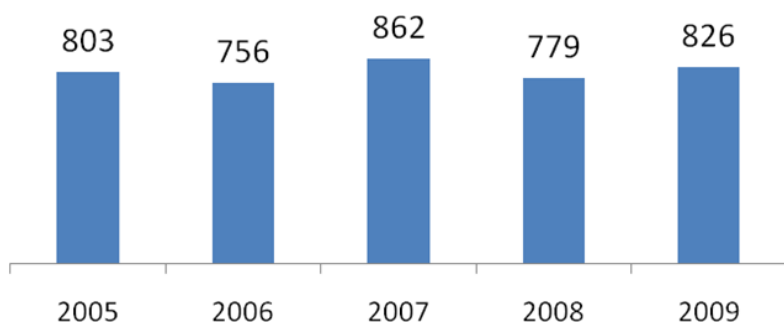
Source Country	Individuals	Households	% of total
Myanmar	786	281	19.52%
Afghanistan	737	294	18.31%
Iran	479	267	11.90%
Iraq	299	132	7.43%
Somalia	251	103	6.23%
Sudan	200	75	4.97%
Vietnam	197	93	4.89%
Democratic Republic of Congo	162	62	4.02%
Colombia	144	66	3.58%
Ethiopia	134	57	3.33%
Eritrea	120	84	2.98%
Liberia	92	40	2.29%
Togo	51	24	1.27%
Burundi	44	12	1.09%
Indonesia	44	26	1.09%
Rwanda	33	11	0.82%
Republic of Congo	31	12	0.77%
Bhutan	28	17	0.70%
Sri Lanka	27	12	0.67%
Uganda	25	7	0.62%
Sierra Leone	20	7	0.50%
Nigeria	15	9	0.37%
China	11	9	0.27%
Other	96	40	2.38%

Total: 4,026 Total: 1,740

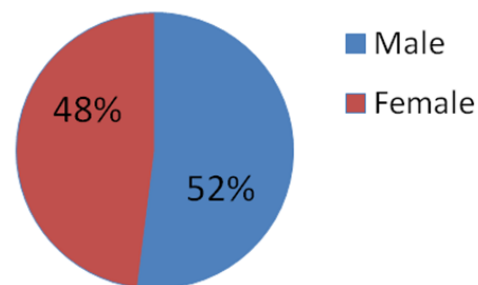
GAR CHARACTERISTICS

Settlement patterns, refugee characteristics, and having adequate supports in place have a significant impact on the settlement outcomes of the refugee population. Data compiled by ISSofBC over the past five years provides a broader picture of the make-up of newly arrived GARs in British Columbia. The following charts provide an overview of some of their revealing characteristics.

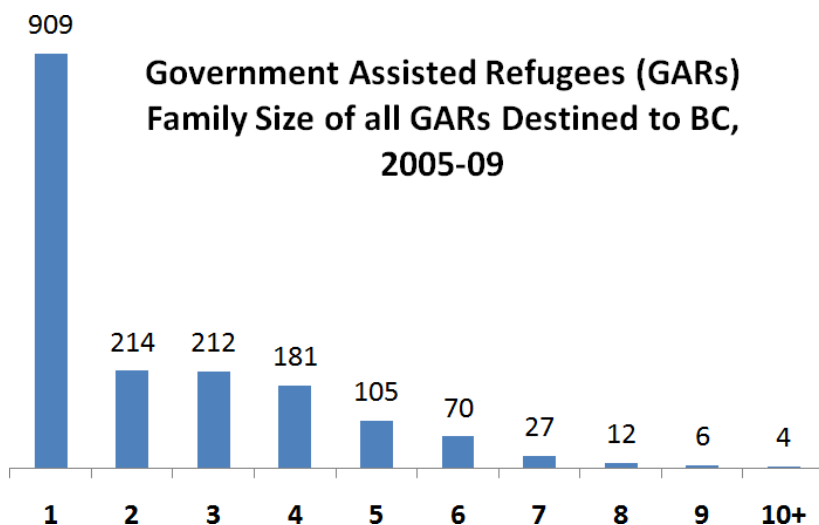
**Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)
Total Yearly Individuals Destined to BC**



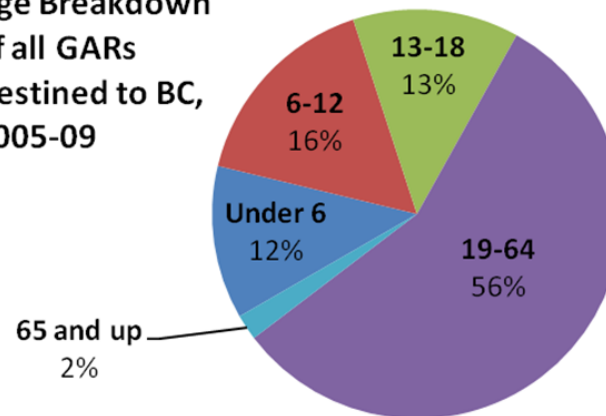
**Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)
Gender Breakdown of all GARs
Destined to BC, 2005-09**



**Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)
Family Size of all GARs Destined to BC,
2005-09**



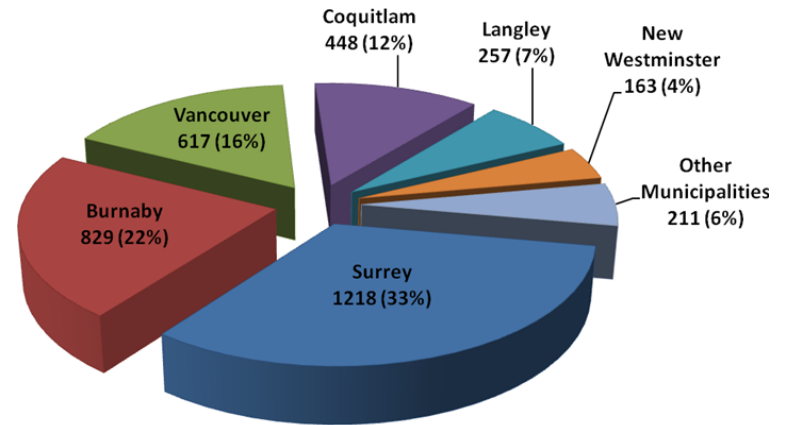
**Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)
Age Breakdown
of all GARs
Destined to BC,
2005-09**



GARs IN METRO VANCOUVER

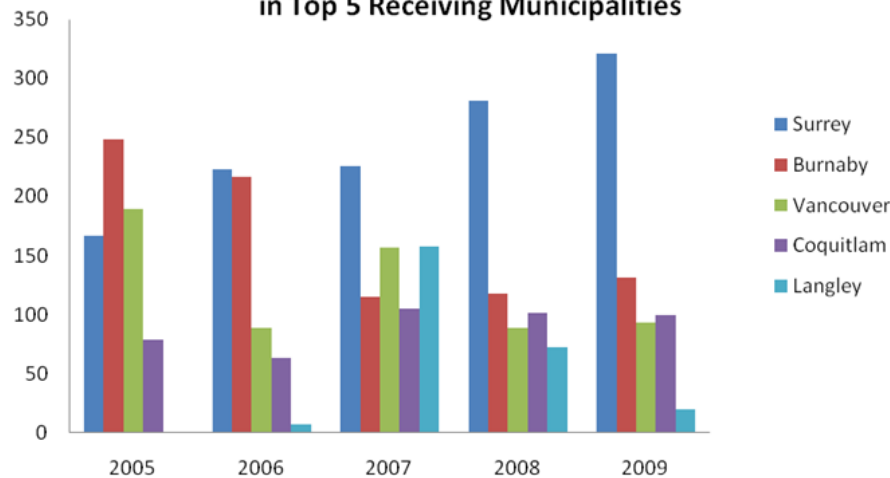
Because government assisted refugees arrive to Canada as permanent residents, they are free to settle anywhere in Canada regardless of where they are destined. Of the 4,026 GARs destined to BC between 2005 and 2009, **3743 (93%) settled in Metro Vancouver**; this compares with approximately 87% of all new immigrants to BC. Although an additional 474 GARs self-transferred to BC from other regions of Canada during this time period, this document focuses only on those who were originally destined to British Columbia by the federal government. The chart to the right shows the settlement patterns of government assisted refugees in Metro Vancouver by municipality.

Between 2005 and 2009, the majority of GARs settled in **Surrey (33%)**, **Burnaby (22%)**, and **Vancouver (16%)**.



**Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)
Metro Vancouver Individual Arrivals
by Municipality, 2005-09**

**Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)
Total Yearly Metro Vancouver Individual Arrivals
in Top 5 Receiving Municipalities**



The proportion of GARs settling in each municipality changes over time. Burnaby previously received the most GARs; however, in 2009, Surrey received 42% (317 of 754) of all individuals who settled in Metro Vancouver. This is about 2.5 times the amount in Burnaby (131 individuals) for that year. **Langley** had a sudden spike in arrivals in 2007 but the flow has since subsided. **Coquitlam** plays a steady role as one of the top five GAR destinations in Metro Vancouver. In both 2008 and 2009, Coquitlam received slightly more GARs than Vancouver, making it the third most popular GAR destination for those years.

INITIAL SETTLEMENT

ISSofBC receives funding through Contribution Agreements with the **Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)** to administer temporary accommodation and basic first language orientation to all GARs destined to BC through the **Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)**. When GARs destined to BC arrive at the Vancouver International Airport, they are brought to ISSofBC's facility in downtown Vancouver where they receive first-language orientation sessions and assistance applying for a Social Insurance Number, Care Card, and Permanent Residence card; opening a bank account; receiving a primary health care screening through the Bridge Community Health Clinic; and other important tasks. In addition to services and temporary accommodation provided by ISSofBC, most GARs receive a one-time basic household goods and furniture package as well as federal government RAP income support (mirrored on the provincial income support rates) for up to one year or until they become self-sufficient, whichever comes first. In 2009, for example, an individual GAR received a total of up to \$685 per month; a family of four received up to \$1251 per month.

The cost of transporting GARs to Canada is borne by individual GARs in the form of an interest bearing loan known as a **transportation loan**. The total loan amount depends on the size of the family. Based on actual cases, the transportation loan for one individual in 2009 was \$1,563; for a family of five with a single mother and one child less than 6 years old it was \$7,010. Thirty (30) days after arrival, each GAR is required to begin repayment of the loan. There is an interest-free period from one to three years, based on the size of the loan.

After a maximum of a 15 night stay (mandated with CIC) at ISSofBC's **Welcome House** facility, staff assist GARs to find permanent accommodation. Affordable housing is a major concern in Metro Vancouver. The shelter allowance provided through RAP is lower than the average cost of rent in Metro Vancouver, and ISSofBC staff struggle to balance affordability with the factors needed to facilitate successful settlement. These include general needs of low-income residents – such as access to public transit – and those more specific to GARs. For example, ISSofBC makes a conscious effort to cluster households together based on pre-existing ethno-specific communities to ease the adjustment process by enabling community-focused social support. Still, some GARs subsequently move – sometimes several times – in search of adequate housing.

In an effort to overcome challenges presented by the lack of low-income rental housing in Metro Vancouver, ISSofBC periodically prepays security deposits before GARs even arrive in the country to secure adequate rental housing. A new partnership with BC Housing secured 18 units in 3 different neighbourhoods, systematically bringing GARs back to Vancouver for the first time in several years. ISSofBC is developing additional partnerships with new municipalities, communities, and local infrastructure to establish homes for GARs outside of Vancouver, Burnaby, and Surrey.

PART TWO: SETTLEMENT PATTERNS BY MUNICIPALITY

The following pages contain maps of GAR settlement patterns in Metro Vancouver between 2005 and 2009. For reference, the map to the right shows some of the 21 municipalities which form Metro Vancouver.

The mapmaking process began with the initial postal codes available for 3,719 of the 3,743 GARs destined to BC who settled in Metro Vancouver between 2005 and 2009. For privacy reasons, each postal code was matched with either its corresponding **dissemination area (DA)** or **census tract (CT)**. DAs and CTs are standard, relatively stable geographic areas defined by the Canadian government. A DA is composed of one or more blocks with a population of between 400 to 700 people. A CT is larger, usually containing between 2,500 and 8,000 people and is only used in large urban centres. Maps displaying DAs show finer detail of *cumulative* data at the municipal level, while those based on CTs give a general overview of *yearly* arrival patterns on a regional level.



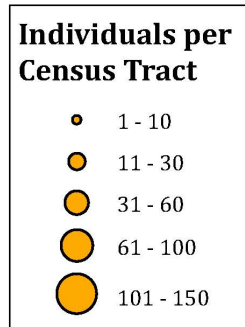
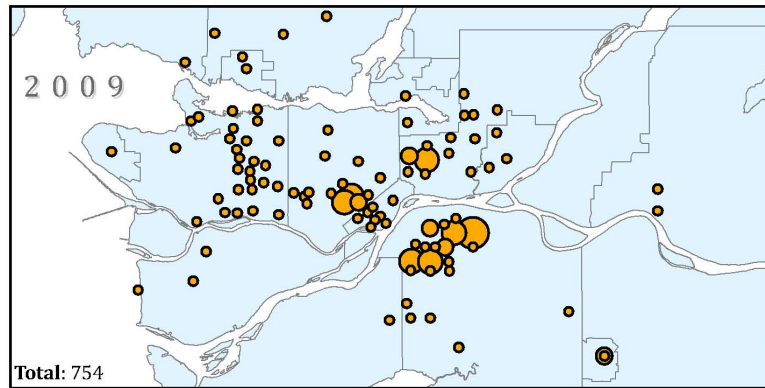
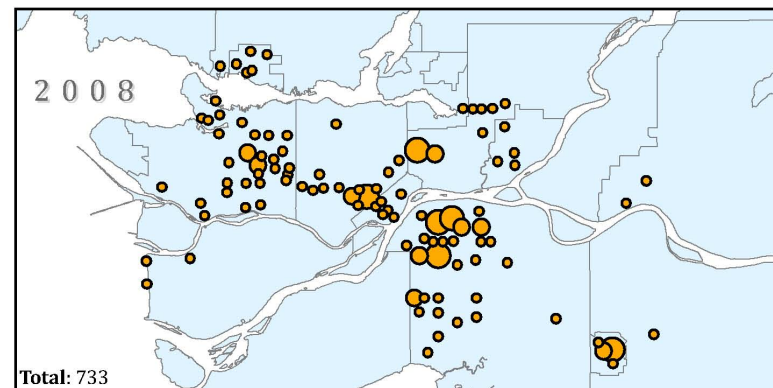
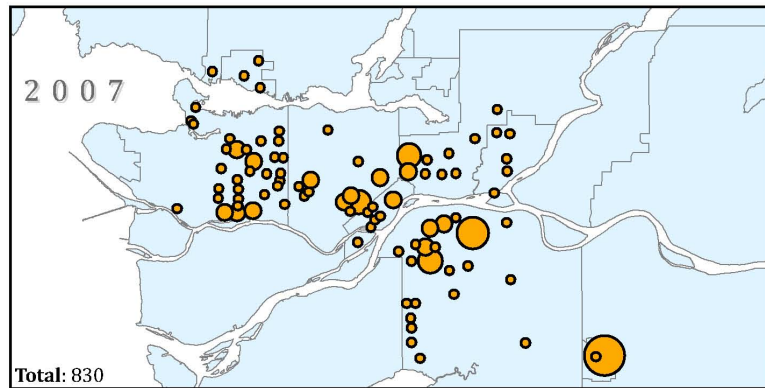
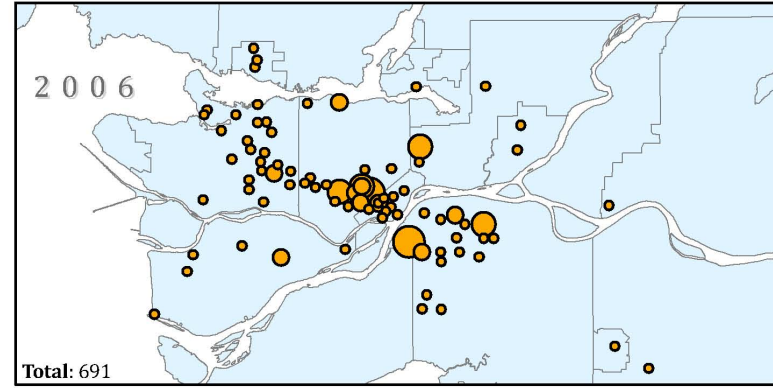
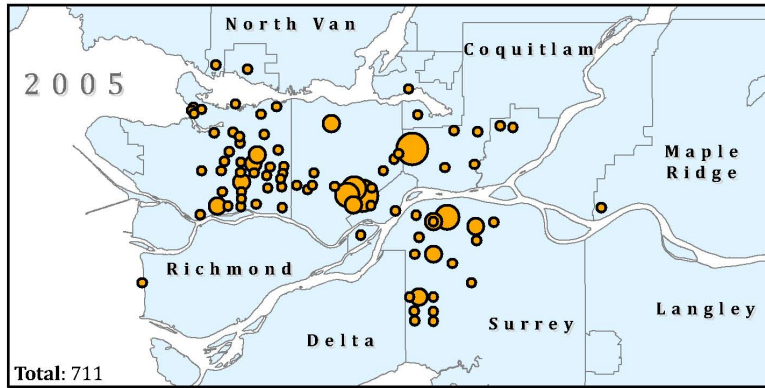
Maps displaying DAs show finer detail of *cumulative* data at the municipal level, while those based on CTs give a general overview of *yearly* arrival patterns on a regional level.

Normally, maps using CT or DA data show the border of each area. However, the number of individual GARs in a given DA is small, so maps at the DA level show only the shape of relevant DAs. In other words, if a DA contains GARs it is shaded in with colour, but if a DA contains no GARs the DA is not shown. Maps at the CT level show only dots. These dots were assigned to the centre of each CT and sized proportionally. Maps at this level do not show any CT borders.

When reading the maps, pay attention to the legends. They show whether the map is showing CT or DA data and how many individuals are represented in each area. Note that the maps do not necessarily compare directly with one another; the largest dot or darkest shade of colour, for example, may represent up to 200 individuals on one map but only up to 26 on another.

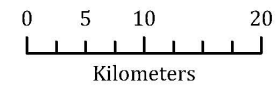
The following page represents *yearly* arrival patterns on the regional level; that is, each small map shows the settlement of all GARs who arrived during that year and that year only.

Metro Vancouver GAR Arrivals, 2005-09

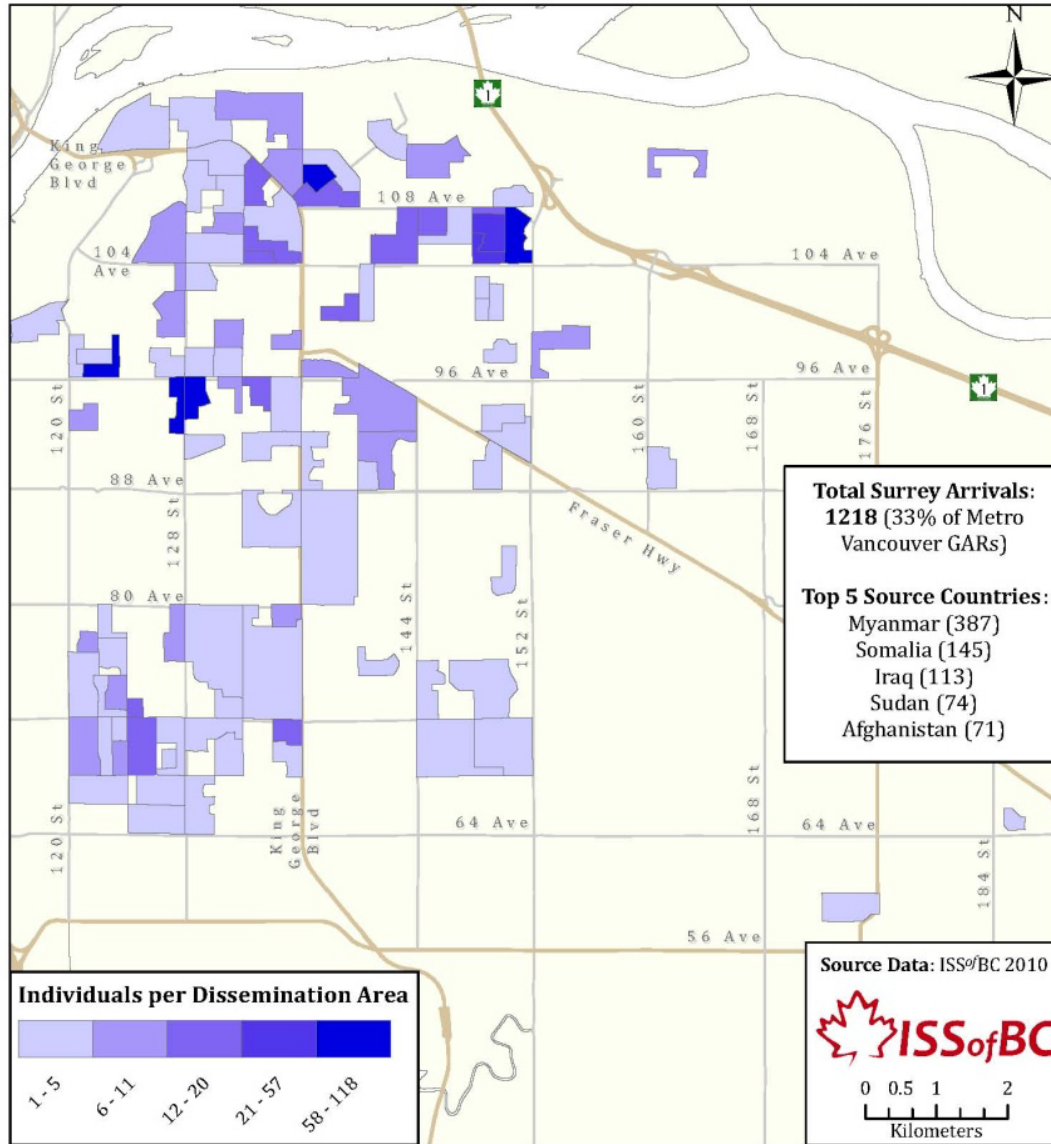


Based on postal codes available for 3719 of 3743 total resettled individuals over 5-year period

Source Data: ISSofBC 2010



CITY OF SURREY, 2005-09

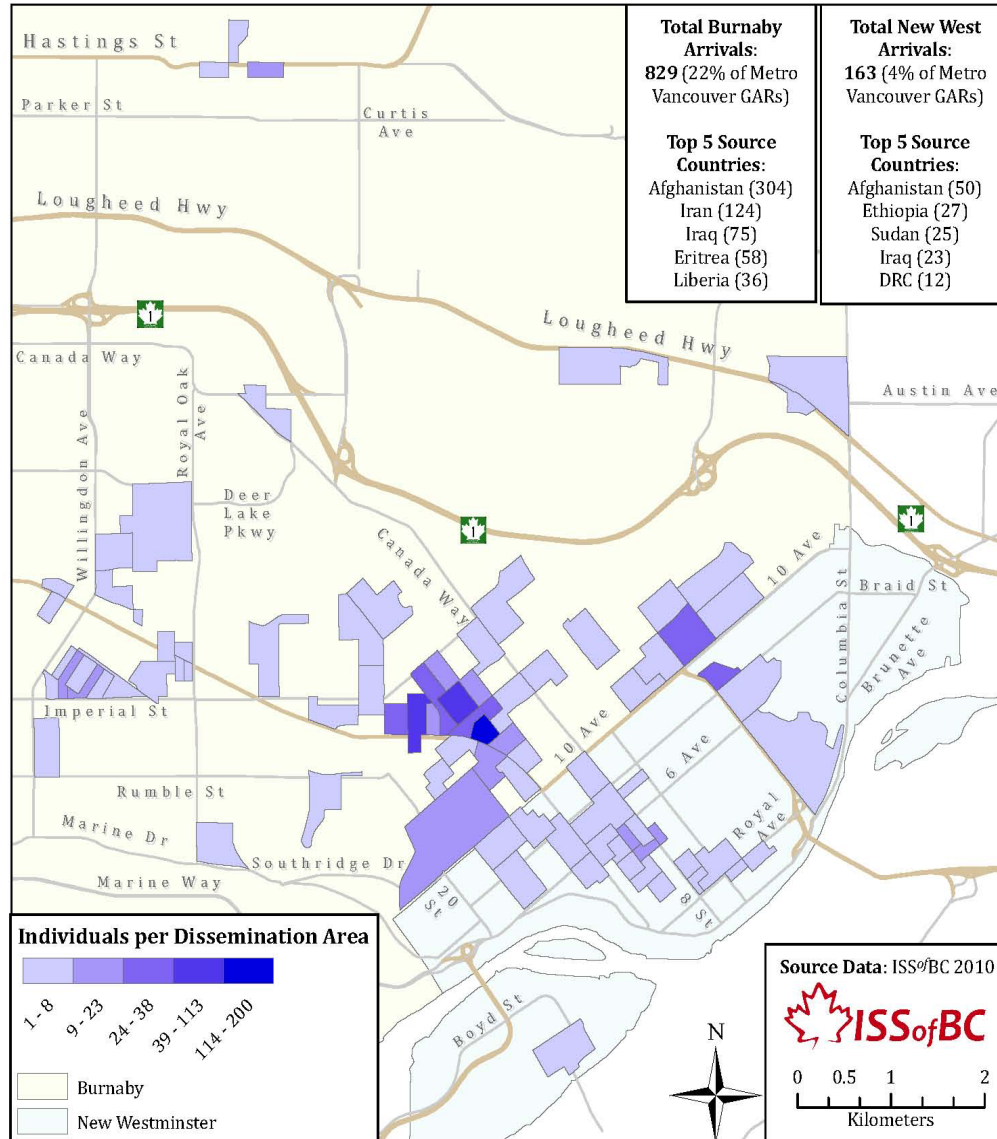


The next five maps represent *cumulative* GAR arrivals between 2005 and 2009 on the municipal level. That is, they show the settlement of all GARs settled in each municipality between 2005 and 2009.

Between 2005 and 2009, the City of Surrey received 33% of all GARs destined to BC. As this map shows, GARs tended to settle throughout **Whalley**, **City Centre**, the northwest section of **Guildford**, and central **Newton**. Almost 250 individuals settled near the intersection of 152 Street and 104 Ave in Guildford, and about 200 individuals settled at the intersection of 128 Street and 96 Avenue in Whalley. Around 150 individuals settled along Grosvenor Road near the intersection of King George Boulevard and 108 Avenue.

A relatively high percentage of all **Myanmar** (Karen) (50%) and **Somali** (77%) GARs in Metro Vancouver settled in Surrey, forming the top two source countries.

CITIES OF BURNABY AND NEW WESTMINSTER, 2005-09



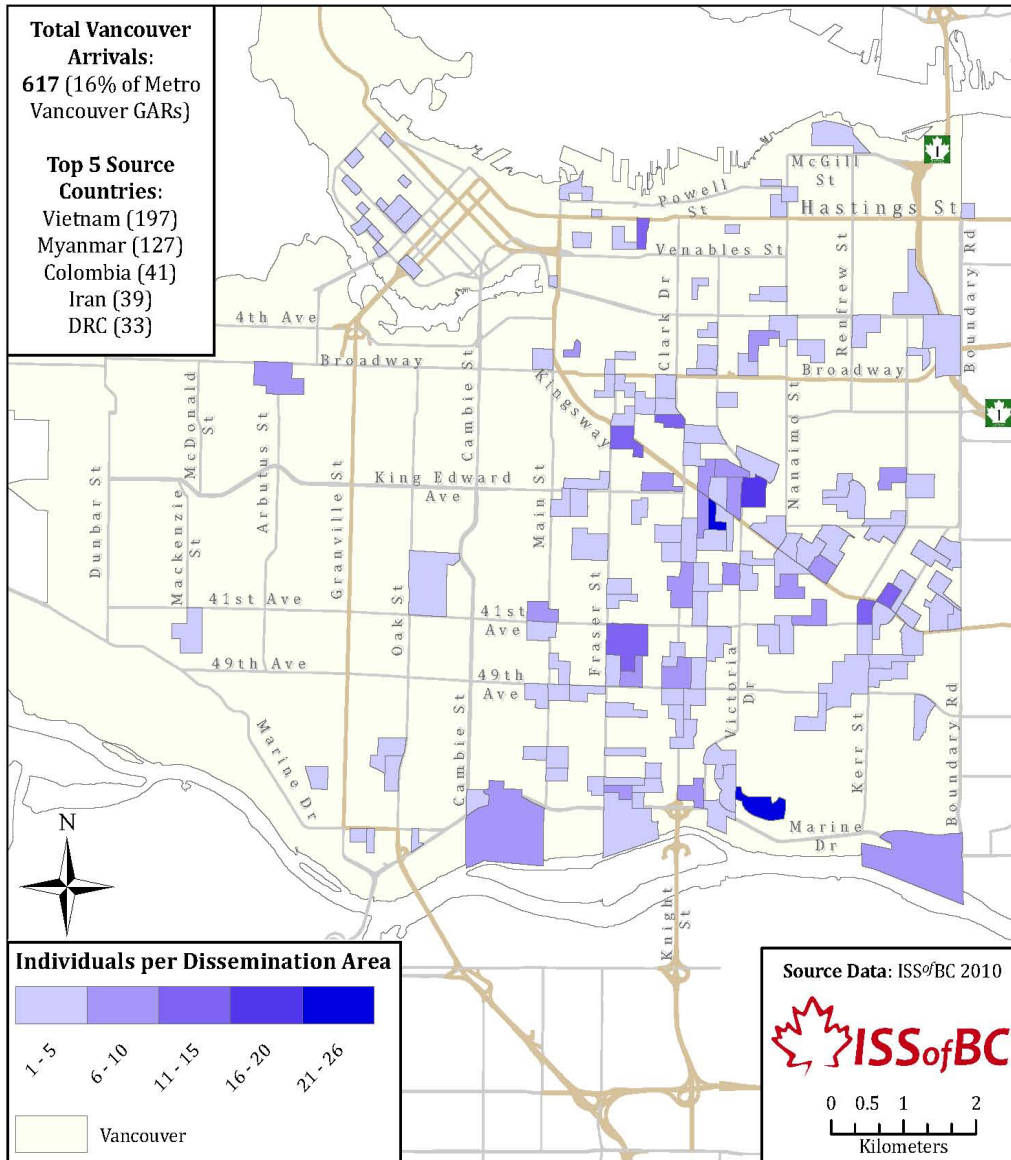
The cities of Burnaby and New Westminster are shown together because many GARRs settled near their border. The City of Burnaby received 22% of all GARRs while the City of New Westminster received 4%.

In Burnaby, GARRs settled in high concentrations in **Edmonds** and **Richmond Park**. Over 550 GARRs settled in these two neighbourhoods alone over this 5 year period.

Although far fewer GARRs settled in New Westminster, the highest concentration is in the southwest corner of **Massey-Victory Heights** and throughout **Queen's Park**.

The top source country in both municipalities was represented by GARRs from **Afghanistan**.

CITY OF VANCOUVER, 2005-09

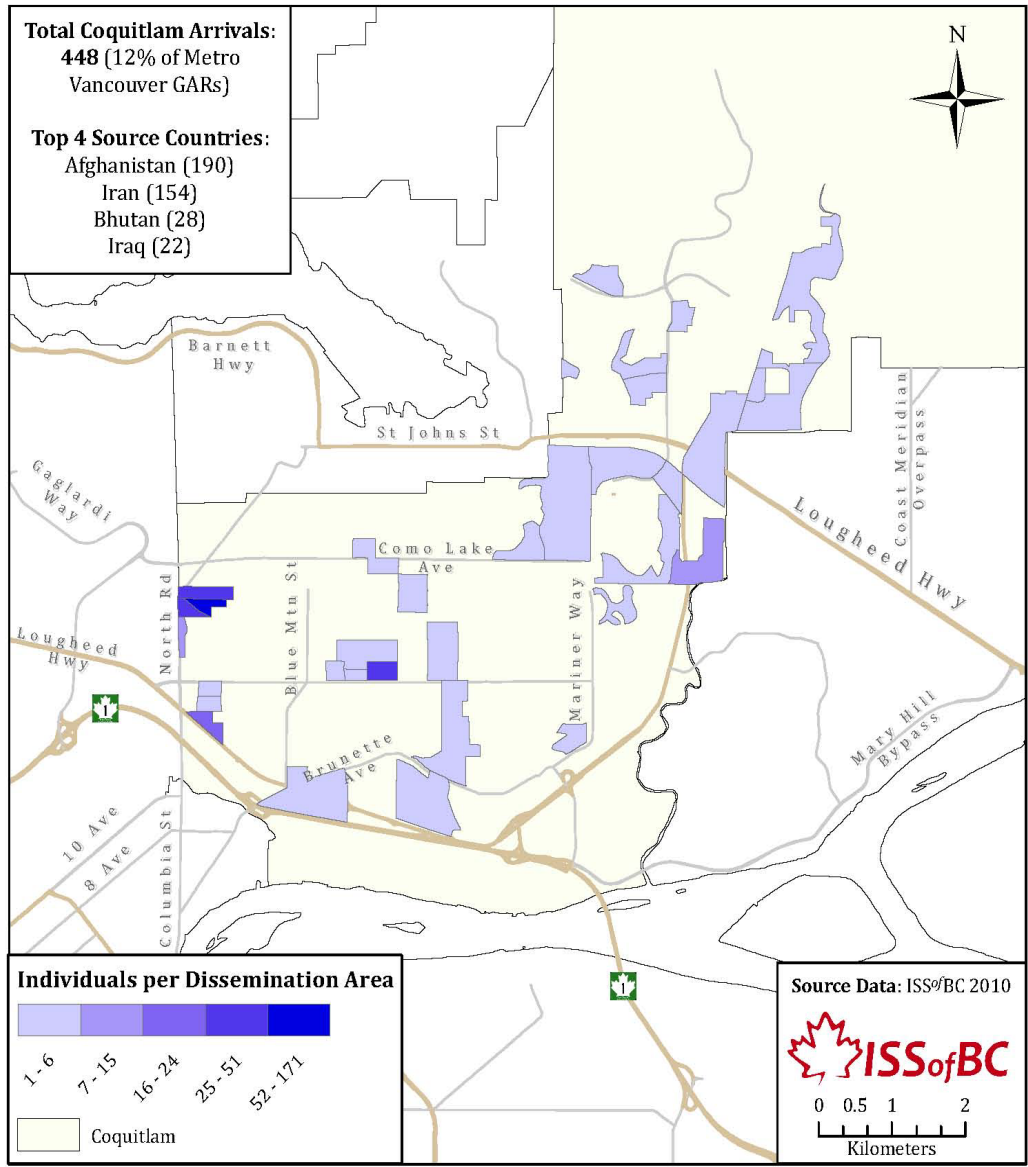


Although the City of Vancouver is home to more than 25% of all Metro Vancouver residents, 16% of all GARs settled there.

GARs in Vancouver were less concentrated than those in the cities of Surrey or Burnaby. They settled throughout **East Vancouver**, particularly in the **Kensington-Cedar Cottage** neighbourhood and in the southeast corner of **Victoria-Fraserview**.

100% of **Vietnamese** Montanyards and Jarai GARs in Metro Vancouver settled in the City of Vancouver, forming the top source country. GARs from **Myanmar** (Karen) represented the second highest source country.

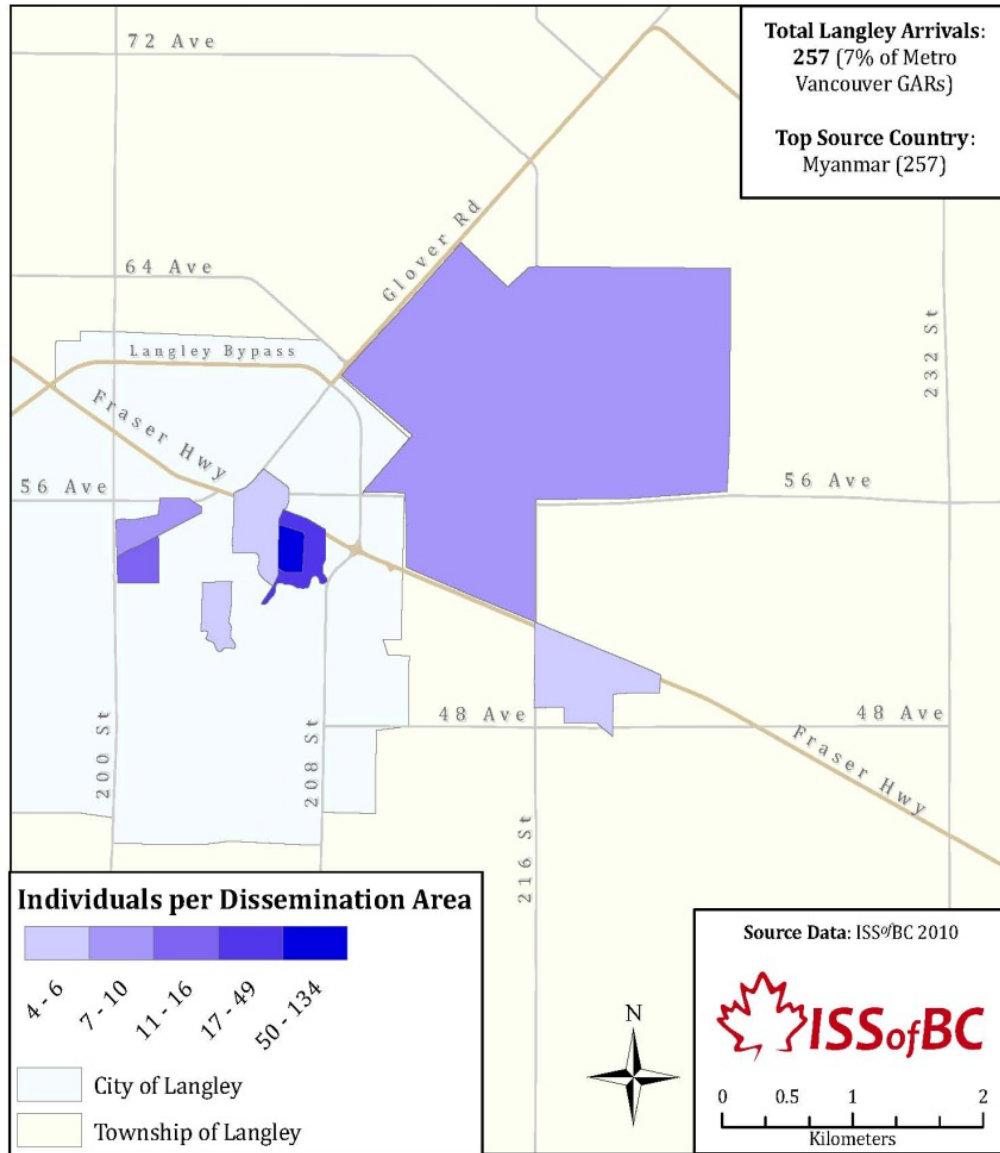
CITY OF COQUITLAM, 2005-09



12% of all Metro Vancouver GAR arrivals settled in the City of Coquitlam. Although GARs settled sparsely throughout most of Coquitlam, a very high concentration of 275 individuals settled near the intersection of North Road and Clarke Road in the **Cariboo/Burquitlam** neighbourhood. An additional 50 individuals settled near the intersection of Austin Avenue and Schoolhouse Street in **Austin Heights**.

28% of all **Afghans** and 34% of all **Iranians** in Metro Vancouver came to the City of Coquitlam, forming 77% of all GARs in Coquitlam alone. In addition, 100% of all **Bhutanese** – a new GAR group to arrive in 2009 – have settled in the City of Coquitlam so far. Because Bhutanese resettlement is expected to continue until December 2012, Metro Vancouver and the City of Coquitlam in particular will see more Bhutanese over the next two years.

CITY AND DISTRICT OF LANGLEY, 2005-09



ISSofBC destined over 250, or 33%, of **Myanmar** (Karen) GARRs to Langley. This was the first time that ISSofBC settled a considerable number of GARRs outside of the usual receiving municipalities. Most GARRs from Myanmar settled in four apartment buildings in **Langley City** near the intersection of Fraser Highway and 206 Street.

PART THREE: SETTLEMENT PATTERNS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Service providers in Metro Vancouver face new challenges as the characteristics and settlement patterns of GARs change. In 2002, the implementation of the **Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)** shifted the focus of Canada’s refugee resettlement program away from those with an ‘ability to establish’ in Canada to those “most in need of protection” as determined by the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**. As a result, Canada’s GAR population was significantly altered to include more ‘high needs’ individuals facing multi-barriers to settlement, such as:

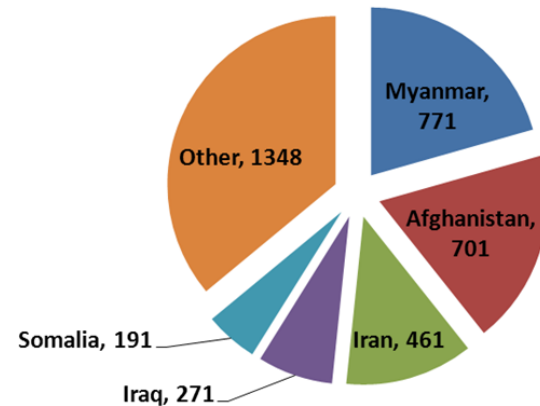
- Low literacy levels in their original languages
- Increased physical and mental health issues
- Larger households
- More households with single parents, mostly lead by women
- Youth with limited exposure to formal education

It also indicated a shift of GAR source countries, bringing newcomers from drastically different political, economic, and social contexts. Many arrived with special requirements after years of trauma, torture, and/or time in refugee camps due to **protracted refugee situations**, raising important questions about the settlement needs of ‘post-IRPA’ GARs.

Today, the GAR program also involves more refugee resettlement through ‘**group processing**’ where groups of refugees from the same camp are intentionally resettled together. Many GARs who arrive through group processing – such as the Karen from Myanmar, the Acehese from Indonesia, and the ethnically Nepalese Lhotshampa from Bhutan – are ‘new and few’ in Canada.

The following maps give country-specific information about the settlement of GARs from the top five source countries in Metro Vancouver over the last five years (2005-2009) as shown in the chart on this page. They represent *yearly* arrival patterns on the regional level; that is, each map shows the settlement of all GARs from a particular source country who arrived during that year and that year only.

**Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)
Total Metro Vancouver Arrivals
by Country of Origin, 2005-09**



1. MYANMAR (BURMA)

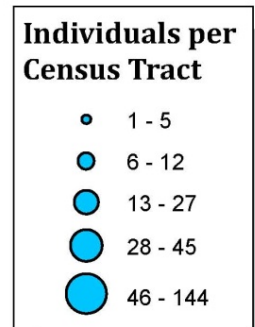
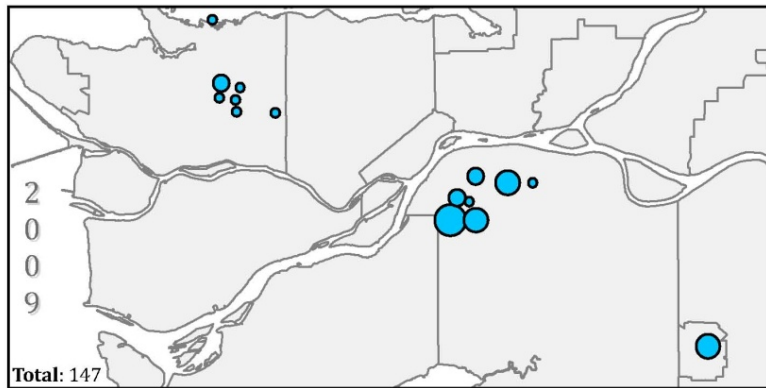
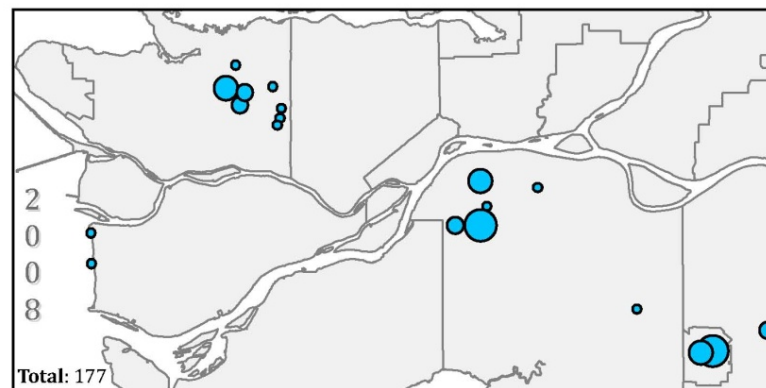
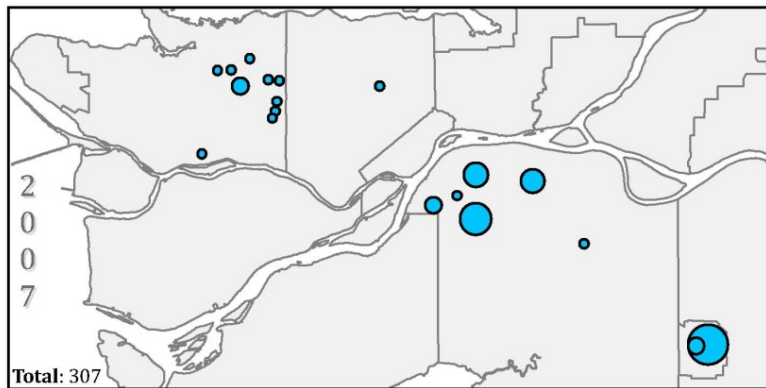
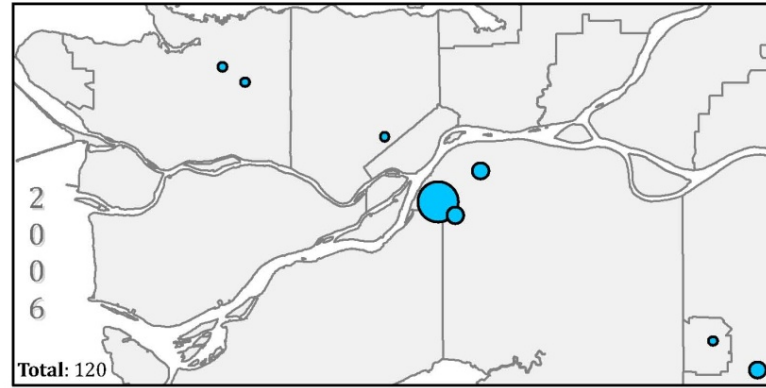
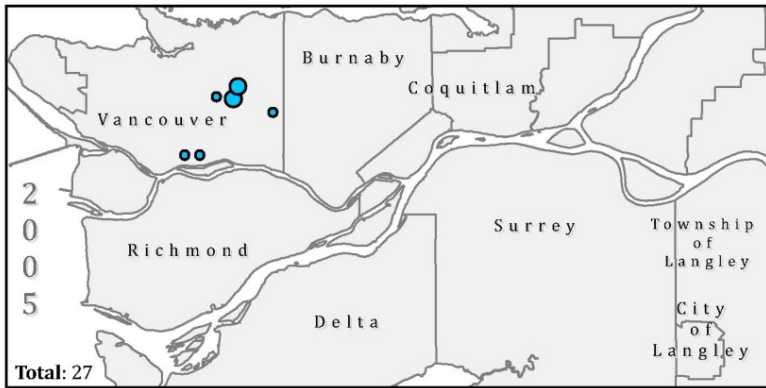
The majority of GARs from Myanmar belong to a minority ethnic group called Karen. They are a relatively new group to settle in BC, arriving after the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recognized Karen refugees as a distinct group with particular protection needs and called upon the international community to assist in their resettlement. For over 3 decades, Myanmar adopted a policy of forced relocation and assimilation so that the Karen and territories dominated by insurgent groups could be monitored and controlled by the central government. As a result of the subsequent human rights abuses, many Karens fled to the borders of Thailand and were confined to remote jungle refugee camps by the Thai authorities. Approximately 140,000 Karen refugees have lived in the camps for the past 20 years. Literacy among both adults and children is relatively low due to years spent evading the army to reach the Thai border and the lack of educational opportunities in the camps. Most Karen speak S'gaw or Pwo while a few speak Burmese as an additional language. The vast majority in BC are Baptist Christian, while a minority are Seventh Day Adventists or Buddhists.

Karen resettlement to Canada began in 2006, but a coup in Thailand in 2008 disrupted the process. Those selected for resettlement in 2007 and 2008 only recently arrived in 2009.

Myanmar GARs settled mainly in the cities of Surrey (387), Langley (257), and Vancouver (127). They tend to live in a few concentrated areas to support each other and depend heavily on the extended family structures developed previously in the camps. Gaining employment and access to health care needs are two of the many challenges they face due to language barriers and unfamiliarity with the Canadian system. Because of their limited income and the high cost of housing in Metro Vancouver, many of the Karen live in crowded apartment suites. It is common for 6 people to live in a 2 bedroom apartment or 4 people to live in a 1 bedroom apartment; teenagers and children often have to share a bedroom with their parents.

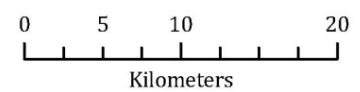
The settlement patterns of **778 individuals, or 21% of all Metro Vancouver GARs**, are displayed on the following map.

Metro Vancouver Myanmar GAR Arrivals, 2005-09



Metro Vancouver Total: 778

Source Data: ISSofBC 2010



2. AFGHANISTAN

Afghans are the largest refugee population in the world. Over 6,715,000 registered refugees have fled from armed conflict, finding sanctuary in neighbouring countries such as Iran, Pakistan, Russia, India, and elsewhere. Since 1978, more than two million people were killed (out of which 20% were children), three million were internally displaced, over 500,000 are war widows, and more than 4% of the population are disabled. Most Afghan refugees have waited since 1992 in camps and/or urban areas of neighbouring countries, where the capacity of the UNHCR is inadequate due to the ongoing regional conflict and safety concerns. As a result, generations of children are born and grow up in camps, deprived of access to health care, education, income earning opportunities and other basic needs.

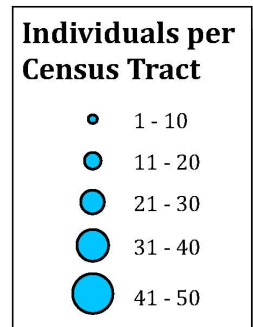
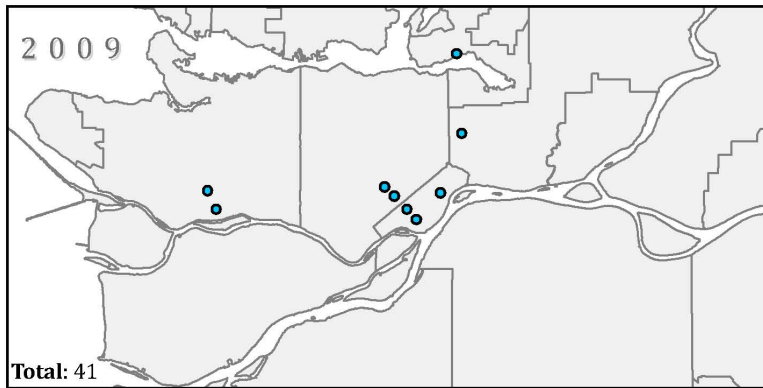
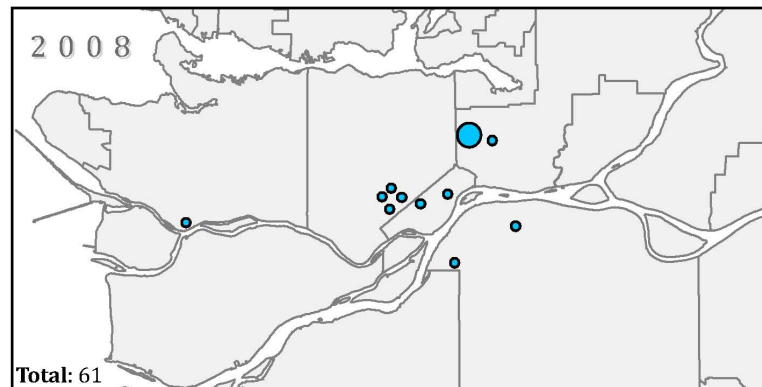
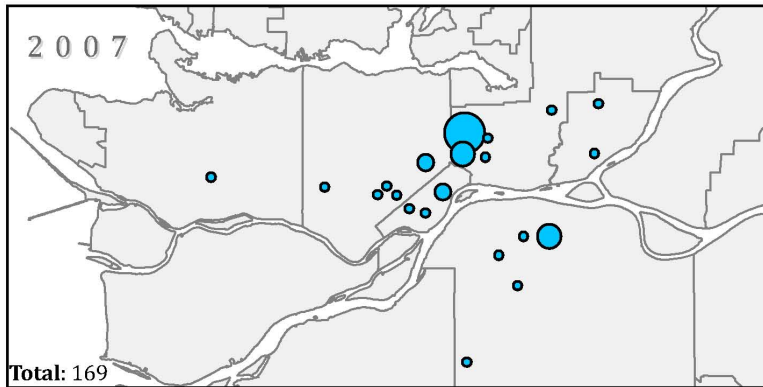
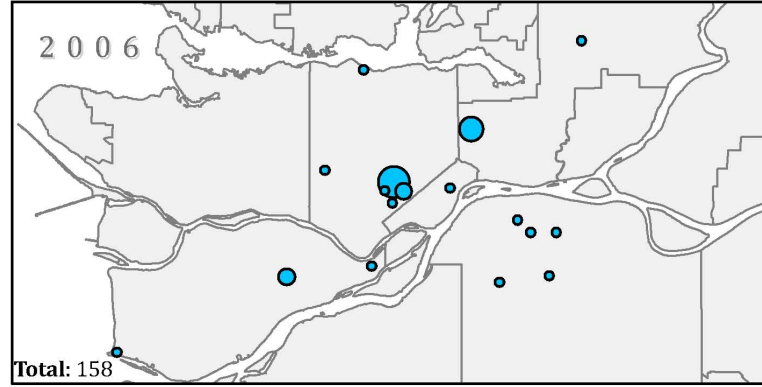
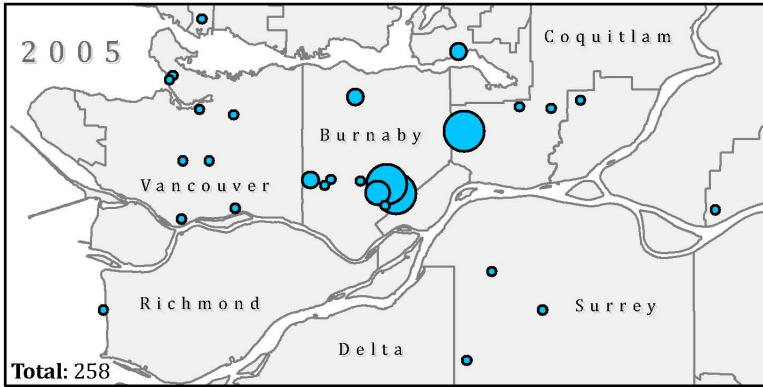
The Afghan families that settle in BC tend to be large by Canadian standards. Single parents, mostly mothers who have lost husbands in the war, are commonly the breadwinners for large families with an average of six children. Low literacy as a result of little or no formal education in war zones and inconsistent and inadequate education in refugee camps makes learning a new language and the overall settlement process slower for number of Afghans than for other newcomers. For some, living for decades in an environment of war and refugee camps has also created a low self-esteem, low motivation, and extremely limited opportunities for utilizing previous skills or acquiring new ones. Racial profiling of Middle Eastern communities since September 11, 2001 has left a strong impact on new immigrants, including Afghan children.

Despite these challenges, Afghan GARs sustain close-knit family relations and depend on each other for cooperation and mutual support. The two main Afghan languages (Dari and Pashto) are in the same language family as that in Iran (Farsi).

Afghanistan has been a top GAR source country in BC since 2003. Due to increasingly limited resettlement access to Afghan GARs, however, the number of individuals arriving in Canada is slowly decreasing. Afghans settled mainly in the cities of Burnaby (304) and Coquitlam (190) where they make up the largest proportion of GARs in both municipalities. They are also the largest GAR group to settle in both New Westminster (50) and Richmond (30).

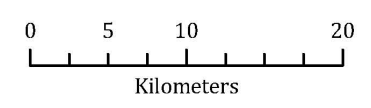
The settlement patterns of **687 individuals, or 18% of all Metro Vancouver GARs**, are displayed on this map.

Metro Vancouver Afghan GAR Arrivals, 2005-09



Metro Vancouver Total: 687

Source Data: ISSofBC 2010



3. IRAN

Iranian GARs leave their home country for a variety of reasons, the most common being:

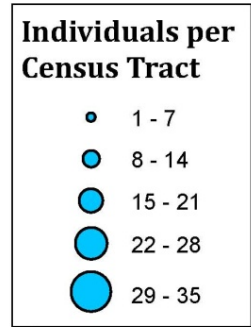
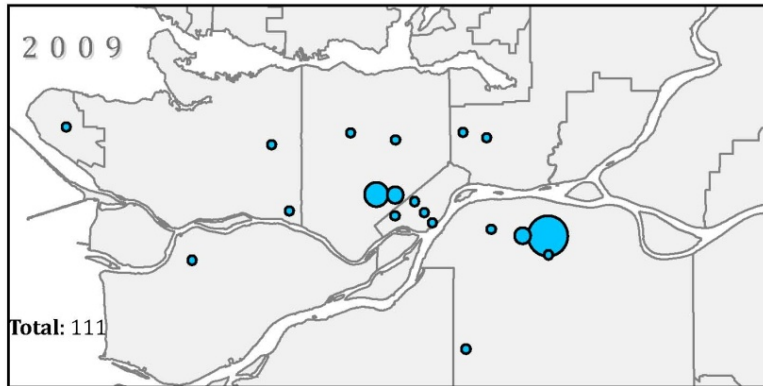
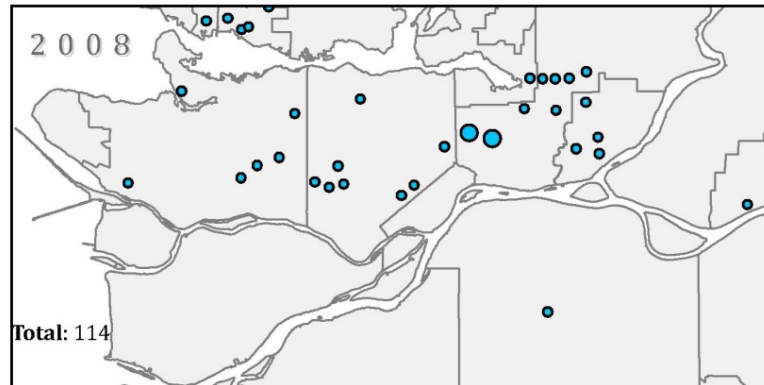
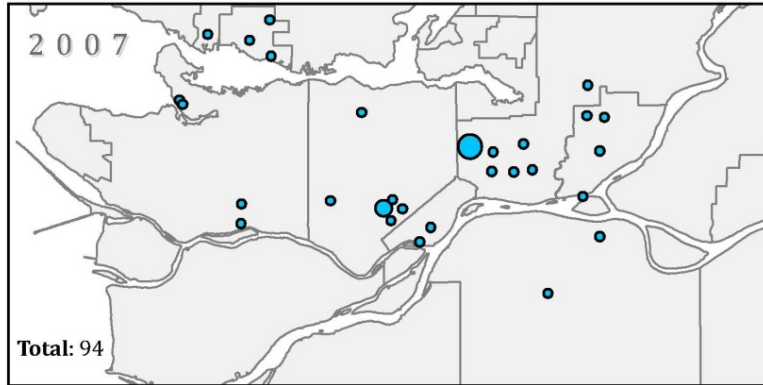
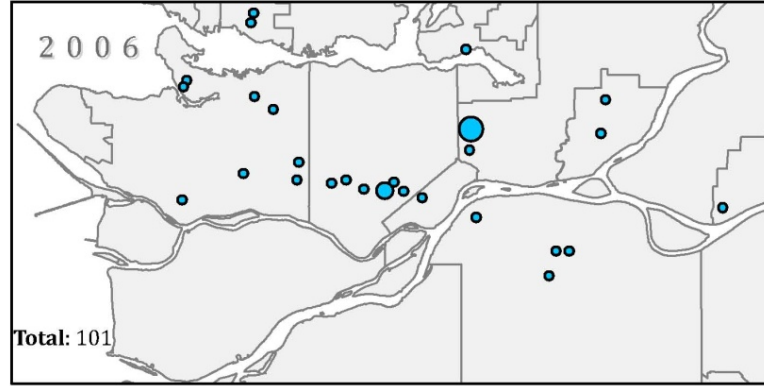
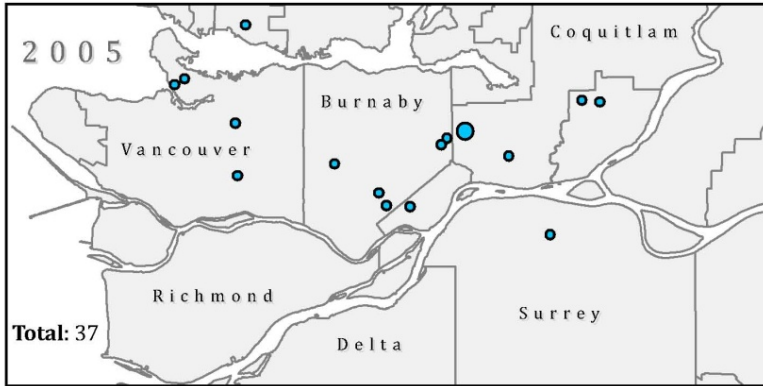
1. Political activity deemed as subversive by the government
2. Pursuing rights by religious minorities such as Baha'is, or converting to a different religion by a person who is born to Muslim parents
3. Advocating cultural and linguistic rights by ethnic minorities such as Kurdish, Arab, or Turkish speaking Iranians
4. Identifying as a transgender or any sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, etc.) which is not sanctioned by religious and civil law

Iranian GARs typically reside in Turkey while their application for refugee status is being processed abroad. During this time, their mobility is monitored and restricted by the Turkish authorities. The average application processing time is between 3-5 years but can take up to 8 years, during which they are not entitled to work. The financial shortages and difficult life conditions in Turkey affect many Iranian GARs with physical and mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. Most Iranian GARs speak Farsi but some speak additional languages as well, such as Kurdish or Azerbaijani.

Unlike most GARs, people of Iranian heritage are well represented in Vancouver through other streams of migration such as the “skilled worker” or “independent immigrant” class. Iranians settled in areas with previously established co-ethnic communities such as Coquitlam (154), southeast Burnaby (124), North Vancouver (66), and Port Coquitlam (32). They are very few non-Iranian GARs in both North Vancouver and Port Coquitlam. A significant number also settled in Vancouver (39). Overall, they tended to be the least concentrated GAR group.

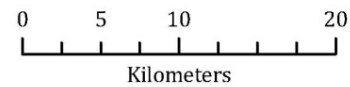
The settlement patterns of **457 individuals, or 12% of all Metro Vancouver GARs**, are displayed on this map.

Metro Vancouver Iranian GAR Arrivals, 2005-09



Metro Vancouver Total: 457

Source Data: ISSofBC 2010



4. IRAQ

Iraqi GAR resettlement to Canada dates back to 1996, but a recent decision by the Canadian government to prioritize Iraqi refugees has sharply increased resettlement since 2008. This is expected to continue until 2013.

Most Iraqi GARs come to Canada from camps in Syria, Jordan, and to a lesser extent Egypt and Turkey after fleeing the Sunni-Shi'a conflict in Iraq. Although their dominant language is Arabic, some also speak Kurdish or Chaldean Neo-Aramaic. Most Iraqi GARs are Muslims and are divided between Sunni and Shi'as, but some are Christian. Although the level of education varies among Iraqi GARs, most of them are literate in their first language and some hold university degrees. Still, even among those who are well educated, few Iraqi GARs can communicate well in English.

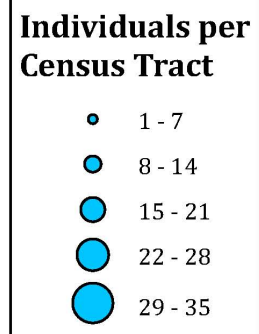
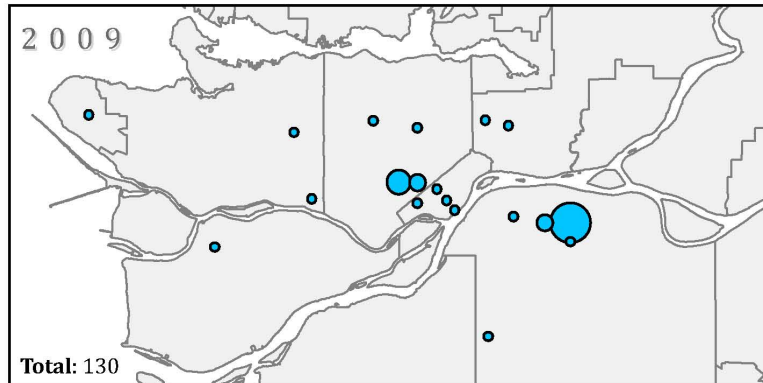
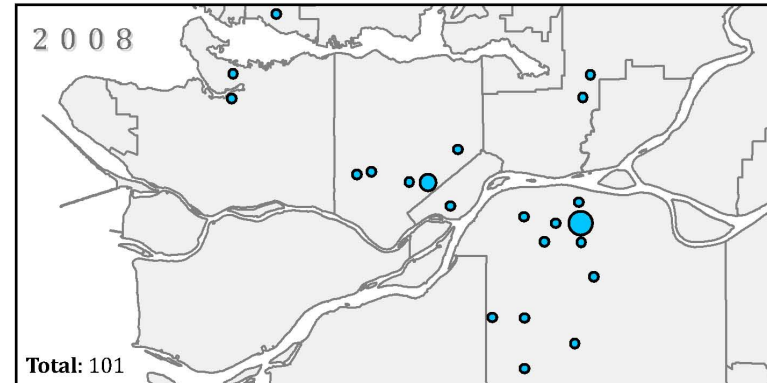
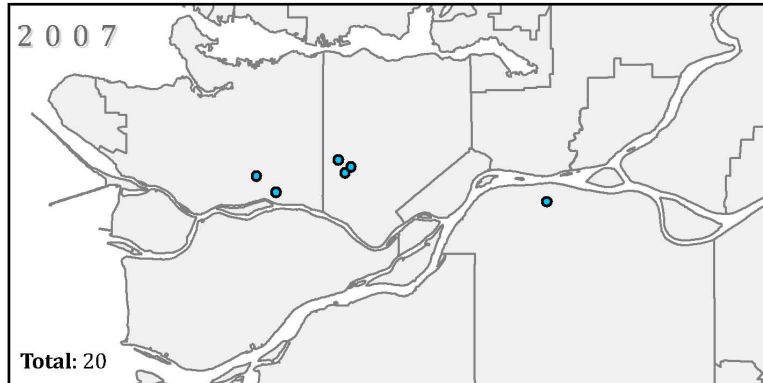
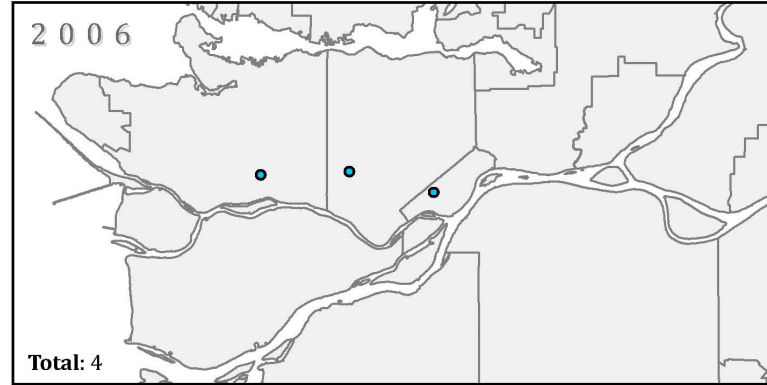
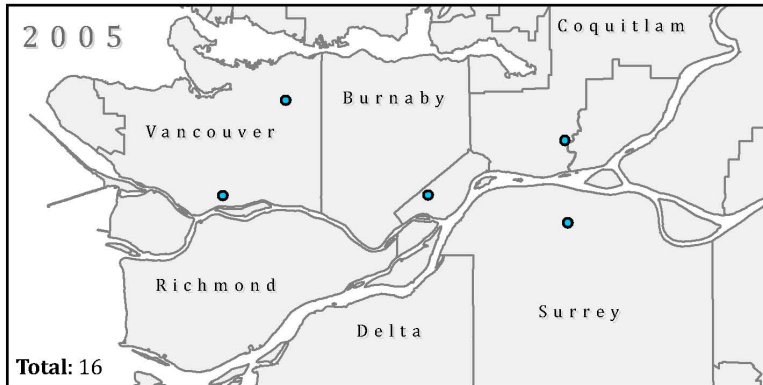
Many Iraqi GARs are coming to BC with recent emotional and physical scars as a result of the Iraqi war. ISSoBC has observed an increase number of single men and women as well as families arriving that are not intact. Some Iraqi's have arrived with significant mental health issues including depression and trauma as well as chronic physical health conditions. ISSoBC has recently observed a sharp increase in the number of Iraqi GARs who have arrived requiring special supports e.g. deaf – Arabic sign language interpreters, blind, etc.

Iraqi GARs are also arriving to BC with limited pre-existing community support and as such are part of a new and growing community.

Most Iraqis settled in Surrey (113) – particularly in Guildford – and Burnaby (75) with smaller groups in New Westminster (23) and Coquitlam (22).

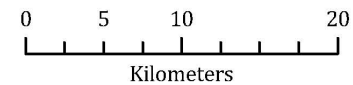
The settlement patterns of **271 individuals, or 7% of all Metro Vancouver GARs**, are displayed on this map.

Metro Vancouver Iraqi GAR Arrivals, 2005-09



Metro Vancouver Total: 271

Source Data: ISSofBC 2010



5. SOMALIA

Following the fall of the Somali President, Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991 and the subsequent power struggle in south and central Somalia, an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 refugees fled to Kenya and another 250,000 fled to other parts of Africa and the Middle East. Two decades after the collapse of its central government, the Transitional Federal Government has failed to bring peace and stability to the country. Due to ongoing violence, human rights violations, and conflict in Somalia, there are currently some 580,000 Somali refugees in four main asylum countries: Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Yemen. Some of these refugees have lived in camps for over 18 years.

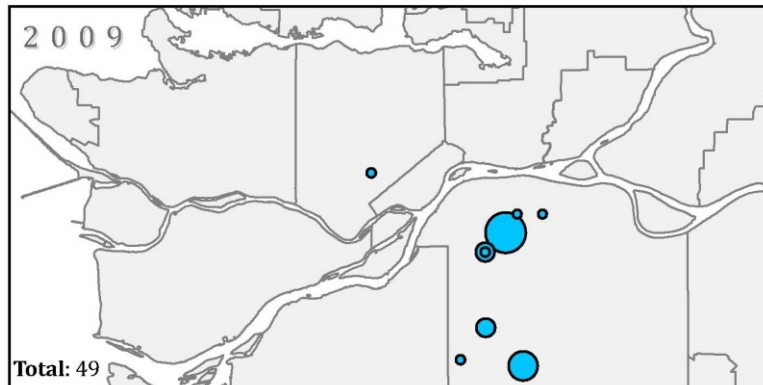
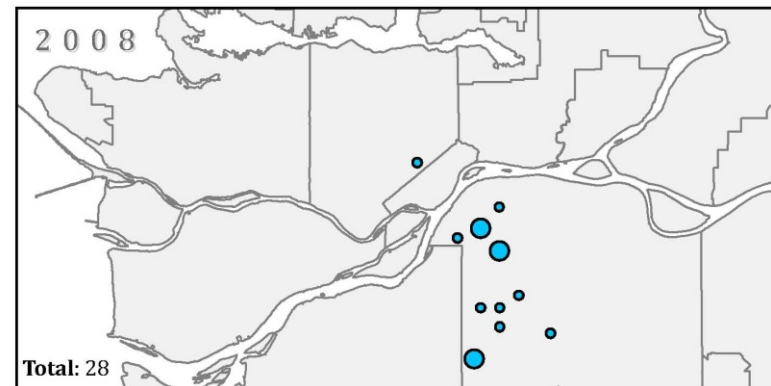
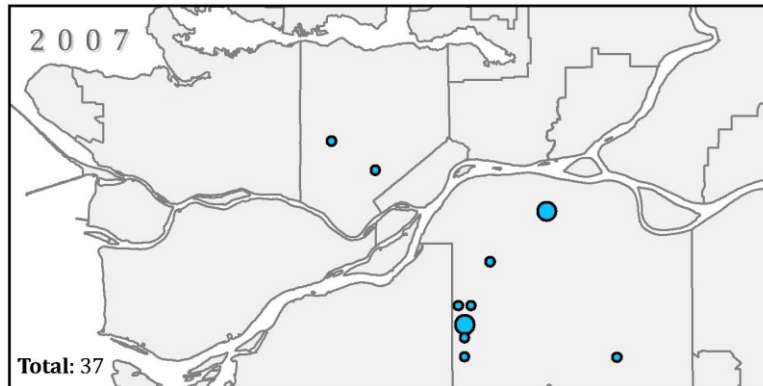
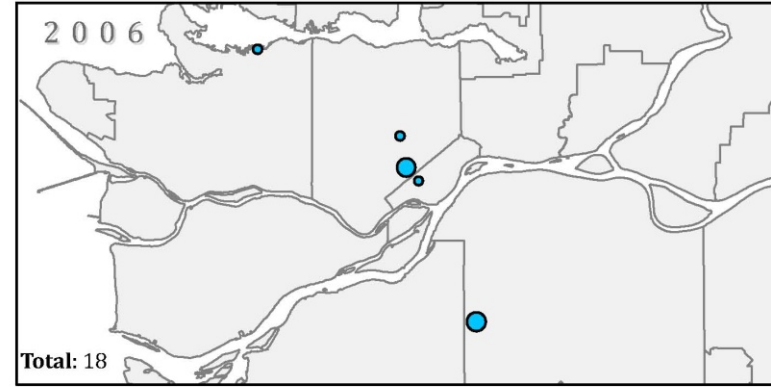
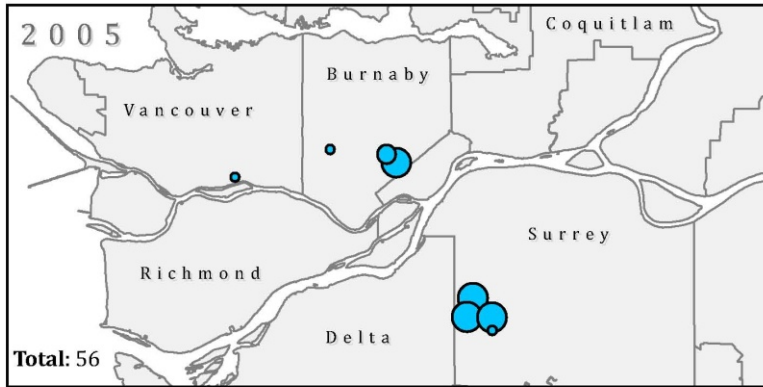
Ethnically and culturally, Somalia is one of the most homogeneous countries in Africa. Although there are minority groups of Bantu descent and Arab enclaves in the coastal cities, the majority are ethnic Somalis who speak dialects of the same language, Somali, and who practice the same religion, Islam. In Metro Vancouver, the majority of Somali GAR households are headed by single parents – particularly women – with an average of 4 to 9 children in each household unit. Another trend observed by ISS_{BC} has been the arrival of single young Somali GARs from Turkey and the Middle East.

Between 2005 and 2009, a high percentage (77%) of all Somali GARs settled in the City of Surrey (145). The only other municipality to receive a substantial number of Somalis was the City of Burnaby (30). Somalis tended to live in the Newton area rather than in other areas of the City of Surrey.

Although the majority (75%) stay in Metro Vancouver, Somali GARs are the most likely group to settle outside the province. Between 2005 and 2009, approximately 25% settled outside BC in cities such as Edmonton and Hamilton.

The settlement patterns of the remaining **188 individuals, or 5% of all GARs**, are displayed on this map.

Metro Vancouver Somali GAR Arrivals, 2005-09



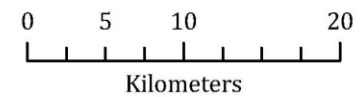
Individuals per
Census Tract

- 1 - 4
- 5 - 8
- 9 - 12
- 13 - 16



Metro Vancouver Total: 188

Source Data: ISSofBC 2010



OUR LOCATIONS

VANCOUVER

Administration & Language College and Career Services

#501-333 Terminal Avenue
Vancouver, BC, V6A 2L7
Tel: 604-684-2561
Fax: 604-684-2266

Welcome House and Settlement Services

530 Drake Street
Vancouver, BC, V6B 2H3
Tel: 604-684-7498
Fax: 604-684-5683

RICHMOND

Career Centre & English Language Services for Adults

#150-8400 Alexandra Road
Richmond, BC, V6X 3L4
Tel: 604-233-7077
Fax: 604-233-7040

English Language Services for Adults

110-5751 Cedarbridge Way
Richmond, BC, V6X 2A8
Tel: 604-633-7077
Fax: 604-233-7040

BURNABY

Settlement Services

#207-7355 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC, V3N 4Z6
Tel: 604-395-8000
Fax: 604-395-8003

TRI-CITIES

English Language Services for Adults

#136-3030 Lincoln Avenue
Coquitlam, BC, V3B 6B4
Tel: 604-942-1777
Fax: 604-942-1780

Settlement & Career Services

#240A – 3020 Lincoln Avenue
Coquitlam, BC V3B 6B4
Tel: 778-284-7026
Fax: 604-942-1730

English Language Services for Adults

#204-3242 Westwood Street
Port Coquitlam, BC, V3C 3L8
Tel: 604-942-1777
Fax: 604-942-1780

NEW WESTMINSTER

*English Language Services for Adults,
Career Services & Settlement Services*

#200-620 Royal Avenue
New Westminster, BC, V3M 1J2
Tel: 604-522-5902
Fax: 604-522-5908

SURREY

Multilingual Employment Resource Centre

#201-7337 137th Street
Surrey, BC, V3W 1A4
Tel: 604-595-4021
Fax: 604-595-4028

Maps, charts, design, and data analysis by Lisa Ruth Brunner (Metropolis BC MITACS-Accelerate Intern)

Produced by Chris Friesen (Director of Settlement Services) and Kathy Sherrell (Manager of the Community Settlement Program)

ISSofBC is solely responsible for the content of this Report. All statistics provided are based on data collected by Immigrant Services Society of BC between 2005 and 2009. Minor discrepancies may exist due to data collection/entry errors.

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