

This event reaffirmed resettlement as a life-saving humanitarian tool while emphasizing its long-term economic and social impacts. Set against shrinking resettlement quotas in 2025 and rising global displacement, discussions focused on data demonstrating positive integration outcomes over time, reinforcing resettlement's role as a durable solution and strategic investment benefiting both host and destination countries.

Economic contributions of refugees

A central theme was the growing economic contribution of resettled refugees over time. Speakers highlighted that despite any initial integration challenges, refugees increasingly participate in the labour market, pay taxes, start businesses, and help address labour shortages as they settle. The International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP), a global legal aid organization supporting refugees, highlighted refugees' entrepreneurial activity, with refugee-owned businesses generating USD 5.1 billion in business income in 2019 alone,¹ thereby creating jobs that benefit local communities. IRAP also cited U.S. government findings² showing that between 2005 and 2019 refugees generated USD 581 billion in federal tax revenue, resulting in a net positive fiscal impact of USD 123.8 billion, with public contributions exceeding the costs of refugee support services.



Photo provided by Daniel Gamboa

The Government of Canada shared findings from longitudinal administrative databases³ showing a steady decline in social assistance use and a tripling of income during the first ten years after arrival, particularly among government-assisted refugees. Several governments highlighted refugees' role in filling labour market gaps. Canada noted that around 60 per cent of refugees work in high-demand occupations, while Spain underscored growing private-sector interest in resettlement. The resettlement program in Spain linked resettled refugees to employment opportunities in Spain's renewable energy sector, enabling Nicaraguan refugees to begin work within two months of arrival. Employer feedback has been positive. The Government of Brazil emphasized refugees' resilience, noting that in 2025 Venezuelan refugees filled approximately 50 per cent of job postings.

Impact on Stability

Discussions highlighted resettlement as a key stabilizing tool at a time when resettlement quotas are shrinking while global displacement continues to rise. IRAP pointed to historic instances such as the refugee crisis following the end of the Vietnam War, where resettlement helped to stabilise the situation. The government of Ethiopia, as a country hosting large refugee populations, emphasized the importance of resettlement as a life-saving protection tool and a tangible expression of international responsibility-sharing, which reduces pressure on health, education, and social protection systems. The Government of Ethiopia also noted that resettlement reductions have clear consequences for host countries; prolonged dependency, eroded hope within refugee communities, and increased exposure to smuggling and trafficking. When resettlement and safe pathways decrease, dangerous journeys increase, underscoring the broader stabilizing impact of resettlement.

From the destination country's perspective resettlement offers states a structured, predictable, and values-aligned way to provide protection to highly vulnerable refugees. IRAP highlights that resettlement is a flexible tool which allows governments to align admissions with their demographic,

¹ See American Immigration Council (2023). [Starting Anew: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America](#).

² Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (2024). [The Fiscal Impact of Refugees and Asylees at the Federal, State, and Local Levels from 2005-2019](#).

³ See also [Settlement and resettlement data, research and reports - Canada.ca; Refugee Statistics in Canada | Made in CA](#).

economic, or protection priorities while maintaining full control over the scale and pace of arrivals. Switzerland underscored this point, by sharing insights into the resumption of its resettlement program, highlighting that fully suspending programmes makes the restart complex, arguing for the advantages of adaptable mechanisms that can respond to changing contexts.

Education outcomes

Education was highlighted as a key driver of long-term integration. While refugee learners may initially face barriers such as language acquisition and disrupted schooling, evidence shared showed that outcomes improve steadily over time, particularly for children who access education soon after arrival. Canadian data indicate that refugees who arrive as children achieve education levels comparable to their peers, while Ireland highlighted positive school outcomes among resettled refugee children as a clear marker of successful integration.

Social integration

Beyond economic outcomes, speakers emphasized that successful integration is fundamentally social. Resettled refugees are active community members who contribute to social cohesion, by volunteering in their communities. Canadian data highlighted strong social participation among resettled refugees, including high levels of volunteerism and the highest citizenship uptake rate among all immigrant groups. Spain showcased its whole-of-society model involving local authorities, civil society, and reception professionals, noting that Mayors see integration of refugees as a strategic way to help sustain essential public services, such as local schools and health services in depopulated areas.

Interventions highlighted the importance of transparent communication from government to society about resettlement and whole-of-society approaches to counter fear or misinformation to consequently foster a welcoming environment for refugees which allows them to integrate quickly and maintains social cohesion. The Government of Ireland emphasized the use of trusted community voices, such as local teachers to explain, that resettlement is a planned, structured and well-managed protection programme, emphasizing selection, security screening and integration pathways, such as housing, education, health, language to maintaining public confidence. The Government of Brazil stressed that sustained community engagement and close cooperation between governments and local communities are essential to overcoming fear of the unknown. IRAP underscored that transparent communication about the highly regulated process of resettlement, including the extensive security vetting of selected individuals, is necessary to build public trust and consequently support for continuing resettlement.