



TENT
—
CANADA

How to set up a refugee hiring pilot with Tent



Types of refugees in Canada

Resettled and refugee claimants in Canada

Refugees in Canada are categorized into two main groups depending on how they arrived in the country:

1. **Resettled refugees:** Resettled refugees arrive in Canada after being referred by either UNHCR, a designated referral organization, or a private sponsorship group.
2. **Refugee claimants**, also referred to as “asylum seekers”



Refugees can legally work in Canada

Hiring a refugee in Canada is similar to hiring any other foreign employee. Companies must first ensure that candidates are authorized to work in the country.

- Refugee candidates will have an open work permit, and Ukrainian refugee candidates will possess a CUAET open work permit.
- Open work permits allow the recipient to work for any employer in Canada and are not job specific.
- Open work permits are valid for up to 3 years



Do not assume that refugee candidates will know which documents they need to share to prove work eligibility. Refugees may also be reluctant to share information or documentation they deem to be personal.

Refugees are talented professionals with diverse skills and experiences

Refugees can help companies meet their needs through their diverse skills, educational experiences and professional backgrounds:

- Canada is an aging population. Nearly **60% of refugees living in Canada are of working age** as compared to 38% of Canadian born who are considered working age
- Half of the refugees (**51%**) in Canada are employed in **high-skilled jobs**; 20% are employed in professional jobs that require a university degree.
- While many refugees arrive in Canada with high qualifications, landing the first job is challenging so they may seek a variety of options and skill levels



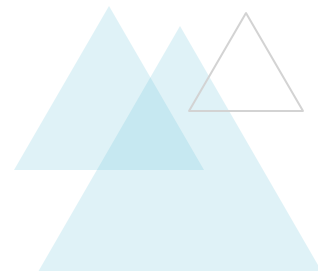
The benefits of hiring refugees

Companies that invest in creating a [welcoming environment](#) for refugees benefit from improved [employee retention](#) rates, an enhanced [brand and reputation](#), and dividends in their ability to [attract new talent](#) to the company.

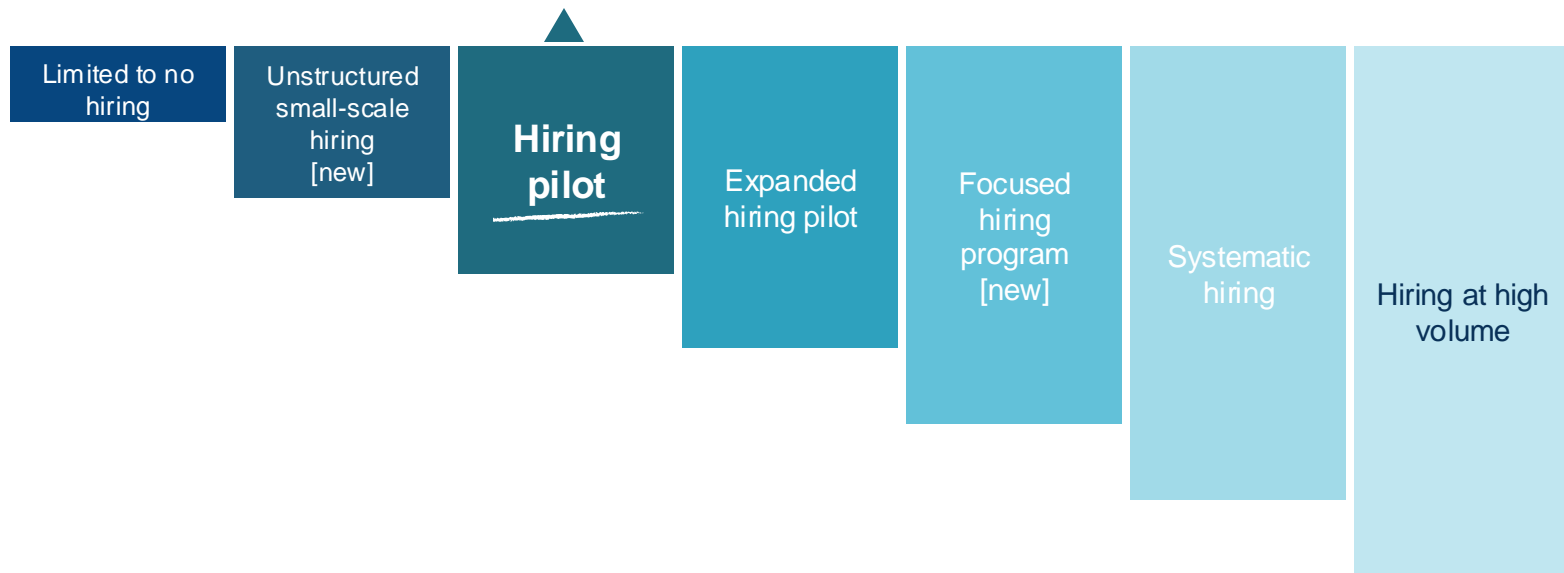
Tent's updated approach to Hiring pilots

Why an updated approach to hiring pilots?

- While Tent has been working with companies for several years on their efforts to hire refugees, we realized we need a more systematic way to define various stages of hiring, from just starting out to more advanced.
- We hope that our updated approach will allow us to better diagnose companies' refugee hiring efforts -- and how we can most effectively support companies, whatever stage they are at.
- One of the stages we consider to be the most critical is a refugee hiring pilot, and we have also updated our own thinking about pilots, which we'll focus on today.



Summary of refugee stages



Hiring pilot

Description: A company is undertaking a “hiring pilot” when it:

- Take steps to hire refugees in a country, with the goal of hiring at least a few refugees;
- Review and assess the outcomes of the pilot at some point; and
- Consider the possibility of expanding refugee hiring efforts if their experience is successful.

Example:

- After having unintentionally hired a few refugees in Mexico, Walmart launched a refugee hiring pilot in June with the goal of hiring a small number of refugees at its retail stores in Mexico City by the end of 2024. If successful, Walmart plans on expanding its refugee hiring to stores in Guadalajara and Monterrey.

Tent's role: We'll work with companies to start a hiring pilot – as well as provide support along the way.

Why invest in setting up a hiring pilot?

We believe that a setting up a hiring pilot will allow companies to **test hiring refugees** and learn very specific insights from the experience.

PHASE 1:

Establish parameters for pilot

First, we strongly encourage companies to establish parameters of pilot to be able to “test” and learn from experience

- A clear **timeline** for the pilot (e.g. 6 months)
- **Location(s)**
- **Role(s)**
- **Relevant job openings** (i.e., total number of relevant roles likely to be filled in the selected location over the timeline for the pilot)
- **A specific hiring target**
- **Other key performance indicators** you may want to assess the pilot on (e.g., the number of offers made, number of offers accepted, number of hires still on the job after X weeks)

Second, we strongly encourage companies to define key activities for the pilot

- A clear plan for sourcing refugee candidates – such as working with partner organizations
- Determine what (if any) adjustments you'll make in screening, hiring, or onboarding
- How you plan to track refugee hires



Second, we strongly encourage companies to define key activities for the pilot

- Company leads will help advance the pilot and liaise with Tent, tending to come from HR, DEI, or CSR/public policy
- Together with the lead, we'll determine:
 - A defined cadence for “check ins” with Tent to review the progress of the pilot
 - Whether Tent should provide any trainings to hiring managers
 - Whether Tent can support on the current approach to hiring, such as refugee recruitment methods



PHASE 2:

Tips for implementing the pilot



Work effectively with local partners

Refugee job seekers may not be aware of vacancies at your company:

- Recently-arrived refugees typically aren't tapped into professional or social networks to link them to jobs.
- They may also not be aware of common ways of finding jobs in Canada, such as online job boards or platforms.

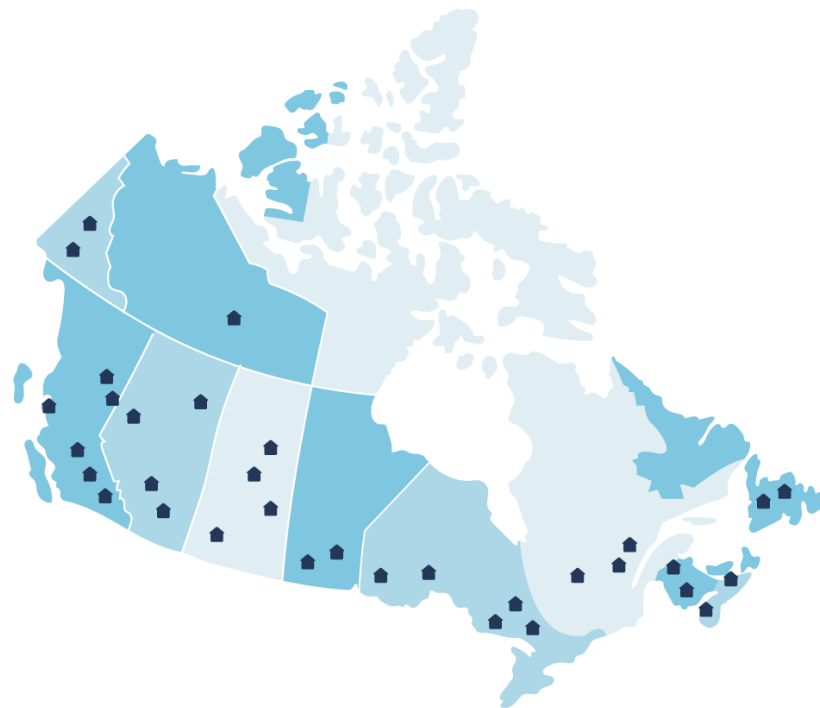
Working with local partner/s can help you to reach refugee job seekers, and Tent can introduce you to relevant organizations



Watch out: Most potential local partners will focus on a specific city or region, rather than on an entire country. (Even national or regional organizations often have relatively independent local offices and programs). If you need support more broadly across a national market, you may need to work with multiple partners. Tent can help facilitate this!

Refugees are located in urban and rural areas of all sizes throughout Canada

Province / Territory	Total
Ontario	109,180
Alberta	47,965
Quebec	37,625
British Columbia	24,250
Manitoba	15,255
Saskatchewan	10,070
Nova Scotia	6,890
New Brunswick	5,910
Newfoundland and Labrador	3,600



Provinces with most resettled refugees during January 2015 to December 2023

Examine your screening and recruitment process to remove unnecessary barriers

- Train your teams to ensure they are not screening out refugees due to resume gaps, lack of local experience, unrecognized credentials, or for seeming “overqualified”
- Assess a candidate’s potential, not their interviewing skills



Members' Hub Resources:

Guidebook on [Employer's Guide to Fostering Inclusion for Refugees in the Workplace](#)



Consider transportation barriers that may discourage refugees from applying

- Given that refugees are new to Canada, it can take them many months to secure a driver's license and save sufficient funds to rent and/or buy a car
- If your interview location is not accessible via public transportation, companies should invest in solutions to help refugees get to an interview/job (e.g. arrange a carpooling or shuttle van, allow for more remote work, etc.)



Members' Hub Resources:

Guideline on “Addressing Transportation Barriers for Refugee Employees in Canada”

Set up a refugee-specific onboarding program

- Tailor your onboarding experience for refugee employees to reduce cultural and language barriers and ensure that they are set up for success.

Ex: Connect them with internal champions/'buddies'. Conduct a benefits and resources info session, set up "lunch and learns" on workplace readiness, distribute onboarding materials in refugee employees' native language, share info helpful to newcomers (e.g. how to access public transport to work)



Members' Hub Resources:

Training on "Setting up refugee employees and their teams for success in Canada"



Examples of how companies can adjust their hiring practices

Out-of-date or lack of skills

- Determine whether required skills are absolutely necessary for the role.
- Test for any technical skills that are a prerequisite for doing the job (e.g., numeracy, computer literacy, experience operating heavy machinery, business-level written English/French).

Limited language proficiency

- Challenge your team to assess the level of local language proficiency that is actually required for the role
- Partner with local organizations that can assist with interpretation and paperwork for initial screening and interviews.

Low familiarity with Canadian workplace norms

- Assign buddies or mentors to new refugee employees so they have a partner who can help to acclimate to your workplace culture
- Explain to interviewers that refugee candidates may not always adhere to certain norms; this may be a sign of cultural difference, not disrespect

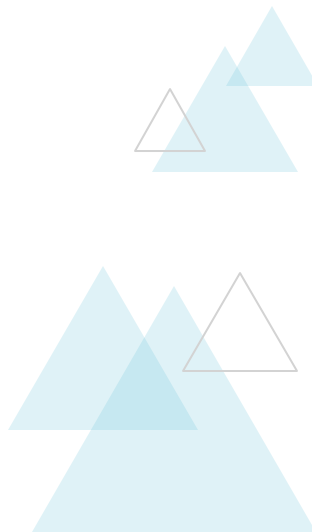
PHASE 3:

Assess the pilot with Tent



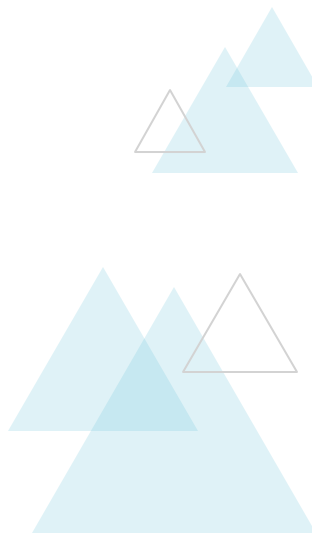
Debrief with Tent to assess the pilot

- Share any relevant data with Tent, such as:
 - The number of refugees hired
 - The number of offers made, and how the hires fared
 - Any other KPIs that were identified at the outset
- In addition, we'd also be interested to know:
 - What worked well for the pilot
 - What did not work well for the pilot



Based on your assessment of the pilot...

- We will want to discuss with you what your company will do next, such as:
 - Expand the hiring pilot, e.g. to more locations, other roles, etc.
 - Replicate the hiring pilot without expanding it, e.g. in another location
 - Discontinue with refugee hiring for various reasons





Thank you!

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