

What, or who, is a refugee? According the 1951 United Nations *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* and its amended definition in the 1967 *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* (and Canada is a signatory to both) a refugee is

A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it...<sup>1</sup>

From the Canadian government website:

Refugees destined to Quebec fall under the Canada-Quebec Accord on Immigration...which has a number of provisions concerning the division of responsibilities between Canada and Quebec.

Quebec is responsible for the selection of refugees and persons in similar circumstances. Those selected by the province receive a Certificat de sélection du Québec (CSQ). When issuing a CSQ, Quebec considers its own criteria, including criteria related to settlement potential.

In accordance with its international obligations, however, it is Canada that determines who is a refugee within the meaning of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and who is a person in similar circumstances in need of Canada's protection. The federal government ensures that statutory admission requirements (medical, criminal and security checks) are met before issuing a visa.

However, Canada cannot admit a refugee or person in similar circumstances identified by Canada who is destined to Quebec but who does not meet Quebec's selection criteria.<sup>2</sup>

(<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/refugees/quebec.asp>)

So while Quebec maintains control over its own immigration policy, the definition of refugee is an international one and a refugee admitted for resettlement in Quebec has met the United Nations Convention criteria defining refugee status.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convention\\_relating\\_to\\_the\\_Status\\_of\\_Refugees#Definition\\_of\\_a\\_refugee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convention_relating_to_the_Status_of_Refugees#Definition_of_a_refugee)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/refugees/quebec.asp>