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Prepared by AAISA's Research and Policy Unit

2015 Federal Election

On Monday, October 19th, Canadians will head to the polls. Elections are a crucial time for individuals and organizations to engage with the political process on social and economic policies.

During this time, it can be difficult to find concise and useful information on the issues that impact newcomer Canadians and the settlement sector. For this reason, AAISA has prepared a document that will provide Alberta's settlement sector with a quick snapshot of where each political party stands when it comes to immigration, settlement and integration policy. A comparative chart¹ is accompanied by a list of targeted questions and resources. This information can be used to guide newcomer serving agencies as they engage with party leaders and candidates during the election at campaign events, debates, door knocking or via telephone and social media.

Political Party	Leader & Platform	Settlement and Integration Policies
Conservative Party of Canada	The Right Honourable Stephen Harper @pmharper Platform available at: http://www.conservative.ca/	<i>No explicit mention of settlement and integration or immigration policy in platform.</i> Related Policies and Campaign Pledges: 1. Add \$40 million over five years for an existing federal loans program that offers financial support to new Canadians during the foreign credential recognition process. This funding will add to the \$35 million already committed to the program in the last budget. 2. Commit to resettling 10,000 refugees from Syria and Iraq over the next four years (in addition to the January 2015 promise to resettle 10,000 Syrians). 3. Spend \$9 million over three years to help the Office of Religious Freedom protect places of worship and religious artifacts targeted by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.
Green Party of Canada	Elizabeth May @ElizabethMay Platform available at: http://www.greenparty.ca/en/vision-green	<i>A comprehensive settlement and integration policy platform that focuses on seventeen key issues.</i> Core Policies and Campaign Pledges: 1. Resettle 40,000 Syrian refugees over the next five years. 2. Eliminate the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and increase immigration to areas with

¹ This comparative chart was developed based on the content available on each political party's websites and within their official platforms.



	<p>labour shortages.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Advocate for the inclusion of environmental refugees as a refugee category. 4. Press professional societies to remove unnecessary barriers to the recognition of professional credentials for immigrants; eliminate the evaluation of foreign credentials for immigration purposes and instead establish realistic criteria for immigrants based on existing job opportunities; and ensure immigrants have licensing requirements met before arrival. 5. Allocate considerably more funding for official language training. 6. Address the needs of people living in Canada without official status. 7. Repeal Bill C-51, the Anti-Terrorism Act. 8. Work with municipal and provincial governments to improve the integration of new Canadians and support multicultural communities by assisting cultural organizations to obtain charitable status. 9. Reverse the Harper administration's policies that create barriers to family reunification.
<p>Liberal Party of Canada Justin Trudeau @JustinTrudeau</p> <p>Platform available at: https://www.liberal.ca/realchange/</p>	<p><i>No explicit mention of settlement and integration policy in platform.</i></p> <p>Related Policies and Campaign Pledges:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invest an additional \$100 million in 2015/2016 to increase refugee processing, sponsorship and settlement services in Canada. 2. Invest \$100 million to the United Nations' Refugee Agency for relief work in Syria and surrounding countries. 3. Adopt a federal government-wide open and merit-based appointment process to ensure gender parity and the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and minority groups are reflected in positions of leadership. 4. Create new performance standards for services offered by the federal government (<i>i.e. Citizenship and Immigration Canada</i>), including streamlining applications, reducing wait times, and money-back guarantees.
<p>New Democratic Thomas Mulcair @ThomasMulcair</p>	<p><i>No explicit mention of settlement and integration policy in platform.</i></p>



**Party of
 Canada**

Platform available at:
<http://www.ndp.ca/issues>

Related Policies and Campaign Pledges:

“Five-Point Plan to Help Syrian Refugees”

1. Resettle 10,000 government sponsored Syrian refugees by the end of 2015 by increasing Canadian immigration staff in the region and fast-tracking private sponsorship with no cap.
2. Increase the number of Syrian government sponsored refugees by 9,000 per year for the next 4 years beginning in 2016.
3. Fast-track private sponsorships with no cap and remove bureaucratic obstacles to private sponsorship.
4. Treat all refugees equally by ending Canada’s policy of religious discrimination.
5. Provide temporary resident permits for Syrians who wish to come to Canada to stay temporarily with family.

Top 5 Questions to Ask Candidates in Your Riding:

1. Can you expand on your party’s position regarding the role of the Canadian government in the current Syrian migrant crisis?
2. Is your party open to amending the revocation of citizenship component of Bill C-24?
3. What recommendations do you have for improving the Express Entry System that was implemented in January, 2015? How would these improvements lead to better settlement and integration outcomes for newcomers?
4. What specific actions would your party undertake to improve the settlement and integration experience of newcomers in Alberta communities? For example: improved family reunification, shorter visa processing times, increased pre-arrival services or funding for settlement services such as ESL and FSL training.
5. What would your party do to create more collaborative and effective relationships between the government and newcomer serving agencies in communities across Alberta and Canada?

Media Coverage on Immigration in the Federal Election

<i>The Globe and Mail</i> , “Ottawa fast-tracks refugee resettlement process”
<i>The Globe and Mail</i> , “How Canada could be doing more to stop the migrant crisis”
<i>Forbes Magazine</i> , “Immigration a key issue in Canadian election campaign”
<i>The Vancouver Sun</i> , “Canada favours temporary residents to permanent: report”
<i>Maclean’s</i> , “Civil rights groups launch constitutional challenge over Bill C-24”
<i>Maclean’s</i> , “Making sense of Canada’s refugee and immigration numbers”

Additional Resources

<i>Vote Compass</i> , Online tool to find out how your views align with those of the candidates running for election
<i>Huffington Post</i> , “Federal Election 2015: Key campaign promises made so far”
<i>The Globe and Mail</i> , “Everything you need to know about political polling”



Alberta Association of Immigrant
Serving Agencies

Research Bulletin



The Globe and Mail, ["Canadian political polls"](#)

Pundit's Guide, ["Data, analysis and charts on Canadian federal elections, ridings, parties and candidates"](#)

Macleans, [Full coverage of federal politics](#)

National Newswatch, [Full coverage of politics in Ottawa and the provinces](#)