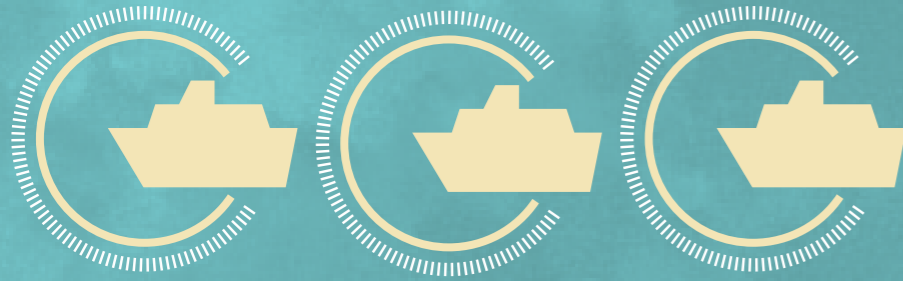


**Humanitarian**  
Mission Services

# ASYLUM SEEKERS & REFUGEES MYTHBUSTERS

# REFUGEES & ASYLUM SEEKERS

BUSTING POPULAR MYTHS SURROUNDING REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS - PRESENTED BY THE SALVATION ARMY



## MYTH: BOAT PEOPLE ARE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

**Fact:** People arriving by boat are not illegal immigrants. As Australia is a signatory to the UN Convention it is not illegal for a person to seek asylum without a visa, regardless of how they arrive.



## MYTH: PEOPLE SHOULD COME THROUGH THE 'RIGHT' CHANNELS AND WAIT THEIR TURN.

**FACT:** There is no such thing as a 'right' channel when fleeing persecution. In order to be recognised as a refugee or asylum seeker, one must be outside their home country. For people fleeing from places like Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran, it is very difficult to obtain refugee protection. Australia is one of the few countries in the region that is a signatory to the Refugee Convention.

## MYTH: PEOPLE COMING TO AUSTRALIA ON BOATS ARE ECONOMIC MIGRANTS AND COUNTRY SHOPPERS.

**FACT:** For the majority of people coming by boat to Australia, they are fleeing situations of war and persecution. In recent years, over 90 percent of people arriving by boat were found to be in need of protection and granted refugee status.



## MYTH: BOAT PEOPLE JUMP THE QUEUE ON PEOPLE WAITING PATIENTLY IN CAMPS.

**FACT:** Around the world there is no orderly procedure or queue in which people are processed and granted protection status. The process for reviewing asylum claims is determined on a number of factors including: location, date of application and the availability of places.

## MYTH: WE NEED TO STOP THE BOATS AND WE WILL STOP THE PROBLEM!

**FACT:** More people arrive by air than by boat. In 2011, over 50 percent of asylum seekers arriving in Australia arrived by air. Nearly all people arriving by boat have been found to be refugees, compared to only 44 percent of air arrivals actually being granted refugee protection. People board boats when there is no other option available to them. They have a choice to live in fear, limbo or risk their lives at sea. Many people cannot get visas to fly to Australia so they feel they have little choice left.

## MYTH: WE ARE BEING SWAMPED BY BOAT PEOPLE!

**FACT:** Asylum seekers arriving by boat make up a small fraction of Australia's annual permanent migration intake. In 2011, 11,491 asylum seekers arrived in Australia. Less than half were boat arrivals. 90 percent of these boat arrivals became refugees. The developing world hosts around 80 percent of the world's refugees and displaced peoples.



**50% OF ASYLUM SEEKERS ARRIVE BY AIR**

## MYTH: ALL THE ASYLUM SEEKERS ARE COMING TO AUSTRALIA. CAN'T THEY GO ELSEWHERE?

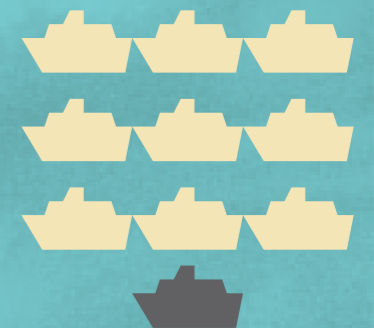
**FACT:** Australia hosts just 0.3 percent of the world's refugees. Worldwide every day 23,000 people are displaced from their homes. This is more than the total number of people who sought asylum in Australia in 2012.

HOSTED BY AUSTRALIA (0.3%)



**44%**

OF AIR ARRIVALS GRANTED PROTECTION STATUS



**90%**

OF BOAT ARRIVALS GRANTED PROTECTION STATUS

Cover Photo - Ghasan and his family fled to Jordan after his father was shot. They live in one of the eight apartments on the sixth floor. They have no heating and need winter clothing. The blanket provides scant protection against the cold.  
UNHCR/ B. Sokol

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