

REFUGEES IN CANADA: FACTS

Refugees and others seeking protection pose very little risk to Canada's security

Refugees and others seeking protection in Canada are not threats to security – they are seeking security and protection from threats to their own lives.

Refugee claimants all go through a front-end security screening. Through this process, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) checks all refugee claimants on arrival in Canada. Since the screening was put in place in 2001, the number of claimants found to represent any kind of security concern has been statistically insignificant. It is far more difficult to enter Canada as a refugee than as a visitor, because the refugee determination process involves security checks by CSIS and the RCMP, fingerprinting and interviews.

Refugees receive limited, if any, social assistance from government authorities

For several years, a persistent chain email has been circulating claiming that refugees receive significantly more money in income assistance than Canadians collecting a pension. The information, which is based on a letter published in the *Toronto Star*, has been [disproven by the federal government](#) and the [Canadian Council for Refugees](#).

Refugees come to Canada in different ways, but no matter the category, refugees receive very limited income assistance from the government.

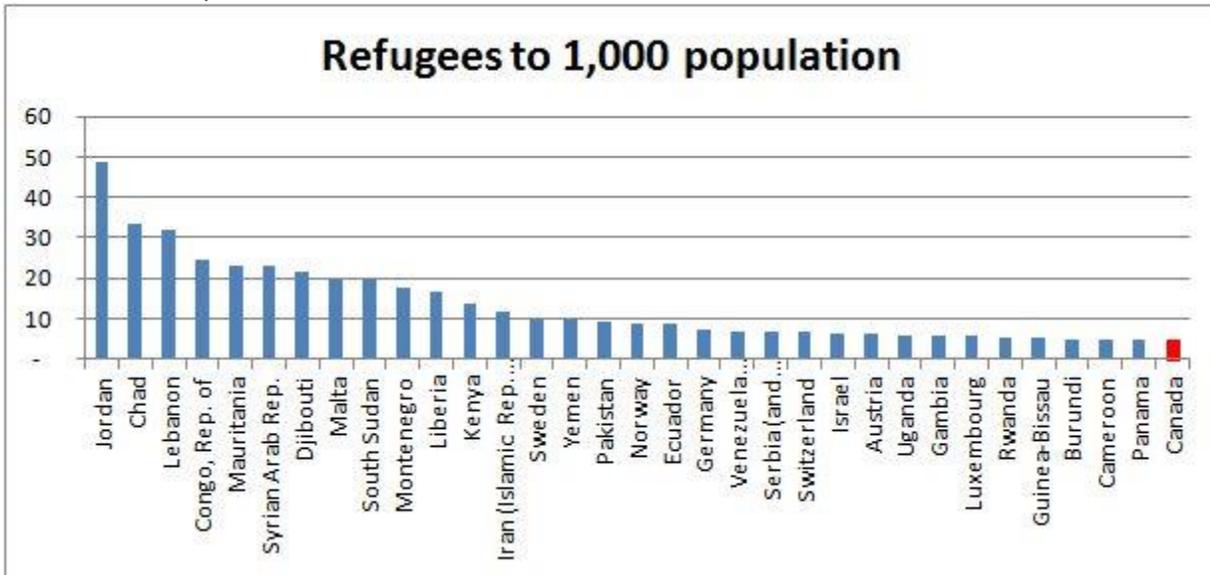
The true picture is that:

- **Refugee claimants** and refugees recognized by the Immigration and Refugee Board [receive no special income assistance](#). They may, depending on provincial regulations, be entitled to social assistance like other residents.
- **Privately sponsored refugees** are not entitled to government assistance (including provincial assistance) during the period of their sponsorship (usually for one year after arrival in Canada). Their income support must be provided by their sponsors – volunteer community groups.
- **Government assisted refugees** have access to financial assistance from the federal government through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP). This financial assistance is generally for one year maximum and is received only if they do not have their own financial resources or income. The exact rate depends on the size of the family and is tied to social assistance rates. In Ontario, for example, a single person receives \$781 per month. In addition, government-assisted refugees are entitled to a one-time set up allowance, to cover such things as clothes, basic household effects and staples, and telephone installation. For a single person there is a maximum one-time allowance of \$905, plus a \$564 loan for house rental and telephone line deposits.

Canada has fewer refugees per capita than many other countries

Canada has just 5 refugees per 1,000 population, compared to more than **20 refugees per 1,000** in Jordan, Chad, Lebanon, Congo-Brazzaville, Mauritania, Syria and Djibouti.

Jordan has 49 per 1,000!



Canada comes 33rd when we rank countries according to the number of refugees per capita. Other countries ahead of Canada include Sweden, Germany, Switzerland, Israel and Austria.

Source: UNHCR, Global Trends 2012: Excel Annex tables, Table 24

Refugees live in many different circumstances, not just in camps

Refugees are people who have been forced from their homes by human rights abuses. All refugees have a right to protection, wherever they are. Saying that some refugees are more deserving than others is the same as saying that some human beings are of less value than others.

Canada has been welcoming refugees for decades now.

Each year, Canada provides asylum to more than 10,000 persecuted persons and welcomes another 12,000 refugees from abroad.

As a member of the international community, Canada helps find solutions to prolonged and emerging refugee situations and helps emerging democracies try to solve many of the problems that create refugee populations.