Refugees: Myths...Busted!
Choosing facts over fears

**MYTH 1:** Most refugees are in Western countries.

**Truth:** The vast majority of the world’s refugees are in the Global South. Only a tiny minority of refugees are found in Canada and the rest of the wealthiest countries.

![Pie chart showing 85% of refugees in the Global South and 15% in the wealthiest countries.](Source: UNHCR Global Trends)

**MYTH 2:** Refugees just want to take advantage of Canadians’ generous social programs.

**Truth:** Refugees were forced to flee their homes. Many had to leave behind good jobs. Most are eager to work, but may need first to learn English/French. Refugee claimants wait months for Canada to issue them a work permit.

**MYTH 3:** Refugees take jobs from Canadians

**Truth:** Refugees create jobs and expand the domestic market. According to OECD research, they create a job for every one they occupy.

“Many of today’s most successful business leaders were refugees from Lebanon; from the civil war in the ’60s and ’70s … [They] come into Nova Scotia, create wealth, create jobs, and increase tax revenue.”

Rob Batherson, chair of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce
MYTH 4: Refugee healthcare costs are a burden for Canadians

**Truth:** The cost of healthcare for refugees and refugee claimants is only a fraction of that of other Canadians. Health care costs are disproportionately for the elderly: the average age of refugees is much lower than of Canadians.

![Health care costs chart](chart.png)

MYTH 5: Refugees receive more than Canadians on welfare.

**Truth:** Government-assisted refugees receive the equivalent of the minimum amount for provincial social assistance.

MYTH 6: Refugees receive more financial support than pensioners do.

**Truth:** Refugees come to Canada in different ways, but no matter the category, refugees receive very limited income assistance, if any, from the government. No category receives more than the minimum amount for provincial social assistance.

![Financial support diagram](diagram.png)

MYTH 7: Refugees might pose a security risk to Canada

**Truth:** Refugees are people who are fleeing violence and seeking security. Refugees go through rigorous security checks, much more than the millions of visitors entering Canada each year.
**MYTH 8:** Refugees are helpless and weak

**Truth:** Refugees are survivors, and have shown courage, determination and resilience in escaping persecution.

**MYTH 9:** Refugees jump the queue over more deserving immigrants

**Truth:** Refugees were forced to flee, while immigrants choose to move. Canada recognizes this by having separate programs for refugees. However, refugees and their families often wait longer for immigration processing than immigrants.

**Processing times in months**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Economic immigrants</th>
<th>Family class spouse/children</th>
<th>Privately sponsored</th>
<th>Dependants abroad</th>
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