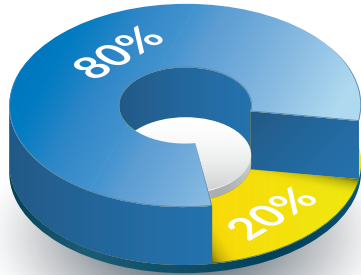


# WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT IRREGULAR BORDER CROSSINGS

## MOST REFUGEE CLAIMANTS ENTER CANADA THROUGH OFFICIAL ENTRY POINTS



Source: IRCC, 2019 statistics

In the first five months of 2019, **80%** of refugee claimants in Canada made their refugee claim at the airport, at an official border post or at an inland immigration office.

## CROSSING THE BORDER AT AN UNOFFICIAL ENTRY POINT TO CLAIM ASYLUM IS NOT A PUNISHABLE OFFENCE

To enter Canada without prior authorization for the purpose of seeking asylum is accepted under international and Canadian law.

**Why?** Because it is not always safe or even possible for a person whose life is at risk to obtain proper travel documents to reach safety in another country.

**IRREGULAR, NOT ILLEGAL**

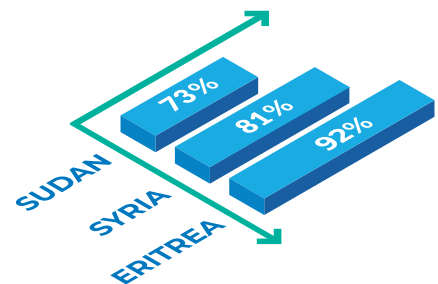


## MOST REFUGEE CLAIMANTS CROSSING THE BORDER AT AN UNOFFICIAL ENTRY POINT ARE FLEEING VIOLENCE AND PERSECUTION



Source: IRB.

**More than half** of the refugee claimants who crossed the Canadian border irregularly and had their case finalized by the Immigration and Refugee Board between Feb. 2017 - Mar. 2019, **were recognized as refugees.**

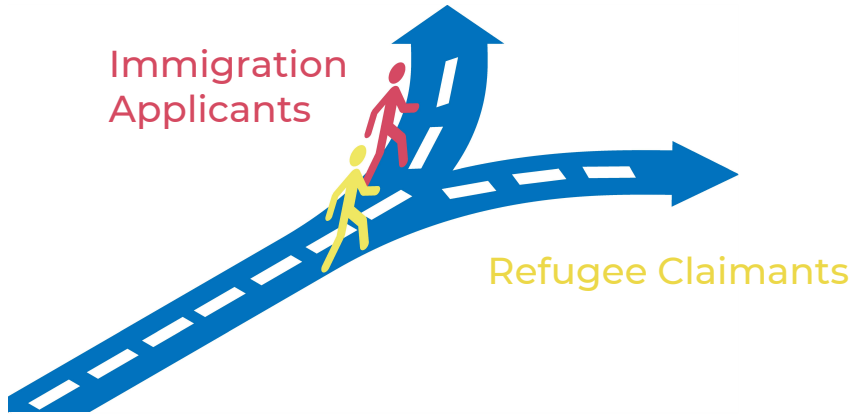


Source: IRB.

Those coming from countries at war or with serious human rights issues have a higher acceptance rate.

## NO QUEUE-JUMPING

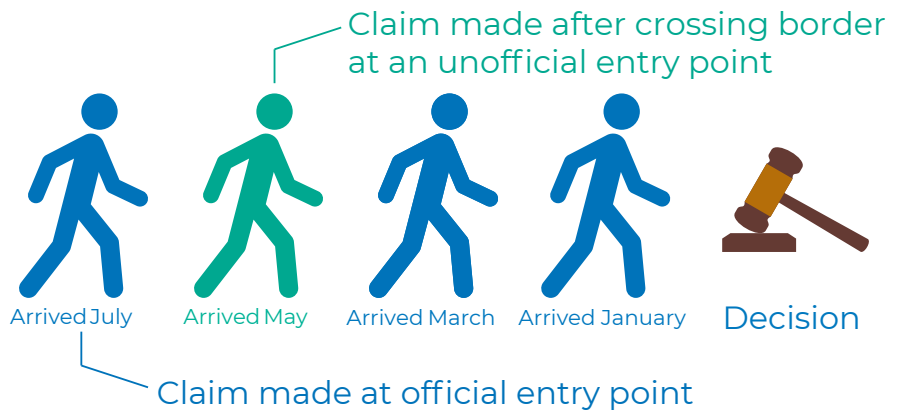
Refugee claimants who cross the Canadian border at an unofficial entry point are not taking the space of others.



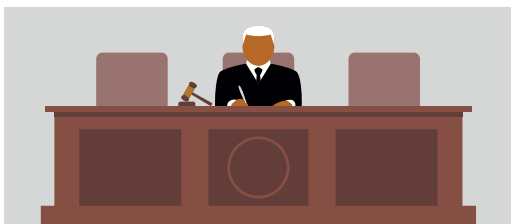
Refugee claimants do not delay or take the spot of economic / family-class immigrants or refugees resettled from abroad as they are processed in entirely different programs and selected on different criteria.

## NO PRIORITIZATION

Refugee claimants who cross the border at an unofficial entry point are not prioritized over those who make their refugee claim at an official point of entry in Canada. All refugee claims irrespective of mode of arrival are processed on a first-come first served basis.



## NO SHORTCUTS FOR REFUGEE CLAIMANTS CROSSING THE BORDER AT AN UNOFFICIAL ENTRY POINT



Canadian officials assess whether refugee claimants' fear of persecution in their home country is well founded irrespective of the mode of arrival.

The merit of each claim is assessed individually based on the specific facts of the case, the claimant's testimony and evidence provided. If the claim is rejected and the person has exhausted all legal avenues, s/he will receive a removal order and be required to leave Canada.

## ALL REFUGEE CLAIMANTS ENTERING CANADA GO THROUGH A RIGOROUS SCREENING



The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is stationed full time at Roxham Road near Lacolle border in Quebec, where 97% of irregular arrivals take place.

Refugee claimants crossing the Canadian border at an unofficial entry point present themselves without delay to the Canadian authorities so that they can make a refugee claim. They are checked upon arrival by both the RCMP and the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) regarding potential security threats and public health hazards.

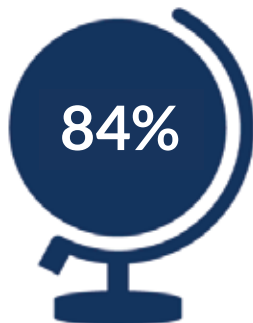
The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act excludes refugee claimants if they are found to pose a security risk or are convicted/suspected of serious criminality.

Between February 2017 and March 2019, **less than 0.5%** of refugee claimants who had entered Canada at a non-official border crossing **had a serious criminal background.**

**Refugee claimants are not dangerous persons but are, in fact, fleeing danger themselves.**



## ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF REFUGEES COME TO CANADA



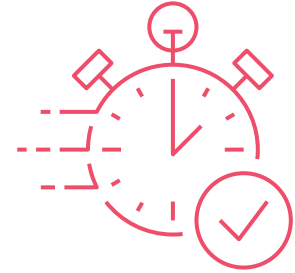
84 per cent of the world's displaced people are in developing countries

Actual refugee crises are taking place in countries that receive millions of refugees year after year, such as: Turkey, Pakistan, Uganda, Sudan, Iran, Lebanon, Bangladesh and Ethiopia, which often have limited means to provide the basics to refugees and local communities hosting them.

**Only a small number of refugees go to the richest countries, including Canada, which receives less than 0.3% of the world's refugee population.**

**In 2018, refugee claimants only represented 0.15% of the total Canadian population.**

## CANADA HAS A STRONG ASYLUM SYSTEM



Refugee claims continue to be well-managed and processed in an orderly manner, as appropriate mechanisms have been put in place to adapt to the increase of refugee claims in the last two years by the government (at the federal, provincial and municipal levels) and civil society.

Some examples:

- Simplified processing and improved reception conditions at the border to accommodate larger numbers of refugee claimants.
- Simplified and faster processing of work permits to minimize pressures on provincial social services.
- 70% increase in processing capacity of asylum claims at the Immigration and Refugee Board between 2016-2018 thanks to additional resources and streamlined processes.
- Increased funding and services towards housing.
- Collecting and donating food, clothing and furniture for refugee claimants settling in their new homes by Canadian citizens from all walks of life.

## REFUGEES SHOULD NOT BE BLAMED FOR HOUSING/SHELTER SHORTAGES

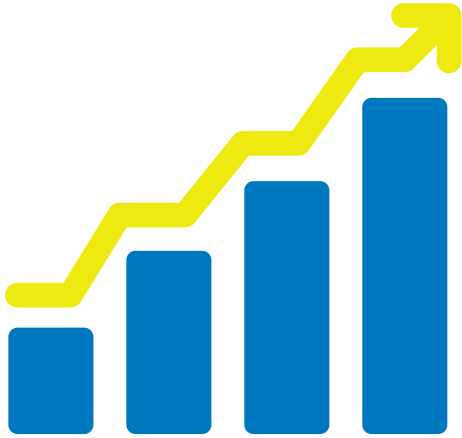


Toronto and Ottawa city shelters are facing capacity challenges. However, **these issues existed well before the increase of refugee claimants in 2017.**

For example, Toronto's shelter system has been running at over 90% of its capacity for the last decade.

Temporary shelters for refugee claimants in Montreal are currently running at less than half of their capacity.

## REFUGEES CONTRIBUTE TO CANADA'S GROWTH, REGARDLESS OF THEIR MODE OF ARRIVAL



› Refugees help address Canada's aging population. They are 10 years younger on average than Canadian-born citizens.

› Refugees have the highest citizenship rate of all immigration categories (89%), which demonstrates their strong sense of belonging to this country.

**Their contributions far outweigh the financial costs of their initial integration.**

› Refugee claimants obtain a work permit within 30 days of making their claim. They contribute to the Canadian economy by adding to its workforce, by paying taxes and spending money on goods, housing and transportation.

› They fill jobs that are often not sought out by Canadians and help reduce labour shortages affecting many businesses, especially in communities outside main cities.

Citizenship Take-up Rates of Refugees vs. Immigrant Classes

