Global trends and refugee resettlement in Aotearoa New Zealand

An overview
The 1951 Refugee Convention
Refugee Convention Article 1A(2)

Refugee Convention Article 1A(2): ...owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

Elements:
• Outside country of origin / habitual residence
• Unable or unwilling to return
• Owing to a fear of being persecuted
• Which is for a Convention reason
• Which is well-founded / credible
• Against which the State (or other actors of protection) cannot or will not protect
• And from which there is no reasonable internal relocation alternative

Lund University / Faculty of Law / Doctoral Student Matthew Scott / 11/20/14
Stark numbers

- By the end of 2014, 59.5 million refugees world wide.
- An increase of 8.3 million from the end of 2013
- The highest ever annual increase
Top hosts

1. Turkey (1.59 million)
2. Pakistan (1.51 million)
3. Lebanon (1.15 million)
4. Islamic Republic of Iran (982,000)
5. Ethiopia (659,500)
6. Jordan (654,100)
Durable solutions

1. Voluntary repatriation to the country of origin
2. Local integration in the country of first asylum
3. Integration in a third country of resettlement for only 1% of refugees.
The numbers of refugees resettled

Has decreased over recent years because of

• Processing delays and

• Security concerns in Western countries

• Nevertheless resettlement offers vital human rights protection to those involved.

“the recent calls to double our refugee quota are modest to say the least.”
- Grant Bayldon, Amnesty International, July 2013
International responsibility sharing

• An avenue for New Zealand to share responsibility for the most vulnerable refugees and contribute to our international human rights obligations
NZ refugee myth #3

We accept more refugees than Australia.

when really...

Australia takes 4.7 times as many refugees than NZ per capita.

do double the refugee quota + double the funding

www.doingourbit.co.nz
The Refugee Quota System

• 750 refugees a year since 1987
• Gain permanent residence on arrival in NZ
• About 50,000 resettled since the end of WW2.
• Potential for us to do more.
• Quota set on a three-year planning cycle; provides surety, but also spells out a political agenda.
Seeking asylum; Convention Refugees

- 300 claims per year
- About 50% successful
- Eligible to apply for permanent residence; but this is not automatic or guaranteed.

Family reunification

- Refugee Family Support Category- up to 300 places a year.
- Reserved for those in greatest hardship BUT families must pay the airfares.
New Zealand refugee policy

• Underpinned by NZ’s human rights framework BUT
• The Human rights Commission is prohibited from commenting on or intervening in regards to discrimination under the implementation of the Immigration Act 2009
• No formal refugee policy
• A Resettlement Strategy
NZ Resettlement Strategy

- Only applies to Quota refugees.
- Implementation emphasises getting refugees into work in line with the government’s priorities of boosting skills and employment.
Growing push for an increase in numbers
Combatting myths

**NZ refugee myth #2**
Most refugees are really just economic migrants.

**when really...**
NZ + United Nations screen all quota refugees to make sure they are fleeing persecution or war. Only 30% of asylum applicants to NZ are accepted.

**NZ refugee myth #4**
There is not enough work for refugees to come here.

**when really...**
The refugee quota brings in less than 400 working age refugees. We issue over 150,000 work visas to other non-NZers.

double the refugee quota + double the funding
www.doingourbit.co.nz
In case of Refugee Crisis
PLEASE BREAK GLASS

COMPASSION

I wish we were whales
'We have hardened our hearts. I fear we have devalued the currency of mercy. Children have asked for bread and we gave them stones. So turn back. I beg you. For the children's sake. For the sake of this nation's spirit. Raise us back up to our best selves. Turn back while there's still time.'

-Tim Winton
Author

I BELIEVE
LOVE MAKES A WAY
FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS
#LoveMakesAWay