

# The 1951 refugee convention the 1951 refugee convention



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# The 1951 Refugee Convention

It is important to know that the UK is one of the signatories to the 1951 refugee convention therefore; when a person asks for asylum in the UK there are in fact asking the authorities to recognise them as a refugee under the 1951 UN refugee convention and they will qualify for protection under the refugee convention if they have a well founded fear of persecution or they may claim under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (or both), Article 3 of The European Convention on Human Rights states that ' No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'

It is important to consider that the UK has responsibility to provide them with accommodation and financial supports because UK is on one of the signatories to the 1951 refugee convention and European Convention on Human Rights.

**Now a day the majority of debates are against asylum seekers /refugees with some arguments in favour of them.**

First of all press and politicians are making a negative view on public opinion regarding asylum issue in the UK by inaccurate and offensive use of language to describe asylum seekers, " People have little trust in the asylum system, believing it to be out of control, too generous to asylum seekers, and ineffective at removing refused asylum seekers."(Hobson, Cox, Sagovsky, 2008, P. 17), When you listen to press or politicians you probably have the impression that the UK is invaded by asylum seekers (See image 1) Headline

published in daily Express on 17 December 2002, they should use an accurate terminology when speaking about asylum seekers and immigration,

‘ The debate is not concerned with whether asylum is a problem, but how best to tackle it.’ (Brendon 2003)

But the question is; Are asylum seekers really invaded the UK! There are many arguments against asylum seekers and refugees

For example:

- Not genuine refugee, This argument is based on that the majority of asylum seekers are immigrant workers and they are here to ‘ steal our jobs’ but the truth is if they are skilful immigrant workers or unskilful, are likely to take jobs unwanted by the UK population and are willing to work without depending on welfare benefits then they will contribute positively to the UK economy as the UK desperately needs young and skilful workers.
- They are here for our benefits: Government research then shows that the foreign-born population contributes around ten per cent more to government revenues than they receive in benefits. 1 Asylum seekers cannot able to claim welfare benefits and they only get financial support from the central government, most asylum seekers are living in poverty; Single asylum seekers in the UK have to survive on £42. 16 a week while couples without children receive £66. 13 a week.

But when they get refugee status or leave to remain in the UK they can claim benefits and most of them are of working age with qualifications and skills. In

the short term they might receive support, but in the longer term, most wish to find a job and do not want to live on the UK benefits.

Those seeking asylum tend to be aged at least 20 years old, and hence are of working age the moment they start to interact with the welfare state.

Contrast this to somebody born in the UK – who will spend at least the first 18 years of their life “scrounging off the state” (in the form of a free education system and various financial child benefits) – and it is clear that, over the course of a lifetime, it is much more likely that a successful asylum seeker will end up “in credit” with the welfare state than the life-long UK citizen. So the welfare argument fails. (Brendon (2003))

- **Crime and Terrorism:** It may be true that the crime figures are higher amongst asylum seekers but simple reason behind this is forbidden them to work, most asylum seekers are living in poverty, they get low level of support whilst claiming asylum, they only need work permission to contribute positively to the UK economy as the UK desperately needs young workers.
- **Too many foreigners:** Some believe Britain is turning to a ‘foreign land’ but the true is the UK is home to just 3.2% of nearly 9.2 million refugees world wide, in the other words what is wrong with people liking the UK even asylum seekers and refugees broaden and diversify our culture.
- **Tighten the Rules Against Them:** Some believe that the government should tighten the immigration rules in order to restrict the number being allowed into the UK, but the best way of reducing the number of asylum seekers in the long term is to reduce numbers of people forced

to flee around the world by preventing and resolving conflict and promoting respect for human rights.