

# Asylum seekers

[Parts of the World](#), [Australia](#)



Asylum Seekers- creating compassion, forming fear and arising anger As a result of the substantial 17, 202 boat arrivals on Australian shores in 2012, it's clear that the issue of Asylum Seekers isn't something that can be taken lightly; in fact this one issue has polarised the entire nation of Australia.

Those seeking asylum are desperately fleeing from a country of fear, conflict and trauma in search of a new life however the recent influx and the extensive numbers of arrivals call for a strong commitment from Australians; when is it too much... when is it ok to say no...will it benefit or be a detriment to society? These controversial questions are a hot topic for the whole population and have developed contrasting attitudes of compassion, fear and anger in a heated societal debate and have challenged the myth of a pluralistic multicultural Australia.

Many members of Australian society display culturally relative beliefs and embrace compassionate humanitarian attitudes towards the issue of asylum seekers. Unsurprisingly, most people passionately posed towards this pluralistic attitude have a much greater understanding and concern for the experiences of individual asylum seekers rather than the demands it imposes on the economy and pressure it places on pre-existing laws.

A satirical article written by Benjamin Law supports and shapes the humanitarian values by highlighting the traumatic experiences people seeking asylum face and as a result triggering emotional responses: “ The way they harp on about it, you'd think it was a matter of life or death...We must avoid listening to their stories of rape and famine, murdered siblings and starved children.” (Source F)

Statements such as these significantly contribute to humanitarian views of the debate as it promotes the resettlement of asylum seekers in Australia. Moreover, being classed as a first world country, Australia is seen as an ideal place for resettlement of these desperate and traumatised human beings.

Not only does it offer a safe haven that provides boundless opportunities for people to live a happy and safe life but it also has a wealth of resources that can accommodate many more people than what it currently caters for: “Australia certainly has the capacity to accept more people” (Source B) consequently compassionately posed Australians argue the pointlessness in sending those seeking asylum in Australia to a disadvantaged country like Papua New Guinea: “A country far less equipped to deal with an increasing in population and refugee influx than Australia.” (Source B).

Evidently, the culturally relative and humanitarian views of the Asylum Seeker debate display a much greater concern of individual experiences and knowledge and are often developed as a result of information that prompts an emotional response. The nation is also divided into a group that has a primary xenophobic concern for the changing demographics of Australia as a result of accepting more and more Asylum seekers each year.

This fear is derived by the media who paints stereotypical images of people of foreign lineage. In Benjamin Law’s article, he conveys common fearful and ethnocentric attitudes Australians have towards asylum seekers: “They come to ravage our country, take our jobs and plague our communities with crime, headscarves and delicious ethnic food.”

Although these may sound quite exaggerated, these are the genuine concerns people positioned on the xenophobic side of the debate have as they are contempt with the current Australian lifestyle and are worried that attitudes, values and beliefs of asylum seekers will begin to override those that are current: “ some of their prominent international spiritual leaders are now openly stating that they will eventually change Australia’s religion and laws to cater for their beliefs.” (Source B)

The proposed change of demographics in the aforementioned quote can most definitely have many subsequent changes in society that may go against the ideologies of the Australian lifestyle, such as: wearing a bikini at the beach, using particular language and also the material taught in schools. Overall, it is clear that the xenophobic attitudes of Australians stem from the messages exaggerated by the media and the threat of change, consequently developing ethnocentric beliefs.

Change can be beneficial, however a large portion of Australian society are very ethnocentric, therefore are angry about the change asylum seekers are bringing and consequently believe that asylum seekers should not be permanently resettled in Australia. This polarised group believe that asylum seekers are unwilling to assimilate to Australia society due to complaints by the media: “ It is not helped by the behaviour of some young people who declare their hatred for Australia, their dislike and contempt for our laws, and even their willingness to harm us.” (Source B)

Subsequently, develop very closed and harsh attitudes towards asylum seekers as they are under the impression that their acceptance and admittance into society will be detrimental: “ Why should I have to change

<https://assignbuster.com/asylum-seekers/>

my beliefs celebrations etc for someone moving to my country? ” (Source B) Furthermore, society has developed an angry perspective on Asylum seekers as many believe the myth that Asylum Seekers are receiving special treatment compared to the rest of Australians: “ People who arrive on Australian shores and are living in a detention centre are being given things that disadvantaged Australians deserve more.” (Raye Colbey)

Evidently, from this quote it is clear that not only do some Australians believe that asylum seekers are put above other needy Australians, but also that they drain money out of the Australian company due to pensions and the funding of detention centres. It is apparent, that angry attitudes towards the asylum seeker debate have manifested due to the belief that their acceptance and admittance into society will be detrimental to the Australian lifestyle and economy.

Overall, it is clear that the asylum seeker debate presents many strong contrasting attitudes that challenge the pluralistic multicultural Australia. These attitudes of compassion, fear and anger are often developed by media and personal experiences and have divided the country into two, main groups; culturally relative and ethnocentric. Undoubtedly, the issue of asylum seekers will continue to cause controversy amongst the entire nation; however, having a clear understanding of all the perspectives is significant to finding a solution.