

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

THIS COMIC STRIP WAS PRODUCED TO CLARIFY THE DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS "REFUGEE" AND "ASYLUM SEEKER". IT DOES NOT CLAIM TO COVER ALL POSSIBLE EXPERIENCES.

PRESENTED BY
THE CENTER OF EXPERTISE ON THE WELL-BEING
AND PHYSICAL HEALTH OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS
(CERDA) OF CIUSSS CENTRE-OUEST-DE-L'ÎLE-DE-MONTRÉAL

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BEFORE IT BECOMES A LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STATUS, THE TERM "REFUGEE" FIRST EXPRESSES THE RECOGNITION OF A PERSECUTION EXPERIENCE.



IN 1951, THE GENEVA CONVENTION RELATING TO THE STATUS OF REFUGEES GAVE AN OFFICIAL DIMENSION TO THIS RECOGNITION AND PROVIDED A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE TERM.



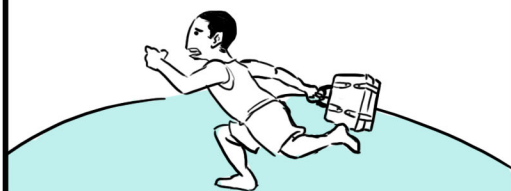
THIS IS A MIGRATORY STATUS PROTECTED BY INTERNATIONAL LAW



ACCORDING TO THE GENEVA CONVENTION, A PERSON IS A REFUGEE WHEN HE OR SHE IS OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY OF HIS OR HER NATIONALITY AND HAS A WELL-FOUNDED FEAR OF BEING PERSECUTED BECAUSE OF HIS OR HER...



THE PERSON IS FLEEING HIS OR HER COUNTRY BECAUSE HIS OR HER LIFE IS IN DANGER AND THREATENED. THIS IS REFERRED AS "FORCED MIGRATION".

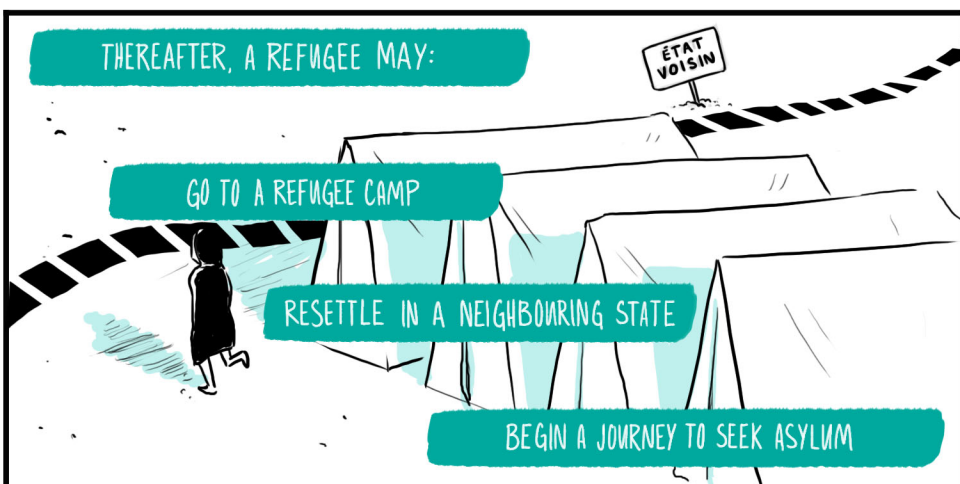


THEREAFTER, A REFUGEE MAY:

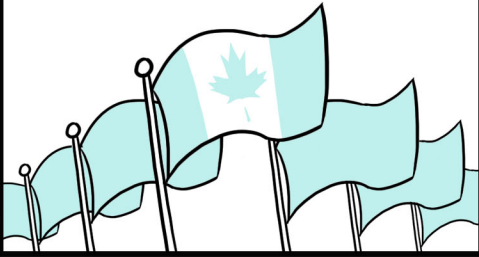
GO TO A REFUGEE CAMP

RESETTLE IN A NEIGHBOURING STATE

BEGIN A JOURNEY TO SEEK ASYLUM



SINCE 1969, CANADA HAS BEEN A SIGNATORY TO THE GENEVA CONVENTION AMONG 145 COUNTRIES.



EACH YEAR, A FEW THOUSAND REFUGEES ARE ADMITTED TO CANADA AND SOME ARE RESETTLED IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.



THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO OBTAIN REFUGEE STATUS IN CANADA.



FROM ABROAD

TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A REFUGEE FROM ABROAD AND RESETTLED IN CANADA, YOU MUST BE RECOMMENDED BY THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR).



FOR EXAMPLE, SOME PEOPLE LIVE IN REFUGEE CAMPS FOR SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE THEIR APPLICATION IS ASSESSED AND THEY ARE RESETTLED.



THESE PERSONS ARE RECOGNIZED AS MEETING THE DEFINITION OF "REFUGEE" UNDER THE GENEVA CONVENTION.



IN CANADA, THERE ARE TWO RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS:



GOVERNMENT-ASSISTED REFUGEES



PRIVATELY SPONSORED REFUGEES (BY A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION OR A GROUP OF 2 TO 5 PEOPLE.)

REFUGEES ARRIVE IN CANADA WITH THE STATUS OF PERMANENT RESIDENTS. THEY DO NOT NEED TO TAKE ANY ADDITIONAL STEPS.

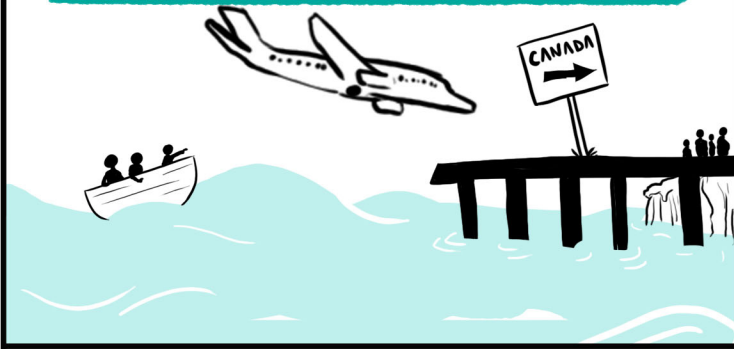


IN BOTH CASES, THEY ARE ENTITLED TO FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ONE YEAR FOLLOWING THEIR ARRIVAL.

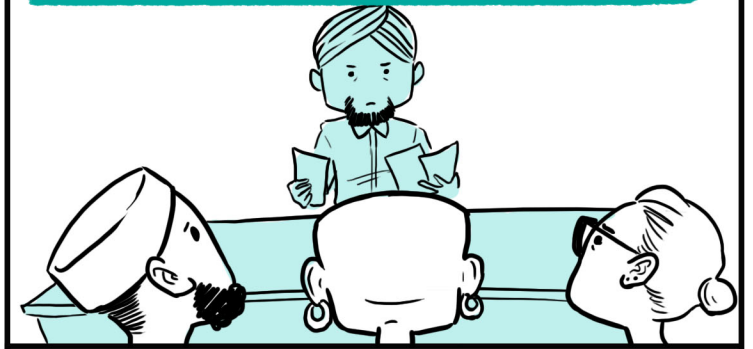


FROM CANADA

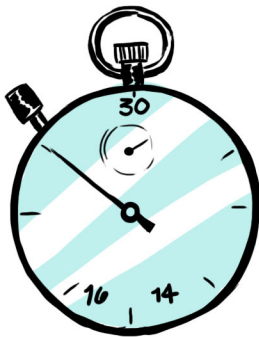
THERE IS ANOTHER WAY TO OBTAIN THE STATUS OF REFUGEE IN CANADA. SOME PEOPLE ARRIVE ON THE TERRITORY BY THEIR OWN MEANS (BY AIR, SEA OR LAND) AND CLAIM REFUGEE STATUS AT THE BORDER. IT IS ALSO SAID THAT THEY ARE SEEKING ASYLUM.



UNDER THE GENEVA CONVENTION'S PRINCIPLE OF NON-REFOULEMENT, CANADA CANNOT EXPEL THEM UNTIL IT HAS REVIEWED THEIR APPLICATION AND GRANTED A HEARING TO ENABLE THEM TO PROVE THAT THEY MEET THE CRITERIA OF THE OFFICIAL DEFINITION.



PENDING THE EXAMINATION OF THEIR APPLICATION, THEY HAVE THE STATUS OF ASYLUM SEEKERS.



IT IS A TEMPORARY RESIDENT PERMIT.

IT IS A PERIOD OF TIME TO GATHER EVIDENCE OF THEIR PERSECUTION, WHICH THEY WILL PRESENT AT THE HEARING.



GATHERING SUCH EVIDENCE CAN BE SOMETIMES A DIFFICULT EXERCISE.

ONCE THE HEARING IS OVER, SOME PEOPLE WILL BE GRANTED REFUGEE STATUS AND MAY APPLY FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE,



WHILE OTHERS WILL BE REFUSED AND SENT BACK TO THEIR COUNTRY AFTER ALL LEGAL REMEDIES HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED.



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