

North East Migration Mythbuster 2017-2018

Below are some facts and figures to help make up your own mind



What is the difference between an asylum seeker, a refugee and a migrant?

Asylum Seeker: Asylum is protection given by a country to a person fleeing from persecution in their own country. An asylum seeker is a person who has applied for asylum and is waiting for a decision.

Refugee: A person whose asylum application has been successful and who is allowed to stay in another country having proved they would face persecution back home.

Migrant: is anyone who has migrated to another country for whatever reason.

Why do refugees leave home?

Refugees are fleeing unimaginable horrors at home.

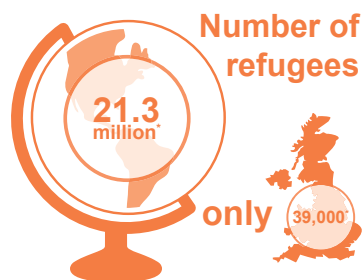
Over **320,000** people are now estimated to have died in the conflict in Syria – more than the total number of Allied troops killed in the Battle of the Somme.

Does the UK take its fair share of refugees?

The UK has a long history of helping refugees – from French Huguenots in the 17th century to the rescue of 10,000 children from Nazi Germany.

Recently, the numbers of people claiming asylum in the UK have been low.

In 2016 approximately **39,000** people claimed asylum (including dependents). This is a tiny fraction of the total number of refugees in the world (21.3 million people as of 2015 (UNHCR)

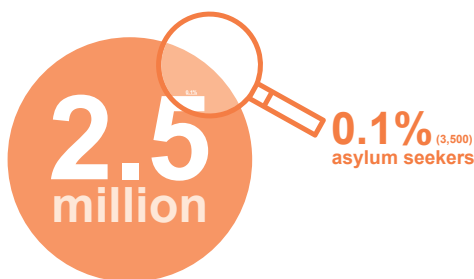


THE UK had the 6th highest number (39,000) of asylum applications in the EU and is ranked 17th in terms of asylum applications per head of resident population (gov.uk2017)

Germany – 692,000
Italy – 117,000
France – 83,000
Austria – 42,000
Greece – 39,000
United Kingdom – 39,000

What about the North East?

The North East has a population of **2.5million**. There are fewer than **3,500** asylum seekers here which represents less than **0.1%** of the total population of the region (G4S 2017)



How do refugees get to the UK?

There are very few ways for refugees to get to the UK safely and legally. This means that many people undertake dangerous journeys to reach safety – including crossing the Mediterranean Sea on overcrowded boats. There were **5,098** recorded deaths in the Mediterranean in 2016 alone.

In 2014, the UK Government set up the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme. As of September 2016, only **4,414** people have actually been resettled under the scheme.

Why do refugees and migrants come to the UK?

150 years ago, the British Empire spanned the globe and many people have subsequently migrated to the UK from its former colonies – the source of much of our wealth.

Most asylum seekers do not choose their destination country. When fleeing persecution it isn't the first thing on an individual's mind.

Those refugees with some choice often come to the UK because they have friends or family here.

The movement of migrants is not just one way. In year ending Sept 2016 323,000 people left the UK (Office for National statistics 2017)

The vast majority of migrant visas are given to international students who are estimated to be worth **£25 billion** to the UK economy (Universities UK 2017)

What financial support do refugees get when they arrive in the UK?

When someone arrives in the UK to seek asylum they can apply to the UK Government (not local councils) for financial support. This is at a lower rate than mainstream benefits such as Jobseekers Allowance.

Can asylum seekers and refugees work?

While someone is waiting for a decision on their case they are not allowed to work. Most asylum seekers find this really difficult as they want to work to use the skills that they have and to provide for themselves and their family. Someone granted refugee status can work and must pay taxes like everyone else.

Where do asylum seekers and refugees live?

If an asylum seeker has nowhere to live while they are waiting for a decision, the UK Government will give them a place to stay.

They will be 'dispersed' to an area within the UK on a no-choice basis.

The accommodation is also given on a 'no choice' basis and is often in places that are hard to let. In most cases the property will be shared with other asylum seekers including sometimes strangers sharing bedrooms.

In the North East the asylum accommodation is provided by the private companies G4S and Jomast.

Once someone has been granted asylum and told that they may remain in the UK, they can move to a new town or city. They are also able to apply for council housing or rent privately.