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# “COOLING THE HEAT ON THE ASYLUM DEBATE,”

**How big is the problem?** In 2012 developing countries hosted over 80 per cent of the world's refugees. The poorest countries were host to 2.4 million refugees. Pakistan was host to the largest number of refugees worldwide (1.6 million), followed by Iran (868,200), Germany (589,700)

and Kenya (565,000). Australia hosted 30,000, or 0.3% of the global total.

**Number What?** Australia is ranked #49 in the world in the number of refugees received and #20 based on the number of asylum seeker claims we receive. Yet if you

listen to our politicians, they call it a flood.

## **But Aren't They Terrorists?**

No one who has arrived by boat has ever been found to be a direct

AUSTRALIA RECEIVES ONLY 0.29% OF THE WORLD'S REFUGEES

threat to Australia's national security. In fact, boat arrivals are subject to the most scrutinised security checks of all arrivals.

**How Much Are We Spending?** On average it costs around

# IT IS NOT ILLEGAL TO SEEK ASYLUM IN AUSTRALIA

\$450,000 a year to detain someone on Nauru or Manus Island. If we gave these people the right to work and let them live in the community they'd not only be contributing to the economy, spending would drop to around \$30,000 a year. All this when there is so much talk of balancing the budget and financial responsibility.

\$450,000 A YEAR TO DETAIN SOMEONE ON NAURU

**Are they for real?** 90% of asylum seekers who come by boat are

found to be refugees escaping war and persecution. We literally lock them up for fleeing for their lives.

## **Legal or illegal?**

Seeking asylum is legal - regardless of how you arrive. It's a basic human right under the UN Refugee Convention that Australia is a signatory to, but not keeping its word on. In fact, the Australian Press Council has said that calling asylum seekers 'illegal immigrants' is a breach of the Council's Standards of Practice because it is simply not true. The term was made up and perpetuated by our politicians. Keep that in mind next

time one of them opens their mouth.

### **Who's really illegal?**

Each year in Australia, there are approximately 60,000 tourists and temporary migrants who overstay their visas. These people are illegal immigrants, and most of them are from rich countries like Britain, the USA and Canada.

### **Got a spare billion?**

Mandatory offshore detention costs us billions and billions of dollars. In fact, if we stopped locking people up like criminals on some

WE ARE NOW HOLDING MORE THAN

**2,000**

CHILDREN IN SOME FORM OF IMMIGRATION DETENTION

**90%**  
**OF PEOPLE WHO ARRIVE HERE BY BOAT ARE FOUND TO BE REFUGEES.**

far away island and processed their claims while they lived in the community in Australia – like almost every other Western country – we would save enough money to fund every single part of Gonski's proposed education reforms.

### **What queue?**

Many people see asylum seekers as queue jumpers, yet there is no queue. In 2011, 7

million refugees were found to be waiting for resettlement, with an average wait of 20 years. In 2012, governments around the world only offered 80,000 official places for resettlement. If you were faced with raising your family in a refugee camp or getting on a boat, what would you do?

### **Aren't people smugglers "scum of the earth criminals"?**

People smugglers aren't all the cashed up crims you might think they are. Oskar

Schindler was a 'people smuggler'. In fact, many are simple fishermen who don't understand what they're in for. We demonise them and lock them up. In fact, children as young as 13 have been arrested, sentenced and imprisoned in maximum-security adult jails in Australia for 'people smuggling' activities.

### **Truth or just snappy headlines?**

You've heard it all... "An unstoppable flood", "A record armada", "We're powerless to stop the invasion".

Now consider that people arriving by boat make up just 4% of our total yearly intake of immigrants. It's all just a drop in the ocean.

### **Whose standards?**

In 2013, the Department of Immigration noted that the conditions on Manus Island were not appropriate for housing and processing asylum

**NO ONE CHOOSES TO BE AN ASYLUM SEEKER**

seekers. Yes, our own department. These concerns were echoed once more by a UNHCR report in July 2013 .

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