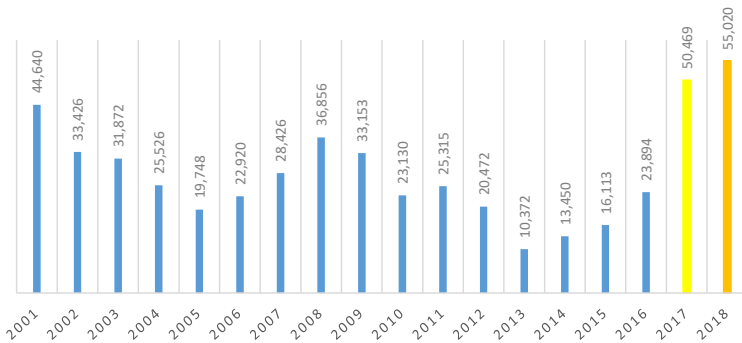


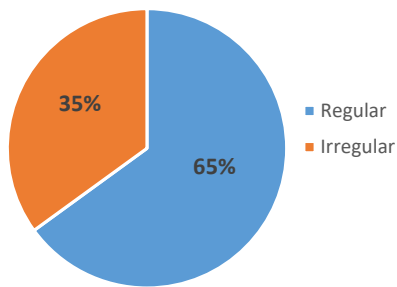
## HOW MANY?

**ASYLUM CLAIMS IN CANADA 2001 - 2018**



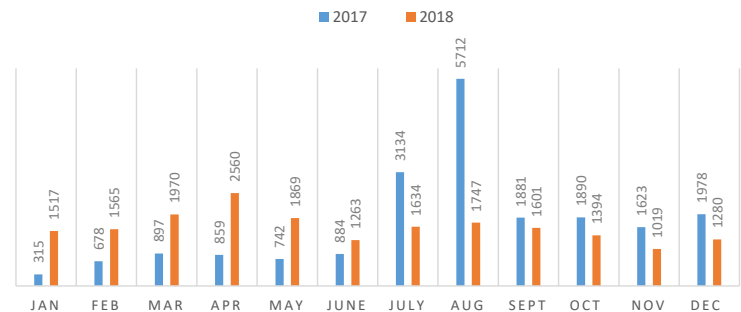
- In 2018, Canada received about the same number of refugee claims as the previous year.

**ASYLUM CLAIMS DISTRIBUTION 2018**



- 65% of all claims made in 2018 were made at an official border post or inland office (same as last year).

**IRREGULAR ARRIVALS IN CANADA COMPARISON 2017- 2018**



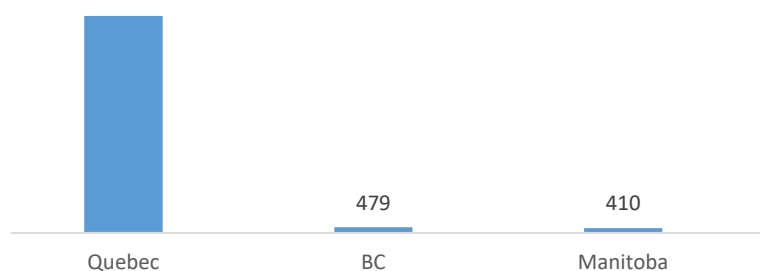
- The total number of refugee claimants who crossed the Canadian border at an unofficial entry point in 2018 dropped by 6% compared to 2017.
- It decreased by 47% during the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2018 compared to the same period last year.

Under Canadian and international law, it is not a crime to cross a border without authorization **IF** this is to seek asylum. Due to circumstances they are fleeing, asylum seekers are often compelled to enter a territory without the required travel documents or authorizations.

## WHERE?

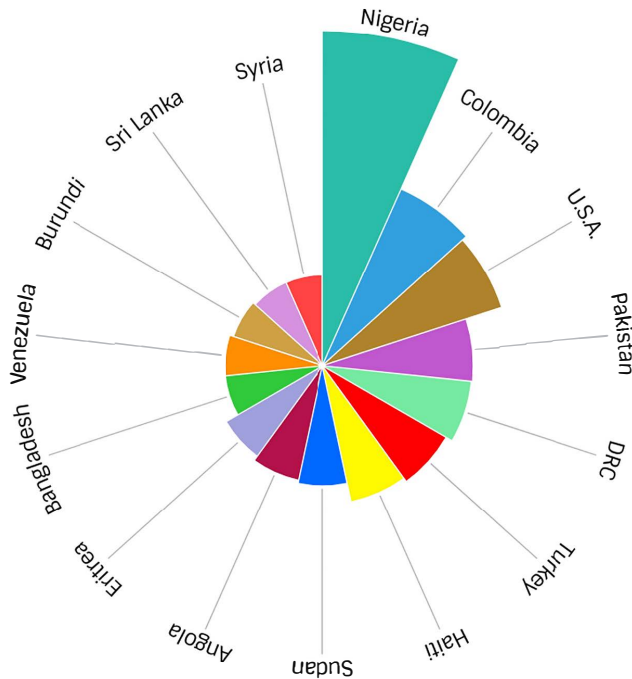
- The majority of irregular arrivals (95%) continue to take place in Quebec.
- Why Quebec? Roxham Road is the busiest irregular entry point in Canada due to the ease and safety of the crossing as well as the publicity it has received in the media since 2017.

**IRREGULAR ARRIVALS BY PROVINCE JAN 2018 - DEC 2018**



# WHO?

## TOP 15 COUNTRIES among irregular arrivals in 2018:



Some of those countries are at war; others struggle with serious human rights issues.

### Top 3 :

**Nigeria** → Nearly 2/3 of the refugee claimants who crossed irregularly in 2018 were Nigerians. Their numbers started however to decrease from May 2018 onwards and represented about 1/4 of irregular arrivals at the end of the year.

**Colombia** → Colombian claims have been among the top 10 source countries of asylum claim in Canada and at the border for several years.

**United States** → Pertains to U.S.-born children of non-American citizens making an asylum claim in Canada.

## FAMILY COMPOSITION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS



Most asylum seekers crossing the border irregularly are a mix of families or single parents with children, couples and persons traveling alone. About 2/5 of irregular arrivals in Quebec in 2018 were children accompanying their parents.

As persecution can affect persons from all walks of life, asylum seekers arriving through the Canadian borders were of varying socio-economic/academic backgrounds.

# WHY?

## CLAIMS FOR PROTECTION BASED ON:

### Colombia

- Victims of non-state armed groups, paramilitary or organized crime
- Political opinion – activism
- Domestic violence
- Sexual orientation
- Racial discrimination/persecution of Afro-Colombians

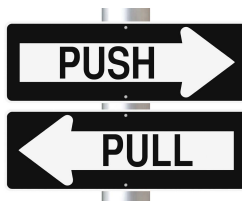
### Nigeria

- Sexual orientation
- At risk of female genital mutilation
- Domestic violence, forced marriage.
- Religious persecution

## DECISION TO CROSS THE U.S.-CANADA BORDER:

Asylum seekers mention a mix of push/pull factors. They include:

- Having family/community ties in Canada
- Perceived better support for refugees in Canada
- Perception that their asylum claim have better chances of being accepted in Canada



- U.S. only used as a transit point to claim asylum to Canada (U.S. visa reportedly easier to obtain than Canadian one)
- Lengthy asylum process in the U.S.
- Fear of perceived hostile U.S. rhetoric towards immigrants and foreigners
- Fear of deportation

## STATUS AND TIME SPENT IN THE U.S.



The majority of asylum seekers had valid status in the U.S. at the time of crossing (often a visitor visa) and only transited in the U.S. for a short period with the intention of claiming asylum in Canada, the American visa being reportedly easier to obtain than the Canadian one.



Others had stayed in the U.S. for a number of years, including persons with pending/denied asylum claims and to a lesser extent, persons whose status in the U.S. had expired.



Under the **Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA)**, individuals in the U.S. **cannot** make a claim at the Canadian official border post **unless** they qualify for an exception to the agreement, such as having a close family member in Canada.



The STCA **does not apply** to those who cross the border in-between official border posts, as at the time they claim asylum, they are already in Canada.

## IMPACT AND RESPONSE

### SECURITY CHECK

No shortcuts are being taken by the Canadian government at the border. All those entering Canada, including through irregular means, are checked by both the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Canadian Border Service Agency (CBSA) regarding potential security and public health threats.



Luggage search



Fingerprinting & verification of identity



Background checks in Interpol, Canadian and American databases

**Less than 1%** of the asylum seekers crossing the border irregularly had a serious criminal background between February 2017 and December 2018.

## INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT



Irregular crossing at the Canadian border.



Interception by RCMP. Security screening. Transfer to CBSA.



Eligibility examination: medical and security screening, verification of identity and interview to check eligibility.

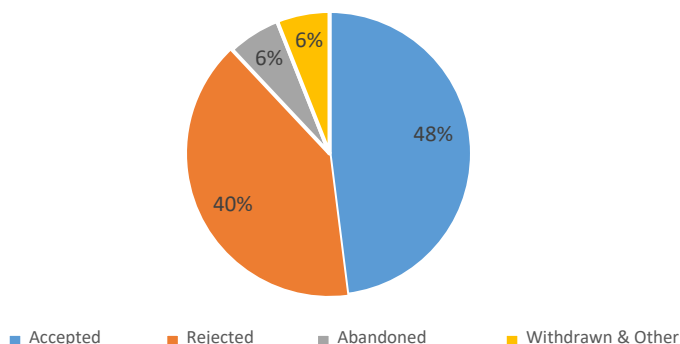


If asylum claim eligible, transferred to the Immigration Refugee Board for a hearing.

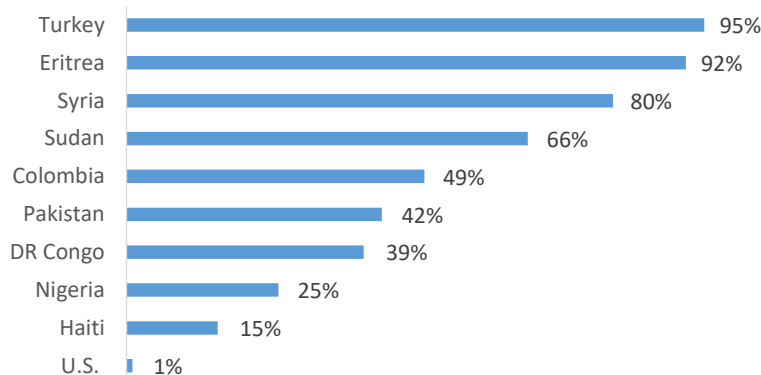
As for all asylum claims, the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) will assess whether those who have crossed the border irregularly have a well-founded fear of persecution in their home country. Their files are not processed before, or prioritized over, those who make their claims at an official port of entry or at an inland office. The merits of each claim is assessed on an individual basis.

**24% of those who crossed the border irregularly since February 2017 had their claims finalized at the end of December 2018. 48% of them have obtained refugee status:**

Claims finalized between Feb 2017 - Dec 2018 (irregular arrivals)



Acceptance Rate for Top 10 Source Countries among irregular arrivals (Feb. 2017-Dec. 2018)



## RESPONSE MECHANISMS/CONTINGENCY PLANS

While the special measures put in place last year by the different levels of government have been maintained and refined in the event of another influx, **new ones were introduced in 2018.**

Creation of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Irregular Migration to coordinate measures and plan operational contingencies.

Increased capacity of border officials as well as immigration and RCMP officers.

Simplified processing and improved reception conditions at the border to accommodate larger numbers of asylum seekers.

Opening of new processing centers and additional shelters in destination cities.

Processing of work permit applications within 30 days to minimize pressures on provincial social services.

Outreach and public awareness campaign to dispel misinformation among groups of potential asylum seekers about the Canadian asylum system.

50% increase in processing capacity of claims at the IRB between April 2017-March 2018 compared to the previous fiscal year.

Additional funding towards managing irregular migration at the border (2018-2019 federal budget), including CAD 74 million allocated to the IRB to hire 64 new decision-makers.

Additional funding to support provinces and municipalities (Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba) in providing temporary accommodation.