

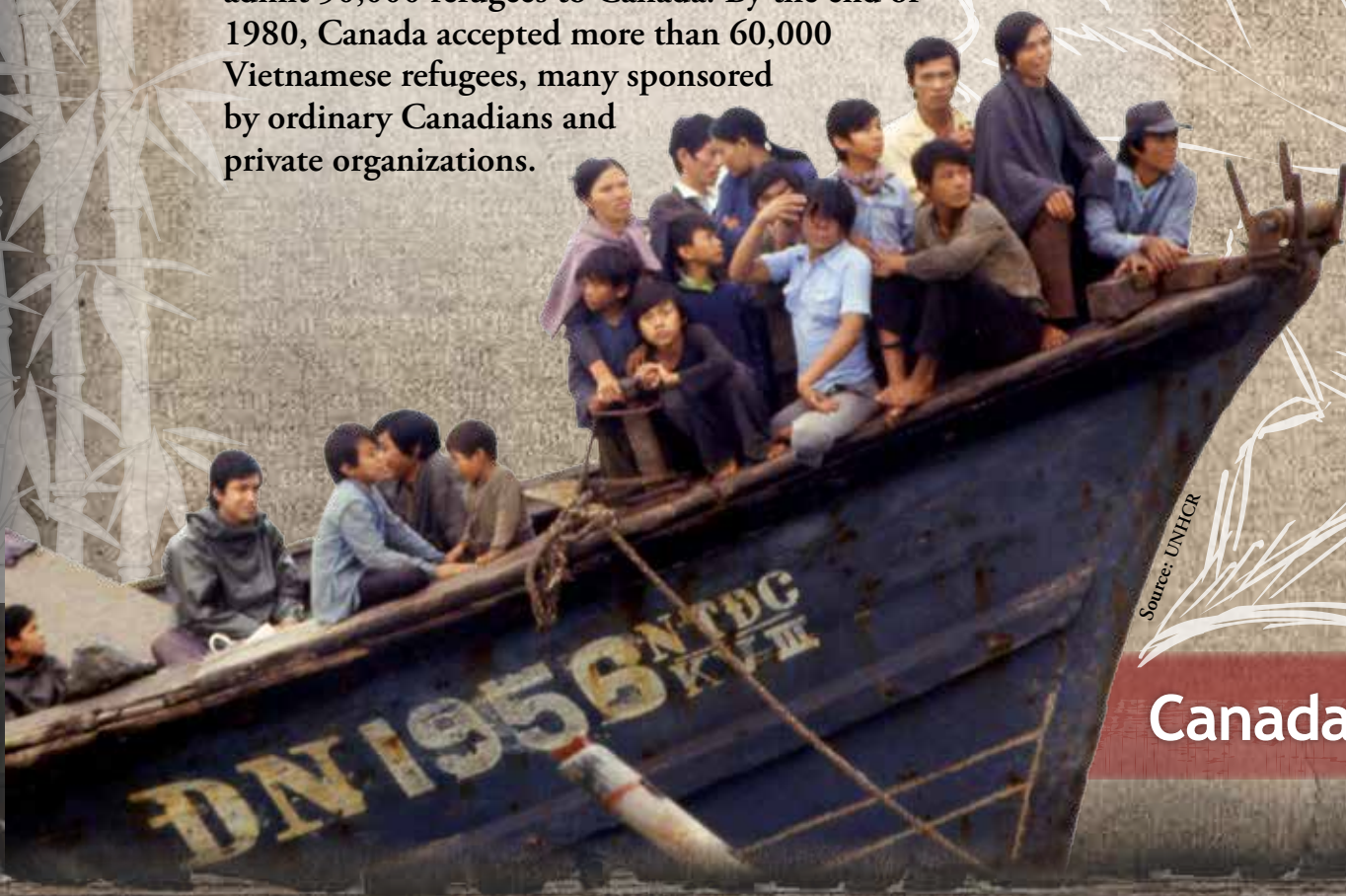
# REMEMBERING THE JOURNEY TO CANADA OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES



Source: UNHCR

On April 30, 1975, the fall of the city of Saigon marked the end of the Vietnam War and the start of a major refugee crisis. Millions of Vietnamese people fled their homes looking for refuge and freedom. Many tried escaping across the South China Sea in small leaky boats.

Canada recognized the plight of the Vietnamese people trying to escape and immediately accepted thousands of refugees, which served as a springboard for the resettlement of the “boat people,” as they became known. In July 1979, the Government of Canada under Prime Minister Joe Clark announced that it would admit 50,000 refugees to Canada. By the end of 1980, Canada accepted more than 60,000 Vietnamese refugees, many sponsored by ordinary Canadians and private organizations.



Source: UNHCR



Source: UNHCR

In 1986, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees awarded the Nansen Medal to Canada in recognition of the major contribution that the people of Canada have made to the cause of refugees. It was the first time that the medal was awarded to a group and the only time to an entire nation.

[Canada.ca/AsianHeritageMonth](https://Canada.ca/AsianHeritageMonth)



Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada



In partnership with:

Liên Hội Người Việt Canada  
Vietnamese Canadian Federation  
Fédération vietnamienne du Canada

Canada