

# STATISTICAL YEARBOOK 2004

TRENDS IN DISPLACEMENT, PROTECTION  
AND SOLUTIONS





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## MAIN FINDINGS

### TOTAL POPULATION OF CONCERN

- *By the end of 2004, the global population of concern to UNHCR was estimated at 19.5 million persons, including 9.6 million refugees, 838,000 asylum-seekers, 1.5 million refugees who had repatriated during 2004, 5.4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) of concern to UNHCR, 146,000 IDPs who had returned to their place of origin in 2004, some 1.5 million stateless persons, and 597,000 Others of concern.*
- *The global population of concern to UNHCR increased by 15 per cent during 2004. The number of returning refugees and IDPs under UNHCR's mandate increased by 37 and 30 per cent respectively. The largest drop occurred in the return of IDPs (-38%) while the global refugee population fell by 0.3 per cent. The asylum-seeker population, that is persons whose asylum applications have not yet been adjudicated, fell by 16 per cent during 2004.*
- *By the end of 2004, Asia hosted the largest population of concern to UNHCR (37%), followed by Africa (25%), Europe (23%), Latin America and the Caribbean (11%), North America (4%) and Oceania (0.4%).<sup>1</sup>*
- *In 2004, the population of concern to UNHCR increased in five out of the six regions of the world. The increase was highest in Latin America and the Caribbean (+57%), followed by Asia (+18%), Africa (+13%), Oceania (+11%) and Europe (+4%). Only North America recorded a decrease in the population of concern (-13%).*
- *Out of the total population of concern of 19.5 million at end-2004, an estimated 7.7 million originated from Asia (39%). Africa was the second leading region of origin with 5.3 million (27%) followed by Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe with 2.3 (12%) and 2.2 million respectively (11%).*
- *By the end of 2004, Afghans constituted the largest population with 3.7 million persons considered as of concern to the Office (19% of the total). Colombians were the second largest population with 2.1 millions or 11 per cent, followed by stateless persons (1.5 million or 8%) and Sudanese citizens (1.4 million or 7%).*
- *Only refugees and IDPs who have returned during the past 12 months are included in the population of concern to UNHCR. Field operations may assist returnees for a longer period, however.*

### Refugees

- *The number of refugees at end-2004 (9.6 million) was the lowest since 1980, when 8.4 million persons were estimated to be displaced outside their country of origin.*
- *By the end of 2004, developing regions hosted 6.5 million refugees, 68 per cent of the global refugee population. The 50 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) provided asylum to 15 per cent of the world's refugees.*
- *In 2004, the refugee population fell by 25,700 persons (-0.3%) with a decline*

<sup>1</sup> See Table D for the regional classifications used in the 2004 Yearbook.



being recorded in all regions with the exception of Asia (+7%) and Oceania (+10%). The level of decline ranged from four per cent in Africa and North America to six per cent in Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean.

- By end-2004, Asia hosted the largest number of refugees (39.7%), followed by Africa (31.6%), Europe (21.6%), North America (5.9%), Oceania (0.8%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (0.4%).

- Pakistan (1.3 million, UNHCR estimate) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (1.0 million) hosted the largest number of refugees at end-2004. Other major countries of asylum included Germany (877,000), the United Republic of Tanzania (602,000), the United States (421,000, UNHCR estimate), China (299,000) and the United Kingdom (289,000, UNHCR estimate).

- By the end of 2004, there were some 2.4 million Afghan refugees according to UNHCR estimates, accounting for one quarter of the global refugee population. Sudan was the second largest country of origin of refugees (731,000), followed by Burundi (486,000), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (462,000), and Somalia (389,000).

#### *Durable solutions*

- In 2004, 1.5 million refugees repatriated to their home country, a 36 per cent increase compared to 2003, when some 1.1 million refugees returned. Afghans constituted some 63 per cent (940,000) of all returnees during 2004. Other countries of origin to which many refugees repatriated during 2004 were Iraq (194,000), Burundi (90,000), Angola (90,000), and Liberia (57,000). In total, 27 countries of origin reported the return of more than 100 refugees.

- UNHCR country offices in first asylum countries resettled some 29,600 refugees during 2004, a 14 per cent increase compared to 2003 (25,900). The UNHCR office in Kenya recorded the highest number of assisted departures (5,600), followed by Côte d'Ivoire (4,500), Egypt (4,100), and Turkey (2,300). The main nationalities benefiting from UNHCR-facilitated resettlement were refugees from Liberia (5,600), Sudan (5,000), Somalia (4,900), Afghanistan (2,700), and the Islamic Republic of Iran (2,200).

- According to government statistics, eleven industrialized countries resettled 84,600 refugees in 2004, 52 per cent above the 2003 level (55,600) but nine per cent below the 2001 level (92,500). The resettlement of these refugees may have been facilitated by UNHCR, through another agency or bilaterally.

- The main resettlement countries in 2004 were the United States (52,900 refugees resettled during US Fiscal Year), Australia (16,000), Canada (10,500) and Sweden (1,800). Major nationalities being accepted for resettlement during 2004 were refugees from Somalia (14,200), Sudan (12,200), Liberia (8,600), Lao People's Dem. Rep. (6,100), Afghanistan (5,200), and Ethiopia (4,000).

#### *Refugee outflows*

- Some 232,000 refugees were displaced as part of a mass outflow in 2004, twenty per cent fewer than in 2003 (290,000) and the lowest level in almost 30 years. Almost all mass outflows occurred in sub-Saharan Africa (87%).

- Countries receiving the largest number of prima facie refugees during 2004 included Chad (131,000), Burundi (21,000), Yemen (17,000), Uganda (16,000) and Rwanda (14,000). In total, eleven asylum countries reported the arrival of more than 1,000 prima facie refugees.

- The main source countries of new mass refugee outflows during 2004 were Sudan (147,000), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (38,000), Somalia (19,000), Iraq (12,000), and Côte d'Ivoire (6,000).

### *Industrialized countries*

- New asylum claims submitted in the 38 industrialized countries fell by 22 per cent, to 366,000 in 2004.<sup>2</sup> Europe received 308,000 new asylum claims (-21%), North America received 54,000 new claims (-29%), and Australia/New Zealand received 3,800 asylum-seekers (-26%).

- Some 280,000 asylum requests were lodged in the 25 countries of the European Union (-19%). Excluding the 10 new member countries of the European Union (EU) who acceded in 2004, the number of asylum claims submitted in the EU-15 amounted to 241,000 (-22%).

- The Russian Federation was the main country of origin of asylum-seekers in industrialized countries: 30,500 new claims were lodged by Russian citizens, most of whom are from Chechnya, in 2004. Serbia and Montenegro was the second leading country of origin of asylum-seekers (24,100), followed by China (17,600), Turkey (16,200), and the Islamic Republic of Iran (12,400).

- During 2004, 87,000 asylum-seekers were granted Convention refugee status at the first instance (56,500) and on appeal (30,500) in the industrialized countries. Another 28,400 asylum-seekers were allowed to remain for humanitarian reasons at the first instance (25,400) and on appeal (3,000).

- Convention refugee status was granted in 16 per cent of first instance decisions taken in 2004, only slightly higher than in 2003 (14%). Including humanitarian status, 22 per cent of all substantive asylum decisions taken at the first instance in 2004 were positive, the second lowest level of the last decade.

- As in 2002 and 2003, some 20 per cent of all substantive asylum decisions taken on appeal during 2004 resulted in the granting of refugee (18%) or humanitarian status (2%).

- The number of undecided asylum cases at the first instance and on appeal in industrialized countries decreased by 24 per cent during 2004. By end-2004, 362,000 asylum-seekers were awaiting a decision at the first instance while another 143,000 asylum claims were pending at the appeal level.

### *Non-industrialized countries*

- During 2004, non-industrialized countries received 158,000 applications for asylum or refugee status, almost the same level as in 2003 (157,000). South Africa was the largest asylum-seeker receiving country during 2004 (32,600 or 21 per cent of all claims), followed by Malaysia (20,700 or 13%), Sudan (12,000 or 8%), Egypt

<sup>2</sup> For the classification of industrialized countries, see Annex D.5.

(10,700 or 7%), Kenya (9,300 or 6%), and Ecuador (7,900 or 5%).

- *Somalia was the main country of origin of asylum-seekers: 13,100 new claims were lodged by its citizens during 2004. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was the second leading country of origin of asylum-seekers (12,800), followed by Iraq (11,900), Colombia (11,900), Sudan (11,000), Indonesia (11,000), and Myanmar (10,700).*

- *Some 58,600 asylum-seekers in non-industrialized countries were granted refugee or humanitarian status in 2004, most notably in Malaysia (18,000; of which 16,500 were granted temporary protection), Sudan (7,800), Egypt (3,700), Kenya (3,200), Thailand (2,900), and Ecuador (2,500).*

#### *Sex and age*

- *Available data on 11.8 million out of the 19.5 million population of concern to UNHCR indicate that 49 per cent are female.*

- *Almost half (47%) of the population of concern to UNHCR are children under the age of 18. In sub-Saharan Africa the proportion of minors is about 55 per cent.*

#### *Locations*

- *In 2004, UNHCR received detailed data on some 330 individual camps with an average population size of 9,000. About one quarter (27%) of the camps hosted more than 10,000 residents.<sup>3</sup>*

- *UNHCR had registered or was otherwise involved with refugees in some 280 urban locations in 2004. The average number of refugees at these locations was 6,100. Some 89 per cent of urban locations hosted fewer than 1,000 persons.*

#### *Host country capacities*

- *Pakistan hosts the highest number of refugees in relation to its economic capacity. During 2000-2004, the country hosted on average 3,000 refugees per 1 USD Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was the country with the second highest number of refugees per 1 USD GDP per capita (2,960 refugees), followed by the United Republic of Tanzania (2,400 refugees), and Ethiopia (1,700 refugees).*

- *Armenia hosts the largest number of refugees in relation to its national population size. During 2000-2004, it hosted on average 84 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants. Serbia and Montenegro was the second main country affected by refugee displacement in relation to its national population (34 per 1,000 inhabitants), followed by Djibouti (29), and the Republic of the Congo (26).*

- *Armenia also hosts the largest number of refugees in relation to the size of its national territory. During 2000-2004, it hosted on average 8,600 refugees per 1,000 square kilometer. The Netherlands was the country with the second highest refugee population in relation to its surface area (4,100), followed by Serbia and Montenegro (3,500), and Germany (2,600).*

<sup>3</sup> These figures exclude camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

- *The economic effects of hosting refugees are particularly felt in developing countries. In relation to their GDP per capita, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the United Republic of Tanzania host the largest number of refugees.*
- *The demographic impact of refugees is significant in Africa and Europe. Armenia, Serbia and Montenegro and Djibouti host the largest number of refugees in relation to the size of their national population.*

## INTRODUCTION

UNHCR statistics on refugees and other populations of concern help to monitor progress against objectives and identify emerging patterns and trends. They serve the needs for information of various actors, both internally and externally. Internally, UNHCR Headquarters (HQ) and field offices use the Yearbook's statistics to monitor levels, flows, trends and characteristics of populations of concern as well as to plan, implement and monitor protection and advocacy activities. The Statistical Yearbook also provides a basis for fundraising and evidence-based decision-making in order to achieve durable solutions.

External partners, including governments, UN agencies, NGOs, donors and general public, use the organization's data to inform their own operational support and funding activities in addition to raising awareness about the situation of UNHCR's population of concern.

The objectives of the fourth edition of the UNHCR Statistical Yearbook are similar to those of the previous years. By providing timely, relevant and comparable data on persons of concern to UNHCR, the 2004 Yearbook seeks to contribute to the implementation of the principles of results based management (RBM) for informed public discourse in an area which is often characterised by lack of or anecdotal information, strong views and divergent opinions.

Both the *1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* ("the 1951 Convention") and the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees refer to the responsibility of countries to provide statistical data to the High Commissioner. In order to provide protection, assistance and durable solutions, UNHCR country offices across the world collect statistics on a continuous basis.

UNHCR statistics are generally based on data provided by the host country. In countries where UNHCR is operationally active, statistics are often jointly established between the host government and UNHCR. The instances where UNHCR has provided estimates have been clearly indicated.

The scope of the Yearbook is primarily limited to monitoring the size and trends of populations of concern to UNHCR. Although the population size is an important determinant of UNHCR's activities, it is not the only one. The quality of international protection and the well-being of beneficiaries, other key aspects of operations planning, are not captured by this Yearbook. However, other on-going UNHCR data collection and analysis programmes, including the Standards and Indicators initiative, contribute to filling the information gap about these issues. The 2004 Yearbook consists of three main parts.

The first part provides a global analysis of recent trends. **CHAPTER I**, which focuses on definitions and methodological issues, ***is essential for understanding and using the data contained in the 2004 Yearbook.*** It presents the definitions, nature and sources of the data and provides insight into data quality and coverage. **CHAPTER II** presents a global overview of the size and changes in the population of concern to UNHCR. **CHAPTER III** focuses on the main population movements during 2004, with a particular emphasis on durable solutions and new refugee outflows. An overview of asylum applications and refugee status determination is provided in **CHAPTER IV**. Sex and age characteristics, key variables in any refugee programme, are discussed in **CHAPTER V**. This chapter also provides information on refugee locations, including camps. The issue of international responsibility and burden sharing is addressed in

**CHAPTER VI.** Here, the size of the refugee population and their duration of stay are compared with the national capacity to host refugees.

The second part of the Yearbook (**ANNEX I**) provides detailed data on 2004 while the third part (**ANNEX II**) provides longitudinal trends, allowing for an easy comparison of trends globally, by region as well as by country for all major subject matters (*Tables A.1 through C.24*). Regional classifications and country codes are also explained (*Tables D.1 through D.6*).

In the fourth section (**ANNEX III**), 50 regional and 162 country profiles are provided. These profiles are preceded by a brief technical note.

Some data contained in this publication may differ from statistics published previously due to retroactive changes or the inclusion of previously unavailable data. Similarly, it is expected that the data contained in the 2004 Yearbook will be subject to minor changes in the future.

To facilitate comparison with other reports, the 2004 Yearbook includes various regional classifications. The classification by UNHCR Regional Bureaux allows a comparison with UNHCR budgetary and administrative information. The more detailed grouping "UNHCR regions" is consistent with the 2004 UNHCR Global Report.

In addition, the 2004 Yearbook includes a number of regional classifications used by the United Nations common system. First, the official United Nations regional classification ("UN major areas") is used to analyse data by continent. Second, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are aggregated by three major regions: developed regions, developing regions and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). These regions are further subdivided into 10 regional groupings. The MDG classification also comprises three special groups: Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). By applying these regional aggregates, the 2004 Yearbook allows for the systematic inclusion of asylum-seekers, refugees and others of concern to UNHCR in the MDGs.

Third, a group of 38 "industrialized countries" has been defined by UNHCR to facilitate analysis and comparison of asylum practices in some of the developed countries. The "non-industrialized countries" include all countries which are not listed in Annex D.5.

In analysing data at the regional level, caution should be exercised in using the regional aggregates. Although the names of the regions may be similar, the countries covered may differ. For instance, North Africa is included in the UN major area Africa, but excluded from the UNHCR Africa Bureau.