

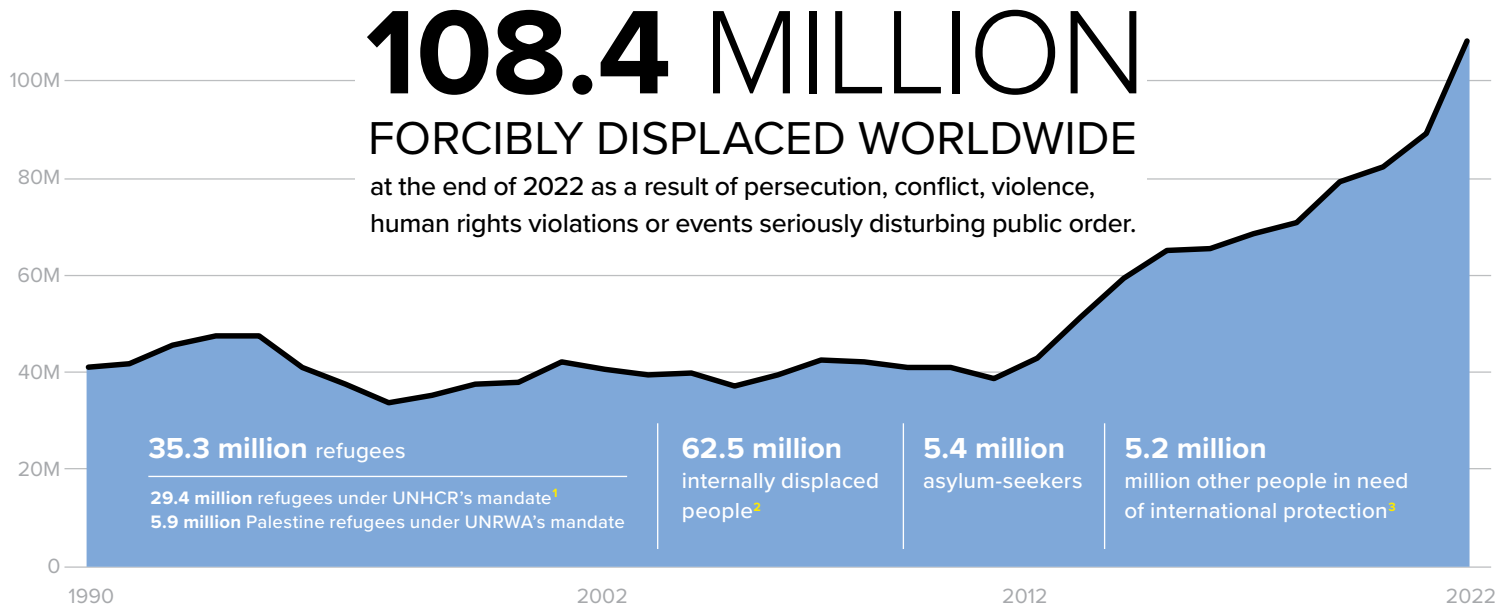
# GLOBAL TRENDS

FORCED  
DISPLACEMENT  
IN **2022**





# Trends at a Glance



## 76% HOSTED IN LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

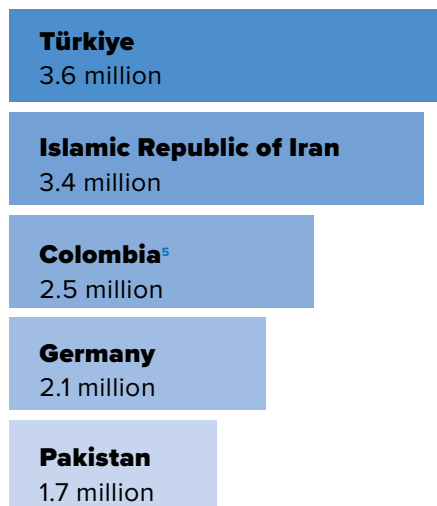
Low- and middle-income countries hosted 76 per cent of the world's refugees and other people in need of international protection.<sup>4</sup> The Least Developed Countries provided asylum to 20 per cent of the total.

## 70% HOSTED IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

70 per cent of refugees and other people in need of international protection lived in countries neighbouring their countries of origin.

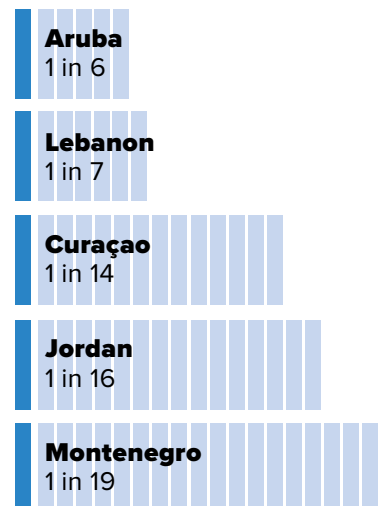
## 3.6 MILLION REFUGEES HOSTED IN TÜRKIYE

Türkiye hosted nearly 3.6 million refugees, the largest population worldwide, followed by the Islamic Republic of Iran with 3.4 million.



## 1 IN 6 ARE DISPLACED

Relative to their national populations,<sup>6</sup> the island of Aruba (1 in 6) and Lebanon (1 in 7) hosted the largest number of refugees and other people in need of international protection, followed by Curaçao (1 in 14), Jordan (1 in 16) and Montenegro (1 in 19).<sup>7</sup>



# 2.6 MILLION NEW CLAIMS

The United States of America was the world's largest recipient of new individual applications.

### United States of America

730,400

### Germany

217,800

### Costa Rica

129,500

### Spain

118,800

### Mexico

118,800

# 52%

## ORIGINATED FROM JUST THREE COUNTRIES

52 per cent of all refugees and other people in need of international protection came from just three countries:

### Syrian Arab Republic

6.5 million

### Ukraine

5.7 million

### Afghanistan

5.7 million

## SOLUTIONS

# 6 MILLION DISPLACED PEOPLE RETURNED

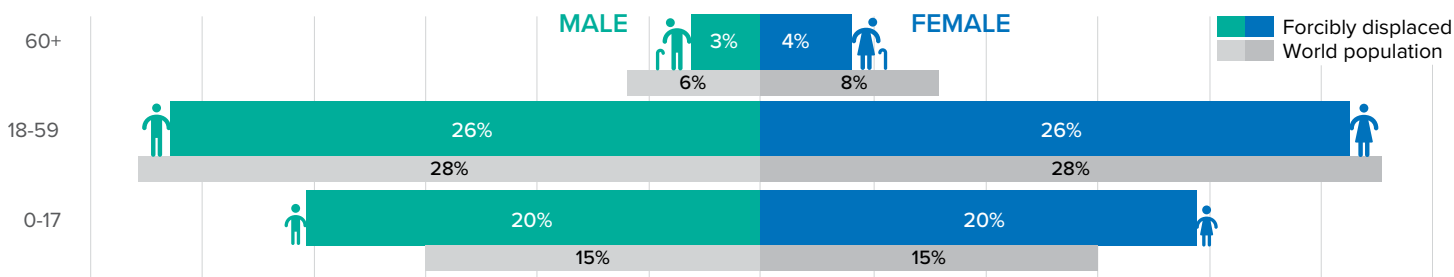
6 million displaced people returned to their areas or countries of origin in 2022, including 5.7 million internally displaced people and 339,300 refugees.

# 114,300 REFUGEES RESETTLED

114,300 refugees were resettled in 2022, double the previous year (57,500), according to government statistics. UNHCR submitted 116,500 refugees to States for resettlement.

## DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN FORCIBLY DISPLACED

Children account for 30 per cent of the world's population, but 40 per cent of all forcibly displaced people.\*



DISCLAIMER: figures do not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

- 1 All references in this infographic to refugees under UNHCR's mandate includes people in refugee-like situations.
- 2 Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
- 3 See the definition of other people in need of international protection on the next page.
- 4 See [Classifying refugee host countries by income level](#).
- 5 Includes refugees and other people in need of international protection.
- 6 Limited to countries hosting at least 10,000 people. Excludes Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.
- 7 When 487,300 Palestine refugees in Lebanon and 2.4 million Palestine refugees in Jordan registered with UNRWA are included, the proportions in Lebanon and Jordan increase to one in four.
- 8 Sources: Estimation of IDP demographics (IDMC); Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate (UNRWA); Refugees, people in a refugee-like situation, asylum-seekers and other people in need of international protection are based on the available data (UNHCR) and World Population estimates (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs).

## Statistics for forcibly displaced and all other people protected/assisted by UNHCR

This report's main focus is the analysis of changes and trends in forced displacement from January to December 2022 among people covered by UNHCR's mandate.<sup>9</sup> The data presented are based on information received as of 31 May 2023 unless otherwise indicated.

At the end of 2022, the number of forcibly displaced people worldwide was estimated at 108.4 million.<sup>10</sup> This figure encompasses refugees (including refugees who are not covered by UNHCR's mandate), asylum-seekers, internally displaced people and other people in need of international protection.

### OTHER PEOPLE IN NEED OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

The category "Other people in need of international protection" was first introduced in mid-2022 reporting<sup>11</sup> and refers to:

*"People who are outside their country or territory of origin, typically because they have been forcibly displaced across international borders, who have not been reported under other categories (asylum-seekers, refugees, people in refugee-like situations) but who likely need international protection, including protection against forced return, as well as access to basic services on a temporary or longer-term basis."*

UNHCR also estimates the population that UNHCR protects and/or assists. This includes those who have been forcibly displaced (refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people and other people in need of international protection); those who have returned home within the previous year; those who are stateless (most of whom are not forcibly displaced); and other groups to whom UNHCR has extended its protection or provided assistance on a humanitarian basis. At the end of 2022 this figure stood at 112.6 million people.

These two categorizations are compared graphically below. A detailed breakdown of the population that UNHCR protects and/or assists is provided in [Annex Tables 1 - 23](#) by category and country.

The figures in this report are based on data reported by governments, non-governmental organizations and UNHCR. Numbers are rounded to the closest hundred or thousand. As some adjustments may appear later in the year in the Refugee Data Finder,<sup>12</sup> figures contained in this report should be considered as provisional and subject to change. Unless otherwise specified, the report does not refer to events occurring after 31 December 2022.

<sup>9</sup> See the [Methodology](#) page of UNHCR's Refugee Data Finder for a definition of each population group.

<sup>10</sup> The total number of people forcibly displaced is calculated using UNHCR, UNRWA and IDMC statistics.

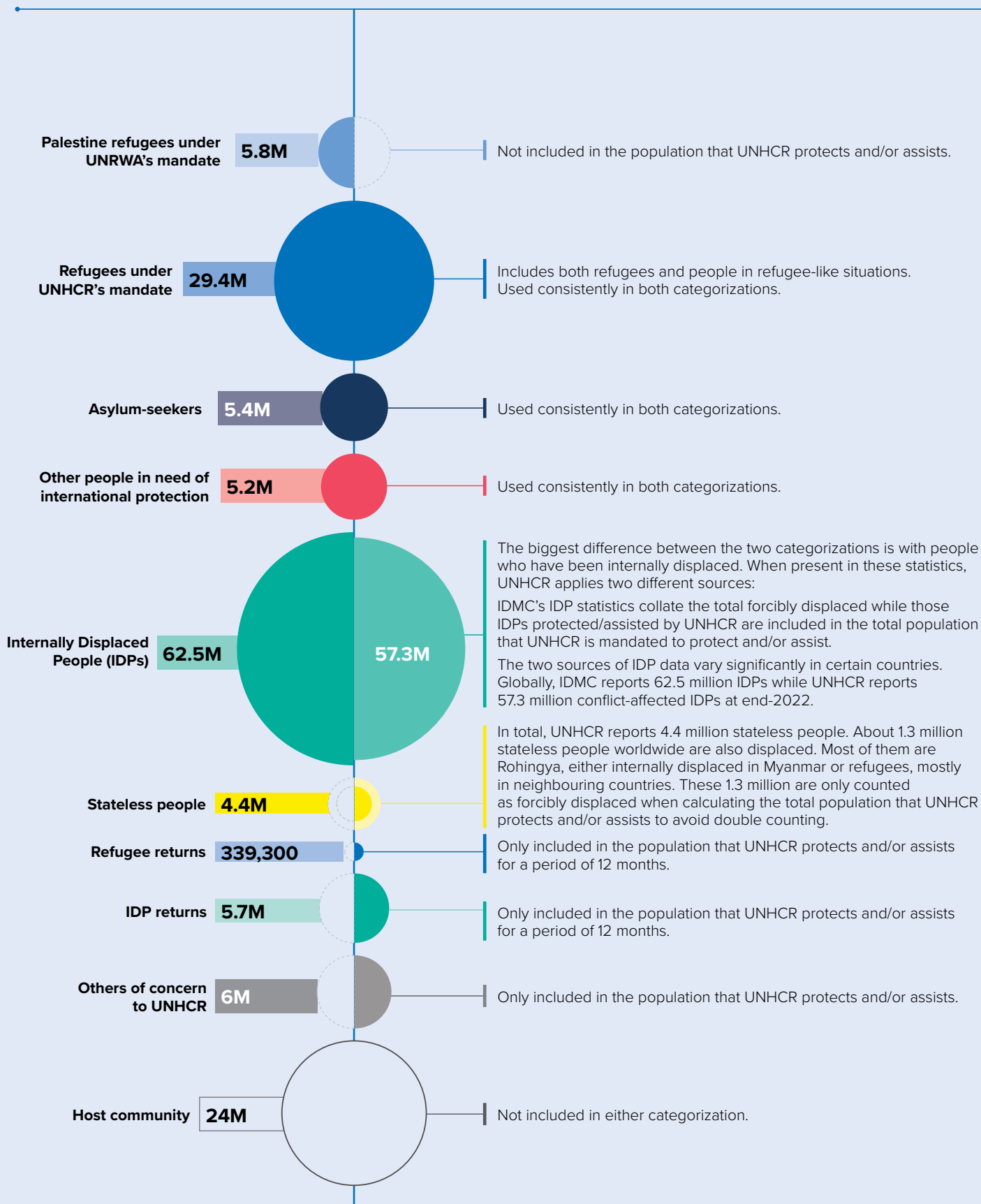
<sup>11</sup> The new category refers to people who have not been reported under other categories, and includes Venezuelans previously designated as "Venezuelans displaced abroad (VDA)". This change has been made retroactively in UNHCR's statistics since 2018. The term VDA will no longer be used.

<sup>12</sup> See: UNHCR's [Refugee Data Finder](#).



**Forcibly displaced people** **108.4 million**

**Population UNHCR protects and/or assists** **112.6 million**





PANAMA. People on the move brave jungle wilderness in their journeys' northwards in search of safety. Against this background, information about the risks that journeys through the Darien entail and details regarding asylum in Panama are provided. In the Darien region, UNHCR works with the government, non-governmental organizations, local communities, the private sector and municipalities to help address the most urgent needs of the displaced.

© UNHCR/MELISSA PINEL





## CHAPTER 1

# Global Forced Displacement

“ *These figures show us that some people are far too quick to rush to conflict, and way too slow to find solutions. The consequence is devastation, displacement, and anguish for each of the millions of people forcibly uprooted from their homes.* ”

**Filippo Grandi**

UN High Commissioner for Refugees

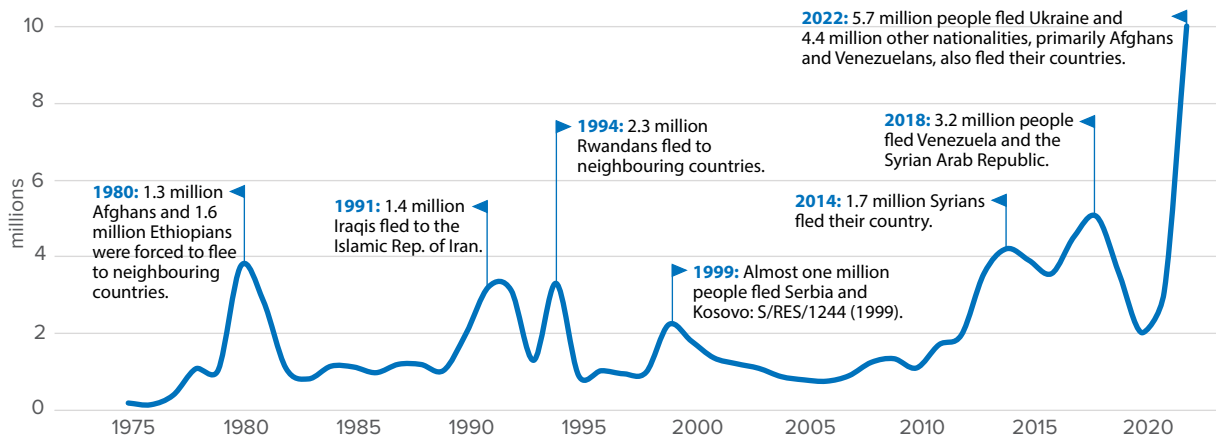
In 2022, the number of people forcibly displaced by persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order grew by 21 per cent standing at an estimated **108.4 million** at the end of the year.<sup>13</sup> More than 1 in 74 people worldwide remained forcibly displaced as a result,<sup>14</sup> almost 90 per cent of them in low- and middle-income countries. The end-year total represents an increase of 19 million compared to the end of 2021 – more than the populations of Ecuador, the

Netherlands (Kingdom of the) or Somalia. It is also the largest ever increase between years according to UNHCR’s statistics on forced displacement. Over half of the increase was due to record numbers of refugees, asylum-seekers and other people in need of international protection forced to flee during 2022 (see figure 1). During the first five months of 2023, forced displacement has continued to rise and UNHCR estimates that the global figure likely exceeds 110 million people at the time of writing, in May 2023.

<sup>13</sup> The total number of people forcibly displaced is calculated using UNHCR, UNRWA and IDMC statistics. See [UNHCR population categories explained](#).

<sup>14</sup> A decade ago, in 2013, the same ratio was 1 in 142; 20 years ago, in 2003, it was 1 in 164, and 30 years ago, in 1993, it was 1 in 118.

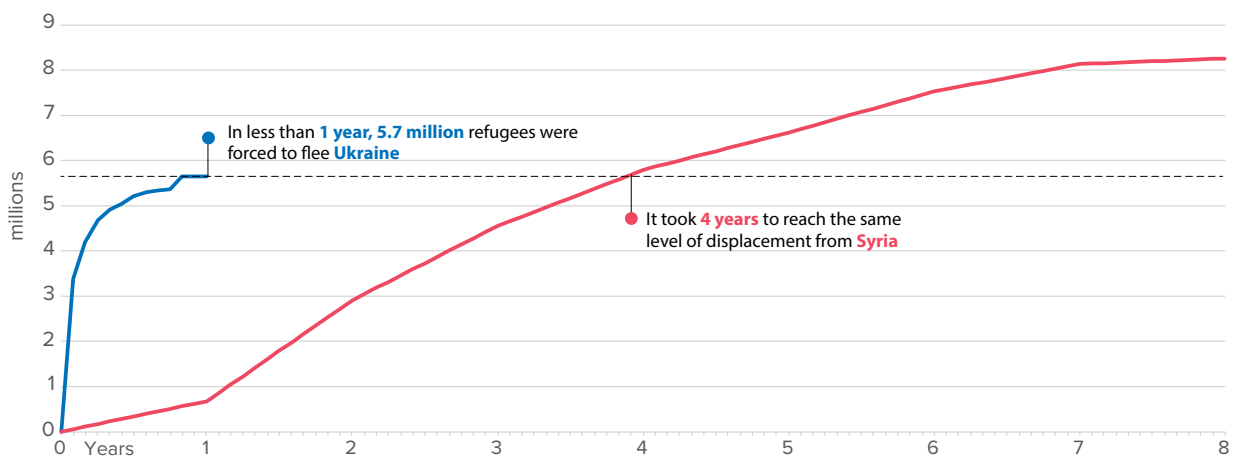
Figure 1 | Refugees, asylum-seekers and other people in need of international protection displaced during each year<sup>15</sup> | 1975 – 2022



In February 2022, the Russian Federation’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine created the fastest displacement crisis, and one of the largest, since the Second World War (see figure 2). In the early days of the war, more than 200,000 refugees per day sought safety across

borders, initially in countries neighbouring Ukraine. At the end of 2022, 11.6 million Ukrainians remained displaced,<sup>16</sup> including 5.9 million within their country, and 5.7 million who fled to neighbouring countries and beyond.<sup>17</sup>

Figure 2 | Refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection fleeing the Syrian Arab Republic and Ukraine since the onset of each crisis<sup>18</sup>



While the full-scale invasion of Ukraine undoubtedly led to the largest forced displacement crisis in terms of magnitude and velocity in 2022, conflict and insecurity in other parts of the world either continued

or was reignited. In addition, updated population estimates of the number of forcibly displaced Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran became available, with many having arrived in earlier years.<sup>19</sup> Overall,

<sup>15</sup> See [Forced Displacement Flow Dataset](#)

<sup>16</sup> In addition, stateless people, third country nationals, and refugees and asylum-seekers hosted in Ukraine before the war were also forced to leave the country.

<sup>17</sup> Previous estimates of the number of refugees from Ukraine that were published on UNHCR’s [Operational Data Portal](#) were based on reports of cumulative applications for asylum and for temporary protection or similar national protection schemes, as well as the estimated presence of refugees with various other legal statuses. In June 2023, the estimates have been adjusted to better reflect the number of refugees remaining in each country at end-2022, based on data provided by national authorities, including active beneficiaries of temporary protection. See the [Operational Data Portal](#) for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>18</sup> Figures for refugees from Ukraine are based on official statistics of refugees recorded in host countries by the end of 2022. Figures for Syria represent annual flows of refugees since 2011. The trends between datapoints are assumed to be linear.

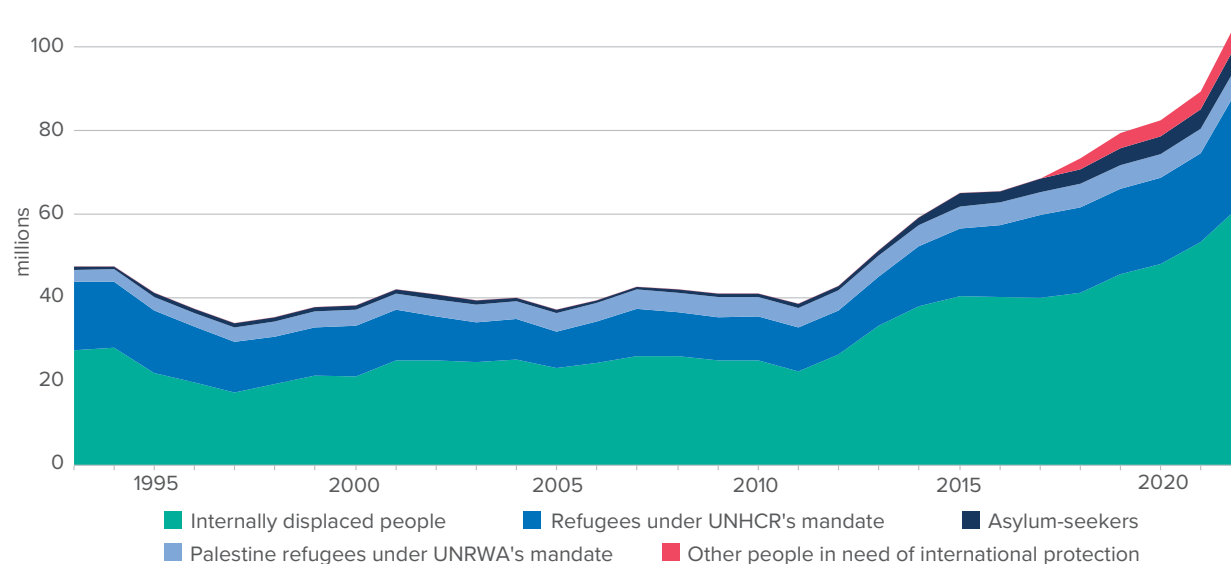
<sup>19</sup> In 2022, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran conducted a recount of the previously “head counted” population and extended the scope of this scheme to all undocumented Afghans residing in the country, including those who had newly arrived due to the Taliban takeover in 2021 in Afghanistan. It is reported that 2.6 million Afghans enrolled in this exercise, which provides them with a headcount slip and temporary protection from deportation.



the global refugee population under UNHCR's mandate<sup>20</sup> increased by more than one-third, or 8.1 million, to reach 29.4 million by the end of the year

(see figure 3). A further 5.2 million other people in need of international protection, predominantly from Venezuela, were reported at the end of 2022.<sup>21</sup>

Figure 3 | People forced to flee | 1993 – 2022



Globally, Türkiye, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Colombia, Germany and Pakistan hosted the largest refugee populations at the end of 2022, including people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection. More than 87 per cent of all refugees and other people in need of international protection originated from just 10 countries.

Millions of refugees from Ukraine received temporary protection, granted by European Union Member States and several other countries.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, the highest number of new asylum applications ever recorded – 2.6 million – were registered by more than 140 nationalities during 2022 in 155 countries. The sheer number of people forced to flee new or ongoing conflicts around the world underlined how critical the right to apply for asylum remains for millions of people worldwide. More than 2 in 5 of the new asylum applications were made by nationals from Latin America and the Caribbean, notably from Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela. Asylum applications

by Afghans and Syrians also grew compared to the previous year. The United States of America remained the largest recipient of asylum applications, receiving 730,400 new claims, nearly four times more than during 2021. Despite 1.3 million substantive decisions by States and UNHCR on these asylum applications, a 27 per cent rise from 2021 and the most since 2017, the volume of new applications meant that the number of asylum-seekers awaiting a decision on their cases climbed 18 per cent to 5.4 million.

Most people who are forced to flee never cross an international border. At the end of 2022, 58 per cent of all forcibly displaced people remained in their own country. New internal displacements surged, with 28 million new displacements due to conflict and violence during the year.<sup>23</sup> War in Ukraine and conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Myanmar each displaced more than 1 million people within their own country. A further 32.6 million new displacements were due to disasters,<sup>24</sup> with 21 per cent occurring in the Least Developed Countries and

<sup>20</sup> Includes people in refugee-like situations and excludes Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

<sup>21</sup> This constitutes a rise of 18 per cent, or 811,000 people, from a year earlier as population estimates of other people in need of international protection were revised upwards in Colombia and Peru.

<sup>22</sup> Temporary protection systems are considered complementary to the international refugee protection regime, being used as an emergency response to large-scale displacement to provide immediate protection from refoulement, access to legal status and rights in host countries to those fleeing humanitarian crises without undergoing prior individual refugee status determination procedures. 26 European Union Member States implemented the Temporary Protection Directive whilst a number of other countries applied similar legal frameworks.

<sup>23</sup> See [2023 global report on internal displacement](#), IDMC.

<sup>24</sup> See [2023 global report on internal displacement](#), IDMC. Only IDPs displaced due to conflict and violence are included within the 108.4 million people that have been forced to flee.

Small Island Developing States, countries that have experienced disproportionately high economic losses in relation to the size of their economies as a result of disasters and climate change.<sup>25</sup>

While most people who have been forced to flee want to return home, this can only occur in safety and dignity if lasting peace is achieved.<sup>26</sup> For most displacement situations around the world, this remained beyond reach in 2022, with just 339,300 refugees reported to have returned home. This means that for every refugee that returned, 22 people became refugees during the year.<sup>27</sup> Other solutions for refugees include resettlement to third countries.<sup>28</sup> The number of refugees resettled in 2022 doubled to reach 114,300, recovering to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. However, this accounted for only a fraction of the projected 1.5 million refugees in need of resettlement.<sup>29</sup>

Two positive developments in 2022 included a cessation of fighting in Northern Ethiopia, agreed in November 2022,<sup>30</sup> with 1.9 million IDPs returning during the year. In Yemen, the ceasefire coordinated by the United Nations expired in October 2022 but it continued to be broadly adhered to,<sup>31</sup> a step forward in a country where more than half of the population do not have enough to eat each day<sup>32</sup> and 4.5 million people remained displaced within the country at the end of the year.

## What next?

New and ongoing conflicts continue to force people to flee in 2023. During 2023, more than 1 million people have been forced to flee their homes in Somalia due to conflict, floods and drought.<sup>33</sup> In April, conflict erupted between competing armed forces in

Sudan and is already having devastating effects on the civilian population, including the over 3.5 million internally displaced Sudanese and 1.1 million refugees hosted in the country. At least 190 children have been killed in the fighting,<sup>34</sup> and the number of acutely food insecure people in the country is estimated to be set to increase by more than 2 million in the next three to six months.<sup>35</sup> As of end-May 2023, an estimated 1.2 million people had been newly displaced within the country<sup>36</sup> and a further 378,300 had fled to neighbouring countries.<sup>37</sup> By the end of May 2023, the number of people forcibly displaced within Myanmar increased by 331,600 from the end of 2022 to stand at 1.8 million,<sup>38</sup> while the number of internally displaced people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo climbed to 6.2 million.<sup>39</sup> UNHCR's global estimates of refugees and asylum-seekers reached 35.4 million by the end of May 2023.<sup>40</sup>

The surge in global energy and commodity prices has negatively affected many countries that were already fragile, such as those in the Sahel, a region in which millions of people require humanitarian assistance, including over 10 million children.<sup>41</sup> This has been compounded by the lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While restrictive measures during the pandemic have eased worldwide, its long-term impacts on the well-being of the world's population are only beginning to be understood. The impact has been particularly acute on vulnerable population groups such as those forced to flee, especially children. For example, by removing essential socioeconomic safeguards protecting children living in situations of armed conflict (e.g. the drastic reduction in household income as a result of economic activity halting, the closure of schools, and the interruption of public services and humanitarian assistance), children have increasingly been exposed

<sup>25</sup> See [Economic costs of weather-related disasters soars but early warnings save lives](#), WMO.

<sup>26</sup> See [Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine #3](#), UNHCR.

<sup>27</sup> During 2022, 5.7 million people displaced within their countries also returned home, while five times more people were newly internally displaced.

<sup>28</sup> Resettlement is the voluntary relocation of refugees from a State where they have sought asylum to another State that has agreed to admit them and grant them permanent residence status.

<sup>29</sup> See [Projected global resettlement needs, 2022](#), UNHCR.

<sup>30</sup> See [Northern Ethiopia peace deal restores hope for displaced](#), UNHCR.

<sup>31</sup> See [Truce Providing Serious Opportunity for Ending Yemen's Long Conflict, Briefers Tell Security Council](#), UN Press.

<sup>32</sup> See [Global Report on Food Crises 2023](#), Food Security Information Network. In Yemen, 55 per cent of the population in the country are in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) / Cadre Harmonisé (CH) Phase 3 or above.

<sup>33</sup> See [Somalia: Over 1 million people internally displaced in Somalia in record time](#), Norwegian Refugee Council and UNHCR.

<sup>34</sup> See [UNICEF press briefing](#), 05 May 2023. The report is based on data up until 25 April 2023.

<sup>35</sup> See [Conflict in Sudan – Food Security Analysis and Forecast](#), WFP.

<sup>36</sup> See [Sudan – situation report 6](#), IOM, 29 May 2023.

<sup>37</sup> See [Sudan situation on the operational data portal](#), as of 31 May 2023. The figure includes refugees, asylum-seekers and returnees.

<sup>38</sup> See [Myanmar situation](#), Operational Data Portal.

<sup>39</sup> See [UNHCR calls for urgent support for 6.2 million people forcibly displaced by conflict in DR Congo](#).

<sup>40</sup> Estimate is based on UNHCR's nowcasting - see the summary in the next section.

<sup>41</sup> See [Child alert: Extreme jeopardy in the central Sahel](#), UNICEF.

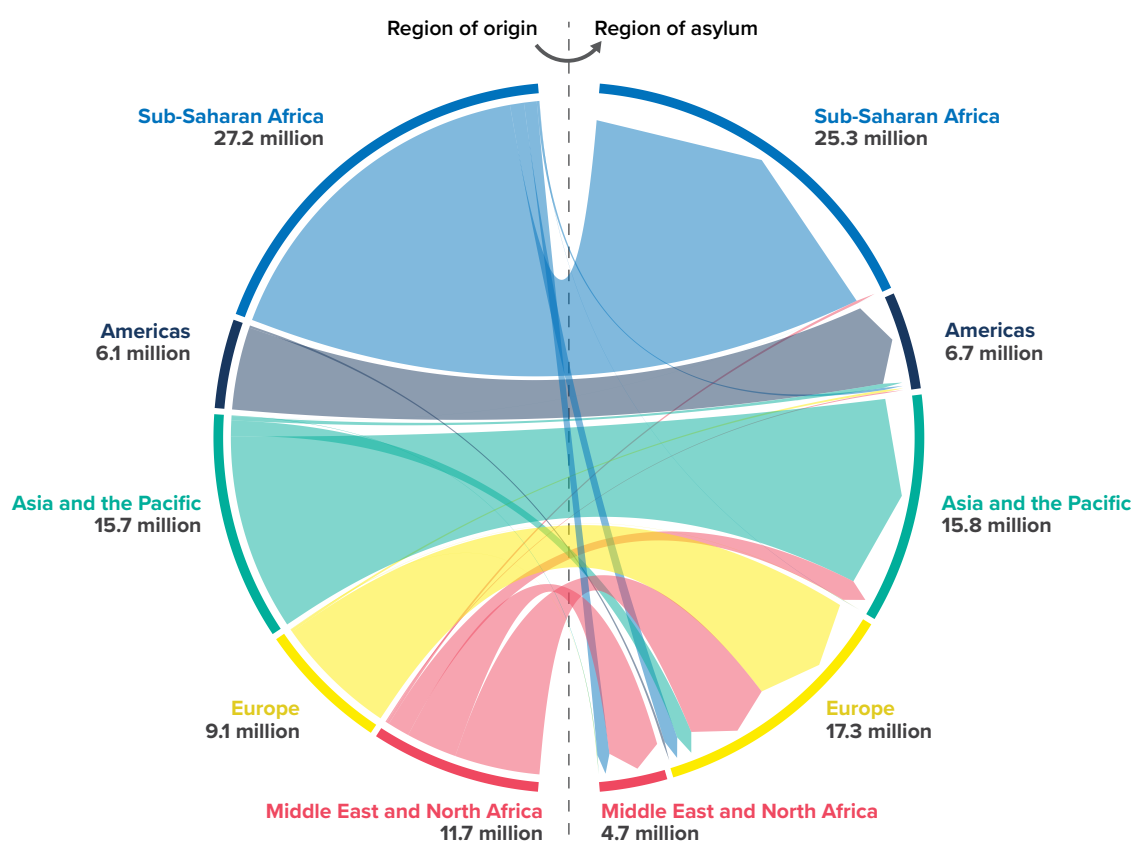


to risks of serious human rights violations,<sup>42</sup> such as recruitment of children into armed groups, and gender-based violence.

Despite these systemic risks, one thing that is unlikely to change in 2023 is that most refugees and displaced people stay as close to their countries as possible. At the end of 2022, 70 per cent of refugees, including people in refugee-like situations and other people

in need of international protection, were hosted by neighbouring countries. Over the last five decades, three-quarters of these same populations remained within their region of origin (see figure 4).<sup>43</sup> For example, of the 15.7 million refugees from countries in the Asia and the Pacific region who fled their countries between 1975 and 2022, 90 per cent (14.2 million) were hosted by other countries in the same region.

Figure 4 | **Flows of refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection from their region of origin to their region of asylum | 1975 - 2022**



Remarkable solidarity continues to be shown for refugees and other forcibly displaced populations around the world. But this cannot be taken for granted and requires greater international support. The Global Compact on Refugees,<sup>44</sup> affirmed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, presents a blueprint for the global solidarity and responsibility sharing needed by the international community. This means doing more to ease the pressure on

the host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, expand access to third-country solutions, and support conditions in countries of origin for voluntary return in safety and dignity. The forthcoming Global Refugee Forum 2023 will be an opportunity to demonstrate that this solidarity remains solid, as States and other stakeholders showcase good practices and make new commitments in support of refugees and their host communities.

<sup>42</sup> See [Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on violations against children in situations of armed conflict - follow-up study](#), Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

<sup>43</sup> Based on UNHCR's [Forced Displacement Flow Dataset and includes refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection](#). Note that some flows between neighbouring countries span different regions e.g. Türkiye is in Europe while Syria is in the Middle East and North Africa. Data is available from 1961 although data prior to 1975 is known to be incomplete.

<sup>44</sup> See the [Global Compact on Refugees](#), UNHCR.

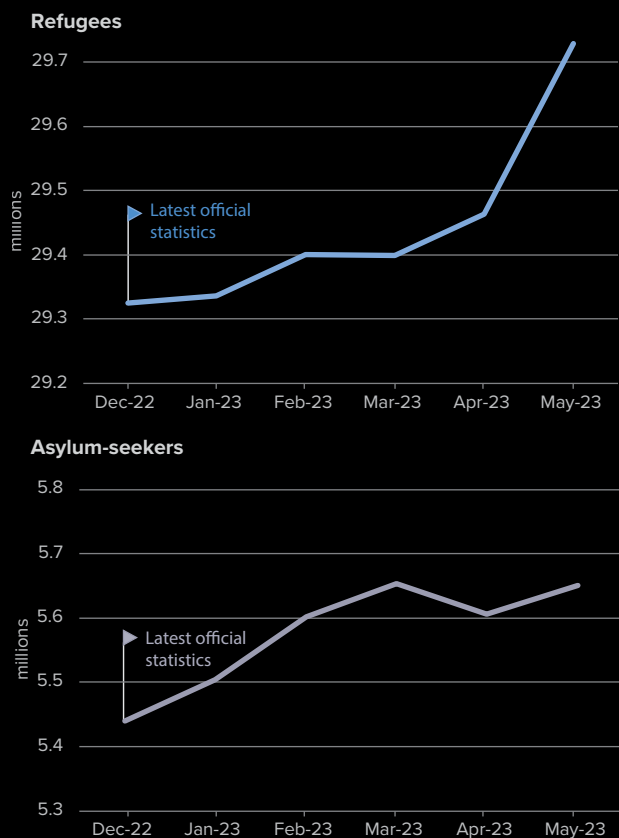
## NOWCASTING OF REFUGEE AND ASYLUM-SEEKER STATISTICS

UNHCR publishes official statistics on forced displacement twice a year. The statistics are published 4-6 months after the end of the reporting period due to the time needed for data collection, validation and verification. For example, UNHCR's annual statistics are published in June and reflect the situation as of December in the previous year. By contrast, near real-time operational data is available, but only for some displacement situations, and the data is not always comparable due to inconsistent definitions or methodological approaches.

Nowcasting – predicting the very recent past or the present – helps to estimate numbers in situations where statistics are not sufficiently timely. In humanitarian and development situations, where collecting up-to-date statistics is challenging, nowcasting can be used to overcome reporting delays. Examples of nowcasting initiatives within these sectors include the WFP's HungerMap<sup>45</sup> which monitors and estimates the current food security situation and UNCTAD's interactive website<sup>46</sup> displaying estimates of current GDP and trade indicators.

UNHCR has recently developed nowcasting of the refugee and asylum-seeker populations, with estimates produced for the previous month on a rolling basis. These figures are published monthly, and the resulting global estimate has an accuracy of close to 99 per cent compared to UNHCR's official global forced displacement figures. As shown in figure 5, the latest estimates for May 2023 are 29.7 million refugees (+1 per cent from the end of 2022) and 5.6 million asylum-seekers (+4 per cent from the end of 2022).

Figure 5 | Nowcasted figures for refugees and asylum-seekers | December 2022 - May 2023



UNHCR's nowcasting uses a mix of actual data and statistical models where actual data is not available. These statistical models use historical information from various data sources to estimate the current refugee or asylum-seeker figures. Prior to publication, the nowcasting data is quality assured to ensure the process produces the most reliable estimates possible with the available information. In 2023, these figures will be published on UNHCR's Refugee Data Finder website.<sup>47</sup>

According to the latest nowcasting data, estimates for the monthly asylum-seeker figures until May 2023

<sup>45</sup> See [HungerMap](#), WFP.

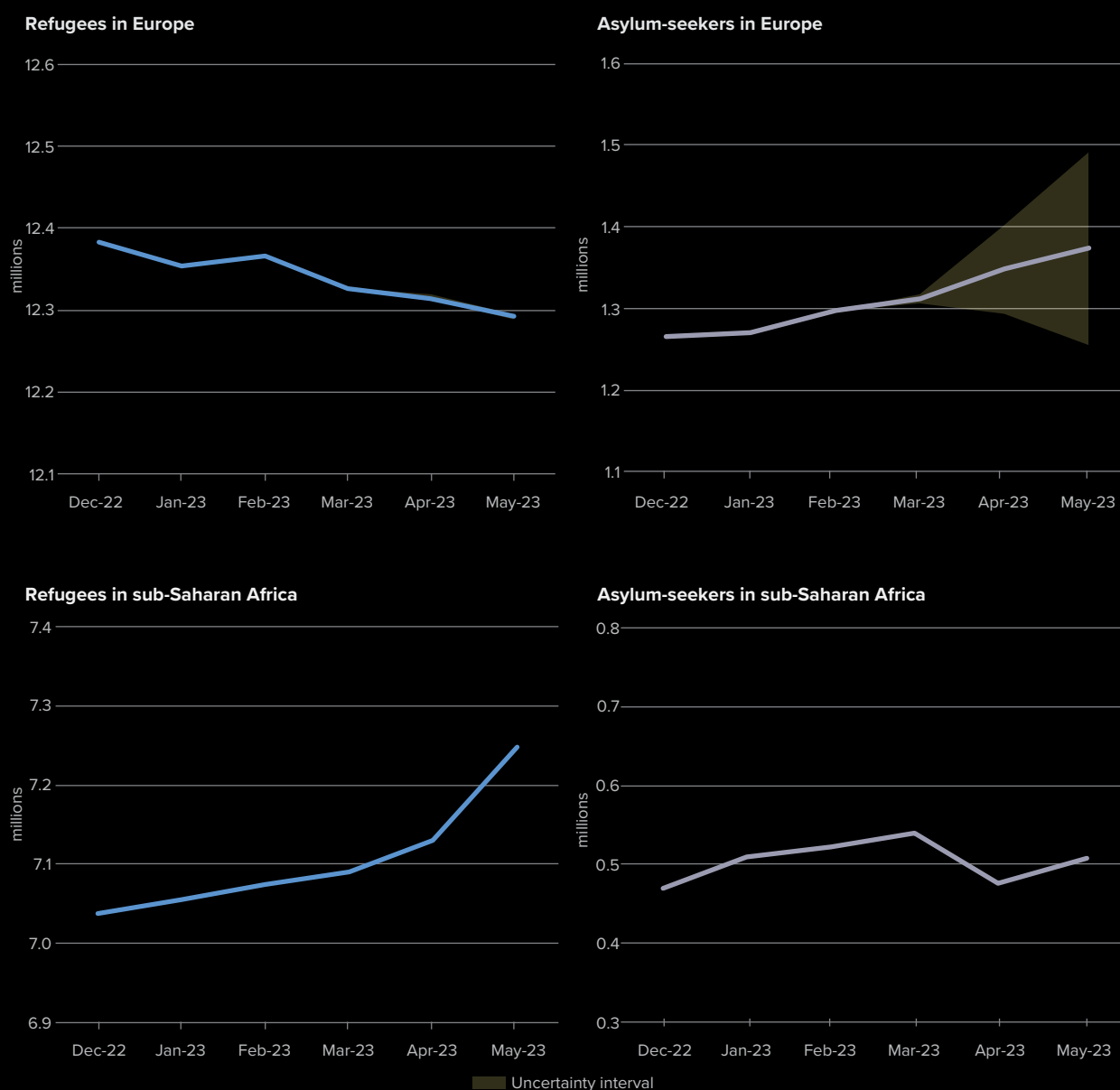
<sup>46</sup> See [UNCTADSTAT](#), UNCTAD.

<sup>47</sup> See [Refugee Data Finder](#), UNHCR.

indicate an overall upward trend for this population in both Europe and sub-Saharan Africa (see figure 6). For many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, up-to-date operational data is available. By contrast, as official monthly data for most European countries is missing, estimates tend to be based on statistical modelling. Therefore, the uncertainty intervals for the European estimates are much broader.

During the same period, the estimated refugee population in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to have increased by 209,600, while in Europe, a slight decrease of 90,300 is expected to be observed. The decrease in the refugee population in Europe is due to fewer Syrian refugees in Türkiye whereas the rise in refugees in the three sub-Saharan African regions primarily reflects an increase in refugees fleeing from Sudan to Chad and other neighbouring countries.

**Figure 6 | Nowcasting regional estimates including uncertainty intervals for sub-Saharan Africa and Europe | December 2022 - May 2023**





**CHAPTER 2**

# Refugees

## Overview

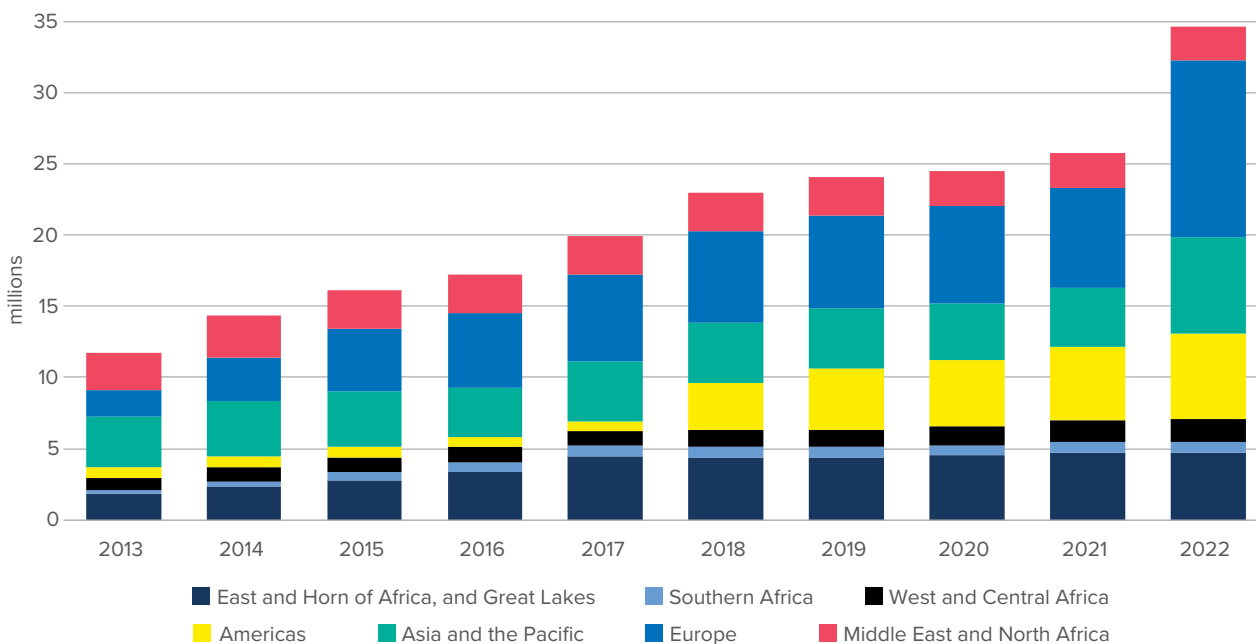
The total number of refugees<sup>48</sup> worldwide rose by a record 35 per cent, or 8.9 million people, to reach 34.6 million at the end of 2022. The increase was largely due to refugees from Ukraine fleeing the international armed conflict in their country and revised estimates of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. This total includes nearly 24.3 million refugees, 5.1 million people in refugee-like situations, and 5.2 million other people in need of international protection. All further references to

refugees in this chapter include all three of these population groups, unless otherwise stated.

During the year, nearly 5 million people were granted international protection, including 717,300 who had made an individual asylum claim, 336,800 recognized on a group basis and a further 3.8 million people who received temporary protection. Precise data on the number of other people in need of international protection that have received residence permits or other forms of legal stay in Latin American and Caribbean countries – which host most of them – is not available.

## By region of asylum

Figure 7 | Refugees by region | 2013 - 2022



<sup>48</sup> Includes people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection and excludes Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

A photograph of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a black beanie with a circular patch and a black puffer jacket, holding a young child. The child is wearing a red and blue puffer jacket and a grey beanie. They are standing in a snowy outdoor environment. The woman has a serious expression, and the child looks slightly away from the camera.

**POLAND.** *Kateryna fled her hometown in southern Ukraine with her family in March 2022. She fears for the safety of some of her relatives, including her sister and grandfather, who stayed in Ukraine.*

© UNHCR/ANNA LIMINOWICZ

## Europe

By the end of 2022, Europe, including Türkiye, hosted more than one-third (36 per cent) of all refugees (see figure 7). The number of refugees in European countries rose from 7 million at the end of 2021 to 12.4 million at the end of 2022 as millions of refugees from Ukraine sought refuge in nearby countries.

Türkiye remained the largest refugee-hosting country in the world, with 3.6 million refugees at end-2022, over 10 per cent of all refugees. Germany hosted nearly 2.1 million, 6 per cent of all refugees globally.

## Asia and the Pacific

The number of refugees hosted in the Asia and the Pacific region rose from 4.2 million in 2021 to 6.8 million by the end of the year, nearly 20 per cent of the global total, as updated population estimates in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan became available. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, a further 2.6 million Afghans were recorded in a Government-conducted exercise.<sup>49</sup> Previously undocumented Afghans, who voluntarily participated in this exercise, included new arrivals and those that were already in the country, often for many years. In Pakistan, a further 178,100 Afghans were recorded during the year.

Over 90 per cent of all refugees in the region are hosted in just three countries: the Islamic Republic of Iran (3.4 million), Pakistan (1.7 million) and Bangladesh (952,400).

## The Americas

At the end of 2022, 800,600 refugees and 5.2 million other people in need of international protection resided in countries in the Americas region, most of whom were Venezuelan. The total of 6 million reflects an increase of 17 per cent from

end-2021, largely due to updated estimates of the number of other people in need of international protection in Colombia, which rose by 611,500, and in Peru, which increased by 178,400.

Colombia (2.5 million), Peru (976,400) and Ecuador (555,400) hosted the largest populations of refugees and other people in need of international protection in the region.

## Sub-Saharan Africa

Countries in sub-Saharan Africa hosted 1 in 5 of all refugees globally. A total of 7 million refugees remained displaced at the end of 2022, a slight increase from the previous year. The East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region hosted 4.7 million refugees, primarily in Uganda (1.5 million), Sudan (1.1 million) and Ethiopia (879,600), which is consistent with the previous year. West and Central African countries hosted 1.6 million refugees at the end of 2022, 5 per cent more than the previous year. Almost 85 per cent of all refugees in the region resided in Chad (592,800), Cameroon (473,900) and Niger (255,300). Countries in Southern Africa continued to host slightly more than three-quarters of a million refugees (773,000), with most residing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (520,500).

## Middle East and North Africa

The number of refugees hosted by countries in the Middle East and North African region declined by 2 per cent to stand at 2.4 million at the end of 2022. This decrease was due to population verification exercises in Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan.

At the end of 2022, Lebanon (818,900), Jordan (697,800), Egypt (294,600) and Iraq (273,700) hosted 87 per cent of all refugees in the region.

<sup>49</sup> See footnote 19.



Table 1 | Refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection | 2021 - 2022

	End-2021				End-2022				Change	
	Refugees	People in refugee-like situations	Other people in need of international protection	Total	Refugees	People in refugee-like situations	Other people in need of international protection	Total	Absolute	%
East and Horn of Africa, and Great Lakes	4,717,500	—	—	4,717,500	4,701,300	—	—	4,701,300	-16,200	0
Southern Africa	783,300	—	—	783,300	773,000	—	—	773,000	-10,300	-1
West and Central Africa	1,488,100	—	—	1,488,100	1,563,300	—	—	1,563,300	75,200	5
<b>Total sub-Saharan Africa</b>	<b>6,988,900</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>6,988,900</b>	<b>7,037,600</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>7,037,600</b>	<b>48,800</b>	<b>0</b>
Americas	708,800	30,000	4,406,400	5,145,100	706,100	94,800	5,217,500	6,018,400	873,200	17
Asia and the Pacific	3,802,000	353,100	—	4,155,100	3,571,300	3,215,700	—	6,787,000	2,631,900	63
Europe, incl. Türkiye	6,972,000	32,000	—	7,004,000	10,611,300	1,783,800	—	12,395,000	5,391,000	77
Middle East and North Africa	2,415,100	26,000	—	2,441,100	2,393,700	—	—	2,393,700	-47,400	-2
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,887,200</b>	<b>441,100</b>	<b>4,406,400</b>	<b>25,734,800</b>	<b>24,320,000</b>	<b>5,094,300</b>	<b>5,217,500</b>	<b>34,631,700</b>	<b>8,896,900</b>	<b>35</b>

## Estimated demographic composition of refugees

Every year, UNHCR compiles data globally on the combined sex- and age-distribution of the populations that UNHCR is mandated to protect and/or assist.<sup>50</sup> At end-2022, demographic data by age and sex was available for 76 per cent of refugees and people in refugee-like situations and 50 per cent of other people in need of international protection.

Statistical modelling can be used to impute the sex- and age-distribution of populations with missing demographic data, helping to fill these data gaps with estimates.<sup>51</sup> Using this approach, children accounted

for an estimated 41 per cent of all refugees, and women and girls accounted for 51 per cent of the total (see figure 8).

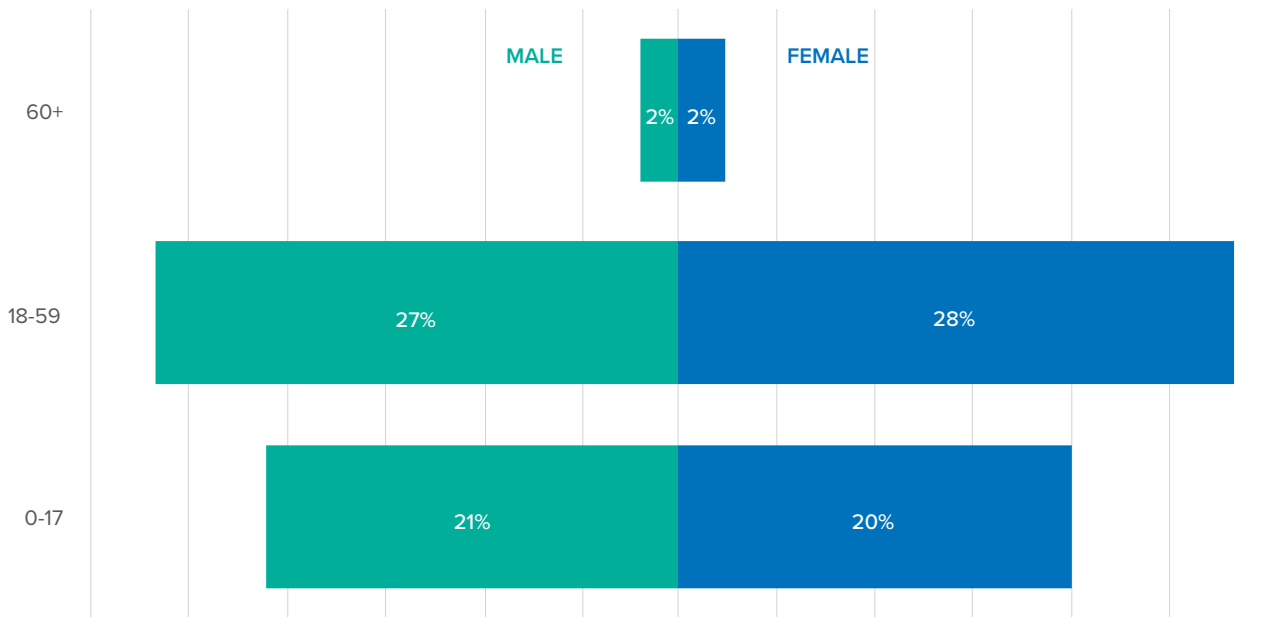
Compared with 2021, there were proportionally fewer children (-1 per cent), more elderly (+1 per cent) and more women and girls (+3 per cent). This is mainly due to the additional 5.7 million refugees from Ukraine, who accounted for 16 per cent of the total refugee population at the end of the year. By contrast with most other countries of origin with large refugee populations, refugees from Ukraine are more likely to be women and girls (estimates range between 59 and 64 per cent), less likely to be children (between 33 and 39 per cent) and more likely to be elderly (between 7 and 9 per cent).<sup>52</sup>

<sup>50</sup> See [UNHCR population categories explained](#).

<sup>51</sup> These models are generated using the available demographic data for a country of origin as a starting point. Where data for a particular country of asylum is missing, the values are estimated using statistical modelling from the available data for the same origin country in nearby countries of asylum.

<sup>52</sup> The ranges expressed represent the upper and lower 95 per cent uncertainty intervals. Note that the proportion of children amongst refugees from Ukraine (33 to 39 per cent) is almost double the proportion amongst the Ukrainian population as a whole (18 per cent).

Figure 8 | Demographics of refugees | end-2022



DISCLAIMER: figures are rounded.

### BIRTH REGISTRATIONS OF REFUGEES UNDER UNHCR'S MANDATE

Data on the number of children born into refugee status are undercounts, as source data on births among refugee populations reported to UNHCR and registered by governments is incomplete. To estimate the global number of such children, UNHCR calculated estimates by imputing missing birth data for the years between 2018 to 2022.<sup>53</sup> A key assumption in the estimates is that forced displacement is likely to impact the fertility pattern of refugees. Refugees face a situation that is drastically different from that of people remaining in their country of origin, and birth rates in the country of origin are not necessarily indicative of refugee populations that have fled these same countries.

Between 2018 and 2022, data on how many children were born into refugee status was missing for nearly two-thirds of all refugees globally. The biggest data gaps on birth figures are among refugee-hosting countries in Europe. By contrast, in countries in Africa and the Middle East and North Africa, less than a quarter of the data on births is missing in each year.

UNHCR estimates that more than 1.9 million children were born as refugees between 2018 and 2022, equivalent to some 385,000 children per year. The sheer scale of new displacement in 2022 has led to a larger margin of error than in previous years and has not yet resulted in many more births being estimated than in 2021. If the people newly displaced in 2022 remain displaced during 2023, these estimates could increase. As this imputation is based on several broad statistical assumptions, results should be considered as estimates and not precise figures.

<sup>53</sup> See [How many children are born into refugee life?](#)

## By country of origin

More than 87 per cent of all people who were refugees at the end of 2022 originated from just 10 countries, a slightly greater proportion than in previous years. Syrians accounted for almost 1 in 5 refugees globally, with 6.5 million hosted in 131 countries. Over three-quarters, 77 per cent, resided in neighbouring countries including Türkiye (3.5 million), Lebanon (814,700) and Jordan (660,900).

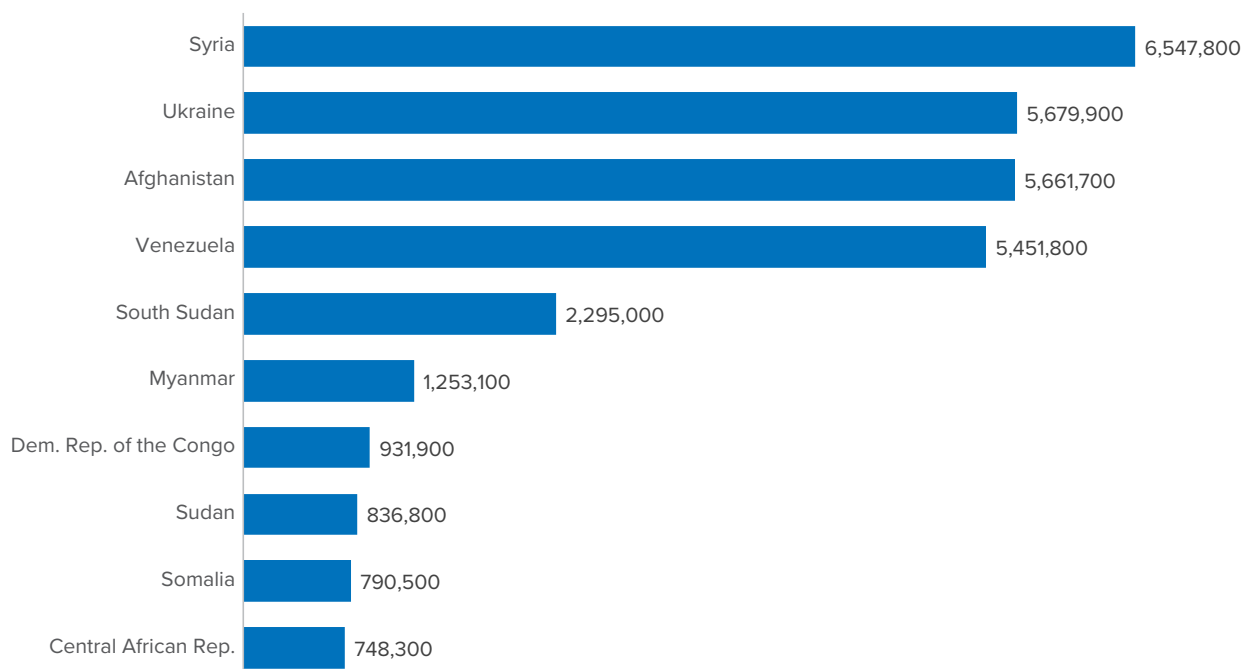
At the end of 2022, over 16 per cent of the world's refugees were Ukrainian. The number of Ukrainian refugees increased from 27,300 at the end of 2021 to 5.7 million at the end of 2022. This was the fastest outflow of refugees since the Second World War, triggered by the eruption of full-scale war in Ukraine following the Russian invasion in February 2022. Almost 2.6 million refugees from Ukraine were hosted in neighbouring countries, with a further 3 million in other European countries and beyond.<sup>54</sup>

Estimates for the total population of Afghan refugees, including people in a refugee-like situation, increased

by 2.9 million to 5.7 million. This was largely due to the upwards revision of population estimates in the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2022<sup>55</sup> which led to the recording of 2.6 million more Afghans. Of these, it is estimated that 1.6 million arrived prior to the Taliban takeover in August 2021, with a further 610,000 arriving later in 2021 and another 390,000 in 2022. In Pakistan, verification and renewal exercises provided the opportunity to register previously unregistered Afghans in refugee-like situations. At the end of 2022, Afghan refugees were hosted in 103 countries. Over 9 in 10 were in the neighbouring Islamic Republic of Iran (3.4 million) and Pakistan (1.7 million). A further 180,000 Afghan refugees resided in Germany.

In 2022, the number of South Sudanese refugees decreased slightly to 2.3 million. Almost all were located in neighbouring countries: Uganda (37 per cent of the total or 854,200 refugees), Sudan (35 per cent, 796,800 refugees), Ethiopia (18 per cent, 409,400 refugees) and Kenya (7 per cent, 153,300 refugees).

Figure 9 | **Refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection by country of origin | end-2022**



<sup>54</sup> The United States of America has also offered temporary status in certain circumstances to people in need of international protection. For example, in 2022, a significant number of Ukrainians and their immediate family members were given temporary protection on a humanitarian basis in the United States. UNHCR is in discussions with the U.S. government about how to best reflect such datapoints for all relevant populations in future reporting cycles.

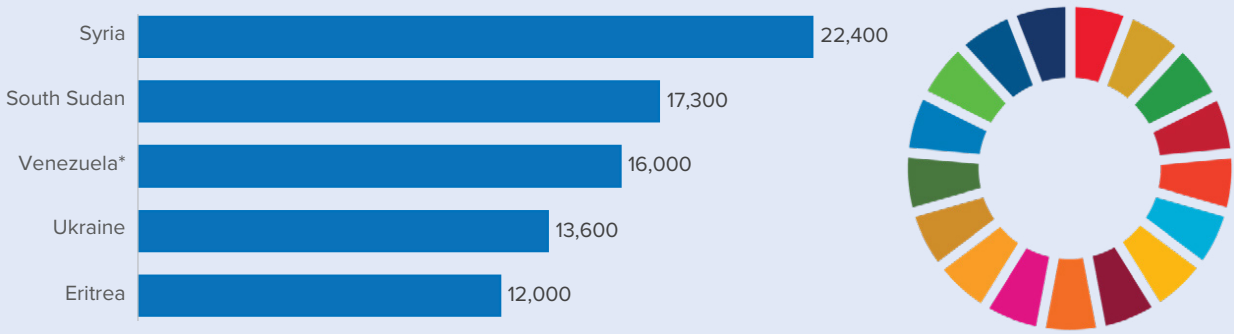
<sup>55</sup> See footnote 19.



### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS – INDICATOR 10.7.4

SDG indicator 10.7.4 identifies the proportion of a country’s population who become refugees.<sup>56</sup> As shown in figure 10, the countries that have seen the greatest proportion of their national population become refugees are Syria (22,400 people per 100,000 inhabitants) and South Sudan (17,300 per 100,000). Reflecting the increase in the number of Ukrainian refugees in 2022, the proportion of the Ukrainian population who are refugees surged from 76 per 100,000 to 13,600 per 100,000.

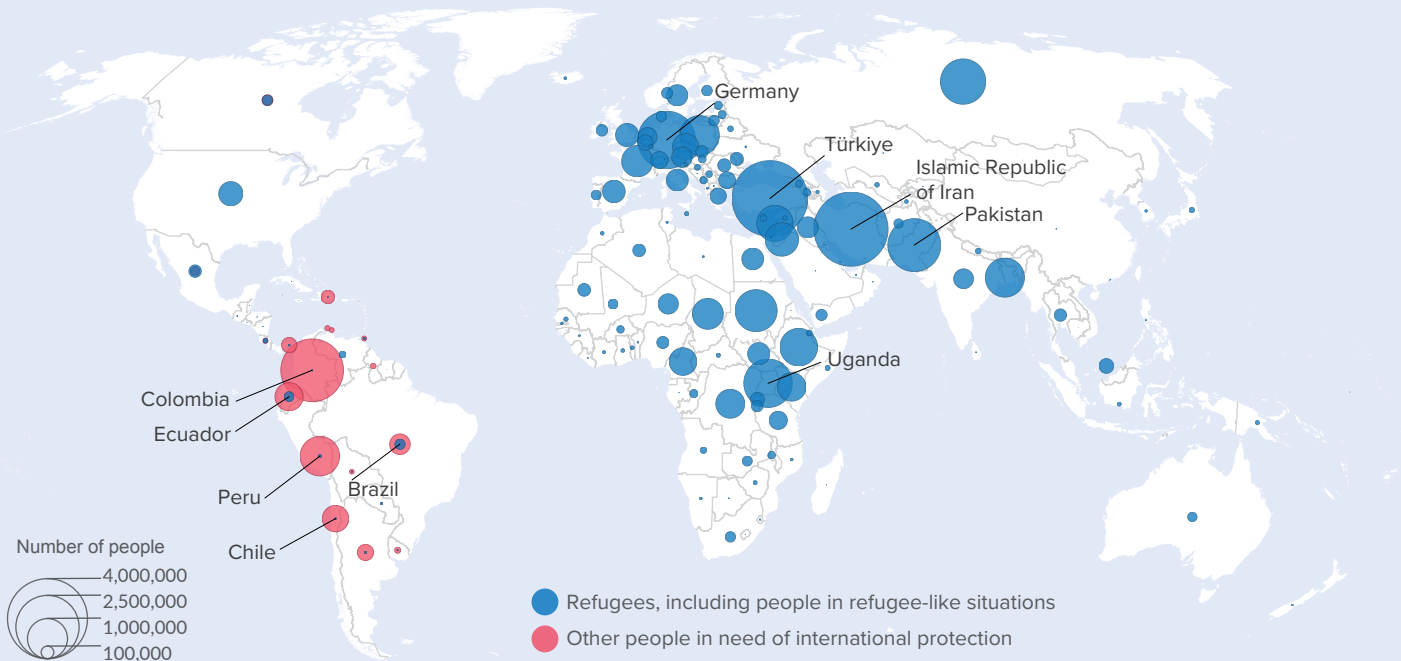
Figure 10 | SDG Indicator 10.7.4 – Refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection per 100,000 national population



\* Includes other people in need of international protection.

### By country of asylum

Map 1 | Refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection | end-2022



A country is named if it features among the five largest per population group. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

<sup>56</sup> See [UN Statistical Commission 51st session \(2020\) documents](#). Indicator 10.7.4 is computed as follows: [Number of refugees by country of origin at end-year / (End-year population in country of origin + number of refugees by country of origin at end-year)] \* 100,000. For this report, refugees, persons in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection have been included. The indicator excludes Palestine refugees under UNRWA’s mandate.

**ETHIOPIA.** Abdikafi, a Somali refugee, was caught in crossfire during attacks that took place in Somalia in 2018. Badly wounded, he lost his leg and was housebound until clashes escalated in February 2023. He then fled to Ethiopia.

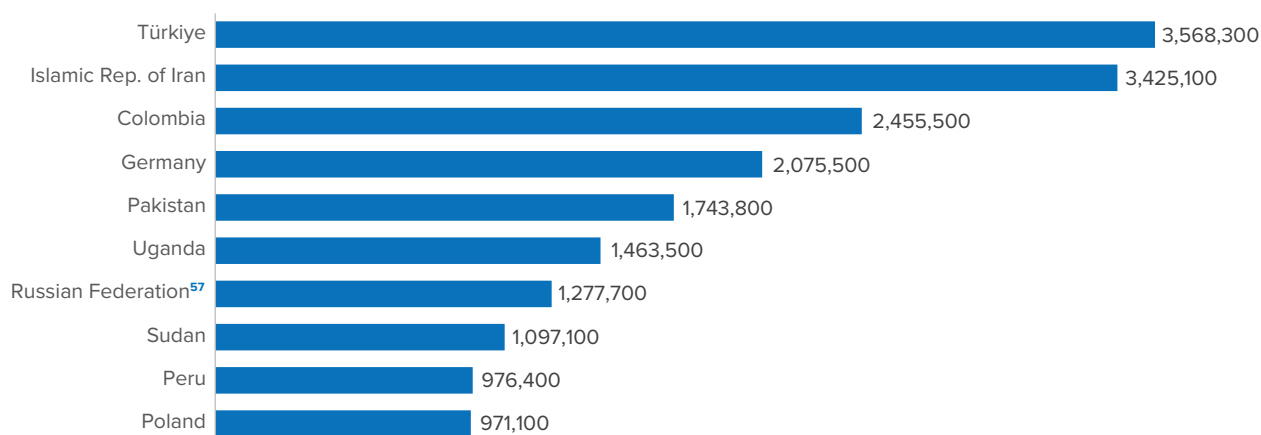
© UNHCR/DIANA DIAZ



Globally, Türkiye, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Colombia, Germany and Pakistan hosted the largest populations of refugees (see figure 11). Nearly all of the 3.6 million refugees hosted in Türkiye are Syrians. During 2022 the number of Syrian refugees in Türkiye declined by 5 per

cent, or 191,600. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the number of refugees rose from 798,300 to 3.4 million as a further 2.6 million Afghans were recorded. In Colombia, a population review led to an upwards revision of 611,500 other people in need of international protection.

Figure 11 | **Refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection by host country | end-2022**



<sup>57</sup> The figure for the Russian Federation includes 65,400 Ukrainians who were granted refugee or temporary asylum status, as well as those recorded in the country in 2022 under other forms of stay.

Table 2 | **Key facts for countries hosting refugees, people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection, by country of asylum | end-2022**

<p><b>70 per cent were hosted by neighbouring countries</b></p>	<p>Most people fleeing conflict and persecution remain near their country of origin. By the end of 2022, the number of refugees hosted in neighbouring countries dropped compared to previous years, primarily because many Ukrainians were hosted in countries that do not directly neighbour Ukraine.</p>
<p><b>76 per cent were hosted by low- and middle-income countries</b></p>	<p>Low-income countries continued to host a disproportionately large share of the world's displaced people, both in terms of their population size and the resources available to them. These countries represented 9 per cent of the global population and only 0.5 per cent of global gross domestic product, yet they hosted 16 per cent of refugees. This included very large refugee populations in Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda. A further 26 per cent were hosted by lower-middle-income countries such as Bangladesh, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Pakistan. Upper-middle-income countries, including Colombia, Jordan, Lebanon, and Türkiye, hosted 33 per cent of all refugees. High-income countries, which account for most of global wealth,<sup>58</sup> hosted 24 per cent of refugees at end-2022. This is a much greater proportion than in recent years due primarily to the number of Ukrainian refugees hosted in high-income, mainly European countries.</p>
<p><b>20 per cent were hosted by the Least Developed Countries<sup>59</sup></b></p>	<p>The Least Developed Countries consist of 46 countries, including Bangladesh, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Yemen. Together, they account for less than 1.3 per cent of global gross domestic product,<sup>60</sup> yet they were responsible for hosting more than 20 per cent of all refugees worldwide. This is down from 22 per cent in 2021 as many new refugees from Ukraine were hosted in high-income countries. At the end of 2022, the number of refugees in Least Developed Countries stood at 7 million.</p>
<p><b>67 per cent were in protracted situations</b></p>	<p>Protracted situations are defined as those where more than 25,000 refugees from the same country of origin have been in exile in a given low- or middle-income host country for at least five consecutive years.<sup>61</sup> This definition should be seen as a reflection of the situation as a whole and does not refer to circumstances of individual refugees.</p> <p>At the end of 2022, an estimated 23.3 million refugees and other people in need of international protection were in a protracted situation, 7.1 million more than the previous year. There were 57 protracted situations in 37 different host countries. Some of the protracted situations are relatively recent, such as the Venezuelans within Colombia and other countries in the Americas region. Others, such as Somali refugees in Kenya, have been in prolonged displacement for decades.</p>

<sup>58</sup> High-income countries account for 61 per cent of global gross domestic product (Source: [World Bank GDP statistics](#)). This compares with 0.5 per cent, 9 per cent and 28 per cent for low-, lower-middle- and upper-middle-income countries respectively. 0.1 per cent of refugees are hosted in countries where, due to a lack of reliable income data, an income group classification was not available.

<sup>59</sup> There are 46 [Least Developed Countries](#). These are typically low- or lower-middle-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development. The list of countries is revised every three years.

<sup>60</sup> See [World Bank GDP statistics](#).

<sup>61</sup> Includes people in refugee-like situations and other people in need of international protection. Palestinian refugees under UNRWA's mandate are excluded from this analysis.

## CHAPTER 3

# Internally Displaced People

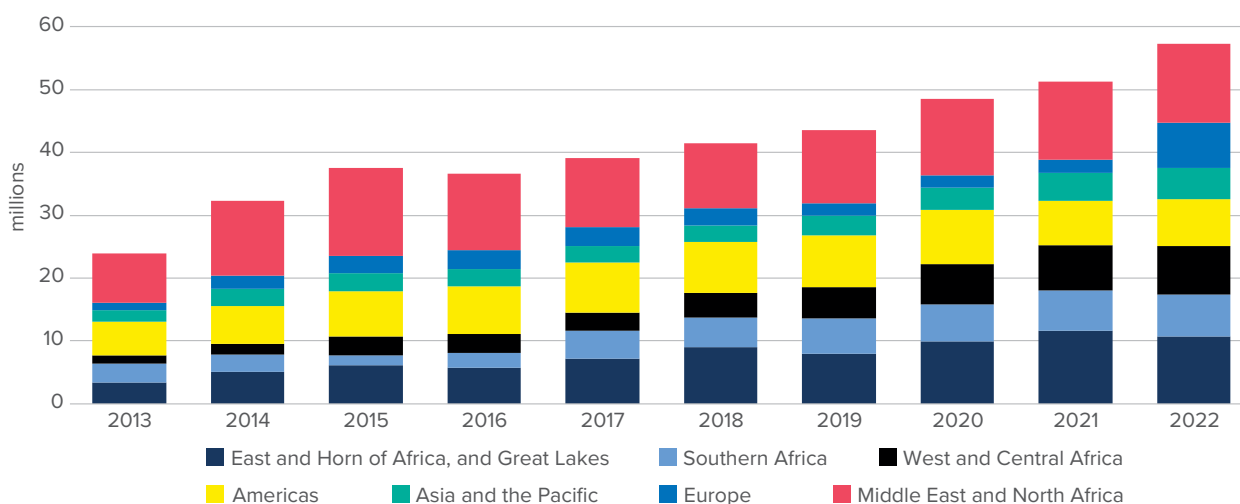
## Key global developments in 2022

People forced to flee due to armed conflicts, generalized violence, or human rights violations and who remain within their own countries are known as internally displaced people (IDPs). As in previous years, IDPs constitute the majority of the forcibly displaced population globally, some 58 per cent at the end of 2022.<sup>62</sup> By year-end, UNHCR reported on situations of internal displacement in 35 countries,<sup>63</sup> and all the

following figures in this chapter relate to IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR, unless otherwise indicated.

Over the last decade, the number of IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR has doubled, reaching 57.3 million at the end of 2022, an increase of 12 per cent from the previous year. A total of 15 countries hosted more than one million IDPs, rising from 12 in the previous year, as the number of people who were internally displaced grew in Ukraine, Myanmar and Mozambique.

Figure 12 | IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR by region | 2013 - 2022



In 2022, UNHCR responded to 15 IDP emergency declarations.<sup>64</sup> These 15 emergency declarations were made in relation to displacements caused by

armed conflict, generalized violence, and climate shocks, including drought, flooding or cyclones, or a combination thereof and occurred across all regions.

<sup>62</sup> See [2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement](#), IDMC.

<sup>63</sup> At end-2022, UNHCR reported IDP populations in 34 countries. In addition, the 98,900 IDPs in Pakistan that were displaced by conflict in the Tirah valley are now reported by the government to have returned.

<sup>64</sup> In total, UNHCR responded to 52 emergency declarations, of which 14 were IDP emergencies and 1 response included both refugees and IDPs.





**MYANMAR.** Daily life in a camp for the internally displaced. A woman is preparing food to feed her pigs in a camp for internally displaced people in Kachin State. Myanmar continues to face complex, overlapping emergencies, and clashes and protection incidents continue to drive large-scale displacement.

© UNHCR/DUMHPAU HKUNRING



UNHCR continued its critical leadership role in reinforcing IDP laws and policies, including supporting States to develop and implement national laws and policies on internal displacement. IDP law-making processes significantly advanced in Burkina Faso, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Mexico and South Sudan.

## Changes by regions and countries

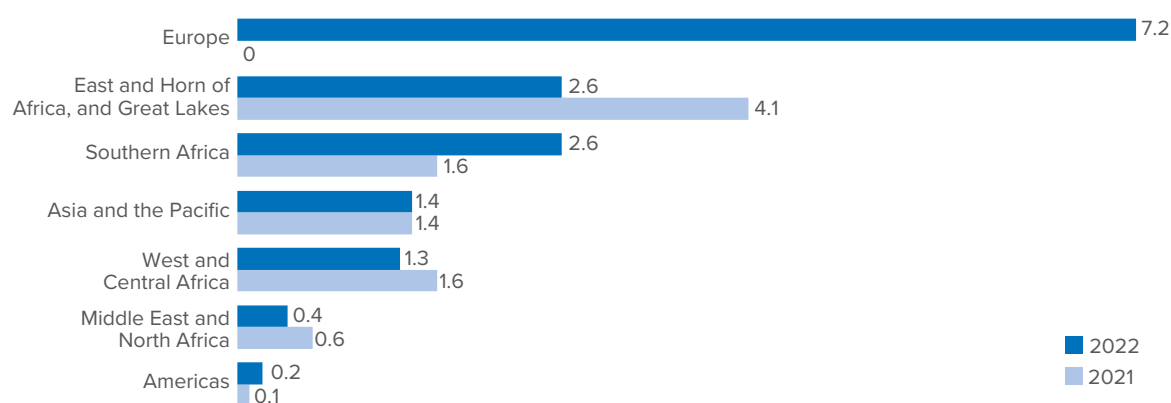
In countries where UNHCR is engaged with IDPs, at least 15.8 million new displacements<sup>65</sup> due to conflict and violence were recorded by governments or partners in 22 countries during 2022. Almost half of these occurred in Europe, in contrast to recent years when more than three-quarters of all new internal displacements occurred in sub-Saharan Africa (see figure 13).<sup>66</sup>

Following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the front lines of the war shifted over time, triggering waves of displacement, returns and onward movements. Estimates of new displacements during the year therefore range from 7.2 to 16.8 million.<sup>67</sup>

Beyond Europe, some 2.6 million people were reported as newly displaced within their countries in 2022 in the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region, most commonly in Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan (see figure 12). The conflict in Northern Ethiopia led to almost one million additional new internal displacements in 2022, before a peace agreement was signed in November 2022.<sup>68</sup> An estimated 783,000 people fled their homes in Sudan due to ongoing intercommunal conflict and violence that followed the military coup in October 2021.<sup>69</sup> In Somalia, 607,300 people were newly displaced due to persistent insecurity and drought, with the situation deteriorating as the year progressed. In South Sudan, violence erupted in Unity, Upper Nile and parts of Jonglei states in 2022 and led to nearly 288,200 new displacements within the country.<sup>70</sup>

In the Southern Africa region, more than 2.6 million people were newly displaced during 2022, with most forced to flee within the Democratic Republic of the Congo (at least 2 million) as insurgencies escalated in North and South Kivu, and Ituri provinces.<sup>71</sup> A further half a million (566,600) people in Mozambique were newly displaced due to the ongoing insurgency in the northern province of Cabo Delgado.<sup>72</sup>

Figure 13 | New internal displacements by region (in millions) | in 2021 and 2022



<sup>65</sup> Statistics on new displacements that have occurred during the year may include people that have been displaced more than once or that may already have returned to their place of origin or moved onwards during the year.

<sup>66</sup> Sub-Saharan Africa includes three regions: East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes, Southern Africa and West and Central Africa.

<sup>67</sup> The figure of 7.2 million is based on the largest number of IDPs that have been estimated to be displaced (see the [IOM DTM May 2022 report](#)) subtracting the 854,000 people that were already internally displaced at end-2021. The figure of 16.8 million new displacements includes people displaced more than once and is estimated by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre – see the [2023 global report on internal displacement](#).

<sup>68</sup> See [Northern Ethiopia peace deal restores hope for displaced](#), UNHCR.

<sup>69</sup> These figures precede the outbreak of conflict in Sudan in April 2023.

<sup>70</sup> See [South Sudan: Human rights violations in Unity state committed with 'impunity'](#), UN News.

<sup>71</sup> See [Urgent Action Needed to Defuse Violence in Democratic Republic of Congo, Senior Officials Tell Security Council, Urging Support for Ongoing Regional Efforts](#), UN News.

<sup>72</sup> See [Nearly 1 million people have fled five years of northern Mozambique violence](#), UNHCR.

In the West and Central Africa region, there were 1.3 million new displacements in 2022. In Burkina Faso, continued fighting between government forces and non-state armed groups led to 409,500 new internal displacements, while in the Central African Republic, 334,700 new displacements were reported due to conflict and violence in several regions.<sup>73</sup>

In the Asia and the Pacific region, there were 1.4 million people newly displaced within their countries, almost all in Myanmar (1.2 million) due to widespread violence following the military takeover in February 2021.<sup>74</sup> In the Philippines, some 111,000 new displacements were reported, most in Maguindanao province as government forces clashed with non-state armed groups. In Papua New Guinea, conflict- and election-related violence escalated and led to 64,000 new internal displacements in the country.<sup>75</sup>

In the Middle East and North Africa, there were 442,000 new displacements in 2022, with over half in Yemen (234,300) and a further 170,800 in

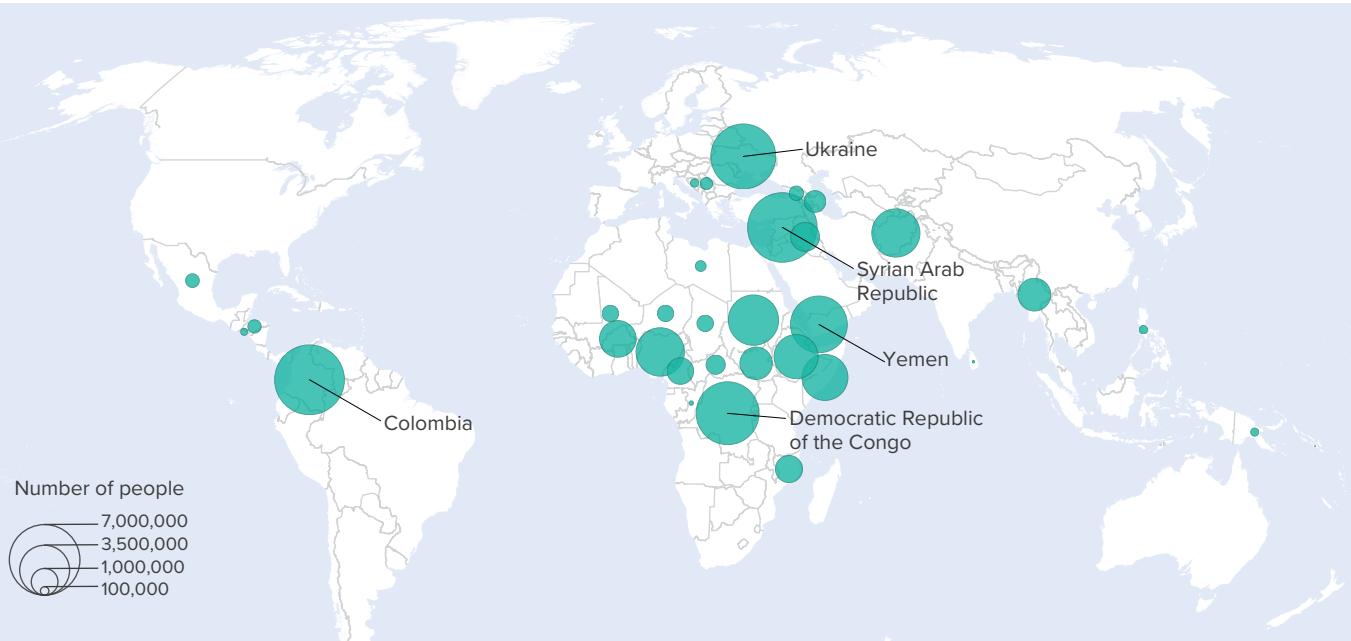
Syria. In Yemen, the ceasefire coordinated by the United Nations began in April 2022 and despite lapsing in October 2022 has continued to be broadly adhered to.<sup>76</sup>

In the Americas region, new internal displacements were only reported in Colombia, totalling an estimated 214,700 during the year.

## Internal displacement overview

At the end of 2022, nearly 4 in 5 IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR (79 per cent) remained displaced in just 10 countries worldwide (see figure 14). Syria and Colombia<sup>77</sup> continued to report the largest number of people displaced within their own countries (6.8 and 6.7 million respectively), consistent with the end of the previous year. This means that 1 in 3 of all Syrians remaining within their country were still internally displaced at end-2022, after more than a decade of conflict.

Map 2 | IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR | end-2022



A country is named if it features among the five largest per population group. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

<sup>73</sup> See [Central African Republic: UN reports detail serious violations, some possibly amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity](#), OHCHR.

<sup>74</sup> See [Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan 2023 \(January 2023\)](#), OCHA.

<sup>75</sup> See [Papua New Guinea: Conflict and election-related violence trigger wave of displacement](#), UN News.

<sup>76</sup> See [Truce Providing Serious Opportunity for Ending Yemen's Long Conflict, Briefers Tell Security Council](#), UN Press.

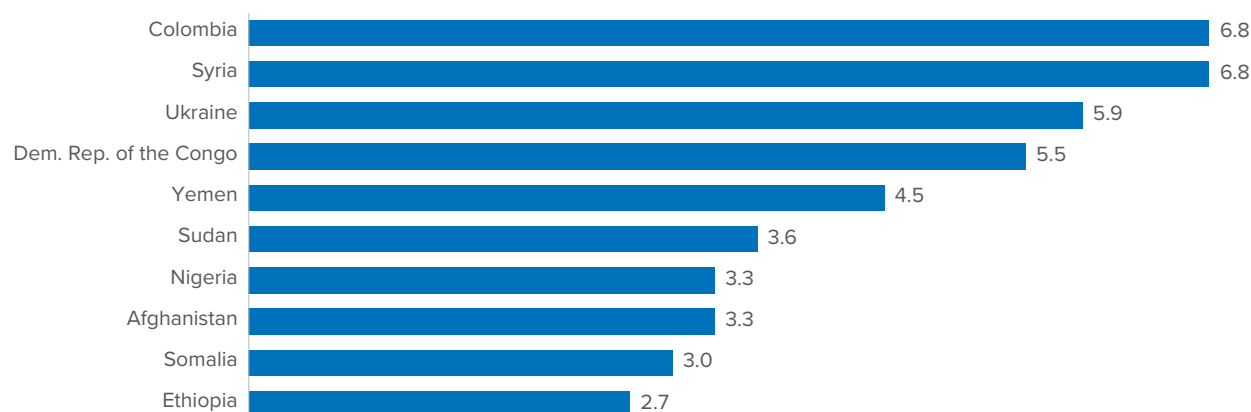
<sup>77</sup> The National Victims Registry of Colombia contains the historical accumulated figure of the number of victims of displacement which continues to increase, with new displacements that continue to be registered. The total number of persons recognized as victims of displacement (more than 8.4 million), includes the number of IDPs who are subject to attention and/or reparation, i.e. those who meet the requirements to access the measures of attention and reparation established in Colombian Law 1448 (6.8 million). The number of victims of displacement who are deceased, direct victims of forced disappearance and homicide, and other victims who, for various reasons, cannot effectively access these measures, are identified as not being subject to attention or reparation and therefore not included in the figure of 6.8 million. Cut-off date: 31 December 2022. Source: [unidad victimas](#).

In Ukraine, the number of people remaining internally displaced at end-2022 stood at 5.9 million, a seven-fold increase from end-2021, following the full-scale invasion of the country in February 2022.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has the largest IDP population in sub-Saharan Africa and, at

end-2022, the population stood at 5.5 million, slightly higher than at the end of the previous year. Yemen and Sudan also both saw increases in the number of people remaining displaced within each country at the end of the year (+6 per cent to 4.5 million and +17 per cent to 3.6 million respectively).

Figure 14 | IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR (in millions) | end-2022



## Demographics of IDPs

Reliable demographic and sub-national estimates of the number of people forcibly displaced within their countries help improve the efficiency of the operational response by UNHCR and its partners to protect and assist IDPs. In 2022, sub-national data on internally displaced people was available for 28 countries, five more than in 2021. Based on the available data, nearly 3 in 5 IDPs live in urban areas (59 per cent) and as more sub-national data becomes available, it is likely that this proportion will increase given the context in the countries with missing data.

Age- and sex-disaggregation was available in 13 countries, and sex disaggregation was available for a further seven countries, one country more than in 2021. Overall, age- and sex- disaggregation was available for 45 per cent of IDPs protected and/or assisted by UNHCR and sex-disaggregation was available for 64 per cent of this population.

Women and girls accounted for 52 per cent of all IDPs, slightly higher than in the previous year. The percentage of IDPs that are women and girls in each country varied considerably, from 46 per cent in Sudan to 57 per cent in Ukraine.

Some 40 per cent of IDPs were children, lower than in previous years (e.g. 45 per cent in 2021), primarily

due to the lower proportion of children reported within the IDP population in Ukraine compared to other countries.<sup>78</sup> In Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Niger, Somalia and Sudan children constituted more than half of the total IDP population in each country, while in Colombia, Georgia and Ukraine, children accounted for between 21 and 28 per cent of the IDPs in each country.

## Displacement in the context of disasters

In addition to conflict and violence, people were displaced within their countries due to disasters. During the year, 32.6 million internal displacements due to disasters were reported, with 8.7 million people remaining displaced at the end of 2022, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Disaster related internal displacement accounted for more than half (54 per cent) of all new displacements in 2022.

The largest number of people displaced within their countries due to disasters was reported in Pakistan (8.2 million) following extensive flooding across the country. In the Philippines and China, cyclones, floods and tropical storms led to the displacement of 5.4 million and 3.6 million people respectively.

<sup>78</sup> Note that the proportion of children amongst people displaced internally in Ukraine (25 per cent) is significantly higher than the proportion amongst the Ukrainian population as a whole (18 per cent).



**CHAPTER 4**

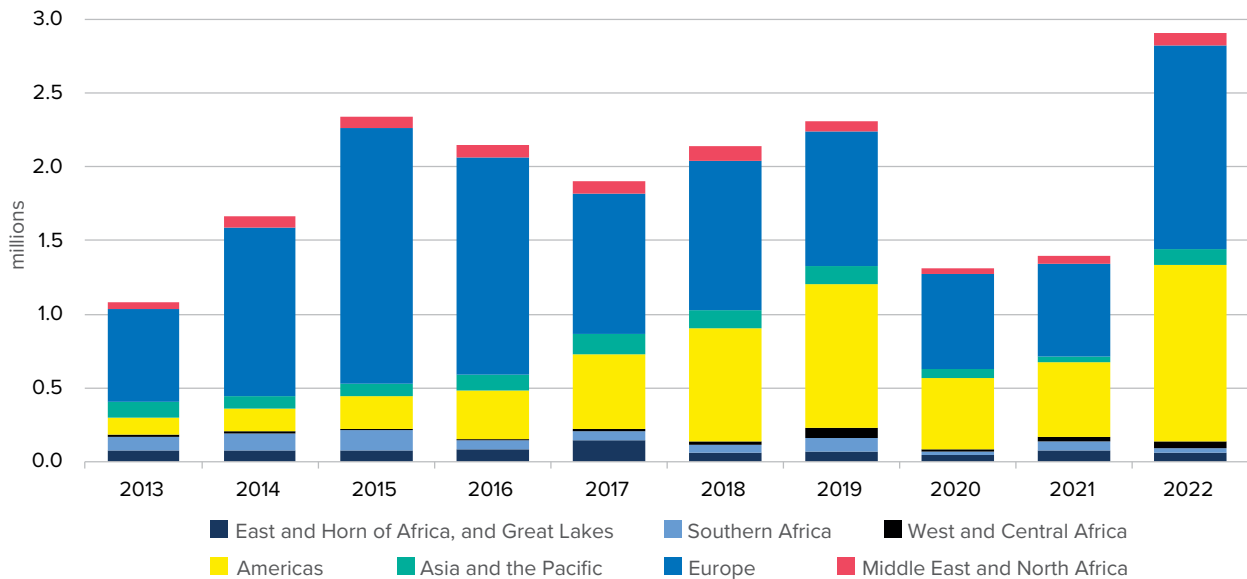
# Asylum trends

## Overview

Refugee Status Determination (RSD) is the process by which governments or UNHCR determine whether a person seeking international protection is a refugee,

assessing asylum claims against the legal criteria in international, regional and national law. Fair and efficient asylum systems are a crucial step in ensuring that refugees receive protection, solutions are achieved and public confidence in the asylum system is maintained.

Figure 15 | Individual asylum applications registered by region of asylum | 2013 – 2022



Refugee status can be determined in either individual or group procedures.<sup>79</sup> When refugee protection is determined in group procedures, it is normally provided when the claim is registered. Therefore, those receiving protection in this manner are

not counted within the number of new individual applications. Individual procedures are primarily in place in the Americas and Europe, while most group refugee recognitions take place in Africa. In addition to group and individual refugee protection, in some

<sup>79</sup> Refugee status can be granted individually or on a group basis. Group recognition most commonly takes place when there are readily apparent, objective circumstances in a country of origin which suggest that most individuals fleeing from that country are likely to be refugees. In most cases, those being granted refugee status on a group basis will be directly registered as refugees, as opposed to those recognized on an individual basis who will first be registered as an asylum-seeker. This is why individuals undergoing group determination will normally not be counted in the “asylum application” total.





*COSTA RICA. An asylum-seeker from Nicaragua. After threats were made against her, she was forced to flee her home and seek refuge in northern Costa Rica.*

© UNHCR/NICOLO FILIPPO ROSSO



circumstances individuals that would otherwise apply for refugee status instead apply for, and are granted, temporary protection. Temporary protection is considered to be complementary to the international refugee protection regime. It can be an effective tool to use in the context of large-scale displacement to provide immediate protection from refoulement, access to legal status and rights in host countries.

In 2022, nearly 2.9 million individual asylum applications were registered in 162 countries by States or UNHCR worldwide. This is the highest number of individual asylum applications ever recorded, representing a 68 per cent increase from 2021 and nearly 30 per cent more than reported in 2019 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of these, almost 2.6 million were new individual applications registered at first instance<sup>80</sup> (that is, for an initial determination of the asylum claim by, primarily, administrative authorities), while 324,200 were repeat or appeal applications for review by courts or other appellate bodies.<sup>81</sup>

The number of new individual asylum applications increased by 83 per cent compared to 2021. The increase in the number of new individual asylum applications submitted to States or UNHCR in 2022 (from 1.4 million to 2.6 million) shows the impact of new and existing displacement situations worldwide, with people forced to seek international protection in ever greater numbers as well as an uneven protection space and assistance landscape in countries of asylum. It also reflects the relaxation in early 2022 of global travel restrictions, put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented people from moving in 2020 and 2021. Compared with 2019, the increase of new asylum applications in 2022 represents a 31 per cent increase. More than 2 in 5 new applications (42 per cent) were made by nationals of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, notably Venezuela (+186 per cent to 264,000), Cuba (a six-fold increase to 194,700), Nicaragua (+49 per cent to 165,800),<sup>82</sup> Colombia (+184 per cent to 90,500), Honduras (+33 per cent to 79,700) and Haiti (+10 per cent to 73,500).

Increases in the number of individual new applications registered by Afghans (+66 per cent to 208,500), Ukrainians (a 14-fold increase to 152,000)<sup>83</sup> and Syrians (+34 per cent to 147,600) were also reported in 2022. Europe and the Americas remained the two regions receiving the largest number of individual applications in 2022 (see figure 15), with over half of all new individual applications registered in just five countries: the United States of America, Germany, Costa Rica, Spain and Mexico.

Another 4.2 million people were granted international protection on a group basis or received temporary protection, 13 times more than in 2021 (309,400). This mainly includes refugees from Ukraine who received temporary protection in countries within the European Union or similar national protection schemes in Europe.

During the year, over 1.3 million individuals received a substantive decision<sup>84</sup> on their individual refugee claim, a 27 per cent increase on the previous year, showing a good increase in productivity. Of these, close to 717,300 individuals were granted refugee or other protection status in 146 countries, while 585,300 were rejected.

In 2022, some 51,700 unaccompanied or separated children (UASC) lodged new asylum applications, an 89 per cent increase from the previous year, in line with the overall increase in new applications. While the number of countries reporting on UASC has increased from 50 in 2021 to 56 in 2022, information remains limited and therefore the figures are likely to be significant underestimates.

## Individual asylum applications registered

### By country of asylum

About 71 per cent of new individual applications in 2022 were registered in just 10 countries, as shown in figure 16. Apart from Mexico, which

<sup>80</sup> Data for some countries may include a significant number of repeat applications if an applicant has submitted at least one previous application in the same or another country.

<sup>81</sup> Statistical information on outcomes of asylum appeals and court proceedings is underreported in UNHCR's statistics, particularly in high-income countries, as this type of data is often either not collected by States or not published.

<sup>82</sup> In 2022 in Costa Rica, Nicaraguans and Venezuelans (only October to December) started their applications by obtaining an appointment to formalize their asylum claim. The appointment process for Nicaraguans and Venezuelans ended in December 2022.

<sup>83</sup> Excludes the 3.8 million Ukrainians that have received temporary protection.

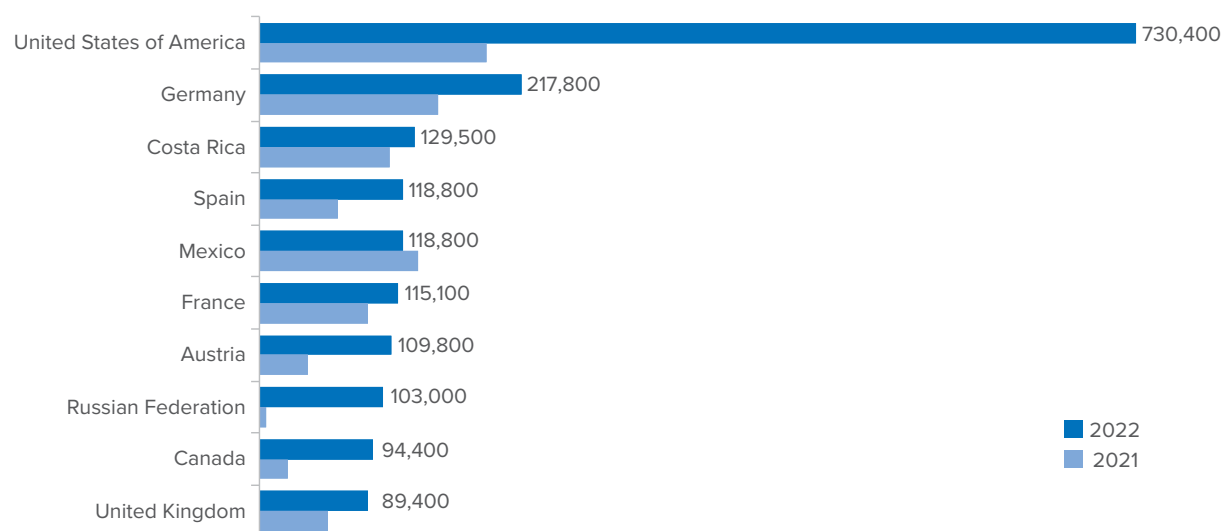
<sup>84</sup> Substantive decisions include Convention status, complementary and other forms of protection, and rejected cases.



saw a 10 per cent decrease, the number of new asylum applications in each of these countries increased in 2022 compared to the previous year, including in Austria (+175 per cent to 109,800), Canada (a three-fold increase to 94,400), and the United States of America (a three-fold increase to 730,400).

In both the Democratic Republic of the Congo (-91 per cent to 4,100) and Uganda (-38 per cent to 25,500) – two countries with significant new applications in 2021 – large drops in the number of new asylum applications were reported in 2022. Both countries did continue to see significant numbers of new arrivals granted refugee status on a group basis.

Figure 16 | Major countries for individual registration of new asylum-seekers | 2021 and 2022



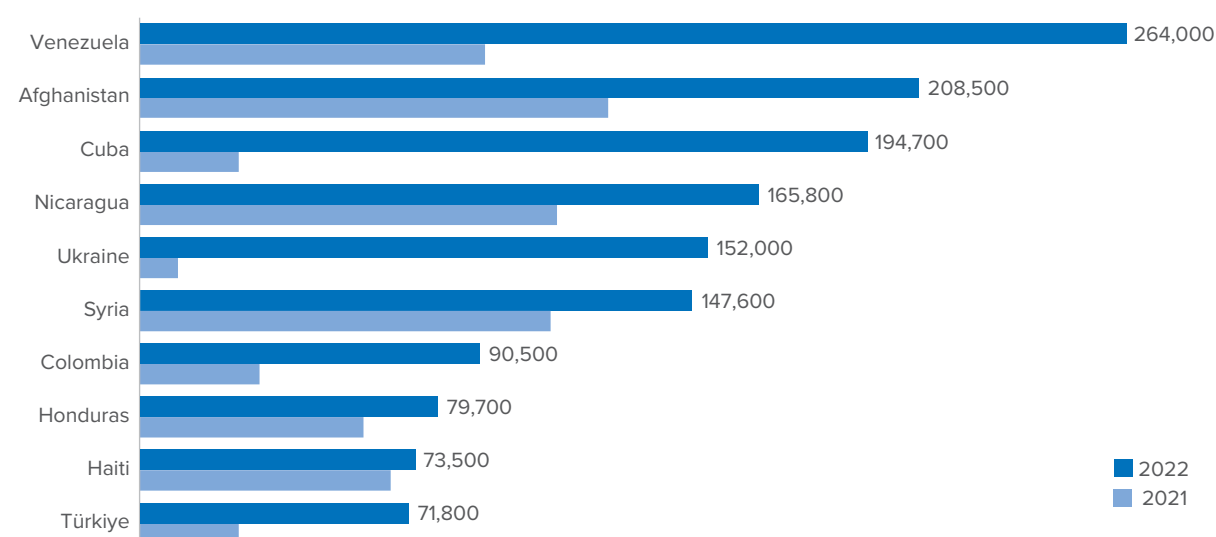
## By country of origin

Of the 2.6 million new individual asylum applications, 56 per cent or 1.4 million asylum applicants originated from just 10 countries (see figure 17).

In the Americas, the number of Venezuelans who sought asylum during the year totalled 264,000, nearly three times as many as during the previous year

(92,400). Applications by nationals of other countries in the region also grew in 2022 compared to 2021, with 217,800 new individual applications lodged during the year by nationals from these countries. While new asylum applications from these countries were primarily registered within other countries in the region, with the highest number lodged in the United States of America, Costa Rica and Mexico, a significant number also sought asylum in Spain.

Figure 17 | Major source countries of new asylum applications | 2021 and 2022



Some 359,100 new individual applications were registered in 2022 by nationals of European countries, more than triple the previous year's total. This increase was driven by sharp rises in applications registered by nationals of Albania (+99 per cent to 26,800), Georgia (+135 per cent to 30,500), the Russian Federation (a three-fold increase to 36,500) and Ukraine (a 14-fold increase to 152,000). Applications from nationals of countries within Europe were lodged in 122 countries, including France and Germany.

The number of new individual asylum applications by nationals of countries in the Asia and Pacific region in 2022 was 454,000, an increase of 78 per cent compared to the previous year. Afghans submitted 208,500 new applications in 2022, the second largest number of applications globally, in 87 countries, including Austria, Germany, Türkiye and the United States of America. Other notable increases in new applications were seen from Indians (a three-fold increase to 58,200), Pakistanis (+69 per cent to 41,000), Bangladeshis (+88 per cent to 38,900) and Iranians (+44 per cent to 29,600). Conversely, the number of new individual applications by Myanmar nationals decreased in 2022 by 37 per cent to 13,500.

In 2022, new asylum applications by nationals of countries in the Middle East and North Africa region increased by 40 per cent to 288,400. Just over half of these applications were by Syrians, primarily in Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands (Kingdom of the). In addition to Syrians, new applications were most commonly registered by nationals of Iraq (-5 per cent to 36,000), Tunisia (+129 per cent to 22,000), Morocco (+54 per cent to 23,000) and Egypt (+118 per cent to 19,000).

Nearly 175,300 nationals of countries in the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region made their first individual application for asylum in 2022, 25 per cent more than in 2021. Applications by Sudanese (+71 per cent to 38,500), Eritreans (+27 per cent to 38,000), Somalis (+ 7 per cent to 34,400) and Ethiopians (-2 per cent to 24,100) accounted for more than three-quarters of all applications from the region.

As detailed below, many others from this region found protection through group procedures.

New individual asylum applications by nationals from countries in West and Central Africa decreased by 12 per cent in 2022 compared to 2021 and totalled 129,800. New applications were most commonly made by nationals of Burkina Faso (an eight-fold increase to 29,900) and Nigeria (-3 per cent to 26,400), with most individual applications lodged in Niger (30,400).

In Southern Africa, two-thirds (43,100) of the 62,000 new applications from countries in the region were from nationals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 25 per cent more than in 2021.

In order to effectively address the large number of applications, UNHCR continues to support States to put in place fair and efficient asylum procedures. Such procedures ensure efficient identification of those in need of international protection as well as those who are not in need, which reduces the burden on asylum systems and can facilitate prompt returns.

### By asylum authority

In line with the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR continues to focus on building and strengthening national asylum systems in countries where fair and efficient procedures are not yet in place. Since 2015, UNHCR has also implemented a strategic direction on RSD,<sup>85</sup> focusing on reducing its RSD activities and engaging in determination under its Mandate only in situations where there is likely to be a substantive protection impact, at either the individual, population, or operational level.<sup>86</sup> Examples of this could include solutions (such as resettlement), documentation or facilitating access to services.

In 2022, UNHCR registered 149,100 asylum applications for RSD in 46 countries. Of these, 133,500 asylum applications required RSD, a 53 per cent increase from the 86,800 applications in 47 countries in 2021.<sup>87</sup> This increase is partially due to RSD conducted for increased opportunities for resettlement. The highest number of new applications in 2022 were recorded in Pakistan (28,500), Egypt (27,300) and Libya (20,200).

<sup>85</sup> See [UNHCR's strategic direction on RSD](#).

<sup>86</sup> Unlike a State, which has the power to grant legal status in its territory after an RSD decision, such decisions under UNHCR's mandate may not have a protection impact for the individual involved, depending on the specific context.

<sup>87</sup> The reduction in the number of countries reporting UNHCR mandate RSD applications between 2022 and 2021 was due to changes in the number of countries receiving very low numbers of applications throughout the year.

Table 3 | New and appeal applications registered for RSD | 2018 - 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
<b>States</b>	1,854,200	2,125,600	1,214,300	1,639,200	2,763,800
<b>UNHCR</b>	227,800	120,400	56,400	86,800	133,500
<b>Jointly**</b>	11,400	1,300	600	700	700
<b>Total</b>	2,093,400	2,247,300	1,271,300	1,726,700	2,898,000
<b>% UNHCR only</b>	11%	5%	4%	5%	5%

\* Provisional figure

\*\*Refers to refugee status determination conducted jointly by UNHCR and governments.

## Group determination of refugee status and temporary protection

During the year, a total of 3.8 million people were granted temporary protection, and 336,800 were recognized as refugees on a group basis. Of those granted temporary protection, 98 per cent were

Ukrainians. Most refugees recognized on a group basis were hosted in African countries, including 99,700 South Sudanese (primarily in Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Kenya), 53,900 nationals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (in Uganda), 28,500 Malians (mainly in Burkina Faso and Mauritania), and 27,200 Nigerians (mainly in Cameroon and Niger). Figure 18 provides an overview of individual and group recognitions as well as people granted temporary protection in 2022.

Figure 18 | Type of recognition by country of asylum | 2022

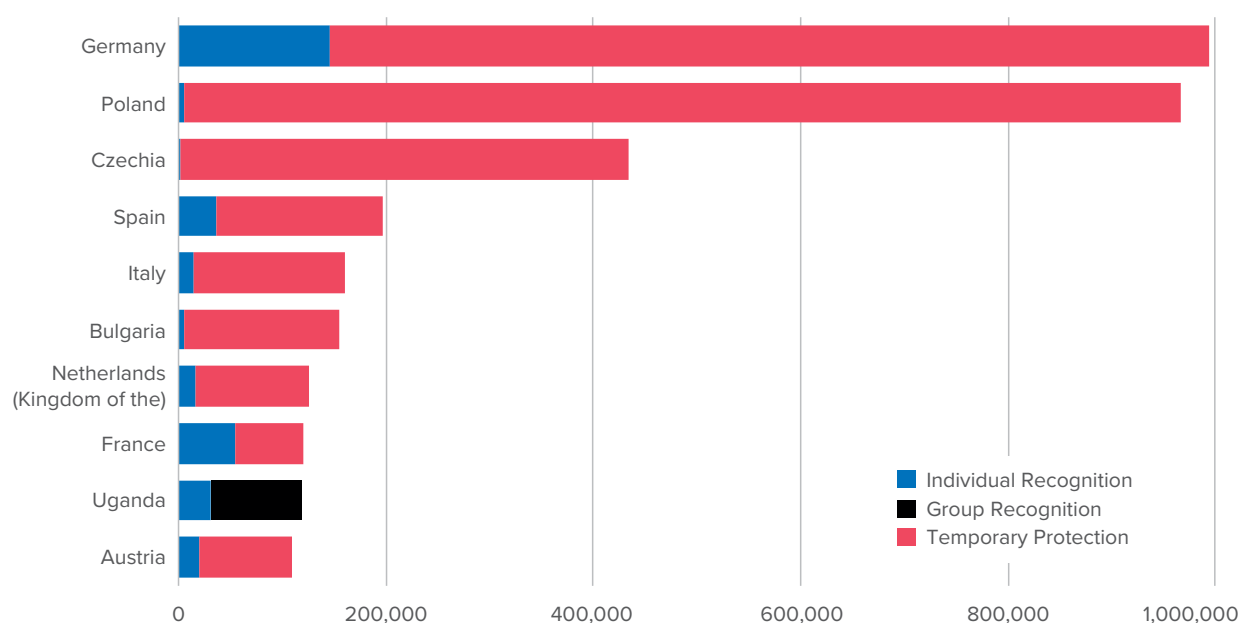
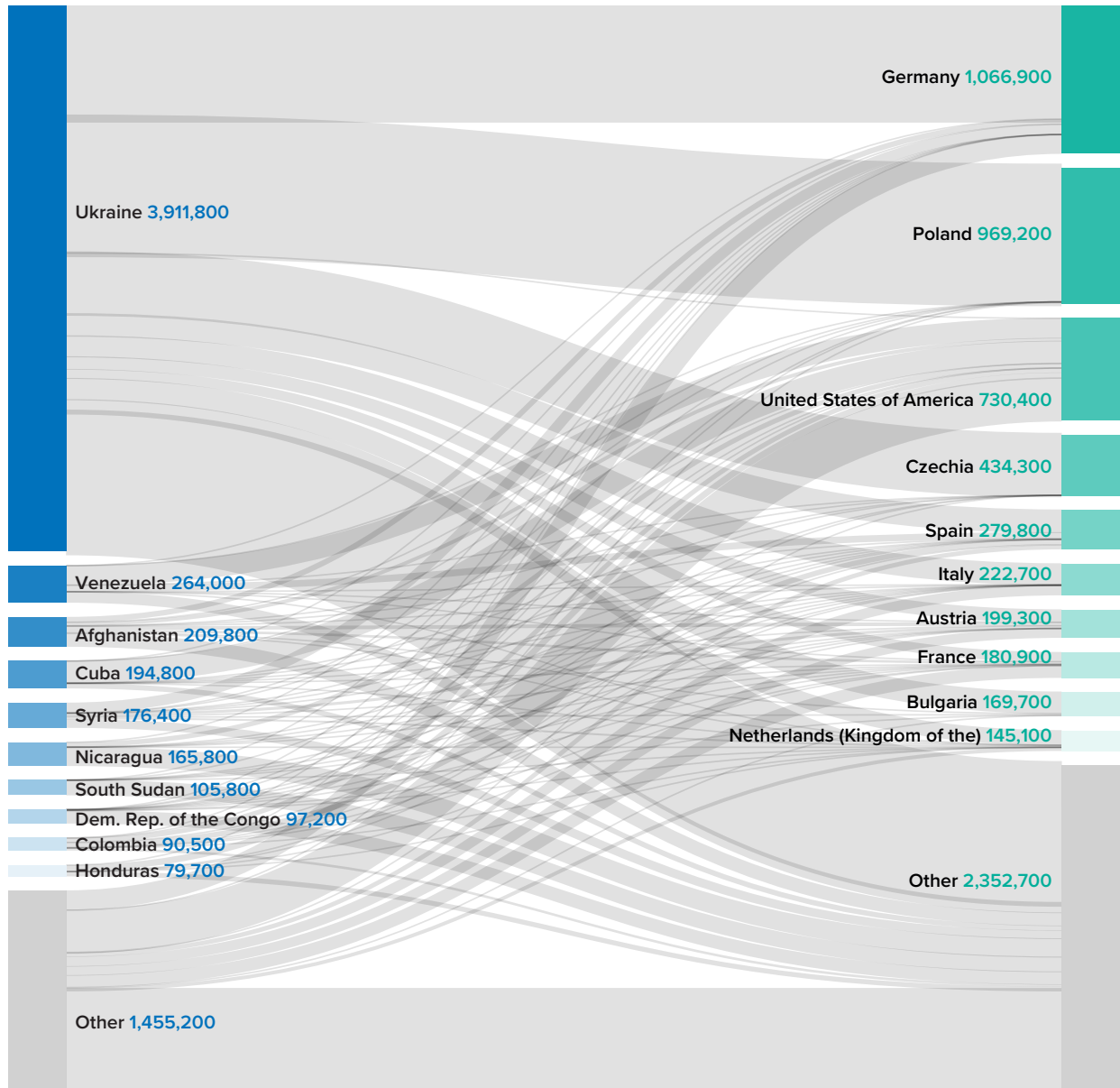




Figure 19 | Key flows of people registered for new individual asylum applications, recognized on a group basis or granted temporary protection | 2022



## Decisions on asylum applications

In 2022, over 1.3 million individuals received substantive decisions<sup>88</sup> on their refugee claims, a 27 per cent increase from the previous year as the efficiency of asylum systems increased to address the high number of applications. Additionally, 666,400 cases were closed without a decision for administrative reasons.<sup>89</sup>

Of the 1.3 million substantive decisions, 97 per cent were made by governments, while 43,400 were made by UNHCR under its mandate (+73 per cent from 25,000 in 2021). A further 400 substantive decisions were made jointly by UNHCR and governments.

<sup>88</sup> Substantive decisions include Convention status, complementary and other forms of protection, and rejected cases.

<sup>89</sup> Examples of reasons for a case being closed without a decision made on its merits are the death of the applicant, no-show for interview, withdrawal of the application, abandonment of the claim, or the determination that another country is responsible for the claim.

The global Total Protection Rate,<sup>90</sup> which measures the percentage of substantive decisions that resulted in some form of international protection, increased from 48 per cent in the previous year to 55 per cent in 2022. This increase was primarily due to high recognition rates among Ukrainian asylum-seekers.

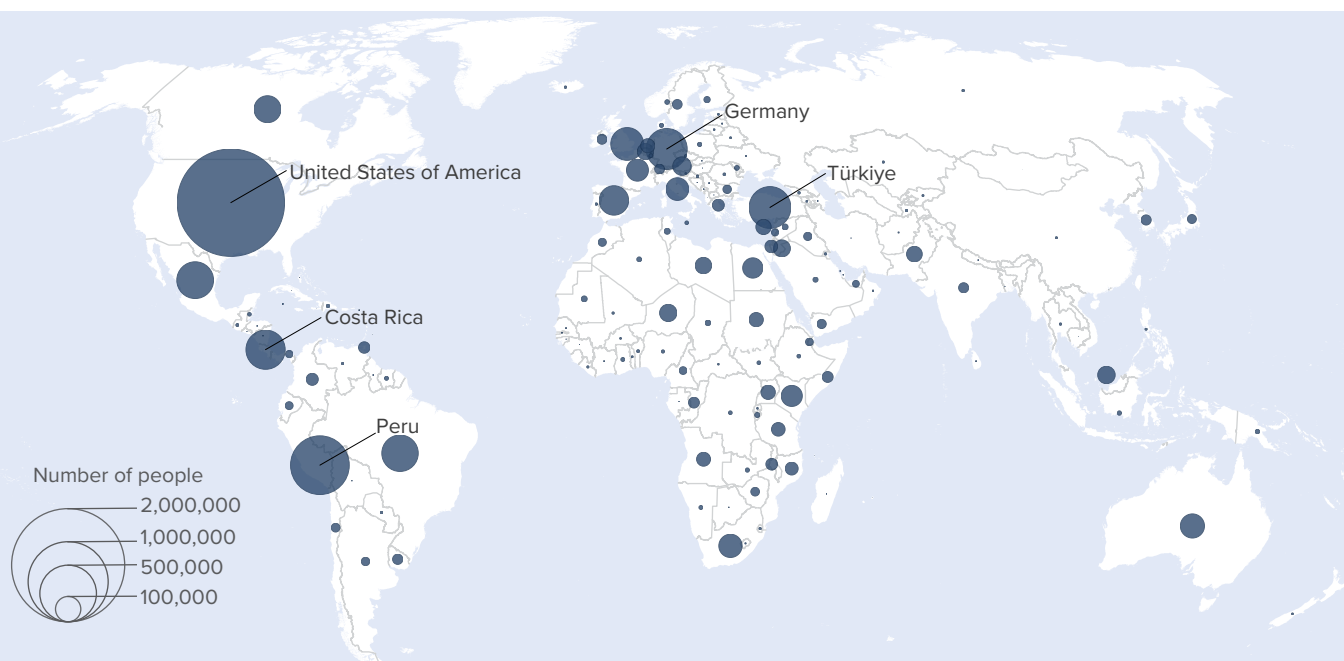
## Pending asylum claims

The number of asylum-seekers waiting for a decision at the end of 2022 stood at 5.4 million, an increase of 18 per cent from the end of 2021. The growing asylum backlog exists despite more RSD cases being finalized (i.e. a substantive decision has been made on the case) in 2022 than in any year since 2017 and reflects the sheer volume of new applications. In the United States of America for example, the number of substantive decisions on cases increased by 59 per cent compared to 2021, while new asylum applications grew nearly three-fold

during the same period. This underscores the need to implement efficient procedures for processing asylum applications, including differentiated case processing modalities, and group recognition. In appropriate cases this can also include protection-sensitive stay arrangements as a complement to the asylum system, which enables faster access to protection and access to services, such as the temporary protection granted to refugees from Ukraine in the European Union. A growing backlog can create protection concerns if asylum-seekers wait many years without legal certainty, and it is more difficult for rejected applicants to return to their country of origin.

In 2022, 43 countries were able to reduce their backlog of pending cases, and these included significant reductions in Malawi, South Africa<sup>91</sup> and Uganda. Conversely, the backlog increased in 92 countries during the year. Increases were greatest in Canada, Costa Rica, Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Map 3 | Asylum-seekers (with pending cases) | end-2022



A country is named if it features among the five largest per population group. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

<sup>90</sup> UNHCR uses two rates to compute the proportion of refugee claims accepted. The Refugee Recognition Rate is the proportion of asylum-seekers accorded refugee status out of the total number of substantive decisions (Convention status, complementary protection and rejected cases). The Total Protection Rate is the proportion of asylum-seekers accorded refugee status or a complementary form of protection relative to the total number of substantive decisions. Non-substantive decisions are, to the extent possible, excluded from both calculations. For the purposes of global comparability, UNHCR uses only these two rates and does not report rates calculated by national authorities.

<sup>91</sup> In South Africa, all refugees and asylum-seekers with valid permits were considered to be active during the COVID-19 pandemic era as long as their permit's expiry dates were after the breakout of the pandemic. With the resumption of normal services in 2022, many permits have been inactivated and are therefore considered to be administrative closures. In total, some 72,200 individuals either did not extend their permits or the extended permits became inactive by the end of the year. Individuals whose permits have been inactivated can reapply although asylum-seekers and refugees have reported challenges in accessing the online renewal system.

## CHAPTER 5

# Solutions


## Overview

Durable solutions enable refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) to rebuild their lives in safety and dignity. They are a strategic priority for UNHCR and the humanitarian and development communities.<sup>92</sup> While the number of refugees and IDPs who found a solution increased in 2022 compared to the previous year, durable solutions continue to remain a reality for very few people. Reliable statistics on durable solutions for IDPs are often not readily available and can be difficult to collect. During 2022, at least 5.7 million IDPs returned to their place of origin, 8 per cent more than during the previous year.

For refugees, durable solutions include voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement to a third country. Complementary pathways and family reunification can also expand third country solutions, easing pressure on host countries and enhancing refugees' self-reliance by building their capacities to attain a solution, including through education pathways or labour mobility. During the year, 339,300 refugees returned to their country of origin, while 114,300 refugees were resettled to a safe third country (-21 per cent and +99 per cent respectively compared to 2021). Despite the increase in global resettlement, as the number of newly displaced refugees surged in 2022, the ratio between new refugees and refugees benefiting from a solution increased to its highest ever level (see figure 20). For each refugee that returned or was resettled in 2022, there were 16 new refugees.

<sup>92</sup> See [The Global Compact on Refugees](#) and the [UN Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement](#).



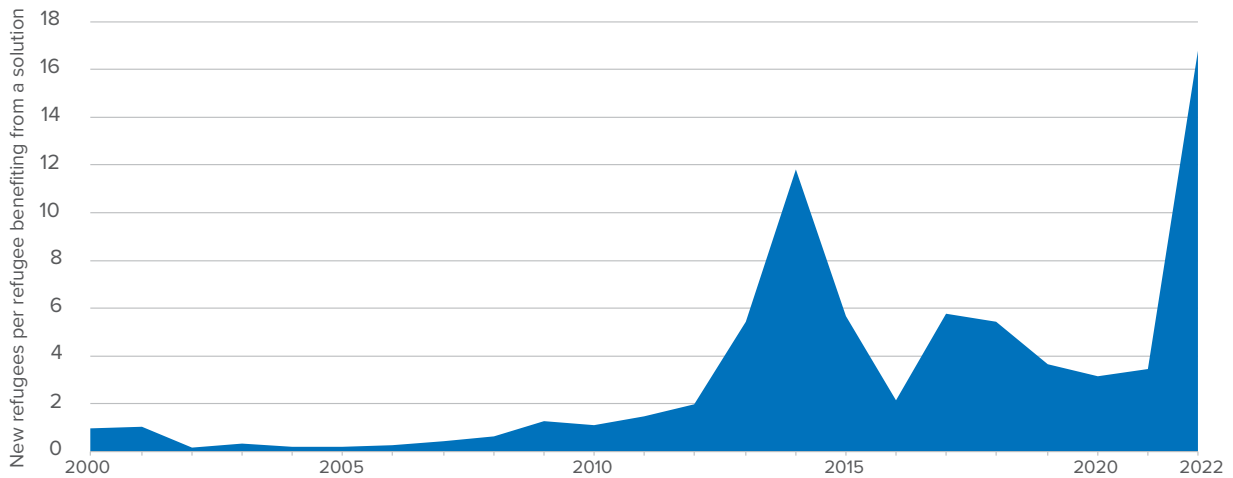


CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC. Since returning to her hometown in the Central African Republic, Renessio has settled in a site for displaced returnees in Bria. A widow with six children, she was able to build the house for her family with the assistance provided to her by the Durable Solutions Working Group, which is led by UNHCR.

© UNHCR/FIDÉLIA BOHISSOU



Figure 20 | Number of new refugees for each refugee that returned or was resettled in each year | 2000 - 2022

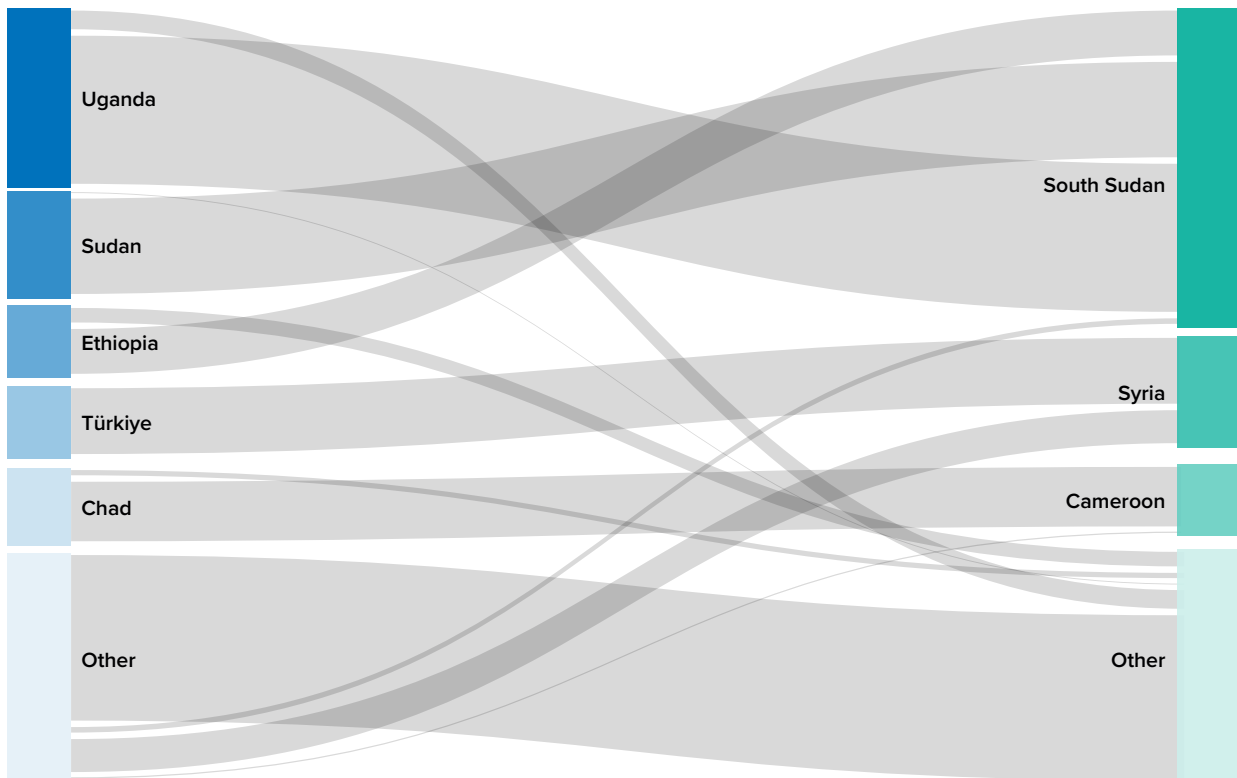


## Refugee returns

In 2022, 339,300 refugees voluntarily returned to 38 countries of origin, a decrease of 90,000 or 21 per cent compared to the previous year (see figure 21). Refugees from South Sudan continued to constitute

the largest groups of returnees, with 151,300 returning in 2022 primarily from Uganda (75,500), Sudan (48,900)<sup>93</sup> and Ethiopia (23,300). In 2022 and previous years, returns to South Sudan have been difficult to verify, as they tend to be self-organized, and it can be difficult to reach the areas to which many people return.

Figure 21 | Refugee returns by former country of asylum and country of origin | 2022



<sup>93</sup> The figure refers to refugee returns from Sudan which occurred during 2022. Given the deteriorating security situation in Sudan at the time of writing, refugee returns to South Sudan from Sudan are expected to increase in 2023, with 86,600 returnees reported (see [Sudan situation on the operational data portal](#), as of 31 May 2023).

UNHCR does not promote refugee returns to Syria, however, together with its partners, UNHCR supports local communities receiving returnees. Some 51,300 Syrians returned to their country during the year, an increase of 14,800 from 2021, with two-thirds of the refugees returning from Türkiye. UNHCR conducted the seventh return intention survey among Syrian refugees in early 2022.<sup>94</sup> Of those refugees surveyed, slightly less than 6 in 10 hoped to return to Syria in the future, a small decrease compared to the previous survey. Only two per cent planned to return to Syria in the next 12 months, with around three-quarters of the others planning to stay in their host countries for now. Safety and security concerns and the lack of livelihood opportunities in Syria were refugees' greatest concerns when considering returning. Statistics on returns to Syria corroborate the survey findings - a total of 147,600 returns were reported between 2018 and 2022 from the four countries in which the survey was conducted, equivalent to 1-2 per cent of the refugees returning in each year.

Other notable returns during the year included Cameroonian refugees returning from Chad (30,800), Ivorian refugees returning from Liberia (12,900), Nigerian refugees returning from Niger (10,700), Congolese refugees returning from Zambia (10,200) and Burundian refugees returning from Uganda (10,100).

The Venezuelan authorities have reported that since September 2018 over 30,000 other people in need of international protection have returned to their country under a government organized return plan called "*Plan Vuelta a la Patria*". Overall, including self-organized returns, some 300,000 Venezuelans have been reported by the Venezuelan authorities as returning to their country during the same period.

## Refugee resettlement

Offering resettlement opportunities allows States to share responsibility with those countries of asylum who welcome large numbers of refugees. Resettlement to third countries is a crucial

protection tool and solution for the most vulnerable refugees who may face urgent or specific risks and is essential to UNHCR's mandate. Positively, 114,300 resettlement arrivals were reported by governments in 2022, double the 57,500 during the previous year, representing a return to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels (see figure 22). Despite the increase in resettlement arrivals in 2022, they constituted only 7 per cent of 1.5 million people globally that UNHCR estimated were in need of resettlement.<sup>95</sup>

Some 55 per cent of refugees resettled globally were supported through UNHCR's resettlement programme, with the remainder resettled through other means, most commonly private sponsorship programmes. Of all the cases submitted by UNHCR to States in 2022, 90 per cent of resettlement submissions concerned survivors of torture and/or violence, people with legal and physical protection needs, and particularly vulnerable women and girls.<sup>96</sup> Submissions by children accounted for 52 per cent of all resettlement submissions facilitated by UNHCR in 2022.

In line with previous years, Canada received the largest number of resettlement arrivals, with arrivals increasing by 133 per cent from 2021 to 47,600 during 2022. Afghans account for 45 per cent of all resettlement arrivals to Canada (21,300), followed by Syrians (7,600), Eritreans (6,100) and Iraqis (2,600).

Nearly 29,000 refugees were resettled to the United States of America in 2022, double the 13,700 in the previous year. Refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo represent the largest number of resettlement arrivals in the country (9,000), followed by Syrians (4,300) and nationals of Myanmar (2,900).

Australia increased its resettlement intake four-fold from the previous year to 17,300. Refugees from Afghanistan (9,600), Iraq (2,500), Syria (1,500) and Myanmar (1,000) account for 85 per cent of all resettlement arrivals in the country.

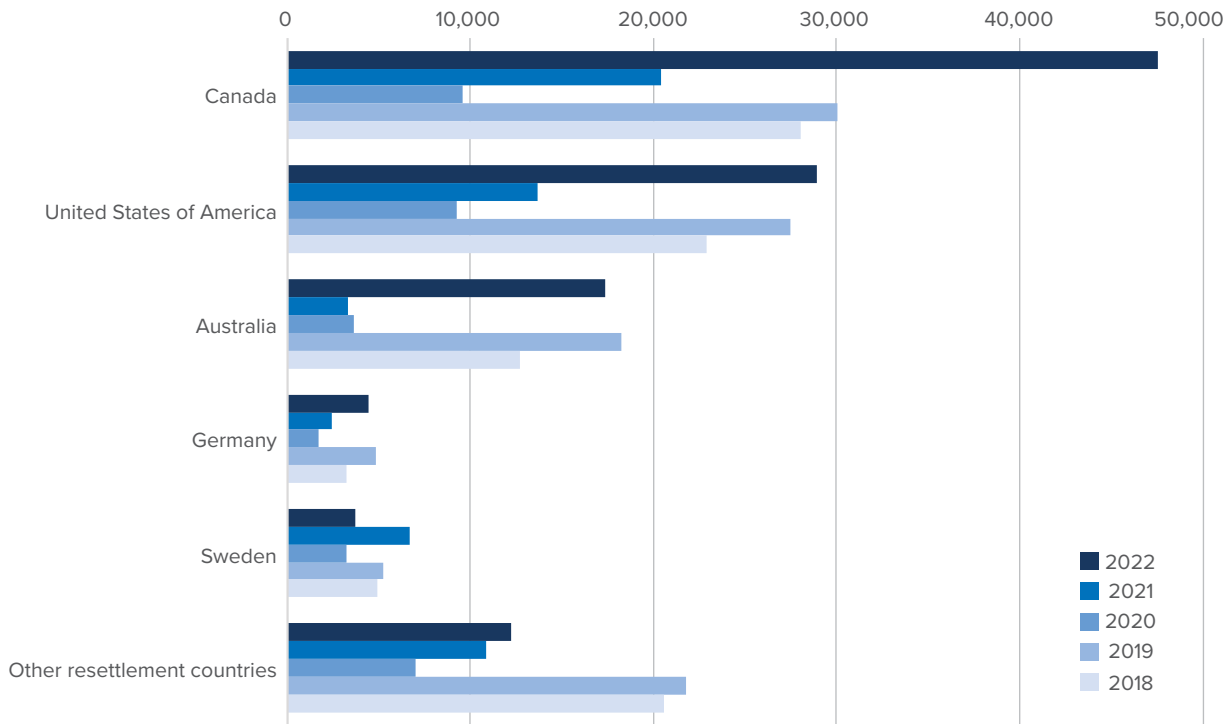
<sup>94</sup> See [Seventh Regional Survey on Syrian Refugees' Perceptions and Intentions on Return to Syria](#), UNHCR. Conducted in early 2022, the survey covered Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. The survey canvassed more than 2,800 Syrian refugees, out of a total of 2.1 million in these countries. In February 2023, a devastating series of earthquakes affected Türkiye and Syria and therefore refugees' intentions from early 2022 are unlikely to be representative in the short term.

<sup>95</sup> See [Projected global resettlement needs, 2022](#), UNHCR.

<sup>96</sup> See [Resettlement Fact Sheet 2022](#), UNHCR.



Figure 22 | Refugee resettlement arrivals | 2018 - 2022



## Refugee local integration

Local integration helps ensure that refugees can build new lives in host countries.<sup>97</sup> It creates an environment of long-term stability, empowering refugees to rebuild their lives, meaningfully participate in the economic and social life of their host country and sustain themselves and their families. Research in many countries has shown that the initial integration period, shortly after refugees’ arrival, is of particular importance for their longer-term integration in their country of asylum.

Consistent and globally applicable statistics for local integration are difficult to measure and require detailed data that remains unavailable in most countries. Naturalization – the process by which a person can obtain citizenship in their host country - is used by UNHCR as an imperfect proxy for more comprehensive statistics on local integration. Naturalization is relevant as an indicator of local integration as it provides essential rights that help

to ensure refugees can successfully integrate in their country of asylum, including the right to stay, unrestricted access to public services and participation in political life. Nevertheless, in many countries, in order to naturalize, refugees usually must fulfil a set of requirements on which it remains challenging to collect data. While differing between countries, broadly the requirements relate to an extended period of stay within the country; a high degree of financial self-sufficiency; the ability to communicate in the national language of the host country and knowledge of its history, culture and customs. Even in high-income countries where data on naturalization is available, statistics differentiating refugees from non-refugees are rare.

Given the complexity with measuring how many refugees have naturalized in many countries, UNHCR is exploring other metrics, including the number of refugees that have been granted long-term or permanent residency. It is expected that such statistics will be available in more countries helping to provide a more comprehensive indication of local

<sup>97</sup> See [definition of naturalization](#), which is used as a proxy indicator for local integration, UNHCR Refugee Data Finder.

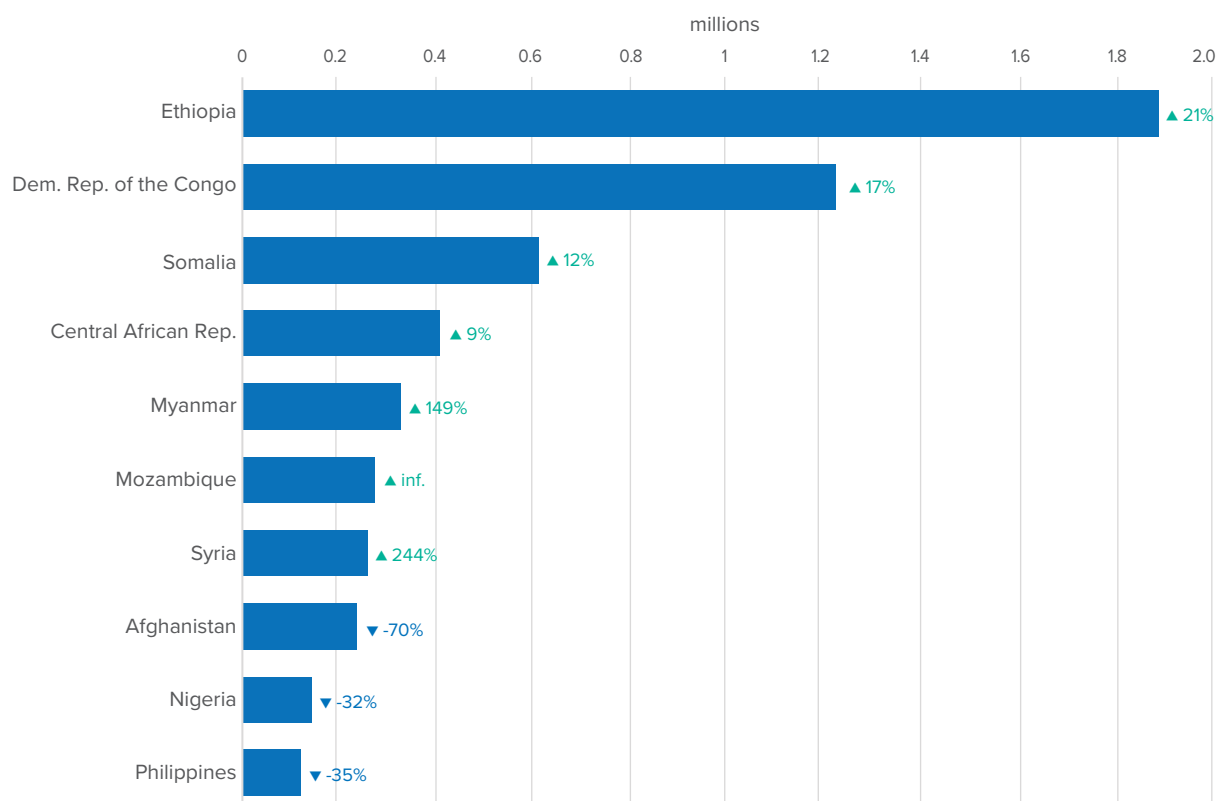
integration. While the rights associated with obtaining long-term or permanent residency are normally less than those granted to refugees that have naturalized, such permits ensure that refugees can remain in the host country long-term.

During 2022, at least 50,800 refugees naturalized, slightly fewer than during the previous year (-10 per cent from 56,700). A total of 28 countries reported one or more refugees naturalizing or obtaining permanent residence, with most occurring in the Kingdom of the Netherlands (23,300). In Canada, 18,700 refugees obtained a long-term residence permit in 2022. Refugees who obtained their host country's citizenship or were granted permanent residence in 2022 were primarily from Syria (14,400), Eritrea (4,700), the Islamic Republic of Iran (3,300), Indonesia (2,200), and Nigeria (2,000).

## Returns of internally displaced people

In 2022, at least 5.7 million internally displaced persons are estimated to have returned to their place of origin, 8 per cent more than during the previous year. Countries reporting IDP returns in 2022 remained broadly consistent with the previous year, with 81 per cent of IDP returns registered in sub-Saharan African countries (see figure 23). A peace agreement was signed in Northern Ethiopia in November 2022, with 1.9 million IDPs returning during the year. In neighbouring Somalia, 607,300 IDPs returned during the year. Some 1.2 million returns were also registered in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a further 404,600 in the Central African Republic and 270,500 returns in Mozambique. The countries in other regions reporting the largest numbers of returns were Myanmar (325,200), Syria (255,100), and Afghanistan (236,200). While some data on returns within Ukraine is available,<sup>98</sup> with the fluid security situation in Ukraine it remains extremely difficult to determine if people who have returned have remained.

Figure 23 | Returns of IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR | 2022



<sup>98</sup> See [Ukraine — Internal Displacement Report — General Population Survey Round 11 \(25 November - 5 December 2022\)](#), IOM.

## MOVING TOWARDS A VULNERABILITY-ASSESSMENT-BASED APPROACH TO DURABLE SOLUTIONS FOR IDPS

The international recommendations on internally displaced persons statistics (IRIS) were endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2020.<sup>99</sup> The recommendations establish a framework for statistical definitions and their measurement, including relating to durable solutions for internally displaced people. In line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs,<sup>100</sup> the IRIS outlines that durable solutions for IDPs can be considered to have been achieved once all their displacement-related vulnerabilities have been overcome. This can take place in IDPs' place of habitual residence (i.e. through return and reintegration), in their current place of displacement (i.e. through local integration), or after settling elsewhere in their country.

Assessing systematically whether IDPs have overcome all of their displacement-related vulnerabilities requires a multi-faceted, comprehensive approach that involves comparing the vulnerability situation of IDPs with those of the non-displaced population in the same country. For the purpose of statistics, the IRIS proposes a simpler composite measure based on only five of the eight criteria set out in the IASC's framework on durable solutions for IDPs. By combining the criteria, the composite measure estimates the proportion of the population who should no longer be counted as internally displaced. A summary of the five criteria is set out below:

**Safety and Security** – IDPs who have achieved long-term safety and security are protected from threats including those that caused the initial displacement and may cause renewed displacement. The degree of protection must be comparable to the one provided to the non-displaced general population. IDPs must not be subjected to attacks, harassment, persecution or similar, with special emphasis to the vulnerabilities of children and female IDPs. IDPs are not discriminated regarding their access to national protection mechanisms, such as police, and are not curtailed in their freedom of movement.

**Adequate standard of living** – includes at a minimum adequate access to essential food and water, basic housing, essential medical care, sanitation and at least primary school education. IDP's access to public services must be on the same level as for non-displaced population groups.

**Access to livelihoods** – the employment and livelihoods available to IDPs must fulfil at least their core-economic needs. Quality and prevalence of employment opportunities for IDPs, is largely affected by country wide factors such as economic fragility and unemployment rates, and a durable solution therefore does not imply that all IDPs find employment. However, IDPs' access to employment and livelihood opportunities must be the same as for those who were not displaced.

**Restoration of housing, land and property** – IDPs have full and indiscriminatory access to effective mechanisms for property restitution and compensation. There must not be any differences in access to compensation for IDPs based on gender or age and for IDPs belonging to indigenous groups.

**Access to documentation** – IDPs do not face discrimination (based on their displacement status) in accessing personal and other documentation for public services, reclaiming property and possessions, voting or other purposes. This may require the replacement of documentation lost during the displacement, without imposing unreasonable conditions on IDPs. Access right shall not differ by sex or age of IDPs.

Technical guidance on how this composite measure should be implemented by countries is being developed by Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS). However, in almost all countries in which people have been internally displaced, the availability of data to inform these criteria remains extremely limited. As part of the United Nations Secretary General's action agenda on internal displacement,<sup>101</sup> and building upon the IRIS recommendations, efforts to generate and improve data to better measure durable solutions in situations of internal displacement continue, including by UNHCR.

<sup>99</sup> See [International Recommendations on IDP Statistics \(IRIS\)](#), EGRISS.

<sup>100</sup> See [Framework for durable solutions for internally displaced persons](#), IASC.

<sup>101</sup> See [UN Secretary General's action agenda on internal displacement](#).



## CHAPTER 6

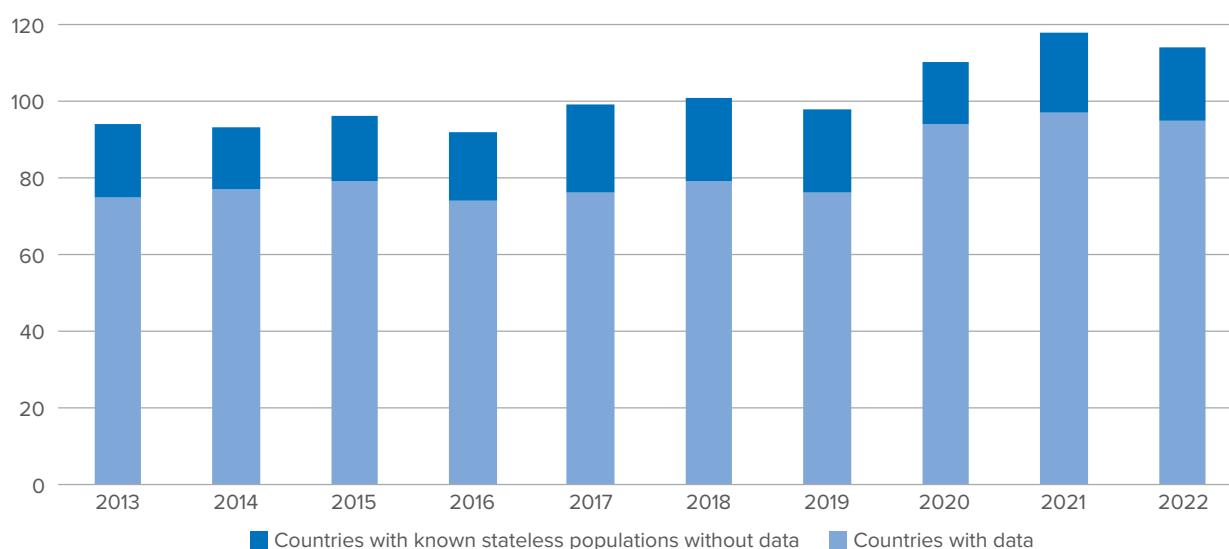
# Stateless people

## Overview

People who are stateless or of undetermined nationality<sup>102</sup> are not recognized as nationals by any State and are therefore often unable to access essential services and enjoy basic rights,

including access to education or health care, formal employment, voting in elections or being able to travel. At the end of 2022, an estimated 4.4 million people worldwide were either stateless or of undetermined nationality, 90,800 (+2 per cent) more than at the end of 2021.

Figure 24 | Number of countries providing statistics on stateless populations to UNHCR | 2013 – 2022



The increase in the number of stateless people is mainly due to improved registration and coverage in countries reporting stateless populations as well as children being born stateless. At the same time, progress on resolving statelessness remains slow. The estimate is based on data for 95 countries from

governments and other sources such as quantitative and qualitative studies by UNHCR and its partners (see figure 24).<sup>103</sup> However, the global number of stateless people remains an underestimate as approximately half of all countries do not report data on statelessness, including many with known

<sup>102</sup> See the [definitions of stateless and undetermined nationality](#) on the Refugee Data Finder. In this chapter stateless people includes people with undetermined nationality unless specified otherwise.

<sup>103</sup> In 2022, one fewer country overall reported stateless populations, however there were several changes in the number of countries reporting very low numbers of stateless people. In 2022, Argentina and Paraguay reported stateless populations for the first time.

**KENYA.** In December 2022, Kenya announced the decision to recognize people of Pemba descent as Kenyan citizens. Asha is happy to get a birth certificate for her daughter born in Kenya. “We are happy that the Pemba are able to get documents. We have grown up together, and now our children are growing up together. To me, we are all Kenyans.”

© UNHCR/CHARITY NZOMO



REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
**CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH A**

Name in the		District in the	
Given Name	Family Name	Province	Sub-County
Date of Birth	Sex	Name and Surname of Father	
Name and Surname of Mother		Name and Surname of Spouse	
Name and Occupations of Informant			
Name of Registering Officer	Date of Registration		
I, _____ Registrar for _____ District hereby certify that this certificate is complete		District Registrar	
Given under my hand and the Seal of the District of Civil Registration on this _____ day of _____ 20__.			

This certificate is issued in pursuance of the Births and Deaths Registration Act (Cap. 226) which provides that certified copies of the entries in any register or return prepared to be used or compared with the full register of Civil Registrations shall be received in evidence of the dates and facts therein contained.



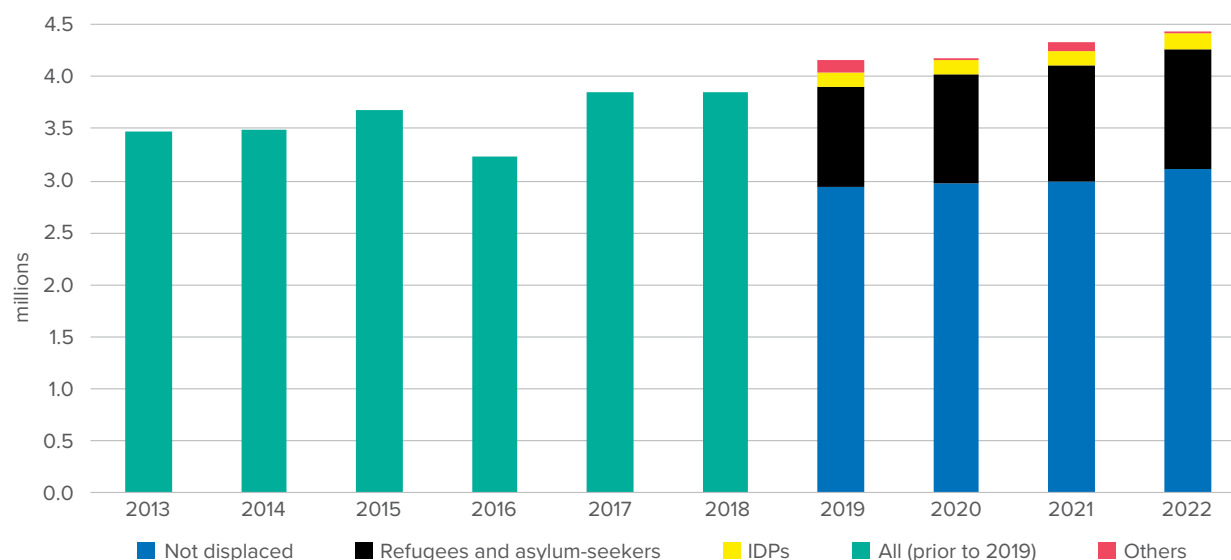
stateless populations. Even among countries that do report statistics on statelessness, several countries only provide statistics for a portion of the known stateless population in their territories, and reporting between countries is not always comparable due to inconsistent criteria for counting who is stateless or of undetermined nationality.

To help effectively address statelessness and advocate for solutions, more comprehensive data collection and reporting mechanisms are needed that provide a more accurate understanding of the extent of statelessness worldwide. UNHCR's efforts to improve data on statelessness included supporting the development of the International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics

(IROSS)<sup>104</sup> developed by the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS).<sup>105</sup> The IROSS was submitted to the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2022 and was unanimously endorsed in March 2023.<sup>106</sup> The EGRISS and UNHCR will assist countries in implementing the IROSS, thereby improving the quality of data on statelessness.

At the end of 2022, most stateless people continued to be reported in Bangladesh (952,300), Côte d'Ivoire (931,100), Myanmar (630,000) and Thailand (574,200). About 30 per cent of stateless people globally are also displaced (see figure 25).<sup>107</sup> Most of them are Rohingya, either internally displaced in Myanmar or refugees, mostly in neighbouring countries.

Figure 25 | **Reported global number of stateless people | 2013 – 2022**



## Acquisition and confirmation of nationality

In 2022, as part of efforts to reduce the number of stateless people, 32,400 people acquired citizenship or had their nationality confirmed in 32 countries, notably in Uzbekistan (9,400), Thailand (6,200) and Sweden (6,100).

This is the lowest figure since the launch of the #IBelong Campaign in 2014 (see figure 26).<sup>108</sup> In total more than half a million stateless people (517,500), including those of undetermined nationality, have acquired citizenship since 2014. Despite significant progress in some countries to resolve statelessness as well as firm commitments in others to address statelessness, overall progress in resolving major statelessness situations has been slow.

<sup>104</sup> See [International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics](#).

<sup>105</sup> See [EGRISS](#).

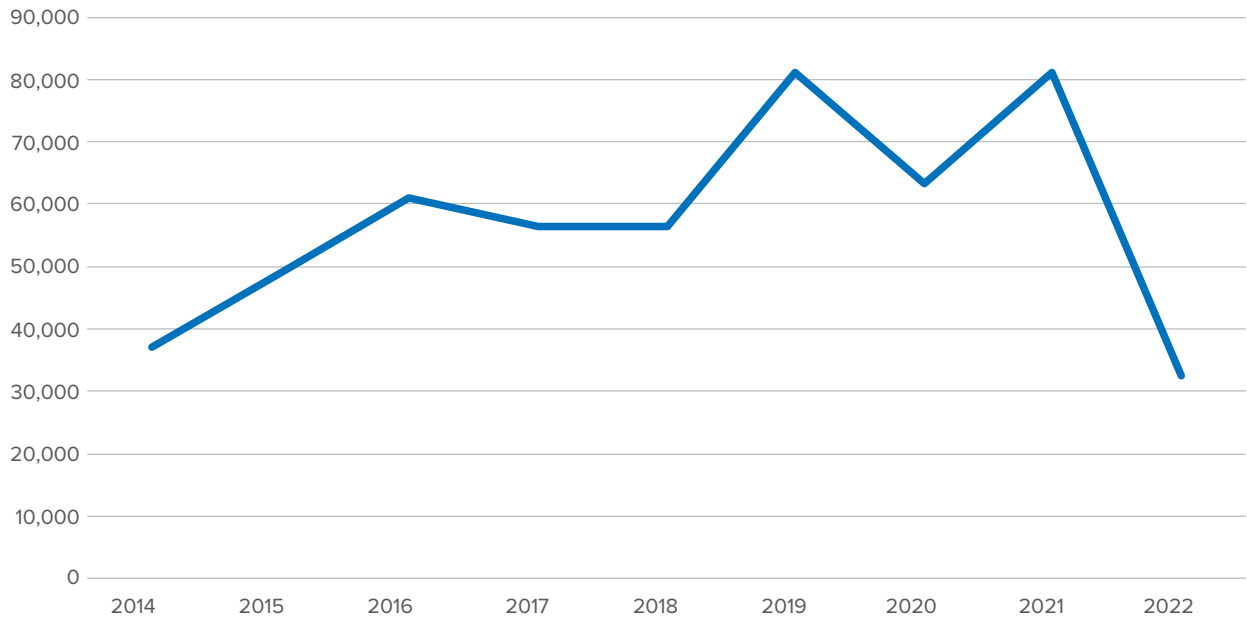
<sup>106</sup> See [United Nations Statistical Commission, 54th Session](#), decision 54/121.

<sup>107</sup> Since 2019, UNHCR has reported on both displaced and non-displaced stateless people. Displaced stateless people are simultaneously included in UNHCR's official statistics as refugees, asylum-seekers or IDPs and in its official statistics for statelessness. Prompted by the large-scale displacement of stateless Rohingya refugees who fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh, this approach reflects the fact that refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs without citizenship require specific and appropriate protection responses.

<sup>108</sup> See [Global Action Plan to End Statelessness: 2014-2024](#)



Figure 26 | Number of people who had their nationality confirmed or acquired citizenship | 2014 – 2022



Important progress was made in 2022 on legal and policy frameworks. A total of 13 States improved their laws, policies and procedures to prevent and reduce statelessness. For instance, Liberia removed gender discriminatory provisions which prevented women from conferring nationality to their children on an equal basis as men, becoming the third country to do so since 2014. Nevertheless, at the end of 2022, 24 countries still prevent women from conferring nationality to their children on an equal basis with men.

The Philippines enacted a law to grant nationality to children of unknown parentage found on the territory, also known as “foundlings”, and also became the first Southeast Asian country to accede to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Other States, including Benin and the Netherlands (Kingdom of the), strengthened their protection frameworks for stateless people in line with the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons.

The President of Kenya announced in December 2022 that the country will initiate a process to recognize the Pemba people, estimated at 7,000,

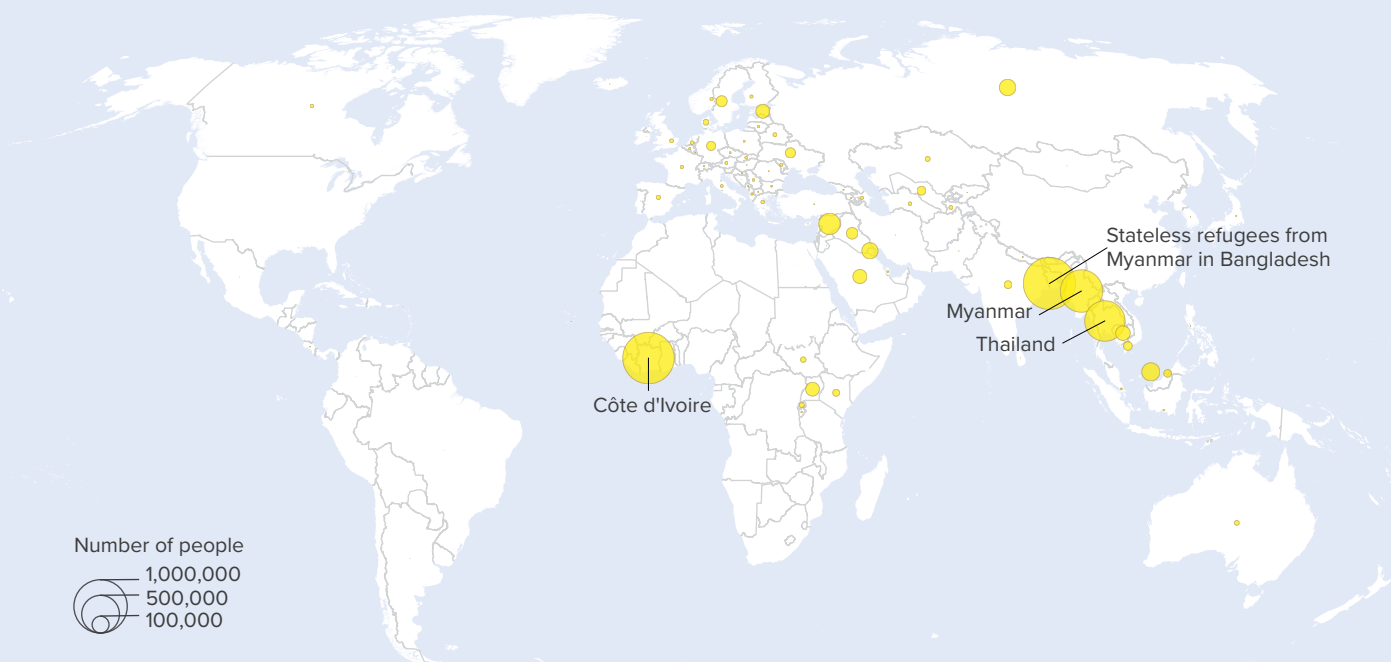
as Kenyan citizens. These people will be registered, issued documentation and granted nationality. It is expected that this will be completed during 2023.

## Demographic data on stateless populations

The collection of demographic data on stateless people is of great importance to UNHCR as it helps to develop age- and gender-specific responses to statelessness. At the end of 2022, sex-disaggregated data was available for 75 per cent of the 4.4 million stateless people reported worldwide. Data disaggregated by both sex and age was reported for 62 per cent of the population.

Based on the data available for 75 per cent of the stateless population, slightly more women and girls are stateless (51 per cent) than men and boys. In Bangladesh, where the largest stateless population is reported, just over half of the stateless populations are children (53 per cent).

Map 4 | Statelessness | end-2022



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

In many cases, statelessness is the result of discriminatory laws, policies and practices that deny nationality to certain groups of people. When thousands of people are left stateless, whole communities can be alienated and marginalized, which can lead to those people having a poorer

standard of living as well as a loss of human capital and revenue. Overcoming the barrier that statelessness presents to development is essential as part of broader efforts to promote human rights, social inclusion and development and to achieve relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

### Who is included in UNHCR statistics?

UNHCR collates population data relating to people who are forcibly displaced or stateless. The data is sourced primarily from governments and also from UNHCR operations. See <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/methodology/> for the detailed description and definitions of who is included in these statistics.

### Annex tables

Annex tables 1 through 23 can be downloaded from the UNHCR website at:

<https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/2022GTannex.zip>

Annex table 5: <https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/2022GTannextableSTA.xlsx>

All data are provisional and subject to change.

Data is available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics>



# GLOBAL TRENDS

## FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN 2022

PRODUCED BY UNHCR  
(14 JUNE 2023)

### FRONT COVER

**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO.** After spending the night with host families in the nearby city of Bulé, internally displaced people return to their temporary accommodation in Plain Savo. They previously left their shelters when Plain Savo was attacked by armed men, leaving 62 dead. Many armed groups across the eastern regions of the country – mainly in the Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu provinces – target civilians in violent attacks, triggering further displacement and resulting in human rights abuses and even deaths.

© UNHCR/HÉLÈNE CAUX



© 2023 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
All rights reserved. Reproductions and translations are authorized, provided UNHCR is acknowledged as the source.

Statistics and Demographics Section  
UNHCR Global Data Service  
UN City, Marmorvej 51  
2100 Copenhagen, Denmark  
[stats@unhcr.org](mailto:stats@unhcr.org)

This document along with further information on global displacement is available on UNHCR's statistics website:  
<https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics>

