

CHAPTER V

HOST COUNTRY CAPACITY AND CONTRIBUTIONS

An important aspect of international refugee protection is the sharing of responsibilities among countries. The contribution to the international refugee cause is expressed by providing asylum to refugees and by providing assistance to poor countries hosting large refugee populations. For developing countries which, due to their proximity to conflict zones, host large groups of refugees, caring for refugees implies a significant additional burden to an already fragile economy. To alleviate these pressures, high-income countries provide assistance through UNHCR, other international agencies or bilaterally. They also admit refugees, either through planned resettlement programmes or by accepting asylum-seekers. Yet, refugees do not only present a burden to host countries. They also actively contribute to the economy as workers and consumers.

Methodology

A comprehensive quantification of the costs and benefits of refugee protection is beyond the scope of this Yearbook. Moreover, much of the information required to undertake such a study is not available. Financial data on national and international aid flows to asylum-seekers, refugees and IDPs, both within countries and between countries, are difficult to obtain. For instance, there are no international rules for the recording of government expenditures relating to asylum-seekers and refugees. Similarly, the recent increase in the number of partners assisting refugees makes it harder to track international aid flows.

While the financial contributions of States to national and international refugee protection are difficult to quantify, the arrival and presence of refugees is generally well recorded. Therefore, rather than in monetary terms, this section expresses the contribution or burden of States in terms of the number of refugees hosted. While this analysis includes all persons of concern to UNHCR, it may be argued that IDPs and returnees do not constitute a contribution to international protection. At the same time, internally displaced persons often constitute significant burden for the host country, meriting their inclusion in this analysis. Similarly, whereas the return of refugees is an asset to the country of origin, large-scale repatriation may sometime overwhelm the capacity to absorb returnees.

An important element in assessing the “costs” of refugee protection is duration of stay. The longer refugees stay, the more their impact will be felt by the host society. To include the time dimension, this analysis uses the average population of concern to UNHCR during the period 1998-2002.

The contribution in hosting refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR should be considered in relation to the national capacity to host refugees: the burden for countries with abundant resources is lower than for countries with few resources. To quantify national capacity, three parameters have been used: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, national population size and total land area. GDP per capita is the most well-known measure of a country’s wealth. By comparing the size of population of concern to UNHCR with the GDP per capita of a country, a comparison is obtained of the relative costs of providing protection. If the number of persons of concern to UNHCR per 1 USD GDP per capita in one country is higher than for another, its refugee burden can be also considered to be higher. Similarly, it may be argued that the capacity to absorb refugees is higher for

larger countries, both in terms of national population size and surface area, than for smaller ones.

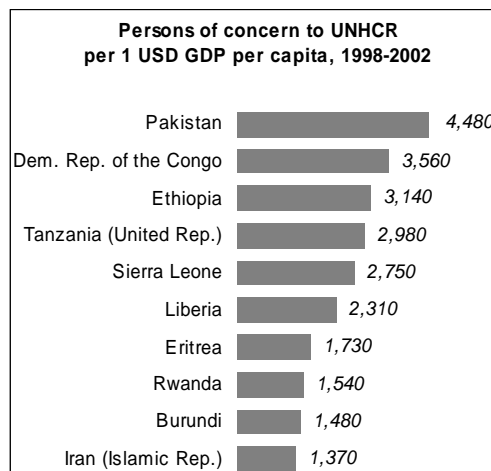
These parameters, while widely available, have their limitations. As refugees are often concentrated in certain areas in the host country, their impact is very much localized. Nationwide estimates also have their limitations in relation to the country's territory as significant portions of the national territory may not be available for productive use. The detailed impact and contributions of refugees on the local economy, society and environment can only be measured through field surveys. The GDP, although the most widely used indicator for development, may not adequately reflect the informal economy, which tends to be sizeable in developing countries.

Host country capacity and contributions

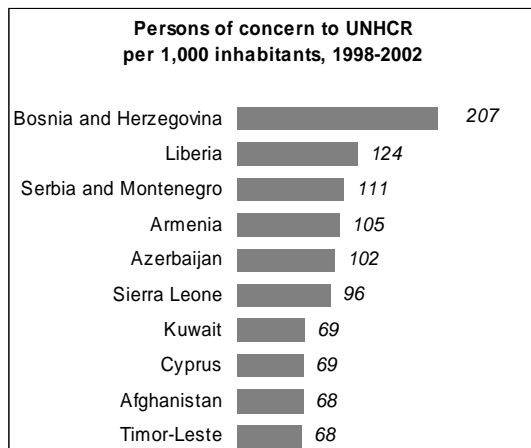
GDP per capita

In relation to its GDP per capita, Pakistan has hosted the highest number of persons of concern to UNHCR.¹⁴ During the period 1998-2002, the country provided, on average, asylum to some 4,500 refugees per 1 USD GDP per capita. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was the country with the second highest refugee burden compared with its economic resources, whereas Ethiopia ranked third. Eight of the 10 countries with the highest refugee burden are Least Developed Countries (LDCs) located in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Within the 10 major recipient countries, the burden differs significantly. In Pakistan, the highest ranking country, the burden is three times higher than in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which ranks 10th. The GDP for Afghanistan, one of the poorest countries with high levels of forced displacement, is not available.



The refugee burden is significantly smaller in industrialized countries. Expressed in relation to their GDP per capita, Germany hosts 51 persons of concern to UNHCR, the United States 31 and the United Kingdom 11. Most industrialized countries rank 50th or lower on this indicator (see Table V.1).



National population size

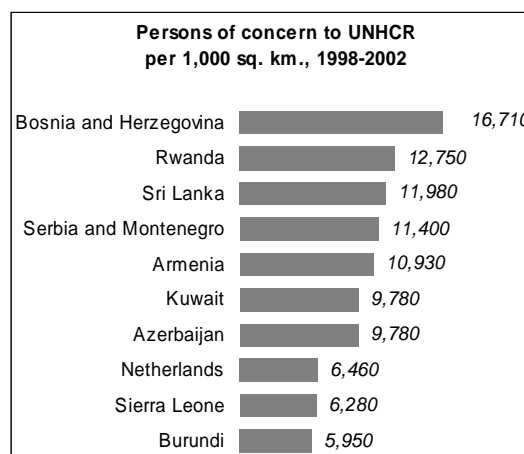
The size of the national population, although not as centrally important to the measurement of the refugee burden as GDP per capita, is nevertheless a useful indicator, because estimates are available for all countries and territories hosting refugees. When the average annual population of concern to UNHCR during 1998-2002 is compared with the size of the

¹⁴ See footnote 6.

national population, a picture emerges which is quite different from the one established on the basis of GDP per capita. Four of the five countries with the highest levels of displacement are located in Central and Eastern Europe. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, about one in five persons is or was recently displaced (*see Table V.1*). Palestinian refugees falling under the mandate of UNRWA are not covered by this Yearbook. Yet, if these refugees had been included, Jordan, Lebanon and Occupied Palestinian Territory would all rank among the top refugee-hosting entities in relation to the size of their national population.

Total land area

Using total land area as an indicator of the capacity to host refugees confirms the vulnerability of some asylum countries. Virtually all countries with the highest refugee burden in relation to the total land area were also among those countries with high burdens in relation to their economy or population size. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Sierra Leone and Kuwait rank among the ten countries with the highest refugee burden both in terms of national population size and in terms of land area. Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Burundi have the highest refugee burden, both in terms of their economy and the size of their national territory.



The above analysis has indicated that the economic effects of hosting refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR are particularly felt in some LDCs in Sub-Saharan-Africa as well as in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The demographic impact of refugees and displaced persons is relatively important in some countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

2002 UNHCR STATISTICAL YEARBOOK

V.1 Indicators of host country capacity and contributions, 1998-2002

A zero indicates that the value is zero or rounded to zero. Two dots (..) indicate that the value is not available.

Country or territory of asylum (residence)	Ratio			Rank		
	TPOC* '98-'02 to GDP per capita	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 inhabitants	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 km2	TPOC* '98-'02 to GDP per capita	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 inhabitants	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 km2
Afghanistan	..	68	2,439	..	9	19
Albania	4	2	191	88	82	58
Algeria	113	6	87	34	51	75
Angola	255	17	176	28	29	61
Argentina	2	0	2	94	122	142
Armenia	420	105	10,929	25	4	5
Australia	4	5	11	86	59	116
Austria	3	9	901	91	45	34
Azerbaijan	1,148	102	9,776	12	5	7
Bahamas	0	0	5	145	116	128
Bahrain	0	0	15	153	147	108
Bangladesh	88	0	213	39	120	56
Belarus	82	12	571	43	38	39
Belgium	2	5	1,655	95	58	25
Belize	4	53	598	87	14	38
Benin	13	1	47	67	96	91
Bolivia	0	0	0	118	134	152
Bosnia and Herzegovina	672	207	16,711	20	1	1
Botswana	1	2	6	108	81	127
Brazil	1	0	0	103	142	151
Bulgaria	2	0	33	97	104	98
Burkina Faso	6	0	5	80	126	132
Burundi	1,479	24	5,950	9	24	10
Cambodia	35	1	51	56	98	88
Cameroon	106	4	130	35	65	66
Canada	9	6	20	77	54	104
Cape Verde	-	0	0	155	163	161
Central African Rep.	219	16	99	30	30	71
Chad	98	3	18	36	73	105
Chile	0	0	1	127	141	148
China	369	0	38	26	111	95
Colombia	309	13	510	27	34	41
Comoros	0	0	4	139	150	137
Congo	129	29	311	33	21	49
Costa Rica	5	5	394	81	57	45
Côte d'Ivoire	251	11	556	29	39	40
Croatia	23	27	2,091	61	22	20
Cuba	..	0	11	..	124	117
Cyprus	5	69	5,879	82	8	11
Czech Rep.	2	1	137	100	89	65
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	3,562	8	170	2	47	62
Denmark	3	17	2,032	93	28	23
Djibouti	33	41	1,305	57	17	27
Dominican Rep.	0	0	10	124	132	119
Ecuador	2	0	13	98	113	113
Egypt	28	0	36	59	101	96
El Salvador	0	0	5	131	146	131
Eritrea	1,732	63	2,050	7	13	22
Estonia	0	0	1	144	143	150
Ethiopia	3,144	4	241	3	63	52
Finland	1	3	49	115	69	89
France	8	3	335	79	71	48
FYR Macedonia	44	39	3,166	53	18	16
Gabon	4	13	62	83	35	83
Gambia	48	10	1,250	52	44	28
Georgia	513	64	4,715	23	12	12
Germany	51	15	3,457	51	31	14

2002 UNHCR STATISTICAL YEARBOOK

V.1 Indicators of host country capacity and contributions, 1998-2002

A zero indicates that the value is zero or rounded to zero. Two dots (..) indicate that the value is not available.

Country or territory of asylum (residence)	Ratio			Rank		
	TPOC* '98-'02 to GDP per capita	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 inhabitants	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 km2	TPOC* '98-'02 to GDP per capita	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 inhabitants	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 km2
Ghana	85	1	104	42	86	70
Greece	1	1	77	113	93	79
Guatemala	1	0	21	107	121	103
Guinea	1,164	53	1,797	11	15	24
Guinea-Bissau	630	65	2,755	21	11	18
Haiti	0	0	0	142	162	156
Honduras	0	0	0	137	157	155
Hong Kong SAR, China	0	0	..	130	115	..
Hungary	1	1	92	105	95	73
Iceland	0	1	3	140	87	138
India	448	0	70	24	118	80
Indonesia	98	0	41	37	108	93
Iraq	..	6	349	..	52	47
Ireland	0	4	216	117	66	55
Islamic Rep. of Iran	1,368	32	1,332	10	20	26
Israel	0	0	144	125	103	64
Italy	1	0	69	109	107	81
Jamaica	0	0	3	141	148	141
Japan	0	0	13	126	139	112
Jordan	4	1	81	85	85	78
Kazakhstan	73	7	42	46	48	92
Kenya	741	9	488	18	46	42
Kuwait	13	69	9,783	70	7	6
Kyrgyzstan	52	3	83	50	68	77
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	1	0	1	110	133	143
Latvia	0	0	0	146	153	154
Lebanon	2	2	772	99	77	36
Lesotho	0	0	0	138	156	153
Liberia	2,308	124	4,173	6	2	13
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	2	2	8	96	74	122
Liechtenstein	..	5	1,105	..	55	30
Lithuania	0	0	5	129	127	133
Luxembourg	0	2	403	136	76	44
Madagascar	0	0	0	128	158	159
Malawi	36	0	48	55	102	90
Malaysia	13	2	157	68	78	63
Mali	77	2	15	44	83	109
Malta	0	1	1,008	135	97	33
Mauritania	87	11	29	41	40	99
Mauritius	0	0	6	147	149	126
Mexico	4	0	13	84	112	111
Morocco	1	0	5	102	131	134
Mozambique	22	0	6	62	114	124
Myanmar	..	0	1	..	145	144
Namibia	14	10	25	66	41	101
Nepal	695	6	1,054	19	53	31
Netherlands	9	14	6,463	76	32	8
New Zealand	0	2	27	119	80	100
Nicaragua	..	0	4	..	125	135
Niger	18	0	3	64	110	139
Nigeria	25	0	10	60	130	120
Norway	1	13	178	104	36	60
Occupied Palestinian Territory	0	0	..	150	161	..
Oman	0	0	0	149	154	158
Pakistan	4,478	12	2,062	1	37	21
Panama	0	1	22	120	100	102
Papua New Guinea	16	1	17	65	84	106

2002 UNHCR STATISTICAL YEARBOOK

V.1 Indicators of host country capacity and contributions, 1998-2002

A zero indicates that the value is zero or rounded to zero. Two dots (..) indicate that the value is not available.

Country or territory of asylum (residence)	Ratio			Rank		
	TPOC* '98-'02 to GDP per capita	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 inhabitants	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 km2	TPOC* '98-'02 to GDP per capita	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 inhabitants	TPOC* '98-'02 to 1,000 km2
Paraguay	0	0	0	132	151	157
Peru	0	0	1	121	140	147
Philippines	1	0	5	101	144	130
Poland	0	0	6	122	136	125
Portugal	0	0	5	133	135	129
Qatar	0	0	4	151	129	136
Rep. of Korea	0	0	1	143	159	149
Rep. of Moldova	11	1	129	73	90	67
Romania	1	0	8	111	128	123
Russian Federation	616	10	88	22	42	74
Rwanda	1,538	39	12,750	8	19	2
Sao Tome and Principe	0	0	1	148	155	145
Saudi Arabia	13	4	53	69	62	87
Senegal	88	4	222	40	60	54
Serbia and Montenegro	789	111	11,400	16	3	4
Sierra Leone	2,755	96	6,281	5	6	9
Singapore	0	0	9	154	160	121
Slovakia	1	1	60	114	99	84
Slovenia	1	7	667	106	50	37
Somalia	..	7	104	..	49	69
South Africa	18	1	35	63	91	97
Spain	1	0	17	116	119	107
Sri Lanka	925	42	11,983	15	16	3
Sudan	1,115	14	182	13	33	59
Suriname	0	0	0	152	152	160
Swaziland	1	1	57	112	92	85
Sweden	8	23	459	78	25	43
Switzerland	3	17	2,986	90	27	17
Syrian Arab Rep.	12	1	84	71	94	76
Tajikistan	68	2	93	48	79	72
Thailand	73	2	287	45	75	50
Timor-Leste	95	68	3,331	38	10	15
Togo	52	3	261	49	70	51
Tunisia	0	0	3	123	137	140
Turkey	3	0	11	89	123	118
Turkmenistan	12	4	38	72	64	94
Uganda	1,084	10	1,049	14	43	32
Ukraine	160	3	227	31	72	53
United Arab Emirates	..	0	12	..	109	114
United Kingdom	11	5	1,205	74	56	29
United Rep. of Tanzania	2,976	21	814	4	26	35
United States	31	4	119	58	67	68
Uruguay	0	0	1	134	138	146
Uzbekistan	72	1	64	47	88	82
Venezuela	3	0	11	92	106	115
Viet Nam	43	0	57	54	117	86
Yemen	158	4	202	32	61	57
Zambia	770	25	352	17	23	46
Zimbabwe	9	0	15	75	105	110

Notes and sources

* TPOC: Total population of concern (source: UNHCR).

Source for GDP per capita: Worldbank, "World Development Indicators Database", accessed at www.worldbank.org on 11 July 2003 (GDP figures for Bahamas, Bahrain, Cyprus, Israel, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Macao SAR (China), Malta, Qatar and Saudi Arabia refers to latest figure available (2000/2001)).

Source for national population: United Nations, Population Division, "World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision", New York, 2003.