



A Palestinian asylum-seeker with his children in front of a reception centre in the town of Banya, Bulgaria.



2 Population Levels and Trends

THIS CHAPTER describes the major trends and developments in population figures between January and December 2010, reviewing changes in the size, origin and flows of refugees, returnees, stateless persons and certain internally displaced persons - collectively referred to as “persons of concern” to UNHCR. Palestinian refugees who fall under the mandate of UNRWA are not included. Likewise,

this chapter only covers IDPs generated by conflict, and who benefited directly or indirectly from UNHCR’s protection and/or assistance activities.

With UNHCR commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, stateless persons feature prominently in this chapter, including the results of major surveys undertaken in Serbia and Myanmar to identify protection and assistance gaps.

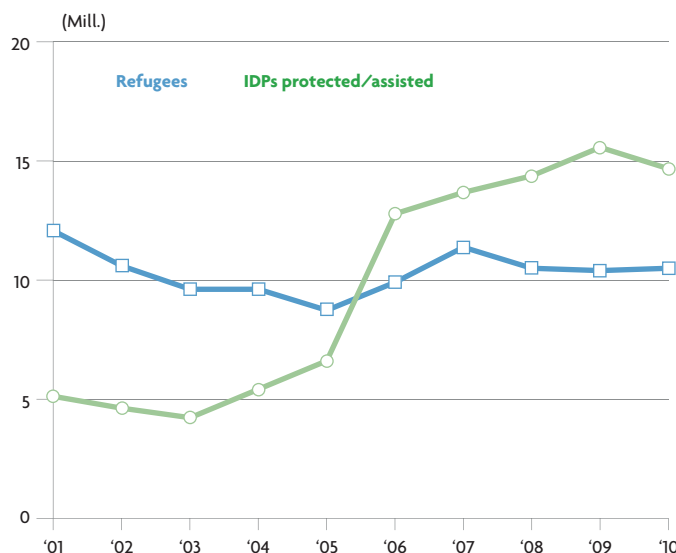
OVERVIEW OF GLOBAL TRENDS

By the end of 2010, the total population under UNHCR’s responsibility stood at 33.9 million. This figure takes account of new displacements, durable solutions, legal and demographic changes, improved availability of data, and revised estimates. The analysis presented in the Yearbook is based on individual population groups.

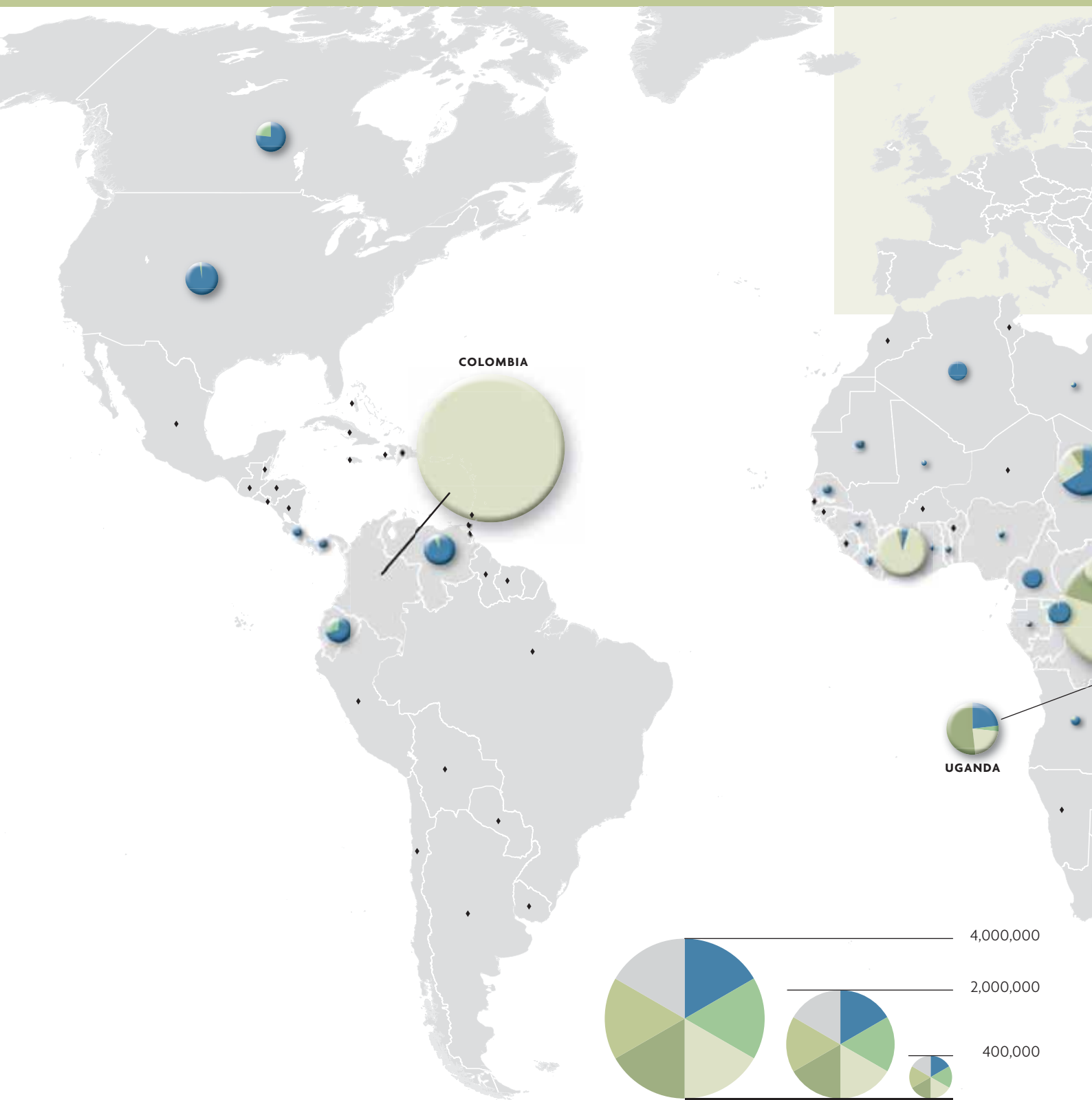
By the end of 2010, there were more than 10.55 million refugees under UNHCR’s responsibility, including some 597,000 people in refugee-like situations.³⁰ A total of 14.7 million IDPs, including more than 242,000 people in IDP-like situations, were receiving humanitarian assistance under arrangements in which UNHCR was either the lead agency or a key partner. This was the second highest figure on record.

While an estimated 2.9 million IDPs were able to return home during the year, the highest level in at least a decade, only 197,600 refugees repatriated voluntarily, the lowest number in more than 20 years. The asylum-seeker population, composed of persons whose asylum applications had not been adjudicated by the end of 2010 was estimated at

Fig. II.1 Refugees and IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR | 2001-2010 (end-year)



³⁰ Of whom four-fifths are located in Bangladesh, Ecuador and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).



- Refugees⁽¹⁾
- Asylum-seekers (pending cases)
- IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR⁽²⁾
- Returned refugees, returned IDPs
- Stateless persons
- Others of concern

◆ Total population below 10,000
 1 Including people in refugee-like situations
 2 Including people in IDP-like situations



IRAQ

837,500. During 2010, UNHCR identified 3.5 million stateless persons in 65 countries and estimated the total number of stateless persons worldwide at three times higher that number, or up to 12 million people.³¹ In addition, some 1.3 million individuals (qualified as “other groups or people of concern”) did not fall into any of the above categories, but received protection and/or assistance from UNHCR based on humanitarian or other special grounds.

REFUGEES

Regions and countries of asylum

The number of refugees under UNHCR’s mandate at the end of 2010 was 10.55 million, an increase of 153,000 refugees (+1.5%) compared to 2009. The continued deterioration of the situation in Somalia accounted for most of this increase, as more than 119,000 Somalis sought refuge in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Yemen during the year. Overall, increases in refugee numbers in certain countries were largely offset by the voluntary return of 197,600 refugees, mainly to Afghanistan.

By the end of 2010, women and girls constituted slightly less than half (47%) of all refugees globally.³² Developing countries hosted 8.5 million refugees, or four-fifths of the global refugee population. The Least Developed Countries provided asylum to almost 2 million refugees (19%).³³

Table II.1 (below) shows that more than one-third (38%) of all refugees were residing in countries covered by UNHCR’s Asia and Pacific region, and that 2.9 million or three-quarters of them were Afghans. Sub-Saharan Africa was host to one-fifth of all refugees, primarily from Somalia (482,500), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (442,200), and Sudan (351,600). The Middle East and North Africa region hosted 18 per cent of the world’s refugees, mainly from Iraq (almost 1.5 million according to Government estimates), while Europe hosted 15 per cent. The largest refugee groups in Europe were from Serbia (and Kosovo: S/RES/1244 (1999)) (180,400), Iraq (152,600), and Turkey (125,800). The Americas region hosted the smallest share of refugees (8%), with Colombians (391,900)³⁴ constituting the largest number in this region.

A decrease in the number of refugees was observed in the Middle East and North Africa region, where figures dropped by 3 per cent during the year. This decrease was primarily

Most refugees flee to neighbouring countries

Available statistical evidence demonstrates that most refugees remain in their region of origin, rather than seeking refuge elsewhere. By the end of 2010, three quarters of the world’s refugees were residing in a country neighbouring their own.

The major refugee-generating regions

hosted on average between 76 and 92 per cent of refugees from within the same region. UNHCR estimated that in 2010 some 1.7 million refugees (17% out of the total of 10.55 million) lived outside their region of origin. ●

the result of revised estimates. The Syrian Government figure for Iraqi refugees was revised downward by 50,000, based on the assumption that a number of Iraqis had left during the year either to return to Iraq or to move onward to other countries. Similarly, the number of Iraqi refugees in Lebanon was revised from 50,000 to 7,600.³⁵ Conversely, 18,400 Somali refugees arrived in Yemen during the year.

³¹ Excluding refugees and asylum-seekers who were also stateless, whose numbers are reflected in the figures for the relevant refugee and asylum-seeker groups.

³² See Chapter V for more details on the demographic composition of refugees.

³³ See <http://www.unhcr.org> for countries included.

³⁴ Including 285,400 Colombians considered to be in a refugee-like situation.

³⁵ This number reflects a notable decrease from that recorded for 2009, which was based on outdated estimates. Recent field assessments concluded that the more accurate figure is that of refugees registered with UNHCR. These conclusions have not been refuted.

TABLE II.1 Refugee population by UNHCR regions | 2010

UNHCR regions	Start-2010			End-2010			Change (total)	
	Refugees	People in refugee-like situations	Total refugees	Refugees	People in refugee-like situations	Total refugees	Increase/Decrease	%
Central Africa and Great Lakes	945,200	24,100	969,300	976,300	-	976,300	7,000	0.7%
East and Horn of Africa	779,200	33,900	813,100	858,900	34,300	893,200	80,100	9.9%
Southern Africa	143,400	-	143,400	146,200	-	146,200	2,800	2.0%
West Africa	149,000	-	149,000	168,300	-	168,300	19,300	13.0%
Africa* Subtotal	2,016,800	58,000	2,074,800	2,149,700	34,300	2,184,000	109,200	5.3%
Americas	520,000	293,200	813,200	513,500	290,500	804,000	-9,200	-1.1%
Asia and Pacific	2,666,000	1,189,400	3,855,400	3,793,900	220,200	4,014,100	158,700	4.1%
Europe	1,641,700	5,600	1,647,300	1,605,600	1,000	1,606,600	-40,700	-2.5%
Middle East and North Africa	1,962,300	43,500	2,005,800	1,889,700	51,300	1,941,000	-64,800	-3.2%
Total	8,806,800	1,589,700	10,396,500	9,952,400	597,300	10,549,700	153,200	1.5%

Note

* Excluding North Africa.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of refugees had declined for the previous nine consecutive years. However, in 2010 this trend was reversed due to renewed or ongoing conflicts in various parts of the continent. By end 2010, there were close to 2.2 million refugees in sub-Saharan Africa, roughly 110,000 more than at the start of the year. Nevertheless, this figure remained far below the figure 10 years ago, in 2000, when more than 3.4 million people were displaced in sub-Saharan Africa.

Due to violence in southern and central Somalia and the effects of drought, more than 119,000 Somalis left their homes during the year and sought refuge abroad, mainly in Kenya (73,700) and Ethiopia (24,100). Armed conflict and human rights violations in Côte d'Ivoire,³⁶ the Central

African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, led to new refugee outflows and the movement of 47,000 people, primarily to the Republic of the Congo (21,000), Liberia (18,100), and Uganda (4,000). Nevertheless, some 43,000 refugees across sub-Saharan Africa returned home voluntarily, notably to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (16,600), Rwanda (10,900), Sudan (7,100), and Burundi (4,800).

In the Americas, the refugee population decreased marginally (-1.1%). UNHCR revised downwards, by 10,900, its estimate for the refugee population in the United States of America.³⁷ Some 7,900 Colombians were granted refugee status in Ecuador while the number of Colombians in Ecuador assessed to be in a refugee-like situation was adjusted from

71,400 to 68,300, as a result of an enhanced registration exercise.³⁸

In the Asia and Pacific region, the total number of refugees, including people in a refugee-like situation, was estimated at 4 million at the end of 2010, an increase of 4 per cent during the year. This was due in part to the revision of the estimated number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan from 1.7 to 1.9 million.³⁹

In Europe, the refugee population decreased by 40,700 people (-2.5%) to 1.6 million at end of 2010. The drop was mainly a result of registration and verification exercises conducted in the Balkans. In Serbia (and Kosovo: S/RES/1244 (1999)), the number of Bosnian and Croatian refugees decreased by nearly 13,000 people when figures were adjusted following a consolidation of refugee databases, which revealed that many who had achieved a durable solution either in Serbia or Croatia were still registered as refugees in Serbia. Likewise, the Government of Montenegro adjusted refugee figures from 24,000 to 16,400, following a comprehensive registration ex-

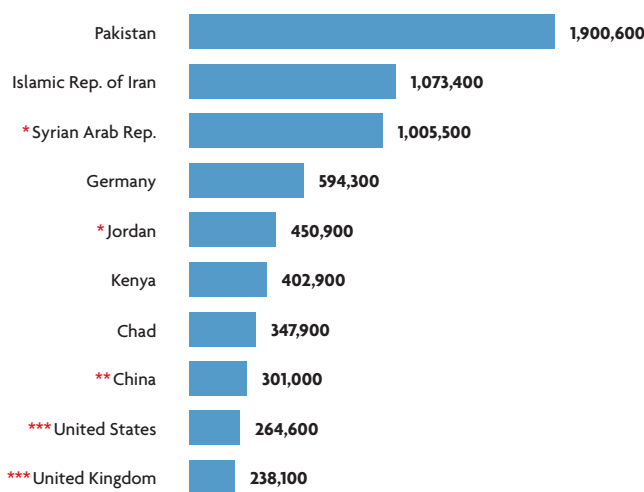
³⁶ At the peak of the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, the number of Ivorian refugees in Liberia and other countries in the region surpassed 200,000.

³⁷ In the absence of official refugee statistics, UNHCR is required to estimate refugee populations in 24 industrialized countries.

³⁸ Following a comprehensive survey carried out by the Government and UNHCR in 2007-2008, to determine the magnitude and the profile of the Colombian population, and to assess the main protection gaps.

³⁹ This is an estimate of the number of Afghan refugees registered with the Government of Pakistan, and is subject to change after completion of the verification exercise ongoing at the time of reporting.

Fig. 11.2 Major refugee hosting countries | end-2010



* Government estimate.

** The 300,000 Vietnamese refugees are well integrated and in practice receive protection from the Government of China.

*** UNHCR estimate based on 10 years of individual recognition of asylum-seekers. Figures exclude resettled refugees.

Protracted refugee situations

UNHCR defines a protracted refugee situation as one in which 25,000 or more refugees of the same nationality have been in exile for five years or longer in a given asylum country. Based on this definition, it is estimated that some 7.2 million refugees were in a protracted situation by end 2010. This was the highest number since 2001. Iraqi refugees in Jordan and in the Syrian Arab Republic are now considered to be in a protracted situation. The 7.2 million refugees living in 24 host countries accounted for a total of 29 protracted situations globally.

For more information on the different ways used to calculate protracted refugee situations, see the 2007 *Statistical Yearbook*, pp. 41-44, UNHCR, Geneva. ●

ercise among refugees from several Balkan states.

The 10 major refugee-hosting countries in 2010 were the same as in 2009, all of them maintaining their individual rankings. Together these 10 countries accounted for 62 per cent of all refugees under UNHCR's mandate (see *Figure II.2*). As in 2009, Pakistan was the country with the largest number of refugees (1.9 million) globally, nearly all from Afghanistan, with an increase of 160,000 in the total refugee population of the country. The Islamic Republic of Iran hosted slightly over 1 million refugees, again almost all Afghans, whose number remained virtually unchanged from 2009. According to Government estimates, the Syrian Arab Republic was host to one million Iraqi refugees, making it the third largest refugee-hosting country, despite a downward revision of 5 per cent (-49,000 people) based on an assumption that a number of Iraqis had departed the country. Germany and Jordan⁴⁰ reported 594,300 and 450,900 refugees, respectively, at the end of the year.

Kenya was the sixth largest hosting country at the end of 2010, with almost 403,000 refugees. The overall figure increased by 44,000 people during the year (+12%), mainly as a result of new arrivals from Somalia. In 2009 and 2010, Kenya witnessed the arrival of over 150,000 Somali refugees, stretching the capacity of the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps to a maximum. In Chad, the refugee population increased to 347,900 by the end of 2010 (+3%) due to new arrivals from the Central African Republic and Sudan.

In 2008, Ethiopia was host to 83,600 refugees and the 27th largest refugee-hosting country in the world. This was the lowest level for Ethiopia in almost three decades. Since 2008

however, refugee figures nearly doubled with the arrival of tens of thousands of Eritrean and Somali refugees. By the end of 2010, the refugee population had grown to 154,300, making Ethiopia host to the 19th largest refugee population globally.

Capacities and contributions of host countries

Ideally, the impact of hosting refugees should be quantifiable in terms of the national and international protection and assistance refugees receive, as well as the contributions they make to the host country. In practice, however, comprehensive and comparable data are not available to allow this.

Countries with strong economies are more likely to be capable of absorbing and supporting refugees. For comparative purposes, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (PPP)⁴¹ per capita⁴² is widely used to measure and compare levels of relative wealth and development. However, GDP (PPP) does not reflect the sometimes very unequal distribution of wealth, nor adequately reflect the informal economy, which is often sizeable in developing countries.

Nonetheless, comparing the refugee population size with the average income level of a country according to the GDP (PPP) per capita, a measure can be obtained of the relative impact of hosting refugees. If the number of

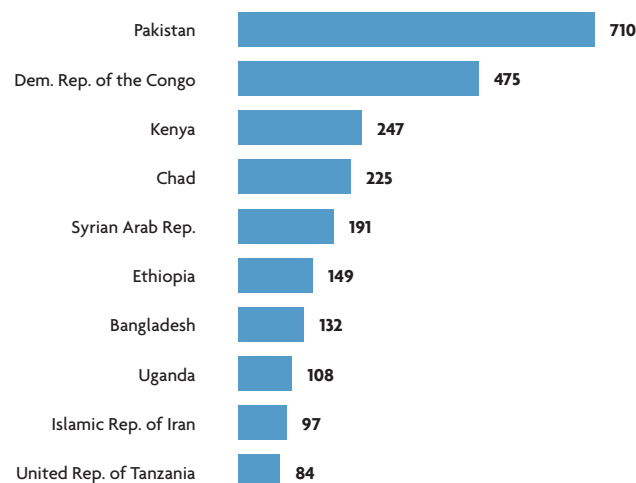
refugees per 1 USD GDP (PPP) per capita is high, the relative contribution of countries compared to their national economy can be considered as high. The 20 countries with the highest number of refugees per 1 USD GDP (PPP) per capita are all developing countries, including 12 Least Developed Countries. Moreover, more than 4.4 million refugees, representing 42 per cent of the world's refugees, resided in countries whose GDP (PPP) per capita was below USD 3,000.

At the end of 2010, Pakistan had the highest number of refugees compared to its national economy (see *Figure II.3*), hosting 710 refugees per 1 USD GDP (PPP) per capita. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was second with 475 refugees per 1 USD GDP (PPP) per capita, followed by Kenya (247), Chad (225), the Syrian Arab Republic (191), and Ethiopia (149). The first developed country was Germany, in 25th place, with 17 refugees per 1 USD GDP (PPP) per capita.

Origins

With more than 3 million refugees in 75 countries, Afghanistan remained the leading country of origin of refugees in 2010. On average, three out of ten refugees in the world were from Afghanistan, 96 per cent of them located in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Iraqis were the se-

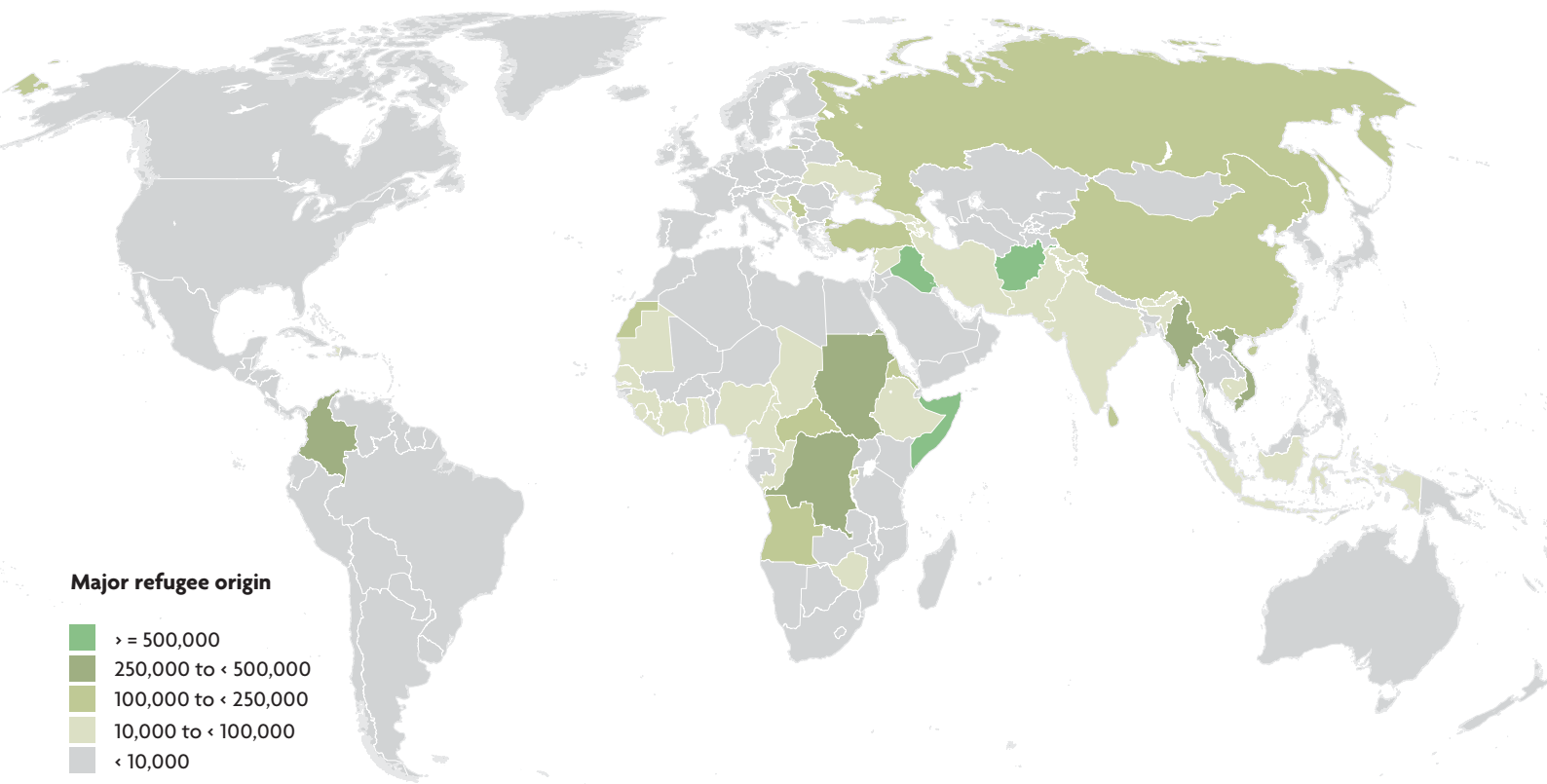
Fig. II.3 Number of refugees per 1 USD GDP (PPP) per capita | 2010



⁴⁰ Number of Iraqis in Jordan as estimated by the Government.

⁴¹ Source for GDP (PPP): International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, April 2011 (accessed 25 April 2011).

⁴² Source for national populations: United Nations, Population Division, *World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision*, New York, 2011.



cond largest group, with an estimated 1.7 million mainly in neighbouring countries. Afghan and Iraqi refugees accounted for almost half (45%) of all refugees under UNHCR's responsibility worldwide (see Map 2 above).

Somalis constituted the third largest refugee group under UNHCR's responsibility, with 770,200 persons at the end of 2010, twice as many as in 2005. Compared to 2009, the number of Somali refugees increased by nearly 92,000 people (+14%). In recent years conditions in Somalia have deteriorated, particularly in the central and southern areas of the country, creating difficulties for UNHCR and other organizations to reach populations in need of assistance. More than 119,000 Somalis fled their country during 2010, primarily to Kenya (73,700), Ethiopia (24,100), Yemen (18,400), and Djibouti (3,300). In addition, tens of thousands were newly displaced within Somalia during the year.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo was the fourth largest country of origin, with 476,700 refugees under UNHCR's mandate at the end of 2010. An estimated 25,000 people fled the country during 2010, mainly to the Republic of the Congo and Uganda. Over the past decade, more than

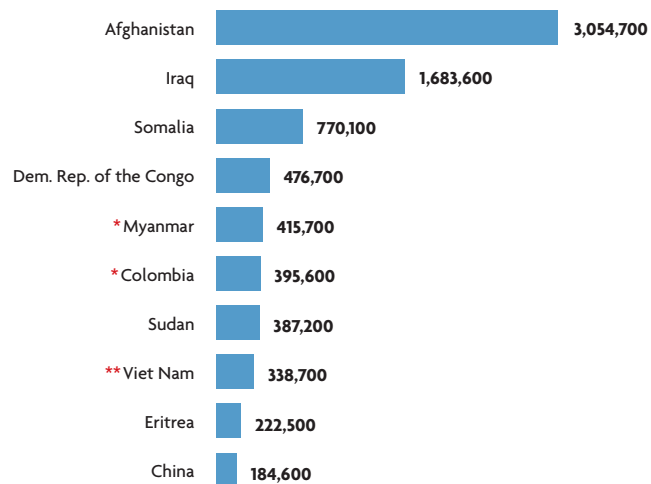
400,000 Congolese from the Democratic Republic of the Congo have fled to neighbouring countries to escape violence and armed conflict.

Other major countries of origin were Myanmar (415,700), Colombia (395,600), and Sudan (387,200). In the case of refugees from Myanmar, the figure includes an estimated 200,000 unregistered people in Bangladesh. In the case of Colombians, the fig-

ure includes 113,200 refugees as well 282,400 people in a refugee-like situation in Ecuador, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and other countries in the region.

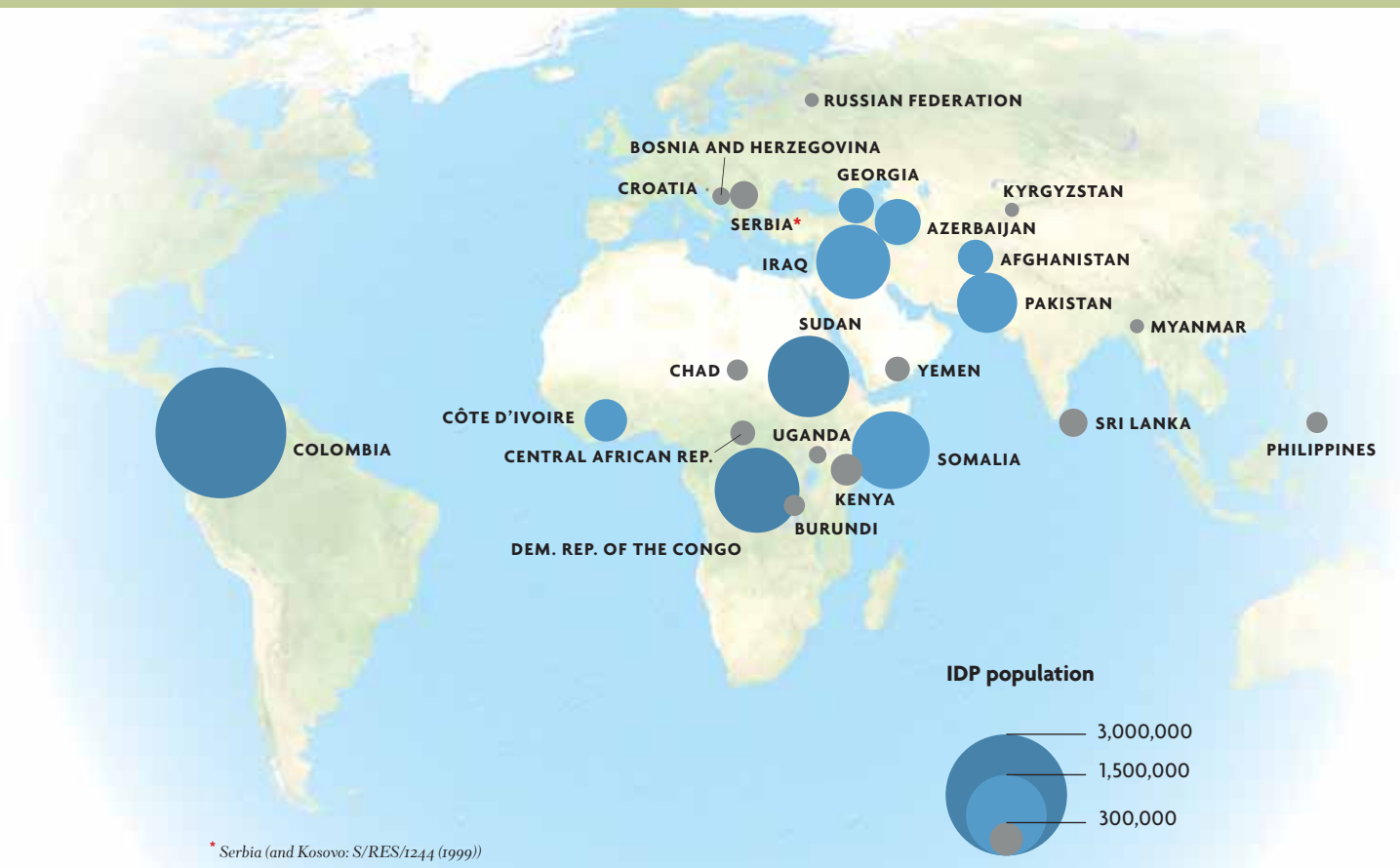
The number of Sudanese refugees has decreased for five consecutive years following the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees from neighbouring countries to southern Sudan. However, in 2010 the numbers

Fig. 11.4 Major source countries of refugees | end-2010



* Includes people in a refugee-like situation.

** The 300,000 Vietnamese refugees are well integrated and in practice receive protection from the Government of China.



of Sudanese refugees increased by some 19,000 people compared to 2009, mainly due to the situation in Darfur and southern Sudan.

ASYLUM-SEEKERS

The asylum-seekers included in the total population of concern to UNHCR are people whose applications for asylum or refugee status are awaiting a final decision. The figures in this chapter refer to claimants whose applications were pending as of the end of 2010, irrespective of when they were lodged, and may include undecided or pending cases from previous years.⁴³

Worldwide, at least 837,000 individuals were still awaiting a decision on their asylum claims by the end of 2010. They included people at all stages of the asylum procedure. Despite improved reporting over the past few

years, the global number of undecided cases presented here is incomplete as some countries, particularly in the industrialized world, do not report these figures.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

UNHCR does not have the capacity to protect and assist all conflict-generated IDPs, globally estimated at some 27.5 million at the end of 2010.⁴⁴ Since the introduction of the inter-agency cluster approach in January 2006, however, UNHCR had become increasingly involved with IDPs as part of a broader effort of the United Nations system and of other participating organizations. In 2010, in the context of its responsibilities within the cluster approach, UNHCR expressed its willingness to increase its engagement to protect per-

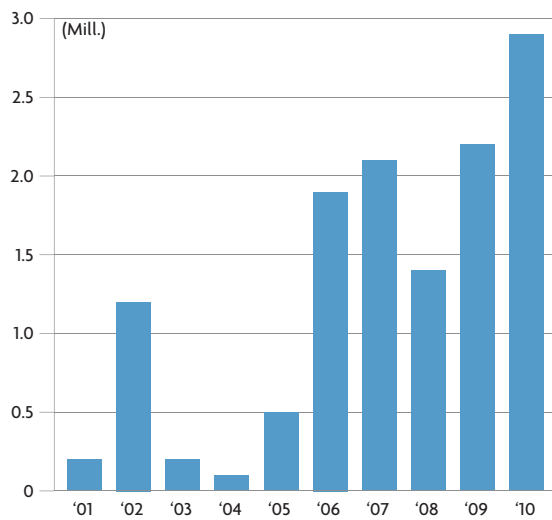
sons displaced by natural disasters.

The number of IDPs, including people in IDP-like situations who benefited from UNHCR's protection and assistance activities stood at 14.7 million at the end of 2010.⁴⁵ This was down by 930,000 from 2009, but nonetheless the second highest figure in UNHCR's history, and double the number since the application of the cluster approach in 2005 (6.6 million). The decrease was mainly due to IDP returns in Pakistan (1.2 million)⁴⁶ and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (461,000). Overall, more than 2.9 million IDPs returned home during the reporting period, the highest number in almost 15 years. At the same time, UNHCR offices reported at least 1.3 million newly-displaced people in 2010. UNHCR statistics include IDP populations in 24 countries (see Annex, Table 6).

In Colombia, where Government IDP registration began in 1997, there were 3.6 million registered IDPs reported at the end of the year.⁴⁷ Renewed armed conflict in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo displaced more than 130,000

43 For details on the number of new asylum claims submitted as well as decisions taken, see Chapter IV.
 44 For detailed statistics on global internal displacement, see the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) website of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) at www.internal-displacement.org.
 45 People in IDP-like situations include those in Georgia (124,000), Kyrgyzstan (20,000), the Russian Federation (22,200), and Sudan (76,100).
 46 This figure includes spontaneous returns in 2009 that could only be verified in 2010.
 47 Accumulated figure dating back to 1997. The Government has highlighted an under-registration of 21 per cent (see Report by the National Government to the Constitutional Court, Judgment T-025/2004).

Fig. 11.5 IDP returns protected/assisted by UNHCR | 2001-2011



people in 2010. By the end of the year, the number of IDPs was estimated at 1.7 million, down from 2.1 million the previous year, following the return of several hundreds of thousands. Pakistan witnessed the return of almost 1.2 million IDPs in 2010, bringing the estimate of IDPs to 952,000. Over the past two years, in Pakistan about 2.3 million IDPs have returned home. As the situation in central and southern Somalia deteriorated further, hundreds of thousands of people were newly displaced in 2010. The estimated number of IDPs in Somalia was about 1.5 million by year's end.

In Sudan, the number of IDPs protected or assisted by UNHCR was approximately 1.6 million by the end of the year.⁴⁸ Since the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement in January 2005 between the Sudanese Government in Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Army, some 2 million displaced people returned to their communities in southern Sudan and the so-called 'Three Areas' of Abyei, Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan. A large number of southerners living in the North, including an unknown number of IDPs, made their way to southern Sudan during the course

of the year, ahead of the referendum on independence which took place in January 2011.

In Iraq, an estimated 1.3 million remained displaced within the country at the end of the year. Some 303,000 IDPs in Uganda were able to return to their villages in the course of the year, reducing the IDP population remaining in camps and transit sites to 126,000. Both IDPs and IDP returnees in Uganda continued to benefit from UNHCR's protection and assistance activities under the cluster approach in efforts to ensure that all individuals, especially the extremely vulnerable, could find a durable solution in the course of 2011.

Kyrgyzstan witnessed extensive new internal displacement in mid-

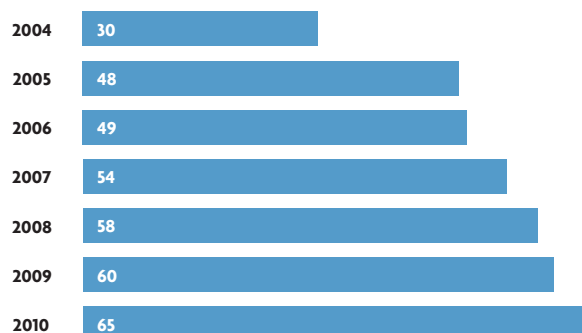
2010. At the peak of the crisis, UNHCR estimated that up to 400,000 people were affected. By the end of the year, an estimated 80,000 persons remained internally displaced in Kyrgyzstan, including 20,000 people in an IDP-like situation.

STATELESS PERSONS

Identifying stateless persons remains key to addressing their problems and to discharging the responsibility entrusted to UNHCR for this population. This responsibility is not limited to the prevention and reduction of statelessness and the protection of stateless persons, but also involves raising awareness among the international community of the magnitude of the problem. Measuring statelessness is complicated by the fact that stateless people often live in precarious situations on the margins of society, frequently lacking documentation, lawful residence and access to national institutions that are principle sources of information as to their numbers and well-being.

Only a minority of countries have procedures in place for the identification, registration and documentation of stateless persons, which facilitate gathering precise data. The statistics in this report therefore only include data on countries for which reliable official statistics or estimates of stateless populations were available. Nonetheless, Annex Table 7 also includes some countries (marked with an asterisk) that had significant stateless populations but for which no reliable

Fig. 11.6 Number of countries reporting statistics on stateless persons



⁴⁸ According to IDMC estimates, the number of IDPs in Sudan is estimated at up to 5.2 million.

figures were provided. They include Côte d'Ivoire, India and Indonesia.

The data on statelessness in 2010 showed a continuation of the gradual expansion in UNHCR's knowledge of and engagement with stateless persons. By the end of 2010, statistics on statelessness were thus available for 65 countries, five more than in 2009. This compared to 30 countries in 2004, the year when UNHCR started collecting statistics on stateless populations in a more systematic way. It reflected sustained efforts by UNHCR offices to gather better data on statelessness. These efforts were bolstered by an increasing awareness of statelessness in a number of countries around the world.

For 2010, the number of identified stateless individuals stood at some 3.5 million persons, as compared to 6.6 million at the end of 2009. The decrease mainly reflected methodological changes in counting stateless persons, rather than an actual reduction in statelessness.

Nonetheless, there was a significant drop in the number of stateless persons, owing to acquisition or confirmation of nationality by stateless persons. Approximately 137,500 stateless per-

sons acquired nationality, mainly in 12 countries. Almost half of this figure was a result of progress to resolve the situation of Faili Kurds in Iraq.

Despite improvements in the number of countries reporting, and in the reliability of population figures, UNHCR was not in a position to provide comprehensive statistics on the number of stateless persons in all countries around the world. As a result, there was a discrepancy between reliable country-level data reported by UNHCR and the total number of stateless persons worldwide, estimated at up to 12 million people. Increased data coverage will gradually narrow this gap.

RETURNEES (REFUGEES AND IDPS)⁴⁹

Voluntary repatriation (for refugees) and voluntary return (for IDPs) remain the durable solution sought by the largest numbers of persons displaced by conflict. An estimated 197,600 refugees and 2.9 million IDPs returned in 2010. For refugees this was the lowest number of returns in more than 20 years - significantly less than the 251,500 refugees who retur-

⁴⁹ See Chapter III for more details on durable solutions.

ned home in 2009. By contrast, the number of IDP returns was the second highest in more than a decade.

OTHER GROUPS OR PEOPLE OF CONCERN

UNHCR also extends protection or assistance to individuals whom it considers of concern, but who do not fall into any of the population categories listed above. These activities are based on humanitarian or other special grounds, and include asylum-seekers rejected by States whom UNHCR deems to be in need of humanitarian assistance, or otherwise of concern to the Office.

The number of people in this category tripled from 412,000 at the start of 2010 to more than 1.2 million at year's end. The increase was primarily due to the inclusion of 838,000 people in Afghanistan. These were former refugees who had returned to Afghanistan prior to 2010, but who had not been able to reintegrate due among other reasons to economic difficulties, a lack of comprehensive reintegration measures, and security concerns. Many of these individuals thus continued to benefit from UNHCR's assistance.

In focus:

Identifying stateless persons: case studies Serbia and Myanmar

SERBIA: SURVEY OF THE ROMA, ASHKALI AND EGYPTIAN POPULATION

The problem of statelessness, or risk of statelessness, in Serbia (and Kosovo: S/RES/1244 (1999)) disproportionately affects the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) population. Due to marginalization and discrimination, these people were often unable or incapable of obtaining access to birth registration and/or personal documents. As a result, they were unable to establish/prove their nationality and effectively enjoy basic social, economic, cultural and political rights.

The conflicts in the Balkans in the 1990s and the forced displacement

that followed exacerbated this problem, through loss of key certificates during flight and the destruction of registries. Moreover, subsequent re-registrations and other administrative obstacles (registering residence) in Serbia further hindered the marginalized communities from obtaining documents and respecting the associated administrative procedures. Failure to comply with such procedures under the Serbian Law on Registry Books led in turn to arbitrary decisions, and inconsistent interpretations of procedures and requirements of proof. Ad-

Survey in Serbia

To strengthen its advocacy and provide concrete evidence of problems being experienced, UNHCR conducted a survey designed to:

1. Establish the number of persons who are at risk of statelessness and facing serious obstacles in obtaining personal documents;
2. Identify and map locations where these persons mainly live;
3. Determine their awareness as to the need to possess personal identification documents and citizenship; and
4. Record or identify the cause of their lack of personal documents.

ditional obstacles included fees and costs of travel to obtain documentary proof for the vulnerable group of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population. In view of the prevailing legal uncertainties, it was difficult for UNHCR to persuade the authorities that these procedural hurdles might have led to statelessness in Serbia.

The survey was conducted in October 2010, by IPSOS Strategic Marketing. The findings were released in June 2011.⁵⁰ The report presented basic information on the situation of households and persons at risk of becoming stateless.

While it was not possible to determine the exact number of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population in Serbia, various estimates were made available. In the Government of Serbia's response to the EC Questionnaire,⁵¹ the authorities indicated that "in 593 settlements there were 201,353 domiciled and 46,238 internally displaced Roma" and that "most of the researchers estimate that there are 450,000 Roma residing in Serbia". The results of the UNHCR/IPSOS survey were based on an estimate of the natural growth, made by the Serbian Statistical Office and the United Nations Development Programme following the 2002 population census. According to the natural growth rates, by 2010 there were an estimated 130,000 RAE in Serbia. The 2011 population census is expected to provide accurate data and permit a more precise estimation of the number of persons at risk of statelessness.

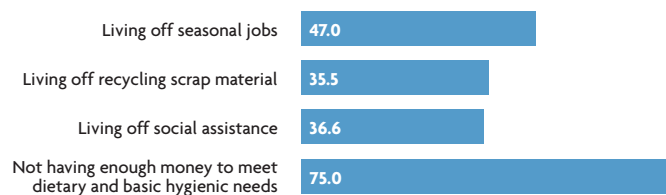
The 2010 survey was carried out throughout the territory of Serbia (excluding Kosovo) among households with at least one member declared as being part of the Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian population. The sample was a two-stage stratified random sample. Primary selection units were constituencies in settlements with RAE population, selected proportionally to the size of the estimated Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population. A list of all

settlements was provided by UNHCR. In the second stage, households were chosen with equal probabilities, and selected by the method of random start and equal random walk. The sampling interval was three. The sample covered 1,930 households and 9,568 individuals. The data was collected through face-to-face interviews. A weighted sample was used in the analysis according to region, type of settlements, gender, age and education.

Possession of documents was surveyed in several ways. The first step established whether household members had valid identity cards, passports and personal identification number for minors, followed by more detailed research in those households where there were members lacking some of the basic documents.

The survey results confirmed the problems faced by the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population. The main characteristics of those at risk of statelessness are described below.

Fig. 11.7 Socio-economic characteristics of persons at risk of statelessness in Serbia (in %)



Some 6.8 per cent of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population in Serbia were at risk of being stateless. Based on their estimated overall number, this could represent up to 30,000 persons of whom one fifth (21%) were minors, and about one quarter (26%) were displaced from Kosovo (disproportionably high in relation to the domiciled population). More than half (54%) of those at risk of statelessness lived in illegal settlements.

The socio-economic status of persons at risk of statelessness was striking: almost half lived off seasonal jobs, with almost four out of ten de-

Survey in Serbia

The survey examined aspects related to personal documentation:

1. Possession of basic documents;
2. Reasons for the non-possession of documents;
3. Attempts to obtain documents and reasons for failure;
4. Access to rights by persons at risk of statelessness;
5. Discrimination;
6. Assistance in obtaining documents.

⁵⁰ See www.unhcr.rs for further information.

⁵¹ See <http://www.seio.gov.rs/documents/agreements-with-eu.69.html>

pending on social assistance. More than 80 per cent had no money to pay bills, meet basic health care needs, or cover expenses related to education (see Figure II.7).

The lack of documentation among persons at risk of statelessness was of acute concern to UNHCR. Some 5.4 per cent had no identity cards, crucial for accessing rights and services. Based on estimates quoted by the Serbian Government, the number could be up to 24,300 persons. Furthermore, some 1.5 per cent of children and adults of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian

In accordance with a main objective of the survey, the study informed the Serbian authorities as to the extent and causes of the problem of statelessness among the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population. Following the publication of the survey report and strong advocacy activities together with EU and civil society in the country, the Serbian authorities agreed to work together with UNHCR and the civil society to resolve the problem of persons at risk of stateless-

ness. Actions would include training and sensitization, simplification and uniformity of documentary requirements, and direct reach-out to persons of concern by providing assistance to the marginalized populations.

With the cooperation of the authorities and with appropriate funding, the problems of persons at risk of statelessness among the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population in Serbia could be resolved within a period of two to three years.

Survey in Serbia

The survey revealed a number of possible reasons why the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population lacked documents, including:

- **Lack of birth registration** and/or lack of possession of birth certificate, and consequently other necessary documents;
- **High costs** of obtaining documents;
- **Complicated procedures** (many did not understand the relevant processes);
- **Rejection by institutions** due to incomplete documentation;
- **Extreme social marginalization** of a growing number of RAE resulting in ignorance of legal procedures, fear of coming forward, and a belief that the authorities would not assist them.

population have not been registered at birth (6,750 persons based on the estimates of the Serbian Government).

Around 3 per cent had no registered permanent or habitual residence, depriving them of access to identity cards and rights, possibly affecting up to 13,500 persons. According to the survey, 2.3 per cent (up to 10,350 persons) were not registered in citizens' registries.

MYANMAR: SURVEY OF MUSLIM RESIDENTS IN NORTHERN RAKHINE STATE

When a new nationality law was passed in Myanmar in 1982, the Muslim residents of northern Rakhine State (NRS) were not included among the 135 recognized "national races". However, they were later issued with Temporary Registration Certificates (TRCs) confirming their lawful residence and providing eligibility to vote in national elections.

Large refugee outflows of the Muslim population first took place from NRS into Bangladesh in 1978. This was followed by a second wave in 1991 and 1992, when approximately 250,000 people left the country. Repatriation began in 1992 as a result of a bilateral agreement between the Bangladeshi and Myanmar Governments. By the end of the decade, more

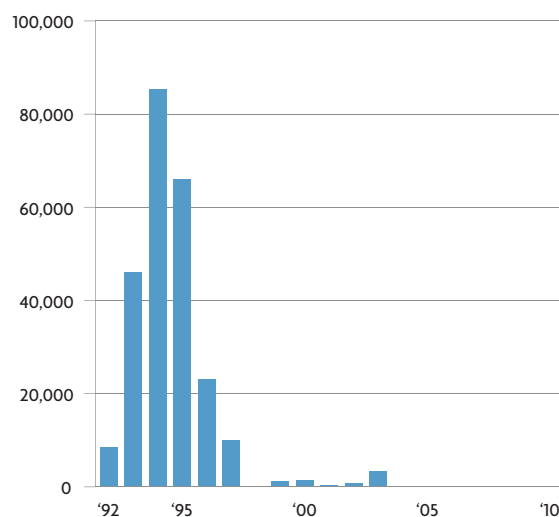
than 240,000 people had returned to Myanmar (see Figure II.8).

UNHCR first established its presence in Myanmar in 1994 to facilitate the repatriation and reintegration of the returnees. On completion of the repatriation and reintegration operation, UNHCR continued to maintain a presence in NRS to encourage the Myanmar authorities to improve the legal status of Muslim residents of NRS. In 2006, UNHCR conducted a household survey comparing the returnee and non-returnee population in terms of overall living conditions.⁵²

No recent census data are available for NRS. With the shift of focus from a returnee towards a statelessness operation, the systematic collection of registration and other protection fig-

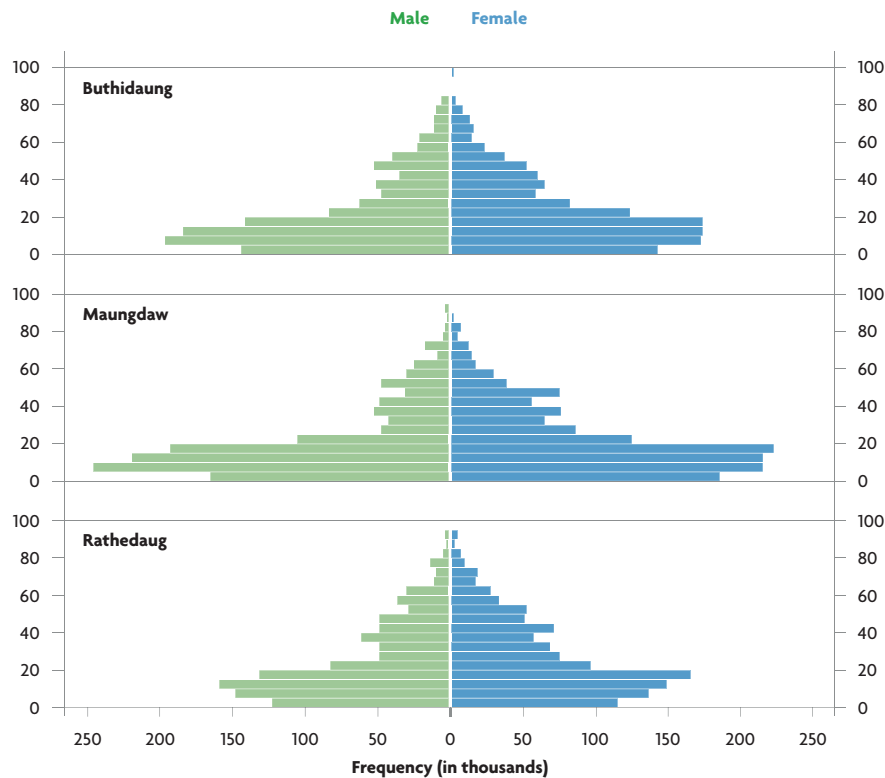
Fig. II.8

Voluntary repatriation of refugees to Myanmar | 1992-2010



⁵² Northern Rakhine State Household Survey 2006. UNHCR Myanmar, May 2006 (unpublished).

Fig. II.9 Age pyramid by township | 2010



ures was considered crucial. Furthermore, donors and other partners in Myanmar were urging agencies of the United Nations to accompany funding submissions with substantiated baseline data, in the absence of essential registration figures.

In 2010, UNHCR therefore conducted a comprehensive survey and analysis of demographic data in NRS. The aim of this survey was to update registration and protection figures, as well as obtain new information on household characteristics such as access to safe drinking water and sanitation, health care, education, shelter, land and other livelihoods. Its scope reflected the aims and activities of UNHCR in NRS so as to inform ongoing planning and monitoring activities, and to allow an analysis of progress achieved since the 2006 survey.

The 2010 household survey also hoped to identify areas in Myanmar where populations were particularly vulnerable. In contrast to the 2006 survey, when the returnees and non-returnees were mainly compared, the

2010 household survey was designed to allow comparisons between citizens and the stateless population.

A sampling scheme was chosen to allow for comparisons between Myanmar citizens who mainly live in Rathedaung Township, and Muslims residents without citizenship, residing primarily in Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships. A sample size of 400 households was set for each township, for an overall sample size of 1,200 households. A two-staged sample design was applied. First, 40 villages were selected using probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling,

with the estimated number of households by villages used as a weight. Segmentation and household listing were done by UNHCR field staff for the 40 villages thus selected. The size of the segment was not strictly fixed, but was generally around 100 households. This was followed by a selection of a sample of 10 households within those villages using systematic random sampling. The sampling frame consisted of the household and population count by village and/or village tract in the three townships. Information on villages and estimated population figures were taken from the popula-

TABLE II.2 Dependency ratios by type of dependency and township (in %)

Townships	Young (under 15)	Aged (60+)	Total
Buthidaung	81.63	8.33	89.96
Maungdaw	91.78	8.62	100.40
Rathedaung	68.66	12.50	81.16
National (FRHS)	44.92	13.81	58.67
Rakhine (FRHS)	62.33	11.28	73.61

2 Population Levels and Trends

tion estimates jointly collected with the other agencies and NGO partners in 2006. UNHCR's field staff in NRS verified and updated the estimates in early 2010. Villages with less than 20 households were combined with the physically adjacent village to form one primary stage sampling unit.⁵³

Rakhine is a multi-ethnic region, home to a majority Muslim population of 70 per cent, many of whom fled to Bangladesh and have since returned. Of these, 13.5 per cent considered themselves returnees. Maungdaw, one of the three townships that constitute NRS was home to 97 per cent of the Muslim population and accounted for 24 per cent of returnees.

The NRS population was relatively young with only 4.9 per cent of the population over the age of 60, and 44.1 per cent under the age of 15. In comparison with other states in Myanmar, there was a high dependency ratio with relatively few adults responsible for high numbers of minors.

Conditions vary significantly between Buthidaung, Maungdaw and Rathedaung Townships. Maungdaw township had the youngest age structure compared to Buthidaung and Rathedaung, resulting in a high dependency ratio potentially contributing to the relatively high poverty rate. The dependency ratios were higher than the national average (58.67 or about 1.7 working age adult for each dependent child or elderly person).⁵⁴ Particularly in Maungdaw, very young children had dropped out from school in order to support the families through income-generating activities. Less than half of the 12-18 year old were enrolled in school. School drop-out rates were particularly high for girls in Maungdaw Township, where only 34 per cent of girls of above the age of 12 years were enrolled in school. Gender was also a predominant factor in the self-assessed literacy rates. For example, in Maungdaw only 4.2 per cent of



women could speak and write the Myanmar language compared to 15 per cent of the male population. In Rathedaung Township, home to the highest number of Rakhines considered as Myanmar citizens, 48 per cent males and 38 per cent females were literate in the Myanmar language.

Furthermore, the demographic data indicated that there had been no increase in life expectancy since 2006, and only a minor decrease in fertility.

UNHCR had advocated for and supported the authorities in issuing Temporary Registration Cards (TRCs) to Muslim residents of NRS as a way to provide protection, and as

a step to improve the legal status of this population, eventually leading to citizenship. Unfortunately, nearly 40 per cent of Muslim residents of the area had yet to receive individual identity documents.

The survey results showed that TRC holders did not benefit from any privileges other than the right to participate in elections. Restrictions on freedom of movement, education, child registration and marriage rights continued. Journeys outside the village tract of residence systematically required the permission of local authorities for TRC holders, with no ease of travel restrictions since 2006.

⁵³ In a small number of instances, no population estimates could be obtained for individual villages. In these instances, the entire village tract was used for the sampling frame. Where village tracts were included in the first stage sample, individual villages from within these village tracts were selected at random.

⁵⁴ *Fertility and Reproductive Health Survey (FHRS) (2007)*, available at http://www.prb.org/pdf09/09wpds_eng.pdf



Refugees from Kyrgyzstan who fled violence during 2010 and took refuge in Uzbekistan return home.

UNHCR / S. SCHULMAN

The 13.5 per cent of the NRS population that considered themselves returnees did not report more protection challenges than those of non-returnee Muslims, congruent with observations of the 2006 survey.⁵⁵ In regard to the overall living conditions, no major differences were observed between the two groups.

The 2010 household survey indicated that general conditions in NRS remained precarious, requiring assistance in the areas of education, infrastructure, health, water, sanitation, and livelihood. The comparison with other studies⁵⁶ showed that NRS reported smaller landholding sizes relative compared to the known national

average. In addition, NRS had the country's lowest literacy rates with less than 30 per cent of the surveyed Muslim residents able to read and write the Myanmar language.

Conclusions drawn from the survey results thus supported UNHCR's shift from a returnee operation to one focusing on stateless groups. While no major differences between the returnee and non-returnee population were identified, the 2010 results confirmed that Muslim residents in NRS, not considered citizens, had less access to public health facilities and faced greater restrictions with respect to freedom than those faced by ethnic Rakhines (citizens).

The findings supported the appeals of the United Nations for continued funding of development projects in NRS. Donors were particularly alerted by the low literacy and the high school drop-out rate of girls.

The survey also disclosed that the number of Temporary Registration Card holders was below that estimated by the international community, and highlighted the need for further support for registration campaigns.

Finally, the survey informed ongoing planning and monitoring activities, highlighting previously "forgotten" areas in NRS, helping to ensure that appropriate assistance and support could reach all those in need. ■

⁵⁵ *Northern Rakhine State Household Survey 2006*. UNHCR Myanmar, May 2006 (unpublished).

⁵⁶ *Agricultural Census*. Myanmar Ministry for Agriculture (2003).