

Processes and patterns of global migration

2.2.4

**Causes, consequences, and management of
refugee movements**

Specification content

Causes of international refugee movements and internal displacement of people (Internally Displaced People), including geopolitical events driven by powerful states and economic injustice, such as land grabs

Consequences of these movements on the lives of refugees and their destinations including lives of people in neighbouring states and developed economies

Actions to tackle refugee crises including the work of UNHDR (*I think this is a typo as it is an acronym for the UN Human Development Report, whereas UNHCR is The Refugee Agency*), national governments and NGOs

The powerlessness of some states in conflict or disaster zones in relation to cross-border flows of people (refugees, soldiers, militia groups) and resources

Specialised Concepts

As an outcome of studying 2.2.1 to 2.2.5, learners will gain an understanding of specialised concepts:

risk (associated with refugees)

resilience (ability of neighbouring countries to cope with refugees)

Core ideas

Candidates should be able to clearly distinguish between refugees and economic migrants but should also understand that the distinction is sometimes blurred by economic refugees who are seeking economic gain but claim persecution in the host country.

Candidates should understand the causes of international and internal refugee movements. These can include persecution, war, natural disasters or economic injustices such as land grabs. Such drivers can be local or on a much larger scale, leading to national inter-regional or international migration.

Key terms

Refugee

UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, aka The Refugee Agency): “Refugees are people fleeing conflict or persecution. They are defined and protected in international law*, and must not be expelled or returned to situations where their life and freedom are at risk.”

<http://www.unhcr.org/uk/refugees.html> 20/10/17)

Other definitions also include natural hazards as a cause – climate change comes in here, too

*The **1951 Refugee Convention** defines who a refugee is and outlines the basic rights which States should afford to refugees.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Watch the short video and determine the similarities and differences between refugees and IDPs, and why some people become IDPs rather than refugees:

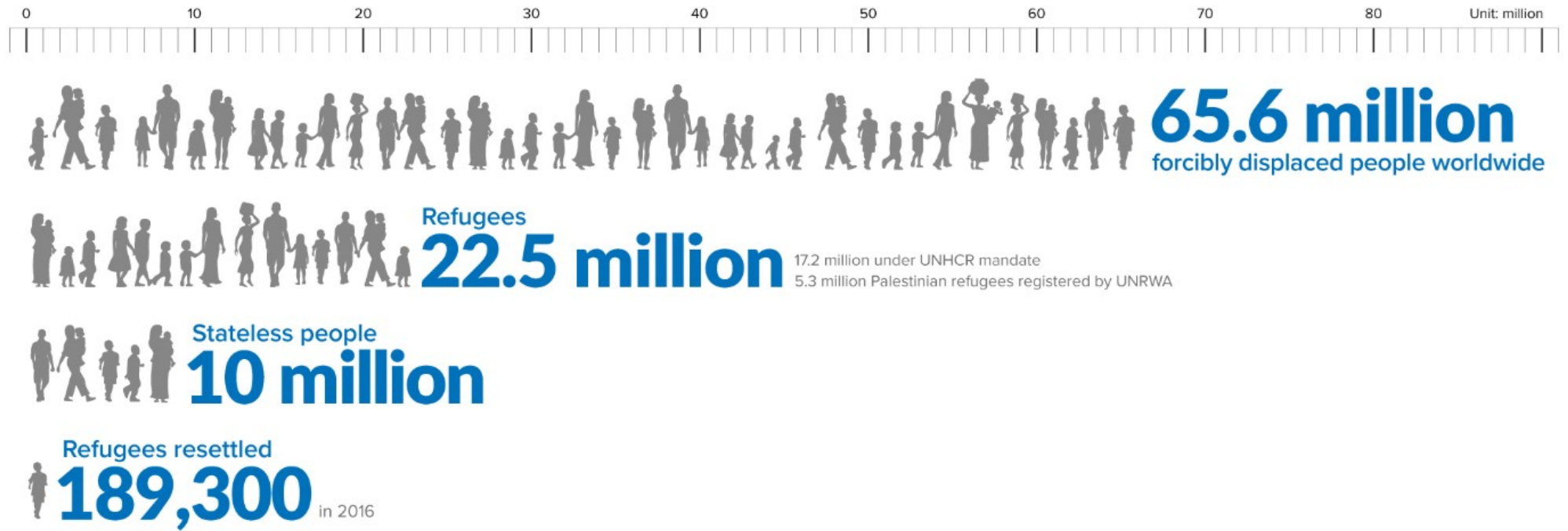
<http://www.unhcr.org/uk/internally-displaced-people.html>

[or: [Who is an Internally Displaced Person .mp4](#)]

The global scale

Figures at a Glance

Statistical Yearbooks

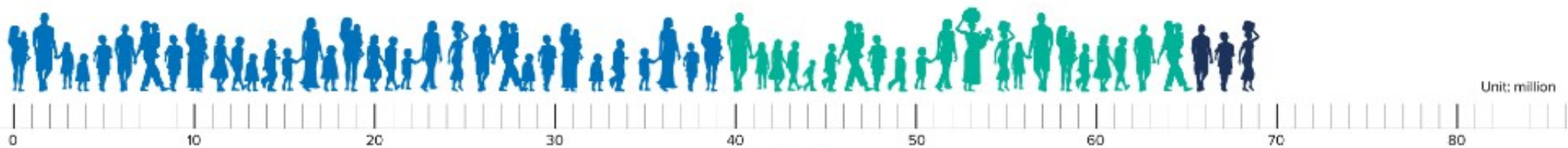


UNHCR: 2016

The global scale

Statistical Yearbooks

68.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide



Internally Displaced People
40 million

Refugees
25.4 million

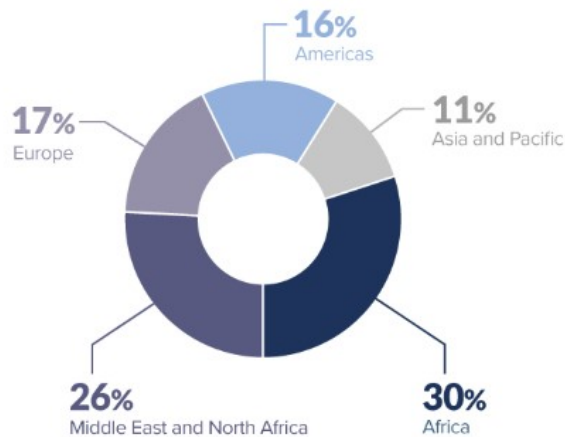
19.9 million under UNHCR mandate
5.4 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA

Asylum-seekers
3.1 million

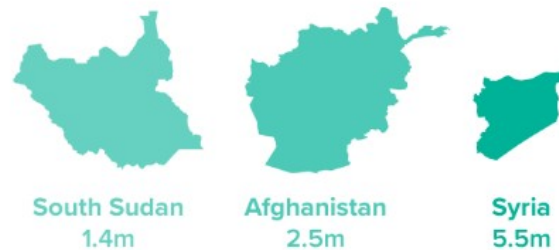
UNHCR: June 2018

The global scale

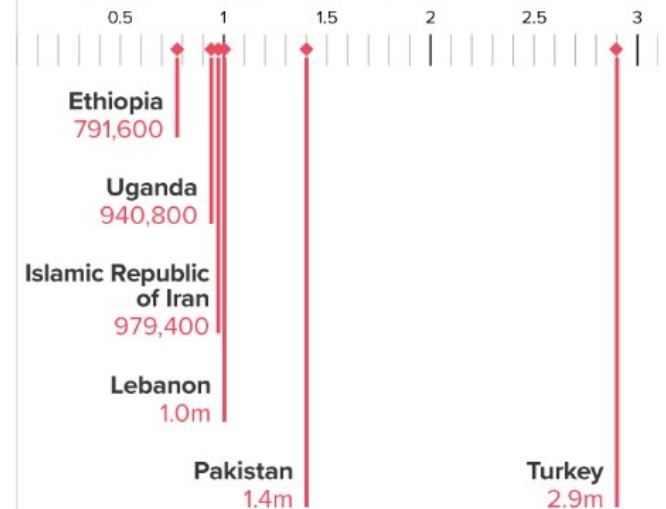
Where the world's displaced people are being hosted



55% of refugees worldwide came from three countries



Top hosting countries



28,300 people
a day forced to flee their homes
because of conflict and persecution

10,966 staff
UNHCR employs 10,966 staff
(as of 30 June 2017)

130 countries
We work in 130 countries
(as of 30 June 2017)

We are funded almost entirely by
voluntary contributions, with 87 per
cent from governments and the
European Union.

Source: UNHCR / 19 June 2017



Also have a look at UNHCR Global Trends 2016 (quite long at 72pp but useful sections):
<http://www.unhcr.org/uk/statistics/unhcrstats/5943e8a34/global-trends-forced-displacement-2016.html>

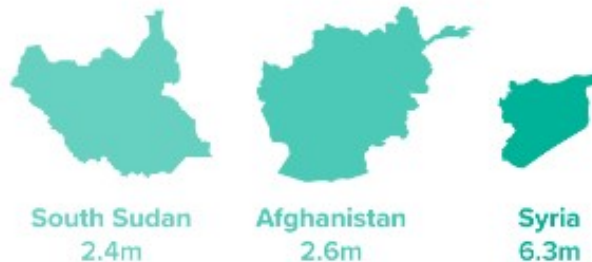
The global scale

Where the world's displaced people are being hosted

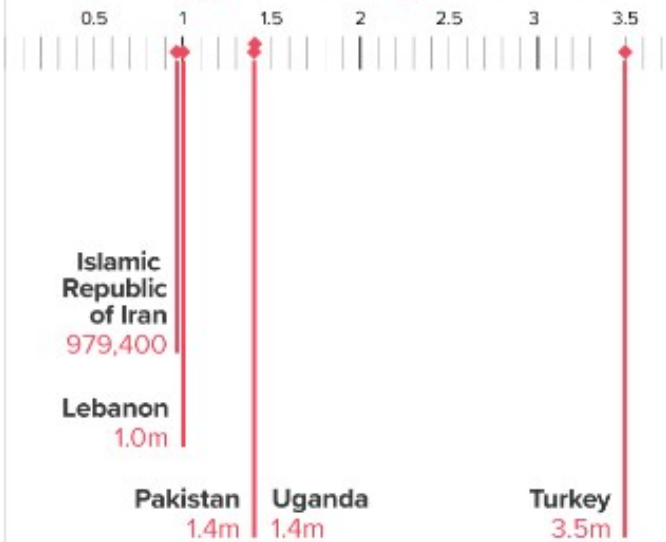


85 per cent of the world's displaced people are in developing countries

57% of refugees worldwide came from three countries



Top refugee-hosting countries



10 million stateless people 

102,800 Refugees resettled

44,400 people a day forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution

11,517 staff
UNHCR employs 11,517 staff (as of 31 May 2018)

128 countries
We work in 128 countries (as of 31 May 2018)

We are funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions, with 87 per cent from governments and the European Union and 10 per cent from private donors

UNHCR: June 2018

Examples

Use these links to gather material to help you understand the nature of the issue. Try to find info that relates to causes and consequences, and the political issues facing both the displaced and the countries they arrive in.

Interactive map: <https://refugeemovements.com/>

BBC series on The Displaced: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-49638793>

Uganda:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-africa-49745896/the-displaced-the-african-country-that-welcomes-refugees>

Trinidad and Tobago:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-latin-america-49690353/the-displaced-when-40000-desperate-venezuelans-hit-a-tiny-island>

Causes

Use the internet (and your textbook) to explain what these terms mean and how they have generated refugees.

Research brief, but detailed examples of each one: when, where (and where to), who, why.

Consider the different temporal and spatial scales of each one.

Geopolitical events:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/commentisfree/2015/jan/03/arab-spring-migrant-wave-instability-war>

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/what-s-driving-global-refugee-crisis> (many examples summarised here)

Economic injustice, including land grabs

Oxfam videos introducing idea of land grabs:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExCQlobfAUU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cnLiyWhfGbo>

News articles about particular examples

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/14/ethiopia-villagisation-violence-land-grab>

<https://qz.com/india/1074906/rohingya-the-oil-economics-and-land-grab-politics-behind-myanmars-refugee-crisis/>

Natural hazards, including climate change

A useful summary + examples for further research:

<http://www.eniscuola.net/en/2017/12/20/climate-changes-natural-disasters-refugees/>

UNHCR: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/stories/2019/10/5da5e18c4/climate-change-and-displacement.html>

Consequences on lives of refugees

Economic/social impacts

Conditions in refugee camps – and how these vary between different groups

Health

Safety

Loss of educational opportunities (longer term economic impacts, too)

Where refugees can work, they're usually in unregulated sectors with limited protection, e.g. domestic work, where abuse (in a variety of forms) is common*

*https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/9221/WDR2011_0028.pdf

Consequences on neighbouring states

Economic impacts (+ve and -ve)

National

- Pressures on infrastructure/service provision
- + Skills and knowledge (e.g. 78% of Syrians arriving in Germany Jan '13 to Sept '14 came from middle or upper class sections of society and had a good education)¹

Local scale

- + Increased demand for goods/services (e.g. estimated direct + indirect benefits of refugee camps in Dadaab, Kenya for local host community was c. US\$82M²)
- + Remittances from abroad (can also enhance inequalities, though)
- Pressure on grazing land/firewood
- Drives down labour costs locally (but benefits local entrepreneurs)

¹ Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, quoted in: <https://www.thenational.ae/world/why-many-refugees-fleeing-to-europe-are-highly-educated-1.132319>

² https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/9221/WDR2011_0028.pdf

Consequences on neighbouring states

Social impacts*

Can exacerbate racial/cultural tensions (e.g. Kosovo-Albanian refugees in Macedonia (late 1990s) generated tensions between ethnic Albanians and Serbs in Macedonia)

...but not if from same cultural/linguistic group (e.g. 25k CAR refugees in DRC in 1990s from same ethnic group (Yakoma))

Tensions created if refugees believed to be unfairly benefitting at expense of host community – can be reduced if international funding targets both

Gender-based violence (vulnerable communities)

Gender relations affected, e.g. where more women involved in income-generating activities in societies where this is traditionally male – reduced access to employment for men (e.g. male Somali refugees in Yemen)

*https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/9221/WDR2011_0028.pdf

Consequences on neighbouring states

Political and Security impacts

“In most cases, the presence of refugees does not have a significant negative impact on the political and security situation of the host countries.” (¹ p12)

However Salehyan and Gleditsch² identify these destabilising effects:

- Expansion of rebel social networks and diffusion of violence
- Facilitation of transnational spread of arms, combatants and ideologies conducive to conflict
- Creation of bilateral tensions, e.g. involvement of Tamil refugees in the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991

¹ https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/9221/WDR2011_0028.pdf

² Salehyan, Idean and Kristian Gleditsch. 2006. ‘Refugees and the Spread of Civil War,’ International Organization, 60: 335-366.

Consequences on neighbouring states

Environmental impacts*

Pressure on land, water, natural resources (e.g. fuelwood), and slum growth

Larger camps slow development of sustainable practices – long term impact

*https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/9221/WDR2011_0028.pdf

Consequences on developed economies

This is covered well in the textbook – make sure you have notes

Be worth making sure you understand what an asylum seeker is

This is an emotive subject so make sure you can view this objectively

Tackling refugee crises

Again, this is covered well in the textbook, so ensure you have good notes on this.

Pay particular attention to the agencies involved:

- UNHCR (not UNHDR, as in the specification, which refers to the UN Human Development Report. There's also the UNISDR (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction) or UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights)) – see [p42](#)
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), e.g. Amnesty International
- National governments – there's a useful summary [table](#) on p43

The previously used reference:

https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/9221/WDR2011_0028.pdf also has some useful examples of how the impacts of refugee movements have been managed, including the role of national governments outside the EU (pp15-18)

Powerlessness of some states...

... in conflict or disaster zones in relation to cross-border flows of people (refugees, soldiers, militia groups) and resources

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a good example of this (see textbook pp44-5)

What makes it difficult to manage cross-border flows?

- Indistinct and extensive borders
- Cultural connections between groups either side of political borders
- Remoteness (e.g. Nigerian refugees fleeing Boko Haram into Niger, Chad and Cameroon)
- Lack of adequate resources to police (difficult even for rich nations – see above)
- Determination/desperation of refugees (also true of other migrants – witness covert routes used by migrants into the EU from Syria/N Africa)