
Number displaced worldwide hits record high - UN report

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The document by the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, says the number of people forced to flee their homes rose by 8.3 million from the previous year.

The continuing conflict in Syria is seen as a major factor behind the record numbers.

UNHCR head Antonio Guterres told the BBC the "world is a mess".

"The drama is that if people think that humanitarians can clean up the mess. It's no longer possible. We have no capacities to pick up the pieces.

"More and more people are suffering, and unfortunately for many of them there is no chance to support them."

Mr Guterres said that the number of displaced people had increased to 42,500 per day in 2014, from 32,000 the year before.

Asylum applications for the 12 months to end of March 2015

Total
695,435



Note: Figures for France, Italy and UK up to end of Feb 2015, Greece to end of Jan 2015

Source: Eurostat

BBC

[Migrants: What can Europe achieve?](#)

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The report says that at least 15 conflicts have erupted or reignited in the past five years, including eight in Africa and three in the Middle East.

This led to 59.5 million displaced people by the end of 2014, of whom 38.2 million were displaced in their own country, by internal conflict. Wars in Ukraine, Nigeria and South Sudan swelled the figures last year, the UNHCR said.

Of the 59.5 million total, the report said, 19.5 million were refugees. More than half of the refugees were children.

Another 1.8 million people were awaiting the outcome of claims for asylum.

UK International Development Secretary Justine Greening said that the latest statistics were shocking.

"I have met some of these people and they tell me they just want the chance to return to their homes and get back to normal," she said.

"That is why as we give these families the basics they need to survive - food, clean water and shelter - we must also tackle the root causes of poverty and instability, in particular economic

development."



Fergal Keane meets migrants in Calais who have fled Africa via the Med
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The civil war in Syria has made 7.6 million people displaced in their own country, while another 3.9 million have fled abroad, most to neighbouring Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

The next biggest sources of refugees were Afghanistan and Somalia. For decades Afghanistan had been the leading source of refugees.

Mediterranean crisis

The document also points to a 50% rise - to 6.7 million - of displaced people across Europe, which is struggling to deal with a growing crisis of migrants crossing the Mediterranean.



Europe is seeing a huge increase of migrants trying to get to the continent by crossing the Mediterranean

The authors of the report say their findings mean that one in every 122 people on the planet was either a refugee, internally displaced or seeking asylum.

Meanwhile, new EU data shows that in the first quarter of 2015 Germany had the highest number of first-time applicants for asylum in Europe - 73,100, or 40% of the total (185,000).

Hungary received the second highest number - 32,800 (18%), [Eurostat reported](#).

The 185,000 total was similar to the last quarter of 2014, but compared with January-March 2014 it was an increase of 86%.

Asylum seekers from Kosovo were the biggest group - 48,900 (26%). Second were Syrians - 29,100 (16%). In many cases Kosovo migrants are considered to be escaping poverty and are not classed as genuine refugees.

The figures do not include the many migrants who have made previous asylum applications in the EU.