



27 March 2015 - The [UN refugee agency](#) (UNHCR) reported on Thursday that the [wars in Syria and Iraq](#) have been a major contributor to the number of asylum applications in industrialized countries last year which have increased by 45 percent from 2013. The [Asylum Trends 2014 report](#) puts the estimated number of new asylum applications lodged in industrialized countries throughout the year at 866,000, up from 596,600 claims in 2013.

The 2014 figure is the highest since 1992, at the beginning of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres has stated that "Our response has to be just as generous now as it was then – providing access to asylum, resettlement opportunities and other forms of protection."

Syrians were by far the largest group among those seeking asylum in 2014, with almost 150,000 applications - one in every five asylum claims in the industrialized world. Iraqis accounted for 68,700 applications, almost double the number in 2013. Afghans were the third

largest group, with almost 60,000 applications, followed by citizens of Serbia (and Kosovo) and Eritreans.

### Top 5 host countries

The net overall increase in asylum applications has not been spread evenly among the industrialized countries covered by the report. The top five receiving countries (Germany, the United States, Turkey, Sweden and Italy) for example, accounted for 60 per cent of all new asylum claims. Germany alone received more than 173,000 applications in 2014, a quarter of which were Syrians.

Relative to the size of its population, Sweden is the country with the largest number of asylum seekers (24.4 asylum seekers per 1,000 inhabitants on average, during the last five years), followed by Malta, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Montenegro.

### Asylum trends

Some countries registered a decrease, notably Australia, where numbers went down 24 per cent from 11,700 in 2013 to less than 9,000 in 2014.

The number of people applying for refugee status in industrialized countries is just one element in the global picture of forced displacement from conflict and persecution. Worldwide, by the start of last year, some 51.2 million individuals were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence or human rights violations. UNHCR's forthcoming Global Trends 2014 report, due in June 2015, will provide a complete picture of global displacement in 2014.

The Asylum Trends 2014 report and annex tables are available here:

- [Report](#)

- [Annexes](#) [Excel tables -zip file]

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