



Statistical Data on Iranian Asylum Seekers and Refugees in 2004

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) annual year-end statistics for 2004 the total number of people of concern to UNHCR rose to 19.2 million from 17 million the previous year. These include 9.2 million refugees, 676,440 asylum seekers, 1.5 million returned refugees, and 7.6 million internally displaced persons. In addition, some 4 million Palestinians were cared for by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Based on data received or estimated by UNHCR the number of **Iranian refugees** at the end of 2004 was estimated to be **115,126** of which 12,120 were assisted by the UNHCR. Another **15,519 Iranian asylum seekers** applied for asylum during 2004. The three countries that **received the largest numbers** of Iranian asylum seekers in 2004 were United Kingdom (3,975), Turkey (2,029), and Germany (1,369). The number of Iranians seeking asylum in previous years were 37,747 (2000), 23,600 (2001), 17,929 (2002), and 18,250 (2003).

Of the **24,666 decisions taken** on Iranian asylum applications in 2004, including cases from previous years, **some 4,806 resulted in refugee status**, 763 decisions resulted in humanitarian status, 15,395 cases were rejected, and 3,702 cases were closed on other grounds. At the end of 2004, some 9,534 Iranian asylum cases were pending .

When cases closed on other non-substantive grounds are excluded, the **global Convention recognition percentage** for Iranian asylum applicants during 2004 amounted to **22.9%**, whereas the total recognition percentage, including grants of **humanitarian status**, amounted to **26.6%**. The Convention recognition percentage for Iranian asylum applicants in previous years amounted to

38% (2000), 29% (2001), 28% (2002), and 27.1% (2003). The total recognition percentage, including grants of humanitarian status, amounted to 42% (2000), 34% (2001), 33% (2002), and 30.4% (2003).

Some examples of **first instance total recognition rates** (refugee & humanitarian) for Iranian applications in 2004 are: Canada (67.9%), France (25.8%), Germany (12.4%), Netherlands (33.5%), Sweden (6.9%), Turkey-UNHCR (53.3%), UK (8.6%), and USA-INS (54.4%).

Globally, a total number of 883,592 first instance or appeal applications for asylum or refugee status were submitted to Governments or UNHCR offices in 143 countries in 2004. Eight industrialized countries receiving most of the new asylum applications were France (58,500), the United Kingdom (40,200), Germany (35,600), the United States (27,900), South Africa (32,600), Canada (25,800), Austria (24,600), and Sweden (23,100). In total, the **global refugee recognition rate** amounted to **20.5%**. When asylum-seekers allowed to remain on **humanitarian grounds** are included, the recognition rate increases to **28.6%**. These rates were 24% & 36% in 2001, 22% & 30% in 2002, and 21.4% & 27.3% in 2003.

The ten largest number of asylum claims (new and appeal) in 2004 were filed by nationals from Russian Federation the Russian Federation (35,200), Serbia and Montenegro (30,900), China (29,000), Congo (28,700), Turkey (27,000), Iraq (23,500), Somalia (22,800), Colombia (20,200), Nigeria (18,300), **Iran (15,500)**, India (15,300), and Pakistan(15,300).

In 2004, of the 30,000 refugees resettled from previous asylum countries with UNHCR's assistance, 2,190 were **Iranians**. Some 690 Iranians were reported to have voluntarily returned to Iran from Iraq during this year.

SOURCES: UNHCR, 2004 Global Refugee Trends, 17, June 2005. For 1999-2003 figures see our previous statistics sheets.

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