



## Statistical Data on Iranian Asylum Seekers and Refugees in 2002

At the start of 2003 the number of people 'of concern' to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) was 20.6 million-roughly one out of every 300 persons on earth. These include about 10.4 million refugees, 1 million asylum seekers, 2.4 million returned refugees, and 5.8 million internally displaced persons. In addition, more than 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 2002 was estimated to be 99,530 of which 22,614 were assisted by the UNHCR. Another 17,929 **Iranian asylum seekers** applied for asylum during 2002. The three countries that received the largest numbers of **Iranian asylum seekers** in 2002 were United Kingdom (2,685), Germany (2,642), and Turkey (2,505). The number of Iranians seeking asylum in previous years were 19,560 (1999), 37,747 (2000), and 23,600 (2001).

Of the 22,964 asylum decisions taken on **Iranian** asylum applications in 2002, including cases from previous years, some 5,397 resulted in refugee status, 999 decisions resulted in humanitarian status, 12,747 cases were rejected, and 3,898 cases were closed on other grounds. At the end of 2002, some 11,350 Iranian asylum cases were pending in the procedures.

When cases closed on other, non-substantive grounds are excluded, the global Convention recognition percentage for **Iranian** asylum applicants during 2002 amounted to 28%, whereas the total recognition percentage, including grants of humanitarian status, amounted to 33%. The Convention recognition percentage for Iranian asylum applicants in previous years amounted to 36% (1999), 38% (2000), and 29% (2001). The total recognition percentage, including grants of humanitarian status, amounted to 41% (1999), 42% (2000) and 34% (2001).

Some examples of first instance total recognition rates (refugee & humanitarian) for **Iranian** applications in 2002 are: Canada (66%), France (13%), Germany (19%), Netherlands (8%), Sweden (15%), UK (20%), and USA-INS (62%).

**Globally**, asylum countries received more than one million new or reconsidered requests for refugee status from different nationalities in 2002. As in previous years, these requests represented only a small portion of the global refugee population. Seven industrialized countries receiving most of the asylum applications were United Kingdom (110,700), United States (81,000), Germany (71,100), France (50,800), Austria (37,100), Canada (33,400), and Sweden (33,000). In total, the global refugee recognition rate amounted to 22%. When asylum-seekers allowed to remain on humanitarian grounds are included, the recognition rate increases to 30%. These rates were 24% and 36% in 2001.

The ten largest countries of origin of asylum-seekers in 2002 were Iraq (59,329), Serbia and Montenegro (43,121), China (42,268), DR Congo (40,494), Turkey (39,375), Colombia (33,171), Eritrea (31,889), Afghanistan (31,533), Mexico (26,067) and the Russian Federation (25,020). **Iranian asylum seekers** (17,929) ranked fifteen.

In 2002 the number of **Iranian refugees** resettled in third countries amounted to 2,831. Of these 2,349 were resettled from Turkey, 314 from Iraq and 66 from Pakistan. Other main countries of origin of resettled refugees were Afghanistan (4,230), Sudan (3,040), Iraq (2,314), and Somalia (1,579).

SOURCES: UNHCR, REFUGEES BY NUMBERS 2003 & 2002 population statistics. For 1999-2001 figures see our 2001 statistics sheet.

---

### **Iranian Refugees' Alliance, Inc.**

---

Cooper Station PO Box 316 New York, NY 10276-0316 USA  
phone & fax: 212/260-7460 e-mail: irainc@irainc.org URL: <http://www.irainc.org>