

**CSPE**

# REFUGEE

**EDUCATION PACK**



**UNHCR IRELAND**



KURDISTAN  
XPG oû peshmarga  
Rojava





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# INTRODUCTION

This education pack is aimed at teachers who wish to familiarise their students with facts and information about refugees. Its goal is to better inform young people about the reasons people flee and their rights under the law.

The pack is designed for teachers of Civic, Social and Political Education, who are teaching students aged from 12 to 15. However, we hope it will serve as an easy-to-use teaching resource for secondary level students of all ages.

Teaching about refugee issues may require special sensitivity, especially where some students have a connection to the issue as refugees or migrants themselves. They may have experienced significant stress and grief because of their experiences, which teachers should be careful to consider in how they approach the subject.

Equally, it is important to take care not to present the issues covered in a way that primarily encourages pity and “othering” of refugee children. In planning lessons with the aid of this pack, we hope that it will assist you to engage your students to consider not only the traumatic and stressful experiences that many children face, but more importantly, to be empathetic and better understand the many things they have in common.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees works to protect people forced to flee their homes.

Established on December 14, 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly, the Agency strives to

ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another State, with the option to one day return home voluntarily, integrate locally or to resettle in a third country. It also has a mandate to help stateless people.

Since 1950, the Agency has helped tens of millions of people restart their lives and won the Nobel Peace Prize twice. Today, a staff of more than 9,300 people in 123 countries continues to help and protect millions of refugees, returnees, internally displaced and stateless people.

With a record number of people around the world forcibly displaced, those humanitarian needs are unlikely to disappear. War, conflict and persecution have forced more people than at any other time since records began to flee their homes and seek refuge and safety elsewhere. The number of people forcibly displaced at the end of 2014 rose to a staggering 59.5 million compared to 51.2 million a year earlier and 37.5 million a decade ago. Globally, one in every 122 humans is now either a refugee, internally displaced, or seeking asylum. If this were the population of a country, it would be the world's 24th biggest.

As well as serving as a teaching resource that explains these issues, we hope that students will come to see refugees as ordinary people forced to make extraordinary choices.

**Enda O'Neill, Head of Office, UNHCR Ireland**



## SECTION ONE

# Why Do People Flee

### AIM

To introduce students to the concept of asylum

At the end of this lesson, students will:

- Be able to explain who is a refugee
- Understand that the right to asylum is a basic human right
- Understand what rights refugees have under international law



Chadian gendarmes from the CNAR do body searching of newly arrived refugees from Darfur in Kounoungou camp, eastern Chad.



A father from Afghanistan tries to warm up his six month old baby after crossing the Aegean sea.

## Starting Off

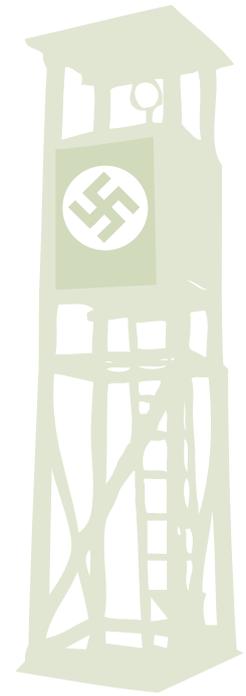


Explain that in the aftermath of World War II, the world's leaders set up the UN to promote international co-operation and preserve world peace. In 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which set out the rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled.

One of the rights was the right to asylum.

### Why asylum?

World War II left millions of people as refugees. Some, such as Alfred Einstein, had escaped from the Nazis before the war. Others were driven out by fighting. One of the UN's most urgent tasks was to help refugees return home or find a new one.



### Article 14 UDHR

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.



A family starts a new life in New Zealand in the 1950's after years in a German camp.



Albert Einstein in California. Einstein was a Jewish refugee who fled Nazi Germany in the 1930's. Image Source: flickr.com

## 1951 Refugee Convention

The 1951 Refugee Convention is the cornerstone of modern international refugee law. It clearly defines who is a refugee and the kind of legal protection, other assistance and social rights a refugee is entitled to.

The convention specifies that a person will qualify for refugee status only if he/she fears persecution 'for reason' of one or more of the five grounds listed in Article 1 of it (see below).

### Exercise



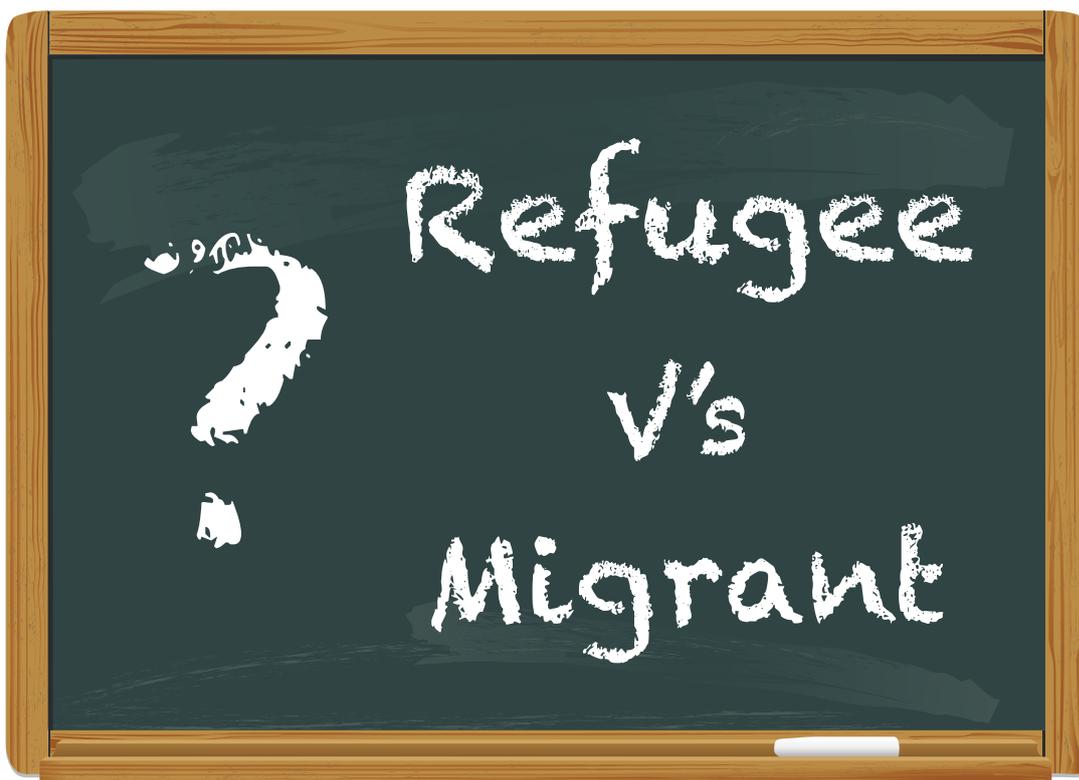
#### One

Write the word '**Refugee**' in the middle of the blackboard and ask the class to tell you what they think it means and discuss.

Once finished, use UNHCR's guideline on the use of the word '**Refugee**' and '**Migrant**' (see page 9) to discuss the difference. The booklet on the 1951 convention should also provide useful background material.

#### Two

Break the class into groups. Give each one a card with one of the five grounds listed in Article 1 of the 1951 Refugee Convention. Ask them to discuss what they think each one means and how someone could be discriminated on those grounds.



## The Five Grounds of Article 1A (2) of the 1951 Refugee Convention

### Race

Article 1 of the 1965 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination defines racial discrimination to include distinctions based on race colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. This broad meaning is a valid definition of race under the 1951 Convention.

### Religion

Freedom of religion is a fundamental human right. It includes the right to have or not to have a religion, to practice one's religion and to change religions. Freedom of religion includes the right to manifest the religion in public, or private, in teaching, practice, worship and observance. Religion under the 1951 Convention refers not only to established institutionalised religions; it also covers any belief system, defined by UNHCR as 'convictions or values about a divine or ultimate reality, or the spiritual destiny of mankind.'

### Nationality

Nationality as a ground for refugee status includes citizenship and also extends to groups of people defined through their real or perceived ethnic, religious, cultural or linguistic identity, regardless of whether this difference has been legally formalised.

### Membership of a particular social group

Social groups are often groups of people that have an unchangeable characteristic that makes them unique and can often mean they are singled out for persecution. This includes groups defined by their gender (male or female), their language and their sexual orientation. It can also include homosexuals and women subject to circumcision. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) places the percentage of the women in Somalia who have undergone this procedure at 90 percent.

### Political Opinion

In many countries, people are persecuted simply because they have a different political opinion to others. People do not have to belong to a political party to be persecuted or have a high profile, as people can often be persecuted against just because persecutors perceive them to be different and wish to target them.



## Who is an asylum-seeker?

Asylum-seekers are people seeking protection as refugees, who are waiting for the government to decide on their applications. These people are entitled to stay in the state unless their application to be considered as a refugee is rejected. They also have a right to a fair hearing of that application and to an appeal if necessary.

## Who is a refugee?

International law defines refugees as people who are outside their country of origin and whose life and, or human rights are seriously at risk because of who they are (e.g. their race, nationality, social group) or what they believe (e.g. their religious beliefs or political opinion); and their governments will not or cannot protect them. Refugees are entitled to be protected against forcible return to their countries of origin.

## Refugees, migrants, is there a difference

The terms 'refugee' and 'migrant' are increasingly being used, and often interchangeably, in both the media and within public discourse. However, the terms 'refugee' and 'migrant' are different terms covering quite different things and should not be confused. The fundamental difference between a refugee and a migrant is the choice to move. Refugees are persons who are forced to flee due to armed conflict, human rights violations and persecution and who are in need of international protection. Migrants on the other hand, choose to move, not out of a direct threat or fear of persecution but mainly for a variety of socio-economic reasons such as better job opportunities or to alleviate hardships such as living in poverty. Migrants, therefore, move for reasons that are outside of those provided within the legal definition of a refugee.

## Fictional profiles of a refugee and a migrant

**Sing** is a 25 year old father of two from a country in South East Asia. He works as a fisherman and earns a low wage for his work. As a result, Sing and his family live in poor conditions and struggle to get by on a daily basis. Sing decides to pay people smugglers for assistance to travel to Europe in order to seek better work and living conditions.

**Abu** is a 40 year old South-Sudanese man who is a member of one of South-Sudan's ethnic minorities groups, fighting erupted in Abu's home town and civilians were being targeted and killed on the basis of their ethnicity. In fear of his life, Abu and his family fled for safety to neighbouring Ethiopia, fearing that he would be targeted if he remained in his home town.

## Exercise



After reading the fictional profiles ask the students the following question:

### Question for students

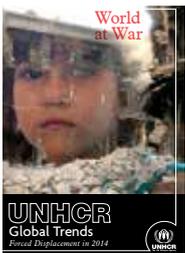
After reading these fictional profiles above, who can be considered a refugee and who can be considered a migrant? Provide two reasons for reaching your conclusion in each case.

## Resources



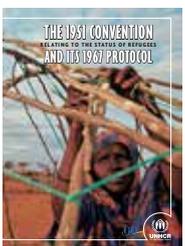
### 'Refugees' and Migrants Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Link:** [www.unhcr.ie/news/irish-story/refugees-and-migrants-frequently-asked-questions-faqs](http://www.unhcr.ie/news/irish-story/refugees-and-migrants-frequently-asked-questions-faqs)



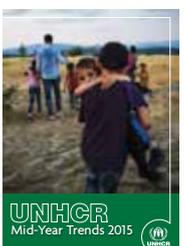
### Global Trends 2014

**Link:** [www.unhcr.org/556725e69.html](http://www.unhcr.org/556725e69.html)



### 1951 convention and its protocol

**Link:** [www.unhcr.org/4ec262df9.pdf](http://www.unhcr.org/4ec262df9.pdf)



### Mid-Year Trends 2015

**Link:** [www.unhcr.org/56701b969.html](http://www.unhcr.org/56701b969.html)

## SECTION TWO

# Routes To Safety

# 2

### AIM

To help students understand:

- The reasons that force refugees to flee their homes
- Why refugees are arriving in Europe
- The risks refugees take in the Sahara, Mediterranean and around the world.



A young boy from Iraq sits on his father's shoulders while crossing the border from Greece into the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.



Syrian Kurdish refugees take a ferry from Lesbos to Athens.

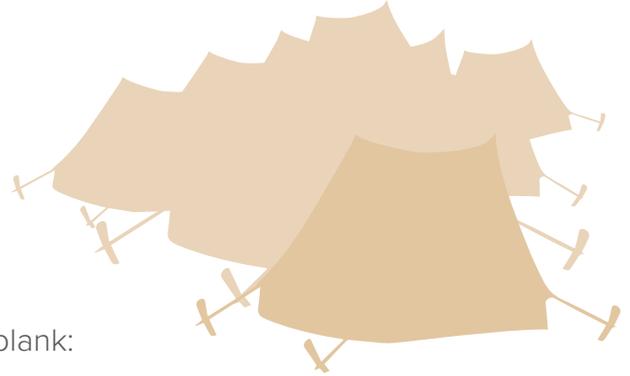
## Starting Off



Get the students to take part in a quiz by either answering the following questions put to them by their teacher or by filling in the blanks. Provide the students with the 2014 Global Trends fact sheets provided for assistance.

# 12 MILLION

Refugees & asylum seekers  
are living in makeshift  
accommodation worldwide



## Quiz Time



Answer the following questions, the underlined should be blank:

- Q1:** According to the United Nations, 59.5 million people are forcibly displaced around the world. During 2014, an average of 42,500 people per day were forced to leave their homes and seek protection elsewhere
- Q2:** True or False: The majority of the world's refugees live in wealthy countries?  
(The answer is false: 86% of refugees live in developing regions)
- Q3:** Syria is the world's top source country of refugees
- Q4:** Turkey is the world's biggest refugee hosting country
- Q5:** 86% of the world's refugees live in developing countries
- Q6:** What six countries host the most refugees?  
(Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran, Ethiopia and Jordan)
- Q7:** **True or False:** Over 50% of refugees are children?  
(The answer is true. 51% of refugees are under 18 years of age)
- Q8:** **True or False:** Refugees are people who have crossed into another country to seek safety from persecution? (The answer is true: A refugee is someone who is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country)

**Film Clip**

Show the students the following 4 minute film:

**FILM 1: Global Trends 2014: World at War**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Rf-K2DWoWY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Rf-K2DWoWY)

**This film shows:**

- The number of forcibly displaced is at a record high
- What countries people are fleeing from
- What countries are the largest refugee hosting nations

Ask the students, does their opinion of refugees differ at the end of the class than from the beginning?

**FILM 2: Adal's Journey**

[www.tellingtherealstory.org/stories/adal/](http://www.tellingtherealstory.org/stories/adal/)

**This film shows:**

- A first-hand account of the journey taken by an Eritrean refugee to Europe
- An insight into the dangerous journeys that refugees often face when having to flee their homelands

**Exercise**

Now that students have learned more about the lives refugees live, ask them to carry out the following activity:

**FORCED TO  
FLEE**

**Forced displacement explains what happens when people are forced against their will to move away from their home or home region.**

### Step One

Tell the students that they are being forced to flee their house and community. They have two minutes to gather their belongings and will most likely not be able to return.

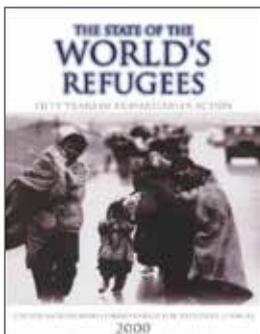
### Step Two

Use the two minutes to brainstorm what they would bring with them. Students can write, draw or paint their ideas.

### Step Three

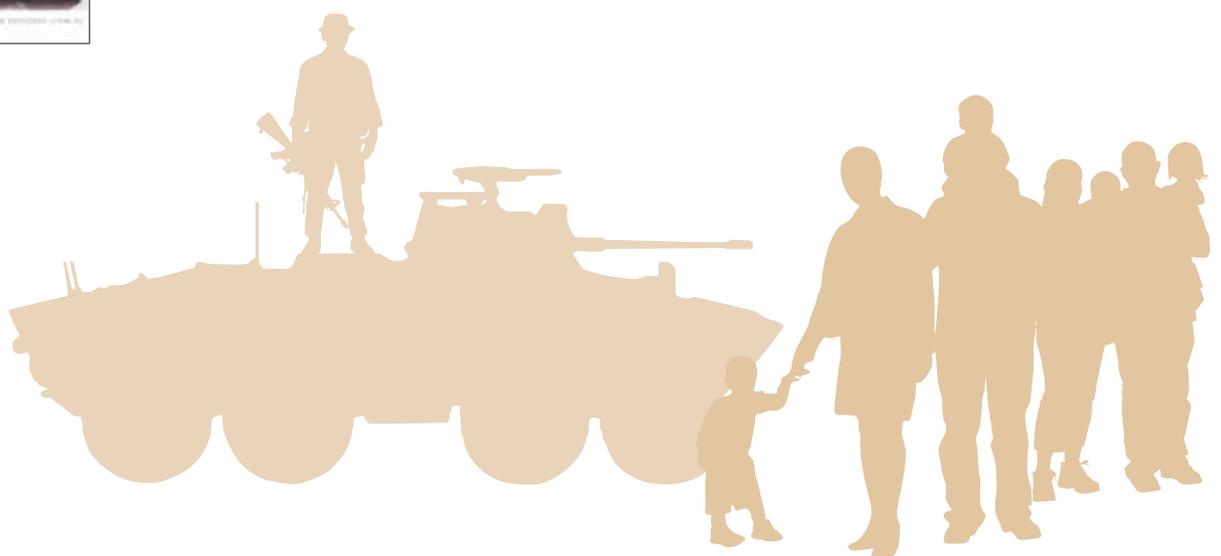
1. What did they take with them?
2. What did they think they would need?
3. Did they think of taking their identity documents?
4. If they did not bring their identity document, how can they prove who they are?

## Resources



### **The State of The World's refugees 2000: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action**

**Link:** [www.unhcr.org/4a4c754a9.html](http://www.unhcr.org/4a4c754a9.html)



## SECTION THREE

# What Does UNHCR Do To Help Refugees?

# 3

### AIM

- Explain how UNHCR makes a difference to refugee lives
- Explains UNHCR's primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees
- Understand the three solutions open to refugees where UNHCR can help:
  - Voluntary repatriation
  - Local integration
  - Resettlement to a third country



Airlift to Liberia, a UNHCR truck before its upload to a cargo plane in Germany in 2011.



A UNHCR staff member carries a dehydrated baby to receive help at Moria Camp, Lesvos, Greece.

## Starting Off



Start by explaining that UNHCR was established on 14 December 1950. It had a temporary mandate when it was first established. However in 2003 the United Nations General Assembly removed the time limitation on the continuation of the Office “until the refugee problem is solved.”

By 1956 UNHCR was facing its first major emergency, the outpouring of refugees when Soviet forces crushed the Hungarian Revolution. Any expectation that UNHCR would become unnecessary has never resurfaced. In the 1960s, the decolonization of Africa produced the first of that continent’s numerous refugee crises needing UNHCR intervention. Over the following two decades, UNHCR had to help with displacement crises in Asia and Latin America. By the end of the century there were fresh refugee problems in Africa and, turning full circle, new waves of refugees in Europe from the series of wars in the Balkans.



Syrian woman in a tent for mothers and children under the care of UNICEF at the Vinojug Reception Centre.

UNHCR provides assistance to those who have been forced to flee their homes and seek safety elsewhere, whether in another part of their own country or abroad. UNHCR

provides vital lifesaving aid such as emergency shelter, blankets, clean water, food and sanitation services to refugees and asylum seekers. UNHCR also provides assistance in the form of refugee registration and helping asylum seekers with their asylum applications. UNHCR and partner organisations also provide benefits such as small loans and agricultural assistance to those who have registered themselves as refugees.

UNHCR provides assistance to individuals who wish to be reunited with family members, a process called family reunification. The work of UNHCR also extends beyond providing immediate emergency assistance to refugees and includes assisting people who wish to return home to do so. UNHCR facilitates this by providing funding for transportation and reintegration programmes in the refugees home country.

As an emergency measure, UNHCR establishes and coordinates the running of refugee camps. Refugee camps are used to house, process and care for refugees. They provide a variety of medical, educational and social supports to people who have fled their homelands. Refugee camps can vary in size from a few hundred people to several hundred thousand. Dadaab Camp in Kenya is the biggest refugee camp in the world, with over 330,000 people currently living there.

## Exercise



There are three solutions open to refugees where UNHCR can help: voluntary repatriation; local integration; or resettlement to a third country in situations where it is impossible for a person to go back home or remain in the host country. UNHCR helps achieve one or other of these durable solutions for refugees around the world every year.

With that in mind, draw a table on the board with the following three headings:

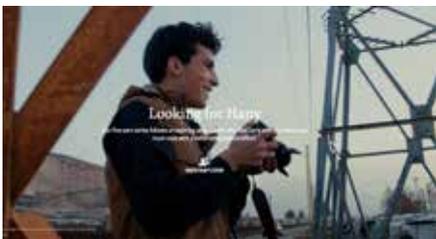
Voluntary Repatriation	Local Integration	Resettlement

Ask the class to suggest what each of these mean and how they help refugees to find solutions to the challenges they face.

## Film Clip



Continue by showing the students the following short films:



### Film 1: Looking for Hany

**Link:** <http://tracks.unhcr.org/2015/09/looking-for-hany/>



### Film 2: The UN Refugee Agency – Our Story

**Link:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ymxq7D2DfA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ymxq7D2DfA)

**Resources**

**More information on UNHCR's history can be found here:**

**Link:** [www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cbc.html](http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cbc.html)



**More information on UNHCR's 3 durable solution can be found here**

**Link:** [www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cf8.html](http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cf8.html)



## SECTION FOUR

# Life as a child refugee



### AIM

At the end of this lesson, students will be expected to:

- Compare and contrast their lives with refugee children
- Understand the abnormal and trying conditions in which refugee children and teenagers live



Syrian refugee girls playing in Tabanovce, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.



Syrian refugees arrive on the island of Lesbos after traveling in an inflatable raft from Turkey, near Skala Sykaminias, Greece.

## Starting Off



### Child Refugees

UNHCR estimates that approximately half of the 60 million displaced persons worldwide are children under the age of 18. Refugee children are at a much greater risk than adults of abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, trafficking or forced recruitment into armed groups. During the last decade, at least 200,000 young people have participated in wars in different parts of the world. Sometimes children and teenagers are forced to become soldiers. They might be removed from their schools or abducted from their villages. Often children join up with a military group when their villages and homes have been destroyed, or when family members and friends are soldiers. It may seem better to become a soldier than to remain frightened and helpless. Some children join so that they will receive food, clothing and shelter. It is a tragedy that some children must learn to kill others in order to survive themselves.

Some children face additional risks such as fleeing alone or finding themselves separated from their families during often long and dangerous journeys. Girls in particular face particular gender-based protection risks. As many refugee children spend lengthy periods in displacement, disruption in their ability to attend school and to receive an education is not uncommon. This disruption to the lives of child refugees combined with their specific protection risks means it is vital that their specific needs are met, especially with regards to education and safe spaces in which to play and rest.

## Eyewitness Interview



Ask students to read the following interview with an Iranian refugee in Ireland. Link here:



**Link: [www.unhcr.ie/news/irish-story/i-was-14-and-kind-of-lost-an-unaccompanied-minors-journey-from-iran-to-find](http://www.unhcr.ie/news/irish-story/i-was-14-and-kind-of-lost-an-unaccompanied-minors-journey-from-iran-to-find)**

After reading it, ask students to look at the two discussion topics.

1. **What opportunities do you have that refugee children do not?**
2. **What threats do refugee children face in their day to day lives?**

**Film Clip**

Continue by showing the students the following short videos

**Aya | Age 8**

**Link:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjN28GraSPQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjN28GraSPQ)

**Emmanuel | Age 16**

**Link:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjN-](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjN-)

**Syrian Girls Football Team**

**Link:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8ZY-](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8ZY-)

- What are the student's reactions after watching the movies?
- What do the students think are the most difficult parts of being a refugee?
- Ask the students what they have in common with any of the refugees in the three films.

**Did you know**

Did you know that International Popstar Rita Ora was a child refugee? In the following video, Rita discusses how her family were forced to flee Kosovo during the disintegration of Yugoslavia and what life was like growing up as a refugee in London.

**Rita Ora: A refugee from Kosovo**

**Link:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGakXoUVoZs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGakXoUVoZs)

## Exercise



### Exercise 1: My life as a refugee app.

Ask students to select one of the 3 characters and play the game!

<http://mylifeasarefugee.org/game.html>



### Exercise 2: Design a Poster

Ask your class to break into small groups. Ask each group to select a particular region in the world (e.g. Middle East/North Africa, Central America, East Africa etc.) and to design a poster which includes facts and figures about the conflict/issues forcing people to flee and the challenges that these refugees face as a result of having to flee (e.g. living in a refugee camp, the need for medical attention, education etc).



## Resources



## Children

Approximately half of the 60 Million displaced persons worldwide are children under the age of 18.

### Children



**You can find more information on the protection and plight of child refugees here:**

**Link:** [www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c1e8.html](http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c1e8.html)



## SECTION FIVE

# Stateless People



### AIM

At the end of this session, students will be able to discuss the concept of stateless people, the ways in which someone can become stateless and the effects that this can have on people's lives.

Discussion Topics:

- What are the main differences between stateless people and refugees?
- What are the main challenges that stateless people face?



An ethnic Akha, Thida Arngee was stateless until she obtained Thai nationality four years ago.



Zairdjan, 59, and his wife, Saliya, 55, live in Kyrgyzstan. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, both are stateless and cannot get pensions.

## Starting Off



A stateless person is someone who is not a nationality of any country. Some people are born stateless, while others become stateless over the course of their lives. There are many reasons for this.

Many end up on the wrong side of redrawn borders. Statelessness due to the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union continues to affect over 600,000 people. For example, Montenegro, which was formerly part of the Yugoslav federation, has approximately 3,300 registered stateless people, while Estonia and Latvia have some 88,000 and 262,000 stateless people respectively. Others inherit it from their parents, unable to become citizens despite having deep-rooted and longstanding ties to their communities and countries. Others have become stateless due to administrative obstacles; they simply fall through the cracks of a system that ignores or has forgotten them.

## Film Clip



Continue by showing the students the following short videos



**#IBelong – “The One Thing I Need To Achieve My Dream Is Citizenship” - Jirair, Georgia**

**Link:** <https://youtu.be/nliM353Tull>



**Living as a Stateless Person:**

**Link:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjHuYq-YVYk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjHuYq-YVYk)

## Who is stateless

While the exact number of stateless people is not known, UNHCR estimates that at least 10 million people worldwide have no nationality. Approximately one third of these are children.

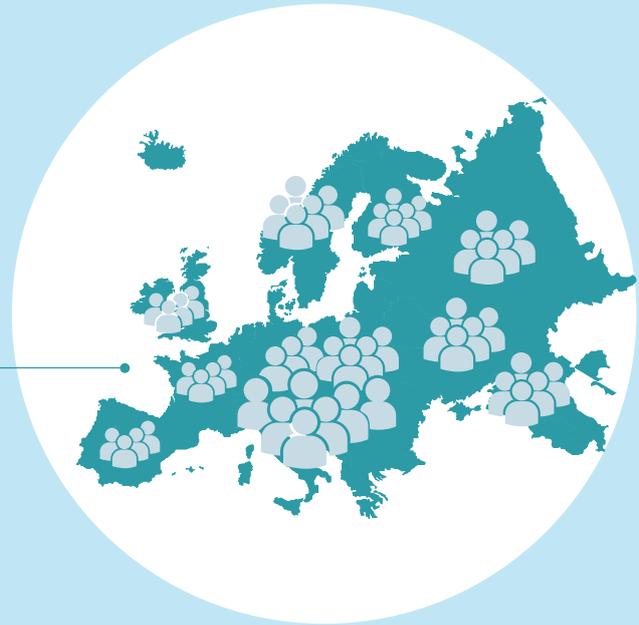
In the former Soviet Union, over 600,000 remain stateless. In Myanmar, 800,000 Muslim Romyingha have been denied citizenship under the country's 1982 citizenship law. As a result, their freedom of movement, religion and education is severely curtailed.

## Did you know



### There are millions of stateless persons in the world

In Europe alone over 600,000 stateless persons who cannot enjoy the benefits that come with a nationality



### Many children are born stateless

Children born to parents who are stateless themselves, often inherit their parents' lack of nationality. In this way the problem of statelessness is being transmitted to future generations



### Being stateless can prevent someone from accessing their rights

Stateless persons often face restrictions on their enjoyment of basic human rights like:

- Education
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Employment
- Marriage
- Travel



## What is Nationality?

Nationality is a legal bond between a person and a State. Nationality provides people with a sense of identity but, more importantly, enables them to exercise a wide range of rights. The lack of any nationality, known as statelessness, can therefore be harmful, in some cases devastating to the lives of the individuals concerned.

### Stateless Syrians

Many Syrian refugees are now finding themselves stateless.

Young children born outside Syria are not able to acquire birth certificates which prove they are Syrian nationals. Under Syrian law, mothers can not pass down nationality, which means if their father has died they cannot acquire documentation.

UNHCR research indicates that 70 per cent of Syrian children born in Lebanon are without an official birth certificate. UNHCR is working with governments to help resolve the issue.



### Article 15

Article 15 of the declaration of Human Rights affirms that “everyone has the right to a nationality”. With these words, the international community recognized that every individual, everywhere in the world should hold a legal bond of nationality with a state. In other words, international law says clearly that statelessness should be avoided.

## Film Clip



Continue by showing the students the following short video

**I Am A Normal Human Being” -  
Artee, Thailand 1 min 44**

**Link:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Cjst7DIM04&index=2&list=PLtPw-Y91GImVCipdhJgNZ4fToggradSlj](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Cjst7DIM04&index=2&list=PLtPw-Y91GImVCipdhJgNZ4fToggradSlj)

## Exercise



Ask the class to list 6 ways in which being stateless would affect their lives.

1. Passport
2. Holidays
3. Insurance
4. Healthcare
5. Bank Account
6. Online shopping
7. Access to Education
8. Marriage
9. Driving



## Discussion



Imagine you are going on a school skiing trip in the French Alps. Everyone has planned for months to go and visit the snowy mountains to learn how to ski and have a break before their final exams. What are some of the difficulties that someone who is stateless would have in going on this trip? Say for example, they wanted to begin by getting a passport.

A stateless person may not even have a birth certificate in the first place to do so. Besides, what nationality would they put on the passport? If they wanted to pay for the trip they might want to get a weekend job again, this wouldn't be possible as they may have no PPS number, bank account or permanent address.

Being stateless brings up a number of challenges on a daily basis with aspects of life that many people may take completely for granted.

**Ask the class to talk about some of their favourite hobbies, pastimes or interests. Write them on the board and then ask the class for ways in which being stateless may affect how they do these things.**



## SECTION SIX

# Irish History of Welcoming Refugees



### AIM

At the end of this lesson, students will be expected to:

- Have a good knowledge of Ireland's history of receiving refugees
- Understand the various reasons that have forced people to flee their homes and eventually come to Ireland



UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon meeting refugees in Farmleigh House, Dublin, in 2015.



Lord Mayor of Dublin Christy Burke with the Irish Vietnamese community at the 2015 World Refugee Day Fair Play Football Cup

## Starting Off



- Are the class aware of any refugees living in Ireland?
- Have they ever met someone who is, or has been, a refugee or asylum seeker?
- Do you know any landmarks in your area named after refugees?

## Background Information and Examples

Ireland has a long and proud history of providing assistance to people in need of refuge. Refugee resettlement programmes have been in place since WW1 when Ireland took in over 2,000 Belgians fleeing the invading German army. More recently, in 2014, Ireland welcomed 80 Syrians fleeing the civil war that has destroyed life in their home country. Below are some more examples of the ways in which Ireland has provided humanitarian assistance to those fleeing war and persecution over the last 100 years:

### Huguenots

Many Huguenots fled France in the 17th century in an attempt to escape religious persecution. If caught, these protestant men were sent to be galley slaves and the women were imprisoned until they agreed to convert. The refugees went mainly to neighbouring states such as Holland, Switzerland, Germany and Great Britain, as well as around 5,000 who came to Ireland. 'D'Olier Street in Dublin, named after a Huguenot goldsmith, is one of the many landmarks that commemorate their legacy in Ireland.

### Pallatines

In September 1709, almost 3,000 Palatines were relocated to rural Ireland from London, having fled their adopted homelands in Germany due to harsh conditions and the many wars in the region. Over the following three years, more than two thirds of the Irish Palatine settlers left Ireland and returned to England and Germany.

## Did YOU know?

Did you know, 12 of **Cork's Lord Mayors** were either refugees or the descendants of refugees?



## Belgians

Some 2,300 Belgians made their way to Ireland after the beginning of World War I in 1914. They were spread out across the country in a wide variety of towns and localities. Read about the the Monaghan lingerie factory that 3 Belgian refugees helped build

[www.unhcr.ie/news/irish-story/the-monaghan-lingerie-factory-that-3-belgian-refugees-helped-build](http://www.unhcr.ie/news/irish-story/the-monaghan-lingerie-factory-that-3-belgian-refugees-helped-build)

## Kurdish

Clashes between government forces and rebels forced millions of people to flee their homes in South Sudan. Many ended up in neighbouring countries such as Ethiopia and Uganda, from where a small group were resettled to Kilkenny in 2008.

## Hungarians

In 1956, shortly after the Hungarian uprising, the Irish government granted asylum to 541 Hungarian refugees when the Soviet army invaded the country. The arrival of the Hungarians marked Ireland's first participation in the UN refugee program. Read or listen to an interview with Olga Murphy, a Hungarian refugee in Limerick, here:

**Link:** [www.unhcr.ie/world-refugee-day/1950s-olga-murphy-from-hungary](http://www.unhcr.ie/world-refugee-day/1950s-olga-murphy-from-hungary)

and here:

**Link:** <https://soundcloud.com/oconnellbrian/from-revolution-to-refuge-olga-murphys-story>



This picture appeared in 'Limerick: A Stroll Down Memory Lane, Vol 6 and shows these young Hungarians happy to be away from their war torn country.

## Vietnamese

212 refugees from Vietnam arrived in Ireland in September 1979. At first they were accommodated in Red Cross centres in Blanchardstown and Swords, and over time settled in to new communities, mostly in Dublin. At present there are over 1,500 Vietnamese still living in the country and the Vietnamese community is seen as well established in Irish society.

## Ban Ki Moon

UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon met with refugees resettled to Ireland in May 2015 at a special event in Farmleigh House, Dublin. He said:

“You may be aware that I was a child during the Korean war. One of my earliest memories is fleeing with my family into the hills surrounding my village. As we climbed in the rain, I looked back on the only world I knew: where I had played, where I had gone to school, where I had lived with my family; all of it was in flames. Our lives went up in smoke.

I know at least some measure of what you are going through.

Despite the hardships, despite the darkness, I came through it. Today, I carry a simple message: The world is with you, and I am with you.”

## Irish Navy

More recently, Ireland has contributed the use of its Naval ships the **LÉ Eithne**, **LE Niamh** and the **LÉ Samuel Beckett** to the search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean Sea. These ships and their crew undertake daring missions in order to seek out and rescue people who are trying to cross the sea in order to live in Europe. Many of these people come from places where war and oppression have made it impossible for them to continue their lives.



Irish Naval vessel LÉ Niamh has taken part in search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean to save refugees

## Exercise



- Do you know a refugee living near you? Invite them to come to class and speak about their experiences.
- Does your local area have any Huguenot landmarks?
- Did your community receive Belgian, Vietnamese or Bosnian refugees?

With the help of your teacher, research what the history of your area says about refugees.

## Resources



### RTE Radio History Show on the Belgian refugees that arrived in Ireland during the First World War.

**Link:** [www.rte.ie/centuryireland/index.php/watch/rte-the-history-show-belgian-refugees-in-ireland](http://www.rte.ie/centuryireland/index.php/watch/rte-the-history-show-belgian-refugees-in-ireland)



### RTE also examined how they had fit in to Irish society 10 years after arriving.

**Link:** [www.rte.ie/archives/exhibitions/1665-immigration/370205-vietnamese-refugees-in-ireland/](http://www.rte.ie/archives/exhibitions/1665-immigration/370205-vietnamese-refugees-in-ireland/)



Karen refugee, Paw Sha Tee in her traditional Karen farming clothes tending to her plants in her new back garden in Castlebar, Co Mayo.



Ireland: Resettled Karen refugee Sa Nga with his wife Wau Dey and their son.

# 2014 IN REVIEW

## Trends at a glance

Global forced displacement has seen accelerated growth in 2014, once again reaching unprecedented levels. The year saw the highest displacement on record. By end-2014, 59.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations. This is 8.3 million persons more than the year before (51.2 million) and the highest annual increase in a single year.

13.9 million

An estimated 13.9 million individuals were **newly displaced due to conflict or persecution** in 2014. This includes 11.0 million persons newly displaced within the borders of their own country, the highest figure on record.<sup>(1)</sup> The other 2.9 million individuals were new refugees.

42,500

The number of individuals **forced to leave their homes per day due to conflict and persecution** increased four-fold in four years. During 2014, conflict and persecution forced an average of 42,500 individuals per day to leave their homes and seek protection elsewhere, either within the borders of their own country or in other countries. This compares to 32,200 in 2013, 23,400 in 2012, 14,200 in 2011, and 10,900 in 2010.

1. Turkey (1.59 million)
2. Pakistan (1.51 million)
3. Lebanon (1.15 million)
4. Islamic Republic of Iran (982,000)
5. Ethiopia (659,500)
6. Jordan (654,100)

Top  
hosts

For the first time, Turkey became the **largest refugee-hosting country worldwide**, with 1.59 million refugees. Turkey was followed by Pakistan (1.51 million), Lebanon (1.15 million), the Islamic Republic of Iran (982,000), Ethiopia (659,500), and Jordan (654,100).

59.5 million  
forcibly displaced worldwide

If these 59.5 million persons were a nation, they would make up the 24<sup>th</sup> largest in the world.

19.5 million refugees

38.2 million internally displaced persons<sup>(2)</sup>

1.8 million asylum-seekers

14.4 million under UNHCR's mandate

5.1 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA

10 million

**Statelessness** is estimated to have affected at least 10 million persons in 2014. However, data captured by governments and communicated to UNHCR were limited to 3.5 million stateless individuals in 77 countries.

86%

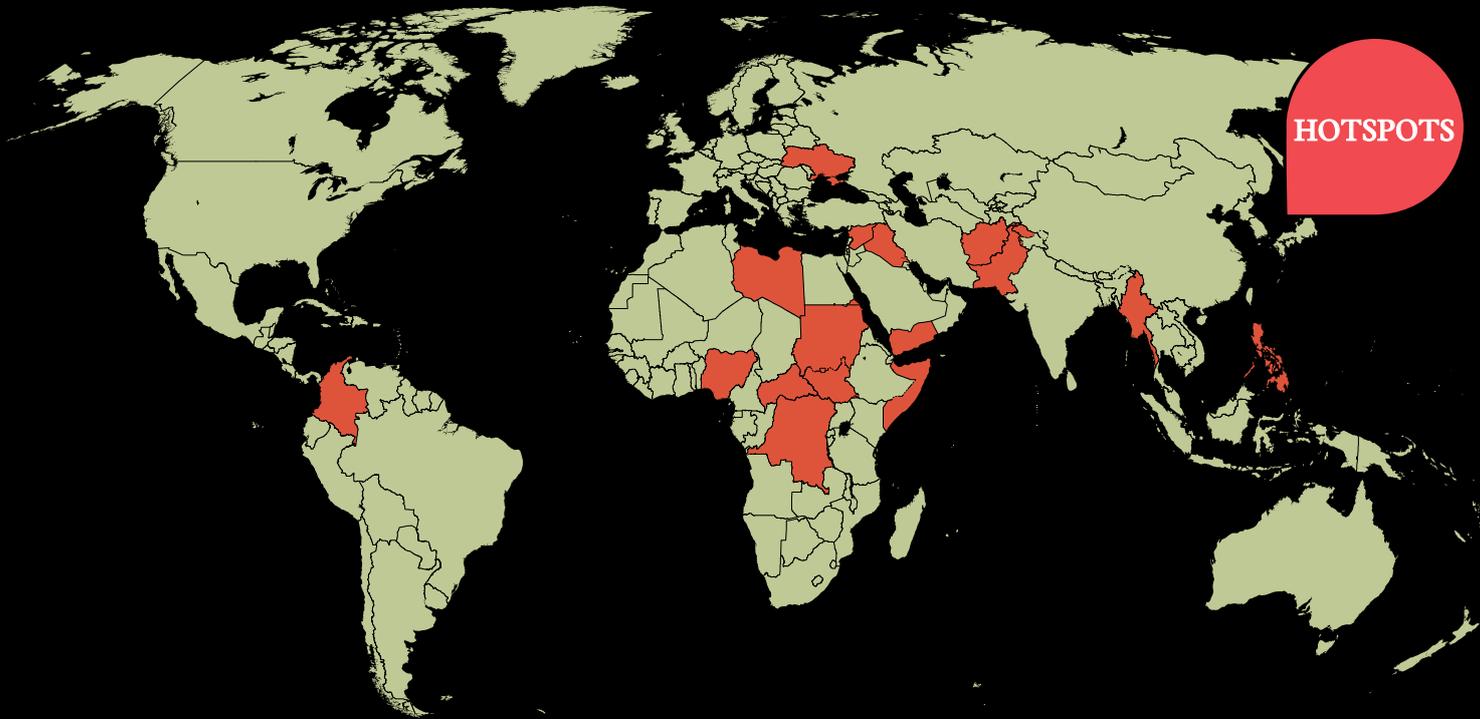
**Developing regions** hosted 86 per cent of the world's refugees – at 12.4 million persons, the highest value in more than two decades. The Least Developed Countries provided asylum to 3.6 million refugees or 25 per cent of the global total.

5.9 million

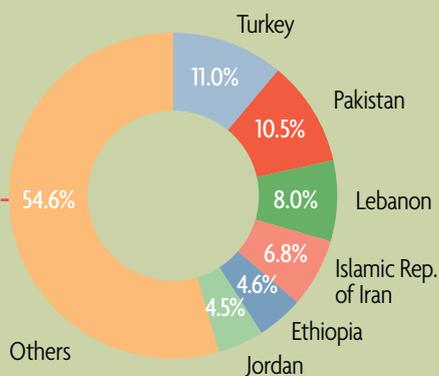
More than 5.9 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate (42%) resided in countries where the **GDP per capita was below USD 5,000**.

(1) Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

(2) Ibid.



See Annex Table 2 for detailed notes.



126,800

Over the course of 2014, 126,800 refugees returned to their countries of origin. Half of these returned to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (25,200), Mali (21,000), or Afghanistan (17,800). This figure was the lowest level of refugee returns since 1983.

“ We are witnessing a paradigm change, an unchecked slide into an era in which the scale of global forced displacement as well as the response required is now clearly dwarfing anything seen before. ”

ANTÓNIO GUTERRES,  
UN HIGH COMMISSIONER  
FOR REFUGEES

232/1000

Lebanon hosted the largest number of refugees in relation to its national population, with 232 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants. Jordan (87) and Nauru (39) ranked second and third, respectively.

1.7 million

A record high of nearly 1.7 million individuals submitted applications for asylum or refugee status in 2014. UNHCR offices registered 245,700 or 15 per cent of these claims. With 274,700 asylum claims, the Russian Federation was the world's largest recipient of new individual applications, followed by Germany (173,100), the United States of America (121,200), and Turkey (87,800).

34,300

Some 34,300 asylum applications were lodged by unaccompanied or separated children in 82 countries in 2014, mostly by Afghan, Eritrean, Syrian, and Somali children. This was the highest number on record since UNHCR started collecting such data in 2006.

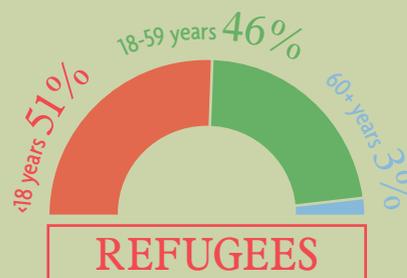
Top origins

1. Syrian Arab Republic (3.88 million)
2. Afghanistan (2.59 million)
3. Somalia (1.11 million)

More than half (53%) of all refugees worldwide came from just three countries: the Syrian Arab Republic (3.88 million), Afghanistan (2.59 million), and Somalia (1.11 million).

26 countries

During the year, UNHCR submitted 103,800 refugees to States for resettlement. According to government statistics, 26 countries admitted 105,200 refugees for resettlement during 2014 (with or without UNHCR's assistance). The United States of America admitted the highest number (73,000).



Children below 18 years of age constituted 51 per cent of the refugee population in 2014, up from 41 per cent in 2009 and the highest figure in more than a decade.

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**UNHCR** IRELAND



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency