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# 1.4. Global developments on statelessness

## 1.4. Global developments on statelessness

The issue of statelessness continued to receive attention by the international community, as millions of stateless people continued to find themselves in particularly precarious situations. UNHCR reported that in June 2023 an estimated 4.4 million people were stateless or of undetermined nationality, based on statistics shared by governments and other sources in 97 countries.40 The number is likely to be much higher as about one-half of all countries do not report data on statelessness, including countries with known stateless populations.

An issue of great relevance in the context of asylum, statelessness has been firmly embedded in the Global Compact on Refugees in an effort to improve the protection of stateless people. At the Global Refugee Forum in December 2023, a multistakeholder pledge was announced to prevent and reduce statelessness.41

To build on the advances made by the #IBelong campaign, the Global Alliance to End Statelessness aims to accelerate solutions to statelessness by 2030. The new initiative brings together stateless and formerly stateless people, civil society organisations, academic institutions, faith-based organisations, the UN and other international entities. The alliance, which will be officially launched at the end of 2024, will serve as a platform to increase collective advocacy efforts and catalyse political commitments to address statelessness.42

Reflecting on their participation in the Global Refugee Forum, the European Network on Statelessness (ENS) offered five key observations and recommendations on how the international community can enhance action to address statelessness, which include:

- Increasing UNHCR programmes, resources and prioritisation on statelessness;
- Mainstreaming statelessness as a cross-cutting issue in the discourse on international protection;
- Adequately supporting and profiling the launch of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness;
- Ensuring sufficient resources in programmes and supporting activities of the Global Alliance; and
- Including civil society organisations when discussing solutions, especially people with lived experience with statelessness.43

In line with its mandate to prevent and reduce statelessness, in March 2023 UNHCR issued its annual background note on gender equality, nationality laws and statelessness. The note

presented law reforms and initiatives at the regional level to promote gender equality in nationality matters, offered information on progress made since the beginning of the #IBelong Campaign, and provided an overview of nationality laws which do not grant women equality with men in conferring nationality to their children.44

As effective responses are contingent on accurate analytics, the availability of relevant statistics is of utmost importance. In 2023, the UN Statistical Commission endorsed the International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS), which were developed by the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS). To strengthen globally-consolidated data, the recommendations provide guidance on how to better include stateless persons in national statistical systems and improve official statistics.45

- 40United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2023). *Mid-Year Trends 2023*.
- 41United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2024). *Global Compact on Refugees - Multistakeholder Pledge: Ending Statelessness*.
- 42United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2024). *The New Global Alliance to End Statelessness*.
- 43European Network on Statelessness. (2024, January 9). *New Year's resolutions – five ways the international community can and must do more to address statelessness*.
- 44United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (March 2023). *Background note on gender equality, nationality laws and statelessness 2023*.
- 45Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics. (2023, July 14). *International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS)*.

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