



9 July 2014 - The number of refugees in the EU is at an all time high, [over 50 million people](#) , even [more than during World War Two](#)

The yearly report by the European Asylum Support Office ([EASO](#)), The [Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union](#) 2013, was [just released](#)

. It focuses on three asylum flows that underline the very different characteristics of asylum applicants in the EU: Syria, Russian Federation and Western Balkans countries. In 2013 in total, 435,760 persons applied for international protection in the European Union - an increase of 30% compared to 2012.

This flow of refugees is just those at the European Union's borders, worldwide the flow of refugees is even higher. Some conflict areas which have seen a flare up of violence, such as Syria, are seeing 100,000 people a month leave their homes in search of safety elsewhere,

often in neighbouring developing countries. To put this in perspective, about [100,000 Syrian refugees](#) in total have declared asylum in Europe since the beginning of the conflict almost four years ago.

While much of the discussion around refugees and asylum seekers focuses on the impact on the EU, taking a broader perspective shows an even larger issue. 86% of all



refugees live in developing states and are displaced due to one of the many conflicts happening in the world today. As such a large number of people flee their homes and seek to settle elsewhere, the basic necessities of food and water cannot be assured, and they are running out of food...fast.

Worst hit have been refugees in [Chad](#) , Central African Republic ([CAR](#)) and [South Sudan](#) where a total of nearly half a million refugees are experiencing ration cuts of 50 to 60 percent. "The amount of large-scale, simultaneous emergencies has never been so high to the best of my memory," said Paul Spiegel, UNHCR's deputy director of programme support and management, [speaking to IRIN](#)

from Geneva. As of mid-June, nearly 800,000 refugees in 22 African countries have seen their monthly food allocations reduced, most of them by more than half.

The World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) and the UN Refugee Agency ([UNHCR](#)) have launched an urgent appeal to address a funding shortfall that has already resulted in food ration cuts for a third of all African refugees. The funding shortfall is not the result of shrinking budgets for either WFP or UNHCR, but a substantial increase in the need for food assistance generated by an unprecedented number of refugee emergencies in 2014.

Out of a global figure of 11.7 million refugees under UNHCR's protection at the end of 2013, the highest number since 2001, 3.3 million live in Africa. A [joint report](#) by WFP and UNHCR released last week warns that failure to prevent continued ration cuts will lead to high levels of malnutrition, particularly among children and the most vulnerable.

[Source IRIN News](#)