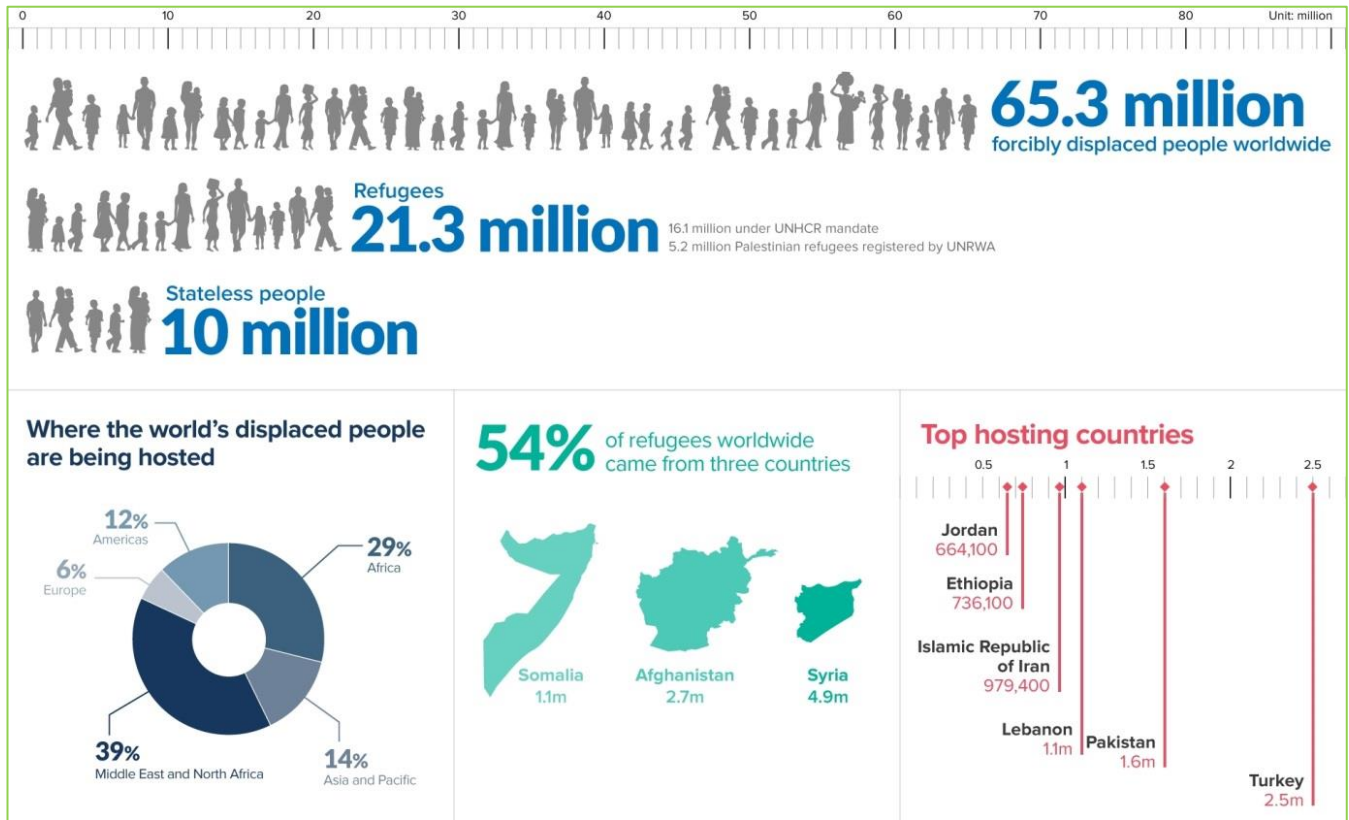


# National Social Monitor 2016

## GLOBAL CHALLENGES

**Figure 1: Global Displacement 2015**



Source: United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 2016. Available from: <http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>.

**Figure 2: Sustainable Development Goals**



### International migration crisis

The number of refugees and displaced people is consistently increasing worldwide as a result of war and conflict. Figure 1 shows the extent of the challenge worldwide, and the small amount of the burden borne by the EU. An unprecedented 65.3 million people around the world have been forced from home. Among them are nearly 21.3 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18 (UNHCR, 2016).

Between January and August 2016 278, 201 migrants entered Europe. This is a significant reduction from 2015 when over 1 million people crossed into the EU from Asia and Africa. However, this is countered by the presence of a further 3 million people in Turkey seeking international protection following the EU's deal with Turkey to stem migrant flows.

The Irish Navy continues to be involved in an operation in the Mediterranean and to date has rescued over 10,000 people, transiting them to Italy for processing and onward settlement. In September 2015, the Irish Government committed to take in 4,000 "programme refugees" directly connected with the EU migrant crisis. As of July 2016, only 311 of these people have arrived in Ireland, and a further 280 have been selected and are awaiting transfer here.

It is imperative that the Government moves swiftly to meet our minimum humanitarian obligation, and take in our full complement of these programme refugees, supporting them to settle in Ireland. *Social Justice Ireland* contends that Ireland needs to also take a leadership position within the EU promoting a human rights based approach to the crisis, and work to open borders and facilitate resettlement. As inward migration to Ireland and Europe of displaced people will be a feature of the coming years, it is essential that Ireland takes a proactive approach, which is based on the human right of every person to live life with dignity.

### Sustainable Development Goals

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development (Figure 2) were adopted at the UN General Assembly on 25th September 2015. These goals make up the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda which is defined as a 'plan of action for people, planet and prosperity'.

The SDGs have been designed for the entire world. The emphasis is on national ownership of the goals, with each Government setting its own national targets to be supported by national development strategies and financing. The link between sustainable development and economic, social and environmental policies is highlighted by the UN, as is the need to support the most vulnerable countries that face particular challenges in achieving sustainable development.

The SDG's present both a challenge and an opportunity for Ireland. The challenge will be in setting national targets, implementing these targets, monitoring progress and ensuring the appropriate budget lines, structures and indicators are put in place to achieve these goals. Implementing the SDG's provides Ireland with the opportunity to enhance our place in the world and to work for a just world where people are empowered to overcome poverty and hunger and fully realise their rights and potential<sup>1</sup>.

### Policy Priorities

- Take a leadership role within the EU and UN on meeting the challenge of the migrant crisis in a way which respects human dignity.
- Become a global leader on the development and implementation of national targets for the Sustainable Development Goals.

<sup>1</sup> One World, One Future: Ireland's Policy for International Development (2013) <https://www.irishaid.ie/about-us/policy-for-international-development/>