



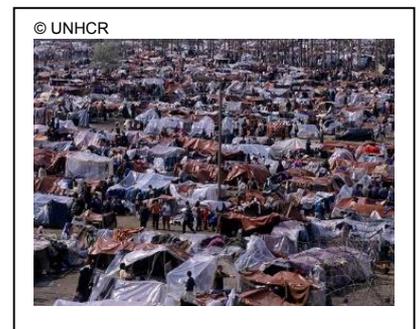
Who will get your teddy bear - who is 'a refugee'?

Refugees are people who flee their homes because they don't feel safe there. They may be **in danger** because they live in a war zone, because of their religion, or because they have different opinions. Their government can't protect them, so they have to travel to another country to ask for help.

- At the end of 2014 there were 19,500,000 refugees in the world. That is more than twice the population of London. **Nearly half these refugees are children just like you.**
- Often these children leave homes with a moment's notice, grabbing quickly whatever they can, with only the clothes they are wearing. Many of them undertake a dangerous journey across land and sea.
- They will be lucky if they survive this very risky journey. They miss their family, friends, and their own teddies very much, and **your teddy will mean a lot to them.**

Where do refugees live?

- Most refugees never come to the UK. They live in countries close to their own country which are poor and cannot afford to help.
- Millions of refugees spend years living in big camps with lots of people, and they make tents and shelters out of anything they can find. They don't have any clothes apart from what they are wearing, and **they don't have** safe drinking **water, food, books or toys.**



What rights do refugees have?

- Before a refugee can live a normal life in the UK, they have to make a special request to stay here. This is difficult to do and takes a long time. The UK government usually says no.
- Refugees who are allowed to stay must be treated the same as citizens. In the UK, children have a right to go to school and to see a doctor if they are sick. Their parents have a right to work.
- **Refugees have a right to stay** in their new country until it is safe to go back to their home country. Many refugees hope their country will be safe someday, so they can go back home.

How are the UK and the rest of Europe helping refugees?

- The UK does not get many requests by refugees to stay here. Lots of these requests are from **children** who have come here **alone**, with no family to look after them.
- Germany received five times the number of requests from refugees than the UK. Germany also took in nearly half of the refugees who asked to stay there.
- Last year, the UK accepted only 41 in a hundred requests to stay in the UK. If there are fewer than 100 children in your year-group, if you were refugees who asked to stay in the UK, less than half of you would be accepted.

What can we do to help?

- Lots of people in the UK are asking the government to do more to help refugees. They want us to welcome more refugees and to give them access to houses and doctors. People are even offering their spare rooms for refugees to live in to show that there is lots of space in the UK for refugees.
- The bears send a powerful message to refugee children: **you are welcome here.** Project Paddington shows our government we want it to change its mind and welcome more refugees.



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Further Information

There are lots of websites with useful information about refugees. Our facts and figures come from these official websites.

For general information and statistics on numbers of refugees and which countries are doing the most to help:

The Red Cross - <http://www.redcross.org.uk>

The United Nations Refugee Agency - <http://www.unhcr.org/>

The United Nations Refugee Agency UK page - <http://www.unhcr.org.uk/>

The Refugee Council - <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>

On international laws protecting refugees:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights - <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

Convention on the Rights of the Child - <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

The Refugee Convention - <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49da0e466.html>

On EU debates and the number of asylum claims made and accepted in different EU states:

The Guardian has a very useful 'datablog' on refugees, facts and figures on the current crisis (<http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog+world/refugees> or go to <http://www.theguardian.com/uk> and search "refugees datablog").

All of the articles on the datablog have lots of useful links to give you more information on what Europe is doing and how many countries are falling below their agreed refugee quotas - or are refusing to accept a quota at all.

Some examples of statistics from these websites:

- The UK received only 31,400 requests from refugees to stay in the UK last year. 1,861 of these were from children with no family.
- Last year Germany received five times the number of requests from refugees than the UK, France had twice the number of requests, and Sweden nearly three times the number.
- The UK accepted 1% of asylum applications. Germany accepted 42% of its applications; Sweden accepted 77%.
- This year Germany is expected to take in 800,000 refugees including 10,500 of the recent refugees who landed on Greek and Italian shores, as part of an EU-wide system on refugee resettlement.
- In contrast, the UK and Denmark have refused to take part in the EU system. Lots of countries fall far short of their quota, for example Estonia has taken only 130 refugees out of its EU quota of 738.
- When working out the quota system, to ensure a fair distribution and ability to integrate refugees, the EU's system takes account of things like the size of the population, the total GDP of the country as a measure of its wealth, and the country's unemployment rate.