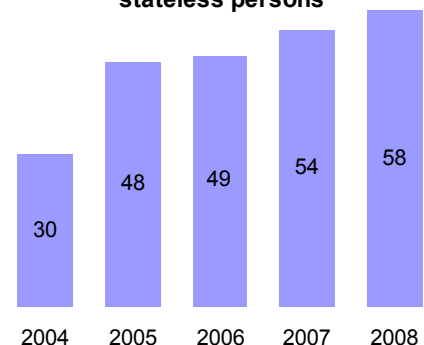


### VIII. Stateless persons

Identifying stateless persons is key to addressing their problems and is fundamental to the discharge of the responsibility entrusted to UNHCR in regard to stateless persons. This responsibility is not limited to the prevention and reduction of statelessness and the protection of stateless persons, but also involves informing the international community of the magnitude of this problem. Measuring statelessness is complicated by the very nature of the phenomenon. Stateless people often live in a precarious situation on the margins of society, frequently lack identity documentation and are subject to discrimination. Only a few countries have procedures in place for the identification and documentation of stateless people which facilitates gathering precise data.

The statistics in this report only include data on countries for which reliable official statistics or estimates of stateless populations are available. Annex table 7 also includes some countries (marked with an asterisk) that have significant stateless populations but for which no reliable figures could be provided, including Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, India and Indonesia.

**Fig 10: Number of countries reporting statistics on stateless persons**



The data on statelessness in 2008 show a continuation of the trend already observed in previous years of a gradual expansion in coverage and knowledge on stateless persons. By the end of 2008, statistics on statelessness were available for 58 countries, four more than in 2007. This compares to 30 countries in 2004, the first year UNHCR started collecting statistics on stateless populations in a more systematic way, and reflects the efforts of UNHCR offices to gather better data on statelessness. These efforts were bolstered by an increasing awareness of statelessness in a number of countries around the world.

For 2008, the number of identified stateless populations more than doubled to almost 6.6 million. This is not necessarily due to new situations of statelessness but, rather, the result of improved