

Netherlands

February 2022

Public support for refugees was waning due to social issues, such as social housing shortages. However, the Ukraine situation has led to rising support and a more welcoming attitude to refugees.

UNHCR submitted 12 interventions to the Dutch Council of State and ECtHR, leading to early rulings in line with the 1951 Convention, and participated in the evaluation of the IND Taskforce.

Statelessness: UNHCR and other stakeholders advocate to improve the draft law on establishing an SDP and advised the municipal expert group on registration of stateless persons.

POPULATION OF CONCERN*

Refugees	97,621
Asylum-seekers	7,391
Stateless persons	2,087
Total population of concern	107,099

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Syrian Arab Republic	37,792	Syrian Arab Republic	1,818
Eritrea	14,787	Iran	861
Somalia	8,368	Turkey	505

*Data source: UNHCR 2021 Mid-Year Statistical Report and UNHCR [data finder platform](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

Family reunification

UNHCR and the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) signed a data-sharing agreement in May 2021, concretizing a project in which UNHCR facilities in the field are used for family reunification interviews when there is no or reduced capacity at embassies due to COVID-19. In 2021, 54 family members were interviewed in 40 cases in India, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Senegal and Uganda.

Fostering Refugee Participation

UNHCR helped establish and facilitate meetings of the Refugee Focus Group (RFG) on resettlement. The RFG aims to be a mechanism to advise authorities on improving resettlement policy and to assist lobbying for increased resettlement places. Stakeholders, including the Ministry of Justice and Security, the Dutch Council for Refugees and refugee-led organizations (RLOs), also met to discuss setting up a refugee-led network.

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Advocacy: UNHCR advocated for access to asylum, registration and adequate reception conditions, as well as freedom of movement for persons of concern, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Inclusion: Asylum-seekers have been vaccinated in all reception centers and new arrivals have also had access to vaccinations. Persons with specific needs are prioritized.

Communication with Communities: Shortly after the lockdown was announced in spring 2020, UNHCR created a help page containing references to health providers in different languages: [UNHCR The Netherlands - Help for refugees and asylum-seekers](#)

UNHCR SUPPORTERS HELP RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS ON REFUGEE ISSUES



UNHCR's new high-profile supporters are helping change the narrative around refugees. Actress Anna Drijver (left) feels a strong responsibility to listen to the stories of people who were forced to flee and to raise awareness about their plight, especially that of women and girls. Dancer Ahmad Joudeh (right) wants to advocate for the rights of refugees and stateless persons.

Read more about their involvement [here](#).

Key Priorities

- **Asylum procedures:** UNHCR submitted several interventions regarding asylum procedures such as letters to lawyers, letters to the Council of State, and an amicus curiae before the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on various issues.
- **Reception monitoring:** At the beginning of 2021 the annual workplan on reception monitoring was agreed with the reception authorities. UNHCR continued to advocate for increased participation of persons of concern within reception facilities. UNHCR conducted 15 reception monitoring visits as of September 2021 and met with key stakeholders at each location. Observations, best practices and recommendations were shared internally with the consulted stakeholders from each of the locations.
- **Resettlement and complementary pathways:** UNHCR continued advocacy to establish a community-based sponsorship programme in the Netherlands together with the Ministry for Justice and Security, Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers, and municipalities. UNHCR provided input to a small-scale project from the Dutch Council for Refugees to set up such a programme, which will focus on supporting the integration process of resettled refugees in selected municipalities. UNHCR continued conducting quality-control reviews of resettlement submissions.
- **Gender-based violence (GBV):** As part of the GBV project 'Breaking the Silence', UNHCR conducted a participatory assessment on safety and GBV with 12 Eritrean women in May 2021. Further GBV prevention activities included participation in events organized by Doctors of the World and meetings with relevant stakeholders, including women-led RLOs and gender equality organisations such as WO=MEN. UNHCR further submitted confidential comments for the 81st Pre-Sessional Working Group

of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in June 2021.

Working with Partners

- In addition to regular contact with ministerial counterparts, UNHCR works closely with the Dutch Council for Refugees, UNICEF, Defence for Children, Nidos, the Institute for Statelessness, ASKV, LGBT Asylum Support and lawyers, among others, and increasingly with RLOs to push for policy change, including legislative reforms and enhanced participation of persons of concern in policy-making and implementation.
- **External engagement:** UNHCR created a series of five podcast episodes in cooperation with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Stichting Vluchteling. In the podcasts, refugees talk about their homeland, their flight and arrival in the Netherlands and the important role music plays in their lives. UNHCR engaged Dutch actress and writer Anna Drijver and dancer and choreographer Ahmad Joudeh as high-profile supporters. They will help spread UNHCR's brand and content about UNHCR's work.

Statelessness

- The Netherlands acceded to both Statelessness Conventions but has no statelessness determination procedure (SDP) in place. The draft law for an SDP is pending in parliament and likely to be discussed during the first quarter of 2022.

UNHCR Presence in the Netherlands

Staff:

7 National Staff

Offices:

1 National Office in The Hague

Financial information (22 February 2022)

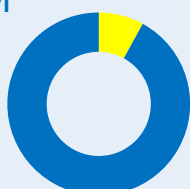
Information relates to the Representation for EU Affairs, Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the Liaison Offices to EUAA and Frontex.

Financial requirements

USD 11.1 M

**Funding gap
92%**

10.2 M



**Funded
8%**

0.9 M

UNHCR is grateful to the donors of unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions to the 2022 global programmes. Donors of USD 10 million or more are:

Sweden | Norway | Netherlands | Denmark | Germany | Switzerland | Belgium | Ireland

Unearmarked contributions provide UNHCR with vital flexibility in determining how best to protect and assist persons of concern who are in the greatest need or at the greatest risk.