

UNITED KINGDOM

February 2021

9,936 people were offered protection in 2020, down 48% on 2019, due to fewer initial decisions as well as the pause to resettlement activity after March 2020, both a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

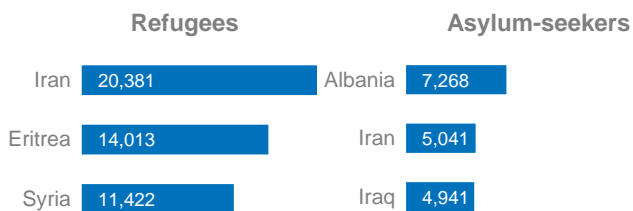
143 resettled refugee women were interviewed for a Participatory Assessment looking into their protection and integration situation.

Resettlement: UNHCR advocates for an ambitious, long term commitment to the new UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), at least at the 2015-20 level of around 5,000 places per year.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Refugees	134,917
Asylum-seekers	56,445
Stateless people	184

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



Data source: UNHCR 2020 Mid-Year Statistical report and UNHCR [data finder platform](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

“Safer and Stronger” Report

The October 2020 [‘Safer and Stronger’ report](#) based on interviews with 143 resettled refugee women between July and October 2019 highlights their protection and integration situation. The research was carried out by UNHCR between July and October 2019.

Statelessness Determination

In December 2020, UNHCR’s Quality Protection Partnership published [an audit](#) of the Home Office approach to decision-making in the Statelessness Determination Procedure (SDP). Between 2013 and 2019, 161 people were granted leave to remain on initial decisions. The report reviewed 36 SDP decisions, both grants and refusals

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Advocacy: UNHCR, the Home Office and the NGO sector have worked to identify gaps in the government’s response to COVID-19 as it applies to asylum-seekers, refugees, stateless persons and migrants, and recommend measures to address them. UNHCR is a member of a working group, led by the British Red Cross, whose purpose is the sharing of information, collaboration and advocacy over COVID 19-related issues in the sector. Our staff are liaising with the government to coordinate response in the areas of detention, resettlement, asylum decision-making and statelessness.

Inclusion of persons of concern: In February 2021, the Government announced that all migrants living in the country, regardless of their immigration status, would be eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccines. Refugees and asylum-seekers were already eligible according to the same roll out criteria used for the general population.



Community Sponsorship

In October 2020, UNHCR UK released [Ties that Bind](#), a photo-driven content series highlighting the huge benefits - to refugees and communities across the country - of the UK’s community sponsorship programme.

Key Priorities

- **Protection:** UNHCR provides guidance on refugee, asylum and statelessness law and policy to the UK government, legal practitioners, non-governmental organisations, and many others. We also provide training on a range of issues to those working with asylum-seekers and refugees.
- **Legal Interventions:** UNHCR intervenes in select asylum and statelessness cases and communicates with the legal community about forthcoming cases of particular concern that are precedent-setting on asylum, refugee, and statelessness law. Strategic interventions include letters of advice or opinion at any stage of the asylum or statelessness determination process. Exceptionally, UNHCR may directly contact authority counterparts about an individual case. When appropriate, UNHCR applies to act or sends notification of intention to act, as an intervener.
- **Guidance on Law and Policy:** Working closely with the Government in a Quality Protection Partnership, UNHCR works to ensure the UK's application of refugee and statelessness law is in line with international standards and is able to be implemented in a practical yet protection-sensitive fashion. This may also be in response to a specific request or policy pronouncement or it may follow the referral of an issue or case by a legal representative and / or a non-governmental organisation.
- **Resettlement and Complementary Pathways:** 823 people were granted protection through resettlement schemes in 2020, 85% fewer than in 2019. The majority were resettled in the first quarter of the year before resettlement activity was paused due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Resettlement resumed in limited fashion in December with eight individuals.
- **Asylum and Statelessness procedures:** UNHCR's Quality Protection Partnership (QPP) with the Home Office continued, ensuring international standards are met in first instance asylum decision making and the statelessness determination procedure.

- **Alternatives to Detention:** UNHCR worked with the Home Office to improve effective screening of new arrivals; evaluate a pilot of alternatives to detention; and design training programmes for decision makers.
- **Integration:** UNHCR seeks to promote integration as a two-way process premised on 'adaptation' by one party and 'welcome' by the other. UNHCR advocates for more Government support to refugees and asylum-seekers, for example on language or employment. UNHCR promotes best practices observed by civil society in support of refugees. UNHCR trained 432 resettlement caseworkers of national and local authorities in integration aspects.
- **Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance:** UNHCR issued a report on the protection and integration of resettled refugee women based on participatory assessment interviews with 143 women, including LGBTIQ+, with specific recommendations on empowerment and self-reliance.

Work with Partners

- UNHCR works with civil society groups including Refugee Week, the Women of the World festival, the Families Together coalition and other partners to better protect people forced to flee their homes and to support them to live their lives in the UK with dignity and respect.

Statelessness

- The UK ratified the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons in 1959 and the 1961 Convention in 1966. The [2013 Statelessness Determination Procedure](#) enables stateless people to apply status recognition. The SDP has been accompanied by [policy guidance](#), updated in 2019.

UNHCR Presence in the UK

Staff:

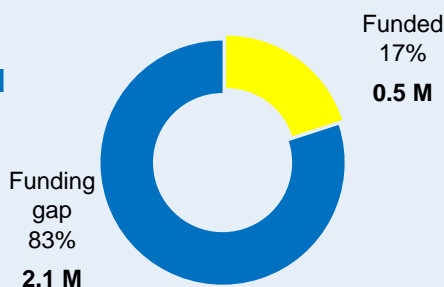
11 National Staff
6 International Staff

Offices:

1 Branch Office in London

Financial information (28 February 2021)

Financial Requirements
USD 2.6 M



UNHCR is grateful to the major donors of unearmarked contributions* to the 2021 global programmes (USD, as of 28 February 2021):

Norway 80 M | Sweden 66.9 M | Netherlands 36.1 M | Denmark 34.6 M | Germany 22.1 M | Switzerland 16.4 M | Ireland 12.5 M | Belgium 11.9 M

*Unearmarked contributions allow UNHCR for critical flexibility in how best to reach populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Above are donors of USD 10 million or more.