

The Netherlands

September 2021

Asylum and reception: The Taskforce cleared almost the entire backlog (15.000 cases) amidst growing new backlogs. Reception capacity in centres and municipalities soared with the new inflow.

Quality of asylum procedures: UNHCR submitted amicus curiae with the Dutch Council of State and the ECtHR concerning the interpretation of the 1951 Convention. Rulings are still pending.

UNHCR advocates, jointly with stakeholders, for improvements on the draft law on the establishment of a statelessness determination procedure.

POPULATION OF CONCERN*

Refugees	78,911
Asylum-seekers	11,882
Internally displaced people	2,006
Total population of concern	92,799

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN*

	Refugees		Asylum-seekers
Syria	22'447	Syria	2'280
Eritrea	11'961	Iraq	497
Somalia	11'642	Eritrea	394

*Data source: UNHCR 2020 Global Trends and UNHCR data finder platform

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Advocacy: UNHCR advocated for access to asylum, registration and 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 newcomers have also 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](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

Family reunification

UNHCR and authorities agreed to facilitate video interviews at UNHCR field locations following reduced capacity at embassies due to COVID-19. So far in 2021, 14 families were interviewed and 12 more are in the pipeline. UNHCR supported 62 persons with the documentation procedures to reunify with their family.

Refugee participation

UNHCR helped establish and facilitate meetings of the Refugee Focus Group (RFG) on Resettlement. The aim is to have the RFG develop into a mechanism to advise the authorities on improving resettlement policy and to assist in lobbying for increased resettlement places.

Reception monitoring

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, UNHCR conducted 9 reception monitoring visits and recommendations were shared with concerned stakeholders.

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE WITH HOPE



Amy identifies as part of the LGBTI community and was ostracized by her family and social environment in The Gambia. Forced to leave her home, she was eventually resettled to the Netherlands, where she finally feels safe. Despite all she's been through, Amy looks to the future with hope. Watch her story [here](#).

Key Priorities

- Asylum procedures:** UNHCR submitted various judicial interventions, including letters to lawyers on the cumulative effect of persecution in SOGI cases, safe third country and political opinion, letters to the Council of State on COI on Gaza, fundamental political opinion and atheism/apostasy, registration in Ethiopia and one *amicus curiae* before the ECtHR on the right to family life, the definition of family, emotional ties, and dependency.
- Reception monitoring:** UNHCR conducted 9 reception monitoring visits up to September 2021 and met with key stakeholders at each location. Reports with observations, best practices and recommendations of the visits were shared with the concerned stakeholders of each locations. UNHCR continued to advocate for increased participation of PoCs within reception facilities. COVID-19 continued to pose challenges, as many reception monitoring visits in the first half of 2021 were either rescheduled or delayed.
- Resettlement and Complementary Pathways:** UNHCR helped establish and facilitate meetings of the Refugee Focus Group (RFG) on Resettlement. The aim is to have the RFG develop into a mechanism to advise the authorities on improving resettlement policy and to assist in lobbying for increased resettlement places. UNHCR has started conducting quality control of resettlement submissions to maintain the dossier quota for individual submissions. In 2021, UNHCR has continued its efforts to establish a community-based sponsorship in the Netherlands, together with the Ministry for Justice and Security, COA, the Central Reception Agency, and municipalities.
- Gender based violence (GBV):** As part of the project 'Breaking the Silence' UNHCR conducted a session on safety and GBV with Eritrean women in May. UNHCR also participated in an event organized

by Doctors of the World and held meetings with GBV stakeholders and refugee-led organizations. UNHCR also submitted confidential comments for the 81st pre-sessional working group of the CEDAW in June 2021.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR works together with the Dutch Council for Refugees, UNICEF, Defence for Children, Nidos, the Institute for Statelessness and ISKV, lawyers and increasingly with refugee-led organizations to advocate for protection and inclusion, including on legislative and policy reforms.**
- External Engagement:** UNHCR organized outreach campaigns to private companies and cultural institutions. For World Refugee Day, UNHCR joined forces with the movie platform Cinetree and Welcome App, for a special platform where four refugee themed movies were available for free for the public for two weeks. The movies were watched over 527 times, with 2,335 unique visitors on the website. During the launch, refugees were linked with Dutch citizens through the Welcome App.

Statelessness

- The Netherlands acceded to both Statelessness Conventions (1954 and 1961) but has no statelessness determination procedure (SDP) in place. The law proposal for an SDP is pending in Parliament following the formation of a new government.

UNHCR Presence in the Netherlands

Staff:

5 National Staff
2 Affiliate Workforce

Offices:

1 National Office in The Hague

Financial information (28 September 2021)

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

Financial requirements

USD 11.1 M

Funding gap
40%
4.4 M



Funded
60%
6.7 M

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