

Austria

February 2022

Austria has long been an important host country, and currently hosts around **178,500 persons of concern**. UNHCR was established in Austria in 1951.

In 2021, **Austria experienced an increase in arrivals**, receiving 38,600 asylum applications with Syria and Afghanistan the main countries of origin; 15,700 persons were granted protection.

UNHCR's focus in Austria continues to be on supporting a quality asylum system, improving protection and raising awareness on refugee issues.

POPULATION OF CONCERN*

Refugees	146,025
Asylum-seekers	18,308
Stateless persons	3,229

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Syrian Arab Republic	57,887	Afghanistan	4,810
Afghanistan	41,037	Syria	3,866
Iraq	9,661	Iraq	2,294

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

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Advocacy: UNHCR advocates the inclusion of all persons of concern in government COVID-19 support programmes and easy access to vaccines. UNHCR has also focused advocacy on the quick transfer of unaccompanied children from crowded federal reception centres to provincial facilities and the provision of adequate care during the waiting period.

Inclusion: All persons of concern are covered by medical insurance and thus treated like Austrian nationals regarding health and vaccination schemes.

Communication with Communities: The UNHCR-supported Refugee Team continues to be active in promoting vaccinations and countering fake news in their respective communities. In cooperation with the Red Cross, peer experts also organize related webinars for the community.

HIGHLIGHTS

Training of over 800 stakeholders

The Office trained around 500 judges and legal counsellors on protection topics, as well as 300 teachers and students on refugees and UNHCR's mandate.

Keynote speech by Gillian Triggs

UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Protection Gillian Triggs delivered the keynote speech at the Asylum Day event co-organized by the Office for around 90 judges and decision-makers.

New blog on refugee law

The Office supported the development and launch of a [blog](#) on refugee law in cooperation with experts from courts.

Austria's largest contribution to date

Austria again increased its contribution to UNHCR from the previous year to a total of **USD 29,805,198**, marking Austria's largest contribution to date.

10 YEARS OF "LONG DAY OF FLIGHT"



The 10th edition of UNHCR's "Long Day of Flight" took place on 1 October 2021 with over 100 online and offline events for pupils and the general public.

Key Priorities

- **Protection:** Monitoring of developments in asylum law and practice, with a special focus on quality of the asylum procedure and reception system. Support for implementation of the quality assurance project (“Bridge”), co-funded by the Austrian Ministry of Interior and the EU’s Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, aimed at supporting asylum decision-makers through training activities, events, evaluation of decisions, etc. Visits to reception and detention centres with a focus on vulnerable asylum-seekers and unaccompanied and separated children.
- **Access to territory:** Monitoring developments, including judicial processes, regarding alleged pushback cases at the border with Slovenia.
- **Advocacy** continued focus on child protection using the Office’s recommendations for child-friendly asylum procedures, a child rights-based application of the 1951 Refugee Convention and best interests assessments by a child protection authority in situations ahead of decisions by the asylum authority to improve protection of children. Advocacy for more inclusive rights for subsidiary protection holders, family reunification, and increased funding for UNHCR.
- **Reception conditions monitoring:** Focus on visits to reception facilities, amid increasing arrivals, with an emphasis on identification of special needs, gender-based violence prevention, child-friendly reception arrangements of both accompanied and separated children, complaint mechanisms and access to information. Follow up with the Ministry of Interior and Provinces to improve protection and care for unaccompanied children.
- **Integration and capacity-building:** Regular meetings with the newly set up UNHCR Refugee Team to better institutionalize exchange with communities.

- **External engagement:** UNHCR hosted the 10th edition of the flagship event “Long Day of Flight” with 50 partners and around 100 events, and a special focus on tailor-made programmes for schools.

Working with Partners

- The Office cooperates i.a. with State interlocutors as well as Ministries, the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum, judges of relevant courts, the Federal Agency for Reception and Support Services, Members of Parliament and senior officials in the Provinces. Regular NGO interlocutors include representatives of all main organizations active in the field of asylum and the Asylum Lawyers’ Network, which engages in litigation. Journalists, academia, actors in the field of education as well as IOM and UNICEF are also important partners.

Statelessness

- Austria acceded to both Statelessness Conventions but lacks a statelessness determination procedure.
- UNHCR advocates for the establishment of a stateless determination procedure and a residence permit for stateless persons as well as the right to nationality at birth for children born stateless.
- Following longstanding UNHCR advocacy, Austria will soon begin implementing a three-year period from the age of 18 for applying for citizenship for children born stateless in the country.

UNHCR Presence in Austria

Staff:

9 National Staff
 1 International Staff

Offices:

1 Country Office in Vienna

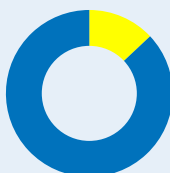
Financial information (22 February 2022)

Information relates to the Representation for Austria and to the European Institutions in Strasbourg, the Office for Switzerland and Liechtenstein, the Liaison Office in Vienna and the presence in Portugal.

Financial requirements

USD 5.2 million

Funding gap
 87%
 4.5M



Funded
 13%
 0.7M

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.