

The Netherlands

February 2021

UNHCR monitors developments in refugee law and policy and provides advice to stakeholders. UNHCR also develops [campaigns](#), [stories](#) and [events](#) to enhance public awareness.

UNHCR cooperated with authorities to facilitate remote procedures during the pandemic and supported lawyers and the judiciary in improving the quality of decision-making.

UNHCR prioritises improving quality of asylum decisions, best interest procedures, faster and fairer family reunification, and facilitating refugee participation.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Refugees	92,725
Asylum-seekers	13,311
Stateless people	1,951

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

	Refugees		Asylum-seekers
Syria	23,598	Syria	3,266
Eritrea	14,736	Iran	2,205
Somalia	11,225	Turquia	984

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

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Advocacy: Following the smart lockdown in March, UNHCR continued to visit reception centres and advocated for protection standards including in times of COVID-19. UNHCR also shared best practices from other countries and held discussions with medical staff at the reception centres.

Inclusion of persons of concern: Persons of concern are included in national COVID prevention and response plans. There are no separate programmes for residents in reception centres despite worries that the lay-out of some of the centres makes observing COVID measures, notably social distancing, challenging.

Health: UNHCR launched a [Helpdesk](#) for newcomers with a dedicated page containing relevant information and contacts of (refugee led) organizations and institutions, dealing with the COVID-19 response.

HIGHLIGHTS

Family reunification

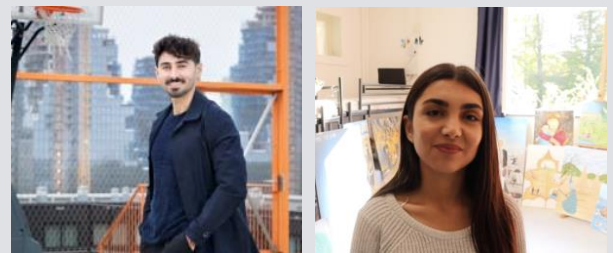
Nearly 10,000 signatures were collected and handed over to the Minister for Migration with UNHCR's campaign for Fairer, Faster and Safer family reunification Ben & Jerry's.

Legal Interventions

UNHCR assisted family reunification cases with best interest assessments and interventions with lawyers, the Asylum Service and the Council of State. One Amicus Curiae was submitted on the interpretation of political opinion under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Funding top-up of

UNHCR received EUR 11 M for the cash-based interventions in Lebanon and EUR 2,2 M for the Venezuela situation.



Together at last

Wahhab Hassoo, a Yazidi refugee, got a chance at a new life in the Netherlands thanks to family reunification. Read more [here](#)

VLOG: A day in the Life of Holiya & her Art!

Because of the genocide on Yazidis, Holiya had to flee Iraq. She shows what she and her family have experienced with her art. We give [you a peek into her life!](#)

Key Priorities

- **Community Empowerment and Self-reliance:** UNHCR held discussions with refugee-led organizations (RLOs) end 2020, which will pave the way for creating a platform in 2021 to give persons of concern a voice in decision making at the local and national level about issues concerning them.
- UNHCR, the Dutch Council for Refugees and the MinJut incl. COA and IND organized the first meeting of the Refugee Focus Group (RFG) on Resettlement. Participants are both refugees with their own network and refugees with a resettlement background. The RFG will collect input that will be used to contribute to the Refugee Statement, for the ATCR in Geneva in June 2021. It is foreseen that the RFG will evolve into a Refugee Advisory Group (RAG) on Resettlement at the end of 2021 and beyond.
- **Asylum procedures:** UNHCR continued to engage with the MinJust, the Asylum Service (IND), lawyers and the judiciary to improve the quality of asylum decisions. In some instances, cases were referred back to the Asylum Service. UNHCR was invited by the Council of State to submit an Amicus Curiae on the interpretation of political opinion under the 1951 Refugee Convention.
- **Family reunification** UNHCR and the Asylum Service looked into strengthening cooperation to facilitate family reunifications and remote interviewing during COVID-19 in countries of asylum where UNHCR has a field presence. An agreement on the modalities of cooperation is nearly finalized.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR worked with the Amsterdam Solidarity Committee for Refugees and the Institute on Statelessness (ISI) to end Statelessness and include a right to residency in the draft law proposal for a statelessness determination procedure.
- UNHCR also worked closely with the Ministry of Justice and the Central Reception Agency (COA) on improving quality of resettlement submissions and facilitating initiatives for complementary pathways of admission such as community sponsorship. In these latter discussions the Dutch Council for Refugees and municipalities also took part.
- **External Engagement:** UNHCR's collaboration with Ben&Jerry's on the family reunification campaign tapped into new audiences and helped raise awareness about the need for faster and safer procedures.

Statelessness

- The Netherlands is party to both Statelessness Conventions. UNHCR launched a [campaign to end statelessness](#) end 2019. The campaign supported ongoing advocacy efforts in 2020 including a Round Table with stateless persons and MPs. Early 2021 the draft law was submitted to parliament.

UNHCR Presence*

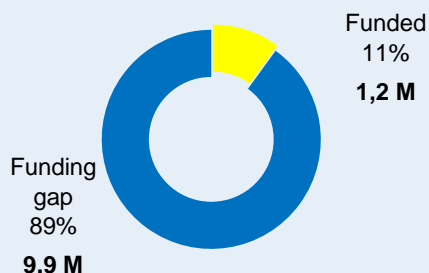
Staff:	Office:
25 National Staff	1 Office in Brussels
17 International Staff	

* Representation for EU Affairs, Belgium, Luxemburg, Ireland and the Netherlands.

Financial information* 28 February 2021

*information relates to the Representation for EU Affairs, Belgium, Luxemburg, Ireland, the Netherlands, and the Liaison Offices to EASO and Frontex.

Financial requirements:
USD 11.1 M



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

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.

UNHCR the Netherlands is also grateful for 2021 contributions from the following donors (as of February):

Private donors