

EUROPE RESETTLEMENT



© UNHCR/ Sasja van Vechgel

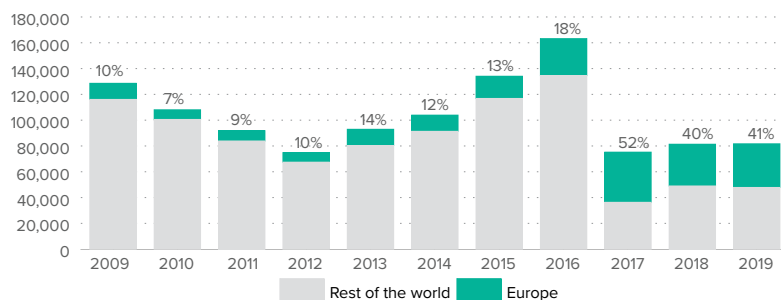
Elisha's story begins as a young boy growing up in the violent area of Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of Congo, close to the Rwandan border on Lake Kivu. Elisha's parents kept him well sheltered from the violence and often sent him away to live with distant relatives for years at a time in safer places in Rwanda, Uganda, and Kenya. From Kenya, Elisha and his father were resettled to Denmark by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. The family arrived in February 2011 when Elisha was 14 years old. "Being in Denmark gave me the opportunity to read. Reading allows me to create my own theory and my own path in life. [Full story](#).

Overview

In 2019, just over 33,800 refugees were submitted by UNHCR for resettlement¹ to 20 countries in Europe.² This represents a 5% increase from the total submissions in 2018; and was nearly double the average rate of 17,800 submissions per year during the previous 10 years. Three countries that received smaller numbers of resettlement submissions in 2018 have not received submissions during 2019.³

Europe's proportion of UNHCR facilitated resettlement submissions globally in 2019⁴ was 41%. Between 2009 and 2016, this proportion increased from 10% to 18%, before substantially increasing to 52% during 2017 and 40% during 2018. The increase in 2017 is primarily due to a significant decrease globally in the scale of some States' resettlement programmes, most notably by the United States of America, in parallel with an increase of resettlement places made available by European States.

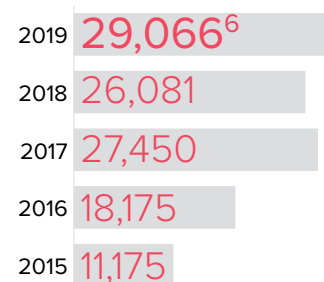
Resettlement submissions to Europe compared to global trends⁵



Resettlement submissions to Europe⁵



Resettlement arrivals to Europe^{5,6}



¹See www.unhcr.org/resettlement.html for more background information on resettlement. The figures presented in this fact sheet reflect UNHCR submissions of resettlement cases to resettlement countries. Following submission, the timescale can vary in each resettlement country before a case is accepted, the refugees depart from their previous country of asylum and arrive finally in the country of resettlement.

² Europe comprises 49 countries, including the EU Member States, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein, South-Eastern Europe (Kosovo (S/RES/1244(1999)), Turkey and Eastern Europe (exc. Kazakhstan). Countries receiving resettlement submissions in 2019 are shown on the map on page 2.

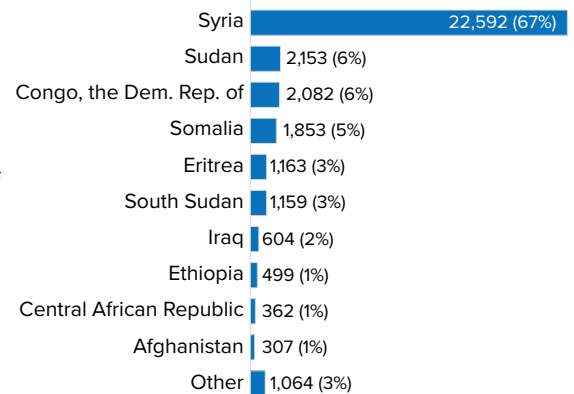
³ These were Iceland, Lithuania, and Latvia. Romania, Luxembourg and Denmark are the countries that have received submissions in 2019, but not in 2018. Countries that received submissions earlier in 2016 and/or 2017 but not since include: Austria, Cyprus, Czechia, Hungary, Monaco and Slovenia.

⁴ All references to 2019 refer to the period between January and December.

⁵ Source: Resettlement submission and departure data from rsq.unhcr.org.

Country of origin

The vast majority of refugees submitted for resettlement to Europe in 2019 were originally from the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria), consistent with 2018, with their number having increased significantly in scale between 2013 and 2016 in accordance with the increasing displacement from Syria during these years. In total, 92% of refugees submitted for resettlement to Europe in 2019 originate from six countries: Syria, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Eritrea and South Sudan.⁷ Some 20% of submissions to Europe are from East Africa and the Horn of Africa and just 0.9% are from West Africa.



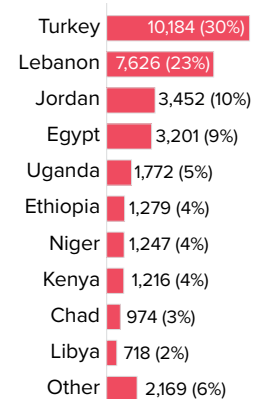
Country of asylum

Refugees submitted for resettlement to Europe were typically registered in the following countries: **Syrians:** Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan or Egypt; **Sudanese:** Egypt, Chad or Libya; **Congolese (DRC):** Uganda, Kenya or Zambia; **Somalis:** Kenya, Ethiopia, Niger or Egypt; **Eritreans:** Niger, Libya or Egypt; **South Sudanese:** Ethiopia or Egypt; **Iraqis:** Turkey, Jordan or Lebanon.⁷

In November 2017, UNHCR and the Government of Niger established an [Emergency Evacuation Transit Mechanism \(ETM\)](#) in order to evacuate and facilitate the processing of the most vulnerable refugees trapped in detention in Libya, so they can access protection and durable solutions. In September 2019 the [Rwanda Emergency Transit Mechanism \(ETM\)](#) was agreed and set up by the Government of Rwanda, UNHCR, and the African Union for the same purpose and a diversified set of solutions.

By December 2019, UNHCR had made 69 resettlement submissions from the ETM in Rwanda (to Sweden), and 1,261 total submissions from the ETM in Niger⁸ (of which 930 to Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom). Refugees at each ETM originated mostly from Eritrea, Somalia, and Sudan.

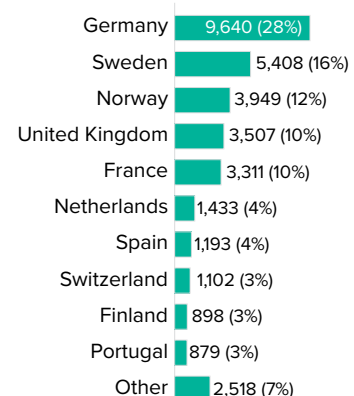
While the total number of resettlement submissions from the ETM in Niger slightly decreased in 2019, compared to 2018 (1,335), significantly more refugees were able to depart in 2019 (1,722, compared to 986 in 2018). The trends in resettlement submissions and departures during 2018 and 2019 reflect multi-year pledges by several States, as well as programmes implemented during States' fiscal years which may not align with the calendar year.



Country of resettlement

In 2019, five countries in Europe (Germany, Sweden, Norway, the UK and France⁷) received 76% of all resettlement submissions to Europe.

Of the 20 countries in Europe to which resettlement submissions were made in 2019, 11 countries resettled predominantly (at least 90%) Syrians. Only Sweden, Norway, France, Germany, the UK, Netherlands, Portugal and Finland⁷ have resettled substantial numbers of other nationalities of refugees, including from Sudan, the DRC, Somalia, Eritrea, South Sudan and Iraq.⁷



⁶Only data on resettlement cases referred by UNHCR are available for 2019. Arrival figures reported by UNHCR may not match resettlement statistics published by States as government figures may include submissions received outside of UNHCR's resettlement processes.

⁷The list of countries are ordered in terms of the number of resettlement submissions, in descending order.

⁸These 1,261 submissions from ETM Niger in 2019 includes all resettlement countries; i.e, also countries outside of Europe.

