There are 65.6 million displaced persons in the world.

1.2 million people are in need of resettlement.

- 35% have been displaced from their country of origin.
- 61% have been internally displaced within their own country of origin.
- Half of them are under 18 years of age.
- 4% are asylum seekers.

Countries that host the most refugees:
- Turkey: 2.9 million
- Pakistan: 1.4 million
- Lebanon: 1 million
- Iran: 979,400
- Uganda: 940,800
- Ethiopia: 791,600

Countries that the most refugees come from:
- Syria: 5.5 million
- Afghanistan: 2.5 million
- South Sudan: 1.4 million

One in every 113 people is a refugee.

Source: UNHCR
Sweden’s resettlement programme 2018

More people than ever are in need of resettlement
More refugees than ever before need protection in a new country through resettlement, according to the UN’s refugee agency, UNHCR. There are 1.2 million refugees in need of resettlement this year, with the single biggest group being Syrians – around 40%. Worldwide, there are currently 65.6 million people who have been displaced by war, conflicts and persecution.

Resettlement occurs when refugees located in a host country outside their country of origin are selected and transferred to a third country that offers them protection. The objective is to create sustainable solutions for people who cannot return to their country of origin, and who are in a vulnerable situation in their host country. Resettlement becomes an option when UNHCR assesses that neither return to the country of origin nor continued residence in the host country are possible.

Beyond offering protection to individual people, resettlement also provides support to host countries that have admitted a large number of refugees. Sweden’s resettlement programme also aims to resolve protracted refugee situations that are at risk of becoming permanent. The system needs to be able to work quickly, so that it can offer protection in emergency situations. The resettlement programme is for people who are considered refugees or persons eligible for subsidiary protection under the provisions of Sweden’s Aliens Act (Utlänningslagen).

The resettlement programme was established after World War II
Sweden’s resettlement programme was established after World War II, and was created to protect those who were unable to seek protection for themselves. Each year, the Swedish government and the parliament provide the Swedish Migration Agency with resources to resettle a certain number of displaced persons to Sweden.

UNHCR makes a global analysis every year of the need for resettlement. It forms the basis when Sweden plans where refugees will be resettled from. The Swedish Migration Agency will later on consult with the Government Offices on how the resettlement places should be allocated. Following this consultation the Director-General of the Swedish Migration Agency will decide on the allocation. UNHCR will then present individuals in need of protection for the Swedish Migration Agency to examine the cases.

The migration policy agreement from October 23, 2015 included, among other things, a goal that Sweden will gradually increase the number of resettlement places to 5,000 during the government’s term of office. This increase has now been implemented. The number of places in the Swedish resettlement programme has not been this high since 1994, during the time of the Bosnian war.

Reduced number of resettlement places worldwide
The need for resettlement has increased by 72% since 2014. For many years, the need for resettlement has greatly outweighed the number of available places, and the UNHCR has therefore been appealing to affected countries to make more places available. Despite positive development up to 2016, when resettlement reached historically high levels, there is still a significant lack of available places. 126,000 people were resettled in 2016, primarily in the USA, Canada and Australia, which have long since offered the majority of total places.

But in 2017, the worldwide availability of places decreased, particularly due to the fact that the USA greatly reduced its admittance of refugees.

At the same time as the USA has started admitting fewer refugees, Canada has increased its resettlement efforts. In 2017, Canada resettled 25,000 people, and it is expected that this number will remain the same or increase to 27,000 in 2018. Several European countries are also following the same trend. One example is the United Kingdom, which plans to take in 23,000 Syrians up until 2020. France, Norway and Sweden are also increasing their resettlement efforts. Sweden is now the third largest recipient of refugees after the USA and Canada.

Refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection
In accordance with the Aliens Act, two categories of people in need of protection can obtain residence permits in Sweden: refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection. People who come to Sweden as part of the resettlement programme can belong to either category.

Refugees

Individuals are recognized as refugees if they meet the criteria set out in the UN’s Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. These criteria include a risk of persecution due to the person’s race, nationality, religious or political beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, or membership in a given community. Persecution can be carried out by the authorities in the country of origin, or it may be the case that such authorities are unable to protect against persecution from certain people.

Persons eligible for subsidiary protection

Persons eligible for subsidiary protection are people who risk being put to death or being subjected to corporal punishment, torture or other inhumane or degrading forms of treatment or punishment. This category also includes civilians who are at significant risk of being injured due to armed conflict.
Resettlement is also becoming an increasingly important issue at the level of the EU. According to calculations by the EU Commission, more than 17,000 people were resettled across 22 member states between July 2015 and July 2017. The EU Commission is encouraging its member states to resettle a greater number of refugees. The target is now to resettle 50,000 people in the EU in 2018–2019. The Commission has set aside €500 million for this purpose, which is the largest financial commitment to resettlement ever made.

Sweden's resettlement efforts in 2017
Sweden resettled 3,400 refugees in 2017. The majority of these had been displaced by the violence in Syria, and were selected with help from selection missions in Lebanon and Turkey. In addition, many refugees were also selected from East Africa, particularly people from Eritrea, the Congo and Ethiopia. 200 Afghans were also selected from Iran. 600 places were filled by people with emergency and prioritized cases.

94% of cases submitted by the UNHCR last year were accepted. More than half were granted refugee status, while others obtained status as persons eligible for subsidiary protection. The gender distribution was equal, and around half of those selected were children, the great majority of whom were part of families.

As of 1 March 2016, it is obligatory for all municipalities to accept recently arrived individuals who are in possession of residence permits, including resettled refugees. This is due to the Reception for Settlement Act, and has greatly facilitated the Swedish Migration Agency's settlement efforts.

UNHCR: vulnerability and need for protection are the most important criteria
The UNHCR believes that vulnerability and the need for international protection should be the two primary criteria for selecting individuals for resettlement. There are many groups that are particularly vulnerable in a refugees situation, such as women and children without a support network, people who belong to a religious or ethnic minority, LGBTQ people, and people who are ill or disabled. The UNHCR provides suggestions as to which people should be included in the Swedish resettlement programme, and the Swedish Migration Agency assesses the need for protection in each individual case.

Many refugees are located within ordinary communities, often in areas with high levels of poverty. Increased competition on the job market, lower wages and rising housing costs have resulted in tension between refugees and local populations. The political climate has grown tougher in many countries, and thereby reduced refugees' ability to move, access healthcare or find employment. One such example is the host country of Lebanon, from which the Swedish Migration Agency selects a large portion of the Syrian refugees in the Swedish resettlement programme. In Lebanon, more than 79% of Syrian refugees live below the poverty line, and only 3% of middle-school-aged Syrian children were attending school between 2016–2017.

The government has not provided any instructions regarding what proportion of the resettlement programme should consist of people in need of medical care. A person’s state of health does not affect whether he or she is able to receive protection under the Swedish Aliens Act.
In 2017, 172,301 people came to Europe via the Mediterranean Sea in search of protection. In the same year, 3,119 people drowned in their attempt to reach Europe by boat. Resettlement is therefore becoming an increasingly important action in the effort to prevent people from risking their lives in an attempt to cross the Mediterranean. Going forward, part of Sweden’s selection of refugees from North Africa will take place along the central Mediterranean route. By making resettlement an option during the passage through Africa or the Middle East, the UNHCR hopes to reduce the number of such accidents.

The UNHCR recommends two additional areas of focus: Syrians located close to the Syrian border, and refugees in Africa (particularly people from Ethiopia, Eritrea, the Congo and Somalia). Furthermore, the UNHCR stresses that it is important for the Swedish resettlement programme to include places for emergency cases and prioritized cases around the world.

Preparations for resettlement
The Swedish Migration Agency endeavors to prepare those who have been selected as part of the resettlement programme before they come to Sweden. Efforts are made to disseminate information in the host countries, in the form of workshops or written materials. In the so-called “Cultural Orientation Program” or at other information events, people who have obtained residence permits can learn about the life that awaits them in Sweden, and they also have the chance to ask questions.

It has now been ten years since these preparatory initiatives were developed, and the time has therefore come for them to be reviewed again. In 2018, the Swedish Migration Agency will revise both its preparatory programs and its written materials. Meanwhile, selected refugees will receive written information about Sweden.

A great deal of the work on these preparatory programs will be undertaken within the framework of the EU-FRANK development project (European Action on Facilitating Resettlement and Refugee Admission through New Knowledge), which the Swedish Migration Agency is running in collaboration with authorities in Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Hungary and Switzerland, as well as the UNHCR, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the Migration Policy Institute think-tank.

Before travel
Before a person travels to his or her new country of residence, the IOM (International Organization for Migration) investigates whether or not he/she is fit to travel. Among other things, these investigations seek to determine whether a person is in the late stages of pregnancy, or is suffering from an illness that makes travel impossible.

The municipality that will be receiving the selected refugee will be sent settlement documentation that is based on the UNHCR’s written investigation of the person concerned. This will include information that is relevant to the person’s settlement process, such as whether the person is ill, or has any special needs. Lack of health care in the host country, and health problems that have worsened since the UNHCR performed its investigation, can mean that such settlement documentation is not always up to date.

Selections are made in two different ways
Selection of the refugees can occur either via dossier selection or via selection missions.

Less complicated cases can be settled by the Swedish Migration Agency using written materials from the UNHCR. This is referred to as dossier selection, where “dossier” refers to a file containing all information about a particular case. If the security situation in the selection country is unstable, then it may also be appropriate for the Swedish Migration Agency to examine the cases using dossiers. Supporting documentation provided by the UNHCR is generally supplemented by additional information. Case officers can also receive support from various specialists at the Swedish Migration Agency.

More complicated cases are investigated by a team from the Swedish Migration Agency. Case officers interview the people concerned on site in the host countries. This is referred to as a selection mission. The delegation normally makes decisions regarding residence permits in connection with these interviews. Cases where it is difficult to make a determination may sometimes require further investigation. It may take until the delegation has returned to Sweden before a decision is made.
The distribution of resettlement places in the 2018 resettlement program follows the UNHCR’s suggestions, and most selection areas are the same as those from 2017.
Sweden's Resettlement Programme

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SELECTION AREAS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection area</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle East, including Turkey and North Africa – mainly people from Syria</td>
<td>2,000</td>
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</table>
Sweden’s resettlement programme for 2018 has 5,000 places

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection areas</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle East – mainly people from Syria</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Africa and the Horn of Africa – mainly people from Ethiopia, Somalia, the Congo and Eritrea</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Africa (central Mediterranean route) – mainly people from Syria and people from the Central African Republic, Sudan and Eritrea</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia – mainly people from Afghanistan</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritized and urgent cases – various nationalities</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Syrian refugees still the majority

The war in Syria began with a number of incidents of unrest in the spring of 2011, and has resulted in the greatest humanitarian catastrophe of our time, according to the UN. Since the conflict broke out, the average lifespan of Syrians has dropped by 25 years. The state and civil society have collapsed to a significant degree, and the territory is now controlled by various conflicting groups.

Half of the Syrian population, twelve million people, has been displaced as a result of the conflict. Over five million of these refugees have sought protection in neighboring countries. The conflict has therefore had significant consequences for countries that share a border with Syria, particularly Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Iran and Egypt have also been affected.

The UNHCR believes that the need for resettlement in 2018 will continue to be greatest among people displaced by the war in Syria.

Over the past few years, resources have been pooled in an attempt to increase the number of resettlement places. Other similar protection initiatives for Syrians have been underway during this time as well. This work has been undertaken with support from a special cooperation group composed of the UNHCR and a number of different countries. Sweden has been an active participant in this group for many years, and a dialogue is taking place between the UNHCR and other states regarding ways to increase protection for Syrians.

The UNHCR has proposed that in 2018, Sweden should focus primarily on resettling Syrians located in countries neighboring Syria. This is reflected in the distribution of places in this year’s Swedish resettlement programme. The nature of the conflict in Syria is such that security issues and exclusion criteria need to be investigated in each case (see fact box). Selection missions are therefore used in order to select Syrian refugees for resettlement. Among the Syrian refugees that will be selected as part of the Swedish resettlement programme, it is expected that there will be many individuals in a vulnerable position, including women, children and members of minority groups. There will also be many who are close relatives of people already in Sweden.

How does the resettlement process work?

**Presentation**

65 million people are currently displaced. Out of this group, the UNHCR estimates that 1.2 million are in such vulnerable situations that they need to be moved to a third country – i.e., resettled. The UNHCR identifies those who are most in need and presents their cases to the Swedish Migration Agency. In 2018, 5,000 people will be resettled in Sweden.

**Investigation**

The Swedish Migration Agency assesses the need for protection in each case that the UNHCR presents. Only people classed as refugees, or otherwise in need of protection, under the Aliens Act can obtain a residence permit. Around 95% of those whose cases are examined are granted permanent residence permits.

**Preparations**

The Swedish Migration Agency prepares Sweden’s municipalities to receive refugees and makes arrangements for their travel to Sweden. Selected refugees are provided with information about the journey, and life in Sweden, before they depart. This often happens via the so-called “Cultural Orientation Program” which is run by staff from the Migration Agency and from a Swedish municipality.

**Travel**

The Swedish Migration Agency or a Swedish Embassy issues an exit permit or emergency alien’s passport, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) makes travel arrangements for the selected refugee. A representative from a Swedish Municipality will meet the refugee at the airport. The municipality will offer accommodation for the refugee, and then integration work can begin.
Sweden’s Resettlement Programme

**Selection areas in Africa**

1. **East Africa and the Horn of Africa** – mainly people from Somalia, Eritrea, the Congo and Ethiopia (1,000)
2. **North Africa (central Mediterranean route)** – mainly people from Syria, and people from the Central African Republic, Sudan and Eritrea (800)
The UNCHR has suggested that, for the first time, Sweden should focus on resettlement efforts along the central Mediterranean route.

Efforts along the central Mediterranean route and other efforts in Africa
The UNHCR estimates that more than half a million people in Africa are in need of resettlement, which represents an increase of 16% compared with 2017. The UNHCR has suggested that, for the first time, Sweden should also focus on resettlement efforts along the stretch of the central Mediterranean route that runs across North Africa, in addition to certain prioritized countries in East Africa and the Horn of Africa.

In July 2017, the UNHCR presented a strategy that seeks to prevent migration to Libya and the subsequent journey across the Mediterranean. Among other things, this strategy involves the resettlement of people in need of protection in countries such as Chad, Sudan and Egypt. In addition, the UNHCR is planning the evacuation of people in need of protection who are already located in Libya and in vulnerable circumstances due to the country’s security situation.

According to the UNHCR, there are many people in need of protection along the central Mediterranean route. A significant number of those who have come from the Central African Republic have been subjected to violence and torture. Because many women and children have suffered from sexual and gender-based violence, they constitute a particularly vulnerable group, both in cities and in refugee camps. Girls are at risk of female genital mutilation, for example, as well as forced marriage and rape.

Difficult situation for Eritrean refugees in Sudan
The Swedish Migration Agency has previous experience resettling refugees from Sudan, the majority of whom are Eritrean citizens. Ahead of 2018, the UNHCR emphasized the increased occurrence of kidnappings and human trafficking that affect refugees in Sudan. Combined with the very limited opportunities for refugees to build a future for themselves in Sudan, this has led the UNHCR to view resettlement as an increasingly important measure. The UNHCR observes that most recently arrived Eritrean refugees have attempted to leave the camps and move further north towards Libya, often with the help of smugglers. There is a lack of access to education in many north African countries, and the UNHCR emphasizes the problematic consequences that this has for women and girls, as many stop attending school and are at risk of being subjected to gangs, sexual violence or forced marriage.

Significant resettlement needs in East Africa and the Horn of Africa
The UNHCR also points out the need for resettlement of Ethiopians, Eritreans, Congolese and Somalis in countries such as Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda. Some of the most severe and protracted refugee situations in Africa are found in these countries. Opportunities for refugees to integrate into local communities is very limited, and it is impossible for them to return home. Many therefore attempt to move northwards through Africa and towards Europe. The Swedish Migration Agency has resettled quota refugees from these countries for many years.
Sweden’s Resettlement Programme

Asia – mainly people from Afghanistan

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia – mainly people from Afghanistan</td>
<td>300</td>
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</table>
Many Afghans are in need of resettlement
This year, the worldwide need to resettle Afghan nationals in Iran has reduced in comparison with previous years. This is partly due to the fact that other solutions have been found, such as voluntary return, local integration or temporary residence permits. In total, however, over 100,000 people in Asia are still estimated to be in need of resettlement in 2018.

The largest refugee group consists of Afghans who have traveled to either Iran or Pakistan. The Swedish Migration Agency has resettled refugees from Iran for many years. These cases have largely related to vulnerable women and children. The situation for Afghans remains difficult in Iran, where refugees risk deportation if they do not have valid permits.

More places for urgent and prioritized efforts
Sweden’s number of resettlement places for urgent cases is increasing this year from 600 to 900 places. Sweden’s contribution hereby makes up a large proportion of the total number of places for such cases worldwide. Urgent and prioritized cases are presented by the UNHCR’s Headquarters in Geneva, or by its regional offices in Amman, Nairobi or Pretoria. The organization has expressed significant gratitude to Sweden for offering these places.

The number of places for urgent cases actively helps in the evacuation of some of the most vulnerable refugees in the world. Thanks to this quota, people can be resettled to another country in a matter of days or weeks. This can have a direct, life-saving impact. Those benefiting may include, for example, refugees who risk being sent back to the countries they fled from, LGBTQ people, detainees, people who have been subjected to sexual and gender-based violence, children at risk of forced marriage, or people in need of medical care.

The number of places for urgent cases also includes places for so-called tribunal witnesses – i.e., people who have testified or will be testifying before an international court or tribunal.

Sweden’s places for urgent cases make up more than half of the total such places available within the EU.

Important to investigate matters of security and grounds for exclusion

An important aspect of the assessment of protection needs is the matter of whether the individual concerned has taken part in any action that could exclude him or her from refugee status – e.g., crimes against humanity or war crimes. It is equally important to assess whether they may constitute any kind of a risk to national security or to the safety of others. If there are well-founded reasons to suspect that this is the case, then the person will not be eligible for resettlement.

The UNHCR assesses each case from a security perspective before presenting it to the Swedish Migration Agency. The organisation has internal guidelines for this process. Individuals who may constitute a security risk are not normally presented for resettlement to any country. The priority level of their cases can also be reduced, to the benefit of others who are free of such complications. In cases where a refugee is presented for consideration, but there are indications that this person may be subject to exclusion criteria, the Swedish Migration Agency is not bound by the UNHCR’s assessment. The Swedish Migration Agency always performs its own independent review of each individual case.

All cases presented to Sweden are referred to the Swedish Security Service for consideration before a final decision on whether or not to grant a residence permit is made. In the case of selection missions, the Swedish Migration Agency performs an initial review of the cases before the delegation leaves the country. Continuous monitoring and tracking is then undertaken. In the case of dossier reviews, the Swedish Migration Agency also waits for a response from the Swedish Security Service before any decisions are made. If the Swedish Security Service objects to a certain person being granted a residence permit for reasons related to national security, then that person will no longer be considered for resettlement in Sweden.

In order to identify any indications that exclusion may be necessary, and in order to prepare for the coming investigation, the Swedish Migration Agency always carefully investigates all cases that the UNHCR presents for resettlement. If necessary, such investigations may be undertaken with support from (among others) the Agency’s exclusion specialists and country analysts. The Swedish Migration Agency’s security- or exclusion specialists also participate in selection missions when necessary.