

REVIEW 2017

Reception - Resettlement and relocation - Voluntary Return



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RECEPTION OF ASYLUM SEEKERS

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Published by: **Jean-Pierre Luxen**, Director-General | Chief Editor: **Mieke Candaële** | Coordination: **Benoît Mansy** | Layout: **Marthe De Clercq** | Photos: **Fedasil** | Translations: **Oneliner** and **Fedasil** | Printed by: Geers Offset (on recycled paper) | All rights reserved - No part of this publication may be reproduced by any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopying, film, or otherwise - without the prior written permission of the publisher | Brussels, May 2018.

Cover picture: individual housing in the public social welfare centre (CPAS) of Roeselare - © Bas Bogaerts

New terminology

Belgian legislation has been modified owing to the transposition of European directives concerning the asylum procedure and reception methods. Since 22 March 2018, the law has introduced new terminology. Now, we refer in particular to 'application for international protection' instead of 'asylum application' and 'subsequent application' instead of 'multiple asylum application'. We use the new terminology in this publication.

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FOREWORD BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

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I am delighted to share with you the 2017 review of the Federal Agency for the reception of applicants for international protection in Belgium.

The asylum crisis which we faced in 2015 and the start of 2016 and which placed Fedasil on the frontline, has now settled down in our country.

Today, we are in a 'streamlining' phase, because that is what our organisation does, having to adapt its activities to the rhythm of migratory flows. In 2017, we continued the plan to reduce the reception network: no fewer than 3,000 places were closed last year.

On request by the Federal government, this exercise is continuing in 2018 with the closure of 6,500 additional places. This decision is the logical consequence of the decrease in the number of people welcomed in the Fedasil network. The government's clear aim is to return to the capacity before the crisis - namely 16,600 places - by the start of 2019.

Therefore, 2018 is marked by this new reorganisation of our network with, in addition, the new 'arrival centre' project for applicants for international protection. A large-scale and ambitious project that will span several years.

The arrival centre is a wonderful opportunity to rethink our activities dedicated to identifying, registering and guiding newly arrived applicants for international protection. It will also allow us to facilitate and strengthen our collaboration with asylum bodies. This project should provide added value for migrants and reinforce our tradition of quality reception.

An expertise in the field of reception which, more than ever, continues to be exported. In 2017, 23 Fedasil staff members participated in a mission for EASO, the European Asylum Support Office. Most of the missions involved the hotspots in Greece and Italy, but also in Cyprus and Bulgaria. By providing its staff, Fedasil is showing its solidarity with EU countries that are subject to a high level of migratory pressure. Our experts are hailed regularly for their professionalism, motivation and skills. I am particularly proud of them.

Moreover, you will also find in this 2017 Review the most recent developments regarding the resettlement and relocation of migrants in Belgium as well as the evolution of voluntary returns to countries of origin.

Jean-Pierre Luxen,
14 May 2018

RECEPTION OF APPLICANTS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

The arrival of applicants for international protection in Belgium stabilised in 2017. More than 20,000 people presented themselves to Fedasil's Dispatching service – namely a 10% decrease compared to 2016 but half as many as in 2015, a record year for arrivals.

Syria is the first country of origin of applicants who arrived in 2017 (a quarter of the arrivals), in particular via refugee resettlement and migrant relocation programmes. The other main countries of origin were Afghanistan, Guinea and Iraq.

Drop in occupation

Throughout 2017 (with the exception of December), there were fewer arrivals than departures in the reception network. Therefore, the number of people welcomed fell steadily from 22,900 (start of January) to 17,800 people (end of December). The occupancy rate fell from 86% to 76%.

The reception network reduction plan, decided by the Federal government in 2016, continued in 2017 with the closure of individual housing

managed by the NGOs (Ciré, Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen) and the closure of the centres in Dendermonde and Lubbeek.

At the end of 2017, the network offered a total of 23,300 reception places, namely a decrease of 3,000 places compared to the end of 2016. The aim for 2019, is to regain the 'structural' reception capacity of the pre-crisis level of 2015, corresponding to 16,600 places.

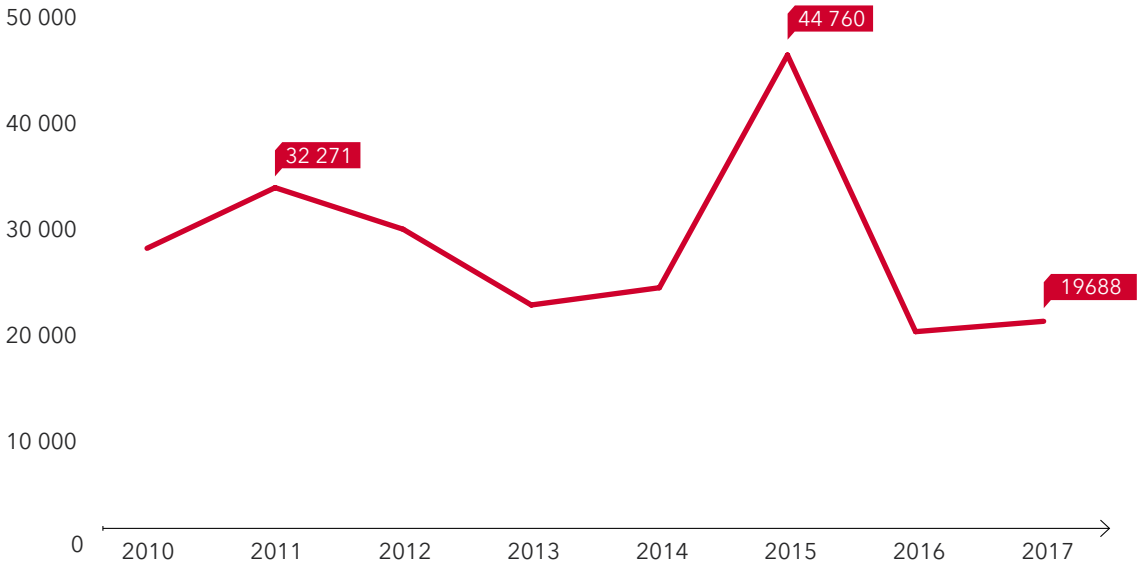
Unaccompanied minors

The arrival of unaccompanied foreign minors (UM) was also stable in 2017 with around 70 young people/month. The capacity for UM decreased slightly and 'UM' places were converted into adult places. At the end of 2017, Fedasil and its partners had 2,341 places for these young people.

The young people accommodated are mainly boys from Afghanistan aged from 16-17 years.

[More information is available at www.fedasil.be](http://www.fedasil.be)

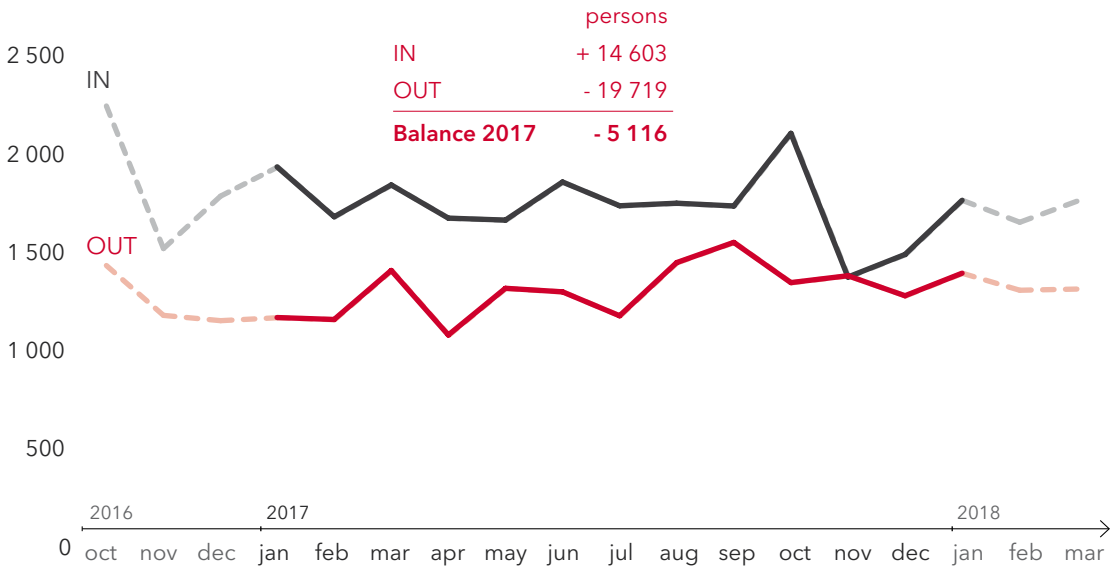
Evolution of applications for international protection (number of persons) in Belgium 2010-2017 (source CGRS)



Reception applications at the Fedasil Dispatching in 2017



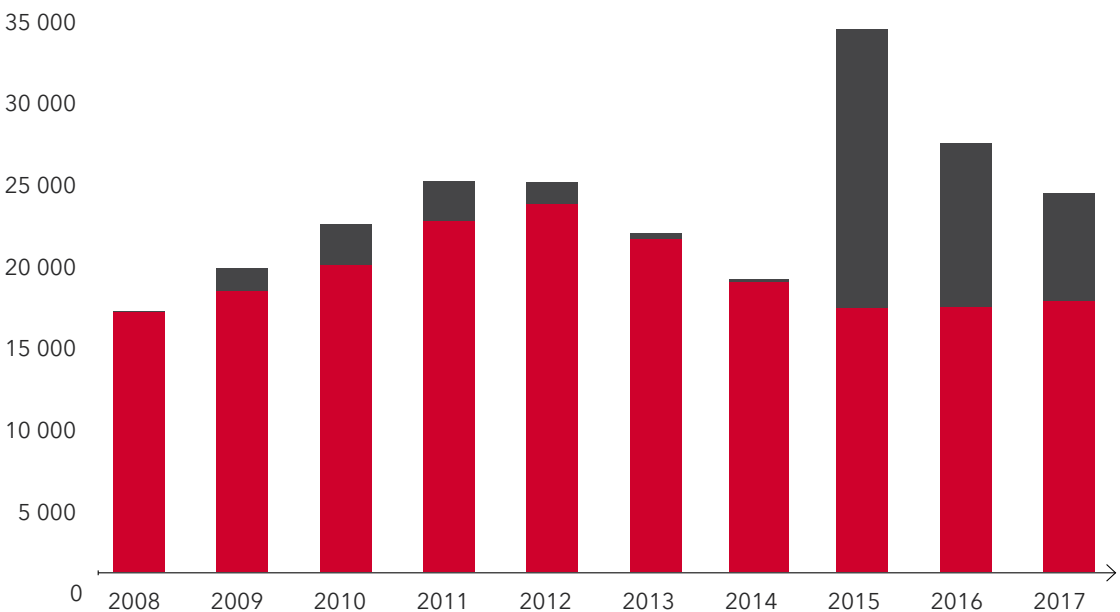
Reception network arrivals (IN) and departures (OUT) in 2017



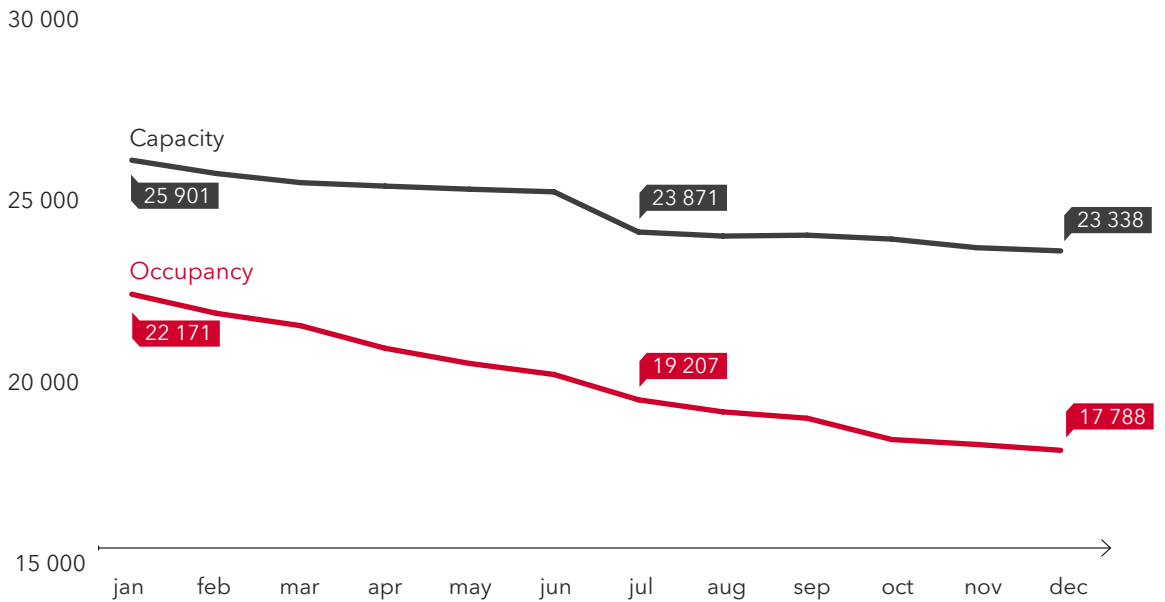
Evolution of the reception capacity / 2008-2017

Situation end of December of each year

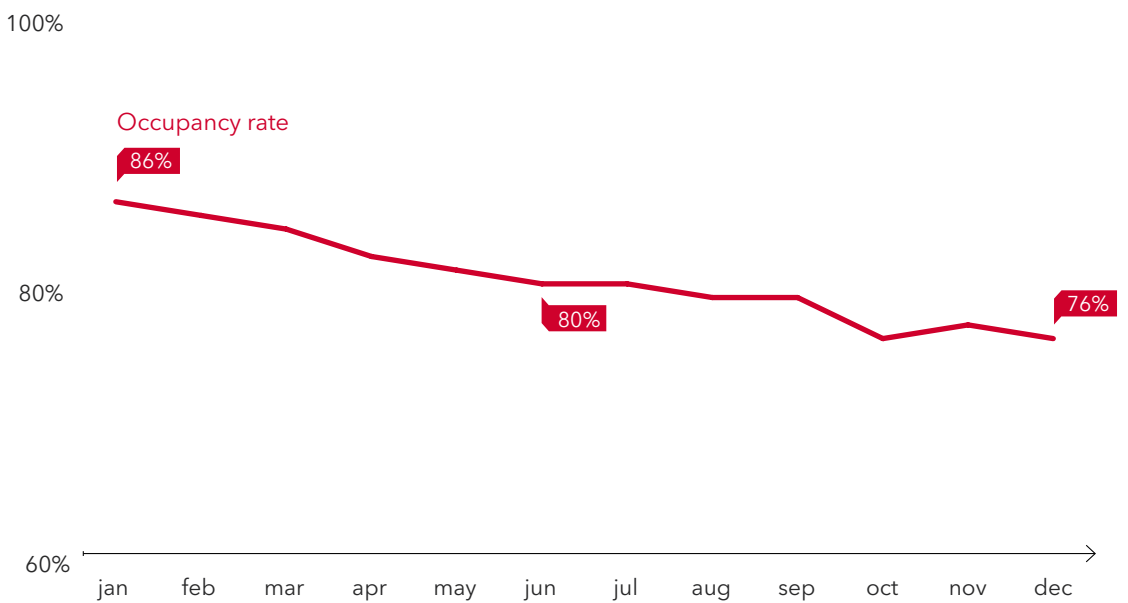
- Structural reception capacity
- Temporary reception capacity (including emergency/transit) and spare capacity



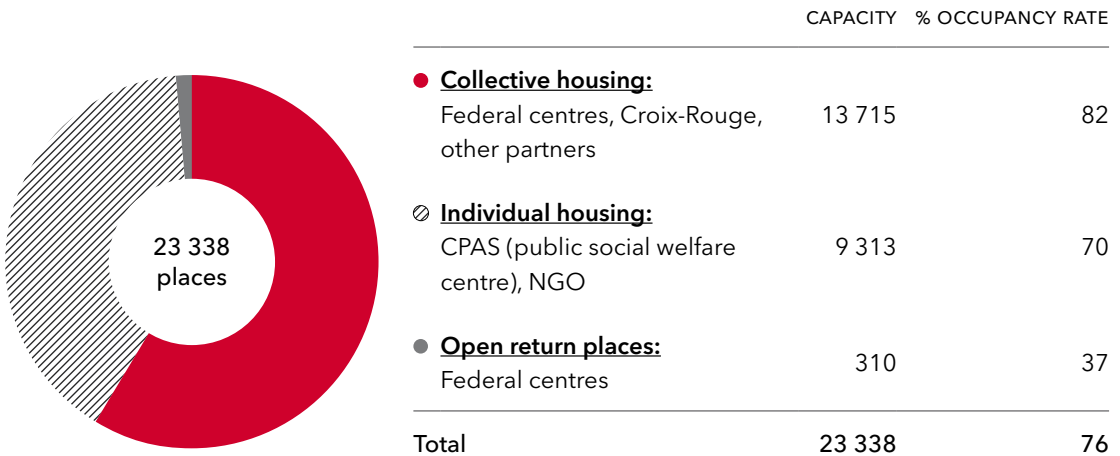
Evolution of the reception capacity and the occupancy in 2017



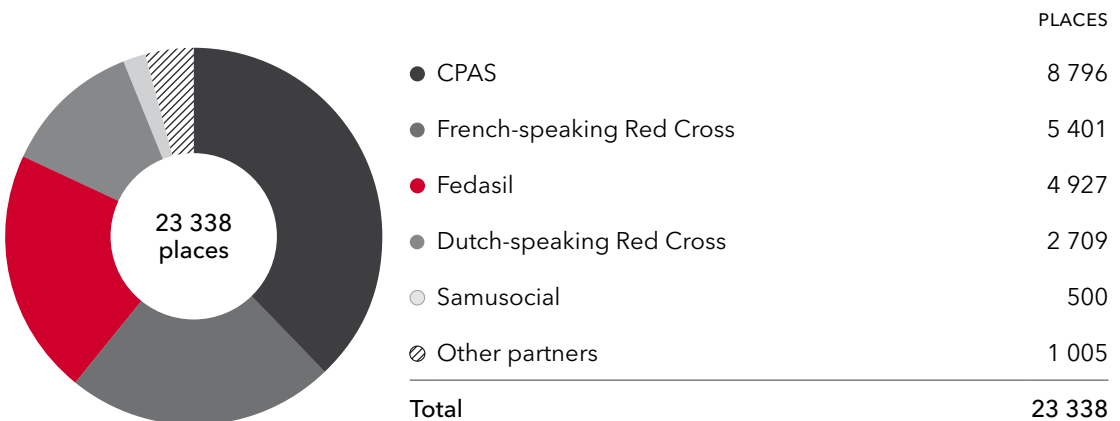
Evolution of the occupancy rate in 2017



Capacity and occupancy by reception structure / end 2017



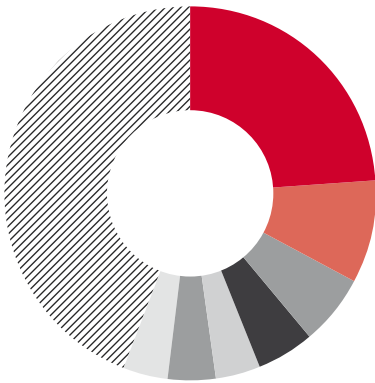
Reception network: capacity per partner / end 2017



Profile of the persons who arrived in 2017

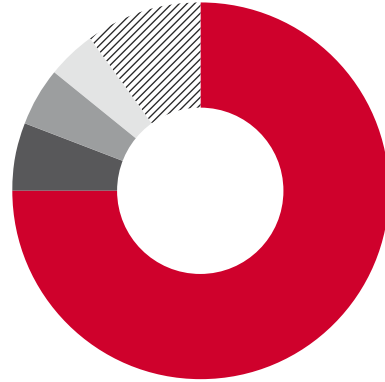


	%
● Families	50
● Single men	34
● Single women	8
⊘ UM (Unaccompanied foreign minors)	9



	%
● Syria	24
● Afghanistan	9
● Guinea	6
● Iraq	5
○ Eritrea	4
● Albania	4
○ Palestine	4
⊘ Others	44

Profile of the persons accommodated / end 2017



	%
● Applicants for international protection (including UM) whose application is being processed	75
● Persons with a residence permit	6
● Resettled refugees	5
○ Persons in open return places	4
⊘ Others	10

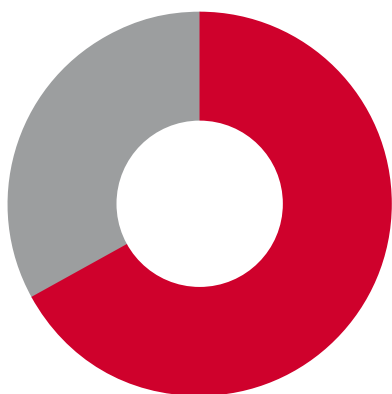
Profile of the persons accommodated / end 2017



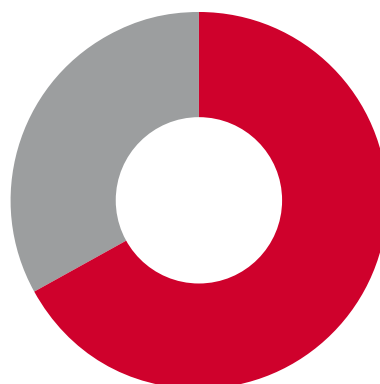
	%
● Families	50
● Single men	36
● Single women	6
⊘ UM (Unaccompanied foreign minors)	8



	%
● Afghanistan	27
● Syria	13
● Iraq	9
● Guinea	5
○ Russia	3
○ Congo (DRC)	3
● Palestine	3
● Eritrea	3
⊘ Others	34



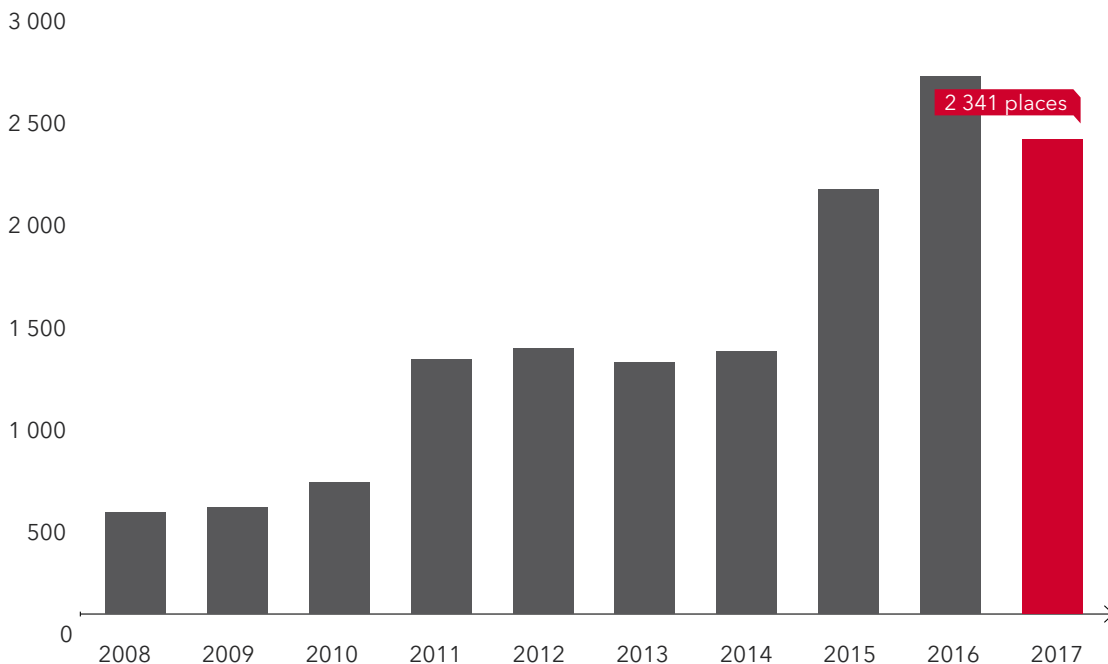
	%
● Men	67
● Women	33



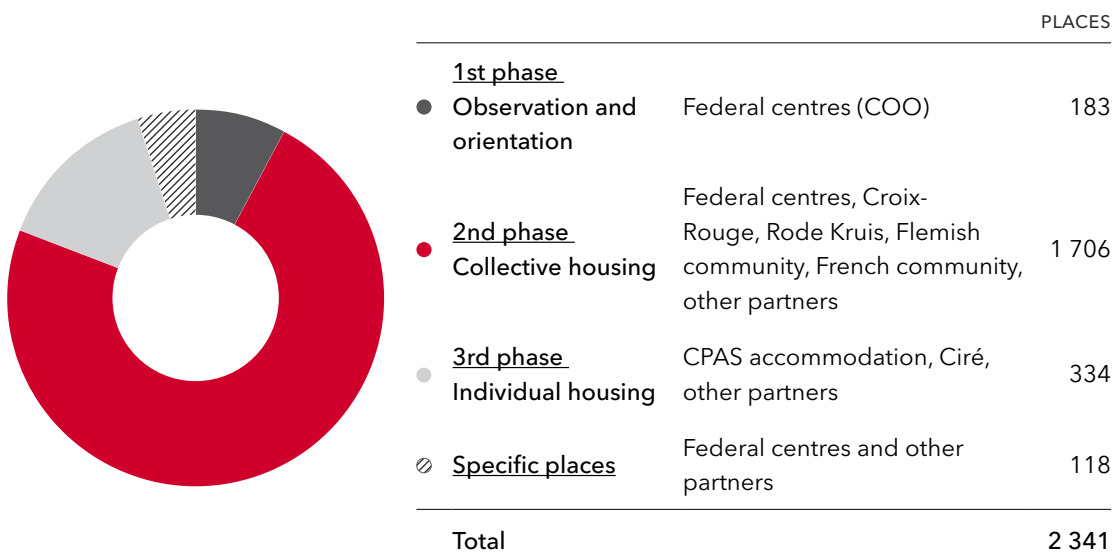
	%
● Adults	67
● Minors	33

Evolution of the reception capacity for foreign unaccompanied minors (UM) / 2008-2017

Situation end of December of each year



UM: capacity by reception phase / fin 2017

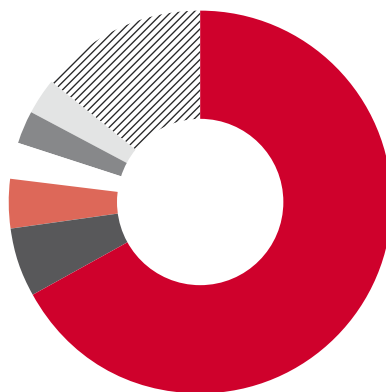


UM: capacity per partner/ end 2017



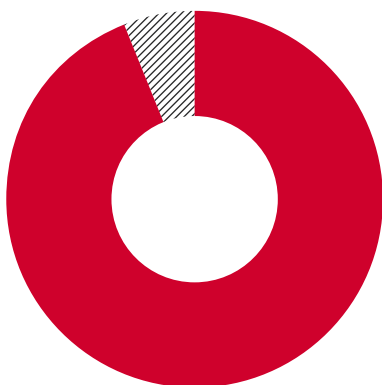
	PLACES
● Fedasil	819
● French-speaking Red Cross	625
● CPAS	221
● Dutch-speaking Red Cross	213
● Flemish community	145
● French community	130
⊘ Others	188
Total	2 341

Profile of the accommodated UM / end 2017



	PLACES
● Afghanistan	67
● Guinea	6
● Eritrea	4
● Albania	3
● Somalia	3
● Syria	3
⊘ Other countries	14

Profile of the accommodated UM / fin 2017



	%
● Boys	94
⊘ Girls	6



	PLACES
● 17 years and more	48
● 16 years	28
● 15 years	15
● 14 years	5
⊘ 13 years and less	4

RESETTLEMENT AND RELOCATION

The number of migrants arriving in Belgium via the resettlement programme and the relocation mechanism increased greatly with a total of 2,208 people who received reception in 2017 compared to 652 in 2016.

Resettlements on the rise

Since 2013, Belgium has had a structural resettlement programme and, every year, is committed to taking in a contingent of refugees with little or no integration prospects in their first reception country.

In 2017, 1,309 refugees arrived in Belgium in the frame of the resettlement programme, namely three times more than in 2016. 90% of refugees are Syrian who had fled to Syria's neighbouring countries to escape the war (Turkey, Lebanon, etc.). The others are a group of Congolese refugees in Uganda.

More information is available at
www.resettlement.be

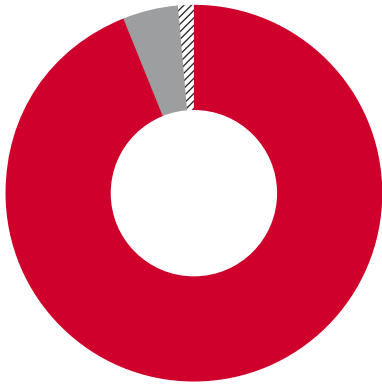
Relocation from Greece and Italy

The relocation of applicants for international protection is a mechanism which was implemented by the European Union at the end of 2015 to relieve the burden on the Member States which are under high migratory pressure. The aim is to spread the applicants registered in Italy and Greece between the different Member States.

In 2017, 899 migrants arrived in Belgium: 514 from Greece (mainly Syrians) and 385 from Italy (mainly Eritreans).

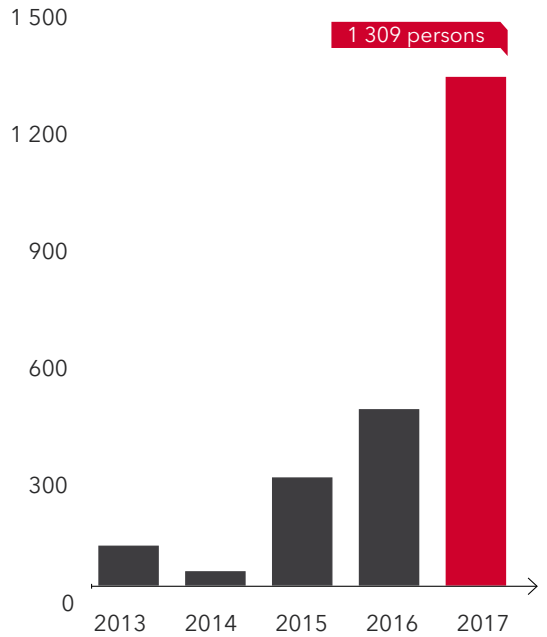
The resettlement and relocation programmes benefit from European funding (AMIF fund).

Profile of the refugees resettled in Belgium in 2017



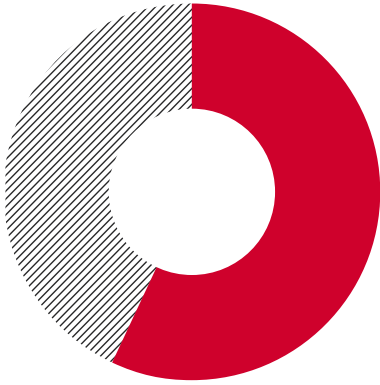
	PERSONS
● Families	1262
● Single men	34
▨ Single women	13
Total	1309

resettled refugees in Belgium (2013-2017)



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	INITIAL COUNTRY OF RECEPTION	PERSONS
● Syria	Turkey	721
● Syria	Lebanon	299
● Syria	Jordan	156
● Syria	Iraq	15
● Congo (DRC)	Uganda	118
Total		1 309

Relocated applicants for international protection in Belgium in 2017



RECEPTION COUNTRY (IN EU)	PERSONS
● Greece	514
⊘ Italy	385
Total	899

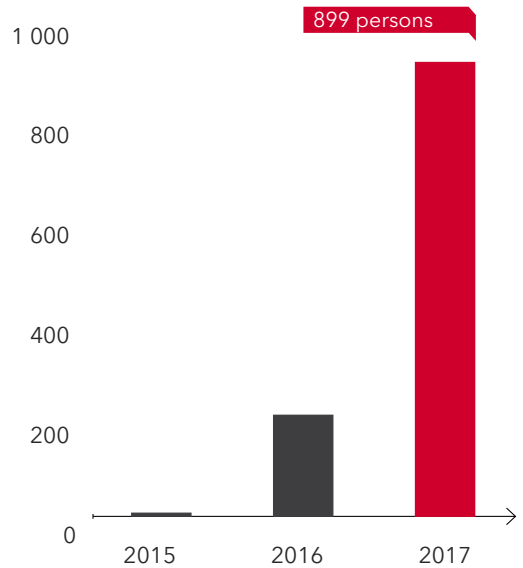


PROFILE	PERSONS
● Families	520
○ Single men	282
● Single women	71
⊘ UM	26
Total	899



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	PERSONS
● Syria	522
○ Eritrea	358
● Iraq	11
⊘ Others	8
Total	899

Relocated applicants for international protection in Belgium (2015-2017)



VOLUNTARY RETURN

In 2017, Belgium organised 320 voluntary returns per month on average, representing a total of 3,827 migrants returned to their country of origin. More than 40% of them benefited from additional aid to facilitate their reintegration into the country.

Decrease in returns

Compared to 2016, a 10% decrease was recorded in the number of people returned. This decrease can be explained partly by the fall in the arrival of applicants for international protection registered in 2016 and 2017. Therefore, there are proportionally fewer migrants requesting a voluntary return from Belgium.

In 2017, the decrease in departures mainly concerned Iraqi and Afghan applicants.

Focus on illegal migrants

However, an increase has been seen in returns by illegal immigrants. These are mainly Ukrainians and Romanians, who never submitted an application for protection in Belgium.

Fedasil and its partners continue to pay particular attention to illegal immigrants. New partnerships have started with associations in contact with migrant communities. Fedasil also informed more than 1,600 frontline workers in contact with these migrants about voluntary return.

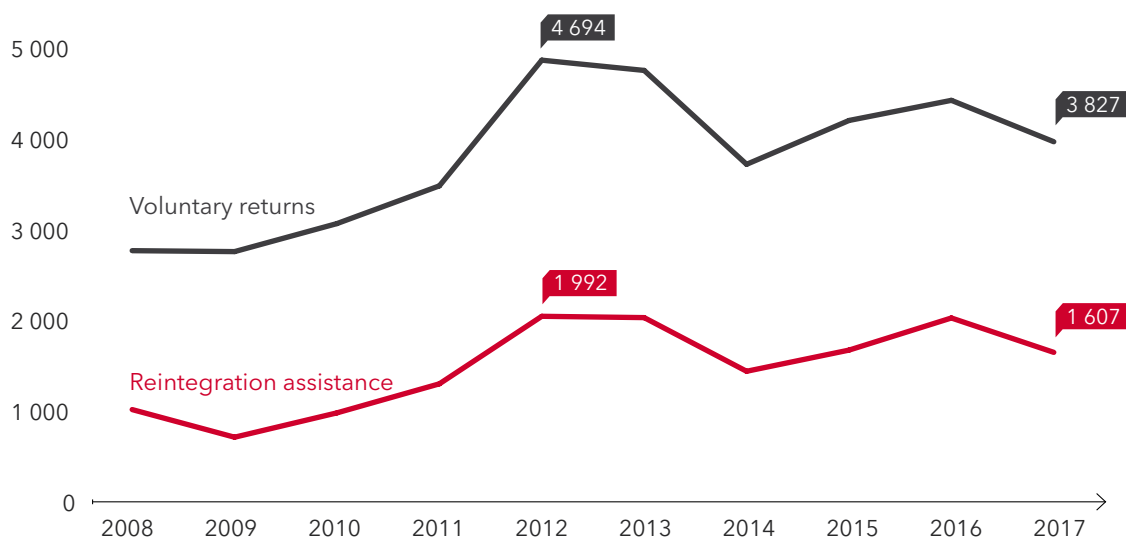
Fedasil return desks

In order to reach migrants who are not in the reception network, Fedasil has five return desks, which organise services to answer their questions and plan a possible return. Return desks are located in cities (Brussels, Ghent, Liege, Antwerp and Charleroi).

The Fedasil advisors provided support for 50% of the people who returned in 2017. The other candidates for return were supported by our partners. The Belgian voluntary return programme benefits from European funding from the AMIF fund.

[More information is available at
www.voluntaryreturn.be/en](http://www.voluntaryreturn.be/en)

Overview of voluntary returns from Belgium (number of returnees) / 2008-2017



Comment

Since 2013, the figures also include the voluntary returns organised by the Immigration Office: 205 in 2013, 141 in 2014, 67 in 2015, 47 in 2016, 83 in 2017. Furthermore, these figures do not include voluntary returns carried out within the framework of the Dublin Convention to the European countries where migrants have already applied for international protection, and which are organised by the Immigration Office.

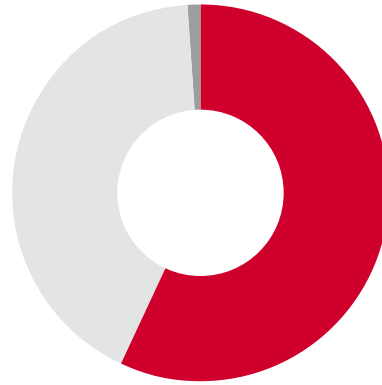
Countries of destination in 2017

PERSONS WHO RETURNED (WITH OR WITHOUT REINTEGRATION)		PERSONS WHO RETURNED WITH REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE	
Ukraine	906	Iraq	352
Romania	624	Georgia	263
Iraq	377	Ukraine	171
Brasil	285	Albania	85
Georgia	282	Russia	81
Albania	134	Afghanistan	51
Mongolia	106	Kosovo	49
Kosovo	91	Armenia	47
Russia	88	Morocco	44
Slovakia	79	Serbia	39
Others	855	Others	425
Total	3 827	Total	1607

Profile of the returnees in 2017



	PERSONS
● Applicants for international protection	704
○ Rejected applicants for international protection	938
⊘ Irregular migrants	2185
Total	3 827



	PERSONS
● Single men and women	2175
○ Families	1618
● Unaccompanied minors	34
Total	3 827

Fedasil is in charge of the reception of applicants for international protection in Belgium and guarantees the quality and conformity of the different reception structures. Fedasil also coordinates the organisation of voluntary returns to the countries of origin.

This review presents the events and statistics for 2017 for reception, resettlement, relocation and voluntary returns. The latest information and news about our organisation can be found on our website, www.fedasil.be.

www.fedasil.be