

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Abdullah SEDIQI

Taekwondo



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	25 December 1996
Country of Origin:	Afghanistan
Residence:	Antwerp, Belgium

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Taekwondo
Event:	-68kg
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	2 nd place at 2019 Spanish Open (ESP)
Coach:	Alireza Nassrazadani (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Host NOC:	Comité Olympique et Interfédéral Belge

BACKGROUND

Abdullah is a taekwondo athlete and became a refugee in 2017, when he was forced to flee Afghanistan, in search of safety. He began practising taekwondo at the age of 8, and achieved a range of impressive tournament results when living in Afghanistan, securing first place at the Open Middle Asia 2011, Bahrein Open G1 2013, and the ILYO Open 2017. Abdullah now lives in Belgium, where he has continued his winning streak, winning first place at the International Brussels Cup 2017 and Tess Cup 2017. More recently, he won silver at the 2019 Spanish Open.

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Ahmad ALIKAJ

Judo



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	5 June 1991
Country of origin:	Syria
Residence:	Hamburg, Germany

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Judo
Discipline:	Mixed team
Best performance (in last 2 years):	N/A
Coach:	Fadi Darwish
Host:	IJF – Germany

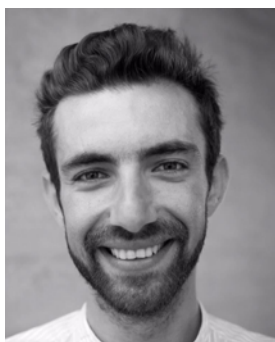
BACKGROUND

Ahmad Alikaj was born in Syria, where he grew up before the war broke out. The 29 year-old judoka is now living and training in Germany and competes in the -73kg category. He was included in the IJF Refugee Team at the 2019 Budapest Grand Prix and participated in the 2019 World Championships in Tokyo, as well as the Paris Grand Slam and Düsseldorf Grand Slam in 2020.

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Ahmad Badreddin WAIS

Cycling



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	15 January 1991
Country of Origin:	Syria
Residence:	Switzerland

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Cycling
Event:	Time Trial
Best Performance (In last 2 years):	9 th at Asian Championships 2019
Coach:	Felix Köhler
Host NOC:	Swiss Olympic Association

BACKGROUND

Badreddin was born in Aleppo and lived with his family as the youngest of six siblings. Following the lead of two of his brothers, he began cycling at the age of 14 and, as his talent began to show, he moved to Damascus to live with the national team and study sports science in Homs.

From 2008 to 2014, he became a national and regional success. He was the most successful junior rider in Syria, winning the Arabic Championship road race and the Syrian Championships. He was also the first junior to participate in the World Championships for Syria. His biggest influence was his older brother Samer, who was by now the national juniors coach.

With the outbreak of war, life became far more difficult and, in 2014, he decided he had no choice but to flee, and arrived in Switzerland after a long journey. He was welcomed by a friend and his family in Lausanne. He continues to train as a cyclist in Switzerland and also hopes to study sports science.

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Aker AL OBAIDI

Wrestling



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	21 September 1999
Country of Origin:	Iraq
Residence:	Austria

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Wrestling
Discipline:	Greco-Roman -67kg
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	3 rd at European Junior Championships 2019 (ESP)
Coach:	Benedikt "Mo" Ernst
Host NOC:	Österreichisches Olympisches Comité

BACKGROUND

Aker is an Iraqi refugee who grew up in Mosul with a wrestling trainer for a father who ran his own club. He fled Mosul when ISIS began recruiting young men in the city and escaped to Iraqi Kurdistan, where he had to leave his family behind and travel onwards. At age 17, after being granted subsidiary protection in 2016, he competed alongside the Austrian juniors at an international event in Riga and secured a gold in Juniors at the event. Now he trains seven times a week at the local wrestling club, Ringer Sport Club Inzing, and helps train local children. The head of the club assisted Aker with finding accommodation in the small mountain town. He most recently won bronze at the U20 European Sporting Championships 2019 in Spain.

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Alaa Maso

Swimming



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	1 January 2000
Country of Origin:	Syria
Residence:	Hannover, Germany

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Swimming
Event:	50m M freestyle
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	23.13 at 2021 German Olympic Trials (GER)
Coach:	Emil Guliyev (Germany)
Host NOC:	Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund

BACKGROUND

Alaa lived in Aleppo with his family, and began swimming at an early age thanks to his father, who became a swimming coach following his retirement from the army. Alaa trained as a swimmer and triathlete and knew fellow refugee swimmer Yusra Mardini when they were both young.

Alaa left Syria in 2015 after his training facilities were damaged and he felt the pressure of the conflict all around him. Following a long journey through Europe, he settled in Germany and began swimming training once again with Emil Guliyev. He has also returned to school and is making up on the years lost due to his flight from Syria.

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Anjelina Nadai LOHALITH

Athletics



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	1 January 1995
Country of origin:	South Sudan
Residence:	Ngong Hills, Kenya

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Athletics
Discipline:	Track – 1500m
Best performance (in last 2 years):	4:38.33 at 2021 Nairobi race (KEN)
Coach:	Joseph Domongole (Kenya)
Host:	Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation

BACKGROUND

Anjelina arrived in Kakuma with her aunt in 2002 after escaping South Sudan because of the war. While at high school, she participated in many running competitions. In 2015, one of her teachers told her that she should participate in a 10km run organised by the Tegla Loroupe Foundation. Based on her promising results, she was selected and has been training with the Foundation ever since. She was selected to compete in the Olympic Games Rio 2016.

In 2018, Anjelina was selected to join other young people from around the world in the first ever “Sports at the Service of Humanity – Young Leaders Mentoring Programme” ahead of the International Olympic Committee’s Olympism in Action Forum and the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Since her participation in the Olympic Games Rio 2016, she has become a mother.

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Aram Mahmoud

Badminton



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	15 July 1997
Country of Origin:	Syria
Residence:	Netherlands

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Badminton
Discipline:	Men's Singles
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	1 st at Latvia International 2019
Coach:	Kian Tan (Malaysia)
Host NOC:	Comi Nederlands Olympisch Comité* Nederlandse Sport Federatie

BACKGROUND

Aram is a badminton player who was forced to flee war-torn Syria after he could no longer safely go to school or continue his training. He and his sister used to play for the Syrian national team, on which they secured a silver in doubles at the Bahrain International Tournament U19.

Now pursuing his sporting goals in the Netherlands, Aram is excelling in his badminton career, most recently reaching the quarter-finals at the 2019 Portuguese International Championships. He considers himself incredibly lucky to have found his current club at the Holbaek Centre of Excellence, which helped him settle into his new life, meet new people and return to his sport.

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Cyrille FAGAT TCHATCHET II

Weightlifting



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	1 August 1995
Country of Origin:	Cameroon
Residence:	Great Britain

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Weightlifting
Discipline:	-96kg
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	British record in 94kg, 96kg and 102kg categories
Coach:	Shyam Chavda (Great Britain)
Host NOC:	British Olympic Association

BACKGROUND

Cyrille came to the UK from Cameroon in 2014. Whilst waiting for his asylum claim to be assessed, Cyrille had some difficult times, and says weightlifting saved him from some of his lowest moments. Three years after his asylum claim was approved, he now has multiple British weightlifting records under his belt, including having won the British, English and BUCS weightlifting championships for 2017, 2018 and 2019. He recently graduated with a first-class degree in Mental Health Nursing from Middlesex University and sees caring for others as a way of “giving back”. He now hopes to begin doing a master’s degree alongside his training.

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Dina POURYOUNES LANGEROUDI

Taekwondo



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	1 January 1992
Country of Origin:	Islamic Republic of Iran
Residence:	The Hague, Netherlands

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Taekwondo
Event:	-49kg
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	1 st place at 2021 Sofia Open (BUL)
Coach:	Manni Zarei & Ramin Padidar (Netherlands)
Host NOC:	Comi Nederlands Olympisch Comité* Nederlandse Sport Federatie

BACKGROUND

Dina was forced to flee Iran in 2015, but continues to pursue her sporting career as a taekwondo athlete in her new home in The Netherlands. Dina has racked up an impressive amount of 34 world ranking medals since she began competing in 2015.

She was the silver medallist at the European Senior Championships in 2018 in Kazan. She was the winner of the Turkish Open 2017 and 2018 and the winner of the Dutch Open 2018 and 2019, two of the toughest ranking tournaments in the world.

She won three silver medals in 2020 at world ranking tournaments: Fujaiarah Open, Helsingborg Open and the Dutch Open. She is number 4 in the world ranking as of June 2021. She says sport is essential for her physical and mental health.

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Dorian KELETELA

Athletics



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	6 February 1999
Country of origin:	Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville)
Residence:	Lisbon, Portugal

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Athletics
Discipline:	Track – 100m
Best performance (in last 2 years):	10.46 at 2020 Lisbon race (POR)
Coach:	Francis Obikwelu (Portugal)
Host NOC:	Comité Olímpico de Portugal

BACKGROUND

Dorian Keletela became an orphan when he was just a teenager. Having moved to live with his aunt, he was then forced to flee at age 17, eventually making his way to Portugal. He only started running at the age of 15, so he feels he has a lot of possibilities ahead of him, and now trains three hours a day, six days a week in pursuit of a place on the Refugee Olympic Team.

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Eldric SELLA RODRIGUEZ

Boxing



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	24 January 1997
Country of Origin:	Venezuela
Residence:	Trinidad and Tobago

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Boxing
Discipline:	-75 kg
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	2 nd at 2019 National Championship of Trinidad and Tobago
Coach:	Edward Sella
Host NOC:	Trinidad and Tobago Olympic Committee

BACKGROUND

Born in Caracas, Venezuela, Eldric used to live with his parents, older brother and younger sister in the popular “23 de Enero” neighbourhood. He finished school but decided not to go to university in order to focus on his boxing career, which allowed him to secure a place on the national team. Despite the fact he didn’t continue with his studies, he considers himself as a person who is passionate about knowledge and always tries to keep learning.

The uncertainty of the life that he and his family lived in Venezuela, the increase in violence and the humanitarian crisis made him and his girlfriend leave the country to find a safer place to live, in Trinidad and Tobago. He has now been joined by his father, who is his coach, and he is training with full dedication and commitment to fulfilling his dream: taking part in the Olympic Games.

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Hamoon DERAFSHIPOUR

Karate



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	22 September 1992
Country of Origin:	Islamic Republic of Iran
Residence:	Canada

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Karate
Event:	-67kg
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	Bronze at World League 2019
Coach:	Samira Malekipour (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Host NOC:	Canadian Olympic Committee

BACKGROUND

Hamoon started practising karate when he was 7 years old. Since then, he has never stopped and has just followed his dreams. During his long career, he has achieved impressive results, such as a bronze medal at the Karate World Championships in 2018, two Asian Championships titles, and several other medals, including three golds and three bronze in the Karate1 Premier League Championship.

For personal and security reasons, he had to leave his country to move to Canada, where he is now living and training with his wife. Now working in an automotive company, Hamoon continues training with a full commitment to fulfilling his dream: participation in the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, in which karate will feature for the first time.

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Jamal Abdelmaji EISA MOHAMMED

Athletics



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth: 25 August 1993

Country of origin: Sudan

Residence: Tel Aviv, Israel

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport: Athletics

Discipline: Track - 5000m

Best performance (in last 2 years): 13:54.28 at 2019 Heusden-Zolder (BEL)

Coach: Yuval Carmi (Israel)

Host NOC: The Olympic Committee of Israel

BACKGROUND

When Jamal was just 8 years old, he fled his home in Darfur as a teenager – parting with his mother and siblings – and travelled through Egypt and the Sinai Desert before finally reaching Israel, where he was granted refugee protection. In his new home, it was the Alley Runners Club, a sports club in Tel Aviv providing opportunities to underprivileged athletes, that helped him get on his feet and on the tracks. Jamal credits the club with helping him integrate into a new country, teaching him Hebrew and serving as a strong support network for him.

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Paulo Amotun LOKORO

Athletics



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	1 st January 1992
Country of origin:	South Sudan
Residence:	Ngong Hills, Kenya

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Athletics
Discipline:	Track – 1500m
Best performance (in last 2 years):	3:44.10 at 2019 Nairobi race (KEN)
Coach:	Joseph Domongole (Kenya)
Host:	Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation

BACKGROUND

Paulo took care of his family's cattle prior to fleeing to Kenya in March 2006 in order to escape war and join his mother, who had been at the Kakuma camp since 2004.

While in the Kakuma camp, Paulo went to school and participated in many sports. In 2015, the Tegla Loroupe Foundation came to Kakuma and organised athletics trials. He participated and performed well enough to join the Foundation. He has been there ever since, and competed in the Olympic Games Rio 2016 in the IOC Refugee Olympic Team.

After Rio, Paulo has represented refugees at a number of international events, including racing for the Athlete Refugee Team at the 5th Asian Indoor Games in 2017, the 2018 IAAF World Half Marathon Championships, the 2018 Africa Senior Athletics Championships and the 2019 UNICEF Harmony Marathon in Geneva.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Javad MAHJOUB

Judo



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	26 May 1991
Country of origin:	Islamic Republic of Iran
Residence:	Montreal, Canada

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Judo
Discipline:	Mixed team
Best performance (in last 2 years):	N/A
Coach:	Fadi Darwish
Host NOC:	IJF – Canada

BACKGROUND

Javad was born in Iran before he fled his country. He is now living and training in Canada. Javad has a long list of impressive sporting results, such as multiple silver or bronze medals at Grand Prix events and two victories at the European Open, as well as winning a Grand Slam in Moscow.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Kimia ALIZADEH ZENOZI

Taekwondo



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	10 July 1998
Country of Origin:	Islamic Republic of Iran
Residence:	Aschaffenburg, Germany

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Taekwondo
Event:	-57kg
Best Performance:	Bronze medallist at Olympic Games Rio 2016 (BRA)
Coach:	Davoud Falahatgar Etminani (Great Britain)
Host NOC:	Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund

BACKGROUND

A bronze medallist for her country at the Olympic Games Rio 2016 in the -57kg taekwondo category, Kimia is now training and living in Germany with her husband.

Kimia has an impressive and long list of sports results. Among other things, she won a gold medal at the Youth Olympic Games Nanjing 2014. She also won bronze and silver medals at the World Taekwondo Championships in 2015 and 2017 respectively.

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Luna SOLOMON

Shooting



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	1 January 1994
Country of Origin:	Eritrea
Residence:	Switzerland

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Shooting
Discipline:	10m Air Rifle
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	PB 607.1 points
Coach:	Niccolo Campriani (Italy)
Host NOC:	Swiss Olympic Association

BACKGROUND

Luna is an Eritrean refugee who fled her country and arrived in Switzerland in 2015. She is the proud mum of a little boy. While living in Lausanne, she met Niccolo Campriani, an Italian three-time Olympic champion sport shooter, who offered her the chance to take up his discipline, air rifle. After a day of trials, she was given the opportunity to train for the Olympic Games and joined a trio of refugees and asylum seekers under Nicco's guidance. Luna is currently training three to four days a week in Lausanne and aiming for the Olympic minimum qualification score to reach the eligibility requirements and become a member of the team for Tokyo 2020.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Masomah ALI ZADA

Cycling



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	11 March 1996
Country of Origin:	Afghanistan
Residence:	France

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Cycling
Discipline:	Time Trial
Best Performance (In last 2 years):	2 nd at Raimon Martin race in 2020 (FRA)
Coach:	Thierry Communal & Jérôme Lambert
Host NOC:	Comité National Olympique et Sportif Français

BACKGROUND

Masomah is originally from Afghanistan, but spent her early years in exile in Iran. Following her return to Kabul, she went to high school and university to study sport. She also worked as a sports teacher, and started cycling with a group of other young women, despite disapproval from conservative parts of society. As a member of the Hazara minority, this made things even more difficult for Masomah, but her group became famous and she joined the national cycling team.

In 2016, the pressure from certain parts of society became too strong, and her family left Afghanistan and claimed asylum in France. She is now studying civil engineering in the second year of university in Lille, where she lives with her sister Zahra, while training hard to become a member of the IOC Refugee Olympic Team for Tokyo 2020. Arte, a French TV channel, did a documentary called “Les Petites Reines de Kaboul” featuring Masomah and her fellow athletes.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Muna DAHOUK

Judo



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth: 27 August 1995
Country of origin: Syria
Residence: Hertogenbosch, Netherlands

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport: Judo
Discipline: Mixed team
Best performance (in last 2 years): N/A
Coach: Fadi Darwish
Host NOC: IJF – Netherlands

BACKGROUND

Muna Dahouk fled from Syria in 2018 to join her mum in the Netherlands. She started judo in Damascus when she was only six, with her sister – who also still competes in judo – thanks to their dad, who was a judo teacher. She never stopped and now competes in the -63kg category. Besides a sporting career, she studied physical education. She was included in the IJF Refugee Team at the 2019 Budapest Grand Prix, and participated in the Paris Grand Slam and Düsseldorf Grand Slam in 2020.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Nigara SHAHEEN

Judo



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	7 July 1993
Country of origin:	Afghanistan
Residence:	Ekaterinburg, Russia

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Judo
Discipline:	Mixed team
Best performance (in last 2 years):	N/A
Coach:	Fadi Darwish
Host NOC:	IJF – Russia

BACKGROUND

Born in Afghanistan, Nigara is a judoka competing in the -70kg category. She started practising judo when she was 11, living as a refugee in Peshawar, Pakistan, as practising martial arts was a family tradition.

She is studying international trade at the university in Ekaterinburg, and is aiming to get her master's degree.

As a member of the IJF Refugee Team, she participated in the Düsseldorf Grand Slam in 2020 and the Kazan Grand Slam in 2021.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

James Nyang CHIENGJIEK

Athletics



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	2 March 1988
Country of origin:	South Sudan
Residence:	Ngong Hills, Kenya

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Athletics
Discipline:	Track – 800m
Best performance (in last 2 years):	1:54.95 at 2019 Nairobi race (KEN)
Coach:	Joseph Domongole (Kenya)
Host:	Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation

BACKGROUND

James is from Bentiu, South Sudan. His father was a soldier who died in 1999 during the war. When he was a young boy, James took care of cattle. He escaped from South Sudan when the war broke out as he was at risk of being forced to participate in the war by the army. He arrived in Kenya in 2002 and integrated into the Kakuma Refugee camp where he was supported by UNHCR. He went to school and started running there. UNHCR persuaded him to participate in a selection process to join the Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation in 2015, and he has been training there ever since.

In addition to taking part in various international athletics competitions, James also competed in the Olympic Games Rio 2016 as part of the Refugee Olympic Team.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Popole MISENGA

Judo



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	25 February 1992
Country of origin:	Democratic Republic of the Congo
Residence:	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Judo
Discipline:	Mixed team
Best performance (in last 2 years):	2 nd Round at 2019 Osaka Grand Slam (JPN)
Coach:	Geraldo Bernardes (BRA)
Host NOC:	Comitê Olímpico do Brasil

BACKGROUND

Popole is originally from Bukavu, the area most affected by the DRC civil war from 1998 to 2003. As a professional judoka, he represented the Democratic Republic of the Congo in international competitions. After years of difficult training conditions, he decided to seek asylum in Brazil during the World Judo Championships in Rio in 2013. He currently trains at the Instituto Reação in Rio de Janeiro.

He competed in the Olympic Games Rio 2016 as a member of the Refugee Olympic Team.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Rose Nathike LIKONYEN

Athletics



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	1 January 1993
Country of origin:	South Sudan
Residence:	Ngong Hills, Kenya

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Athletics
Discipline:	Track – 800m
Best performance (in last 2 years):	2:13.39 at 2019 Doha World Championships (QAT)
Coach:	Joseph Domongole (Kenya)
Host:	Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation

BACKGROUND

Rose and her family left South Sudan because of the war and arrived at the Kakuma refugee camp in 2002. Her parents went back to South Sudan in 2008, but her siblings remained in Kakuma. During her time at school, she participated in many running competitions and in 2015 she participated in a 10km run in Kakuma organised by the Tegla Loroupe Foundation. She has been training with the Foundation ever since, and was selected for the Olympic Games Rio 2016 as part of the IOC Refugee Olympic Team, for whom she was the flag bearer.

Since the Olympic Games, she has represented the Athlete Refugee Team at the World Relays Championships in Yokohama, Japan, in May 2017, and has been invited to Geneva to participate in the 5th Formal Consultation on the Global Compact on Refugees.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Saeid FAZLOULA

Canoe



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	9 August 1992
Country of Origin:	Islamic Republic of Iran
Residence:	Karlsruhe, Germany

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Canoe
Event:	K 1000m
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	10 th place at German Nationals in 2020
Coach:	Ralf Straub
Host NOC:	Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund

BACKGROUND

Saeid is a successful canoeist who has competed in major competitions. He won silver at the Asian Games in Korea in 2014, and finished 8th at the World Championships and 11th at the European Championships in 2018.

In 2015, after he received some threats, Saeid decided to flee his country to find a more secure place. He is now training and living in Germany. His sport, his club, his coach and his training group helped him to settle and start a new life.

While Saeid aims to compete in the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, he is also serving an apprenticeship as a sports and fitness manager.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Sanda ALDASS

Judo



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	26 June 1990
Country of origin:	Syria
Residence:	Almere, Netherlands

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Judo
Discipline:	Mixed team
Best performance (in last 2 years):	2 nd Round at 2019 Budapest Grand Prix (HUN)
Coach:	Fadi Darwish (SYR)
Host NOC:	Nederlands Olympisch Comité* Nederlandse Sport Federatie

BACKGROUND

Originally from the city of Damascus in Syria, Sanda and her family lost their home and she decided to flee alone to the Netherlands through Turkey. Her husband and son joined her later. Sanda's two other children were born in the Netherlands. She was invited by the International Judo Federation to join their support programme for refugee athletes. It has not always been easy for her to balance motherhood and training, but she feels happy and lucky to be able to live in a safe environment with her family and be able to train.

It has been challenging for Sanda and her family to share with her host country community "who they are and what they do", but practising sport and being supported in such programmes has helped in making a fresh start and re-building her self-confidence.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Tachlowini GABRIYESOS

Athletics



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of Birth	1 January 1998
Country of Origin:	Eritrea
Residence:	Netanya, Israel

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Athletics
Discipline:	Road – Marathon
Best performance (in last 2 years):	2:10:55 at 2021 Hula Lake Park Marathon (ISR)
Coach:	Gebremskel Alemayehu (Israel)
Host NOC:	The Olympic Committee of Israel

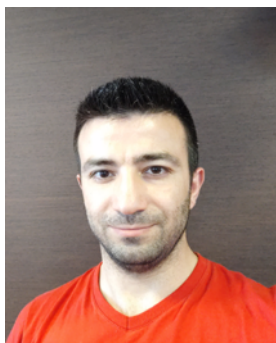
BACKGROUND

Tachlowini fled insecurity in Eritrea when he was just 12 years old with his 13-year-old friend. From there, he spent time in Ethiopia and Sudan, before eventually making the treacherous journey across the Sinai to Israel. He recalls his friend teaching him a trick he learnt from his father: when they would sleep, they would take off their shoes and leave them pointing in their direction of travel so that when they awoke the next morning, they would not lose their way. Upon reaching Israel, he spent time in detention before being sent to a school in Hadera, where he met his running coach. It's been eight years since he last saw the family he left behind.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Wael SHUEB

Karate



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	31 October 1987
Country of Origin:	Syria
Residence:	Germany

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Karate
Discipline:	Kata
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	3 rd at German Championships 2020
Coach:	Mohammed Abu Wahib
Host NOC:	Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund

BACKGROUND

Wael is from Damascus in Syria, where he used to work in a textile factory and as a karate coach. In 2015, due to religious conflicts in his city and because he would have been drafted by the army to fight, he had to flee to Europe to protect himself.

He made it to Turkey on a rubber dinghy and then went on to Greece. Taking the Balkan road, he even rode a bike to the Serbian border through Macedonia. In the end, he made it to Germany, where he now lives and trains, aiming for Tokyo 2020, where karate will be staged at the Olympic Games for the first time.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Wessam SALAMANA

Boxing



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	26 October 1985
Country of Origin:	Syria
Residence:	Germany

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Boxing
Discipline:	-63kg
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	Bronze at Cologne World Cup 2021 (GER)
Coach:	Heiko Staak (Germany)
Host NOC:	Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund

BACKGROUND

Wessam lived in the countryside of Damascus with his wife and daughter. He studied for some time at the higher Institute of Tourism before working for the ministry of oil. He had to make the difficult decision to flee his country for the safety of his family and to be able to continue his sporting career.

He now lives in Saarbrücken in Germany with his wife and three children. He represented Syria at the Olympic Games London 2012. He is now training hard in the hope to compete in Tokyo 2020 under the Olympic flag as a member of the Refugee Olympic Team.

IOC REFUGEE OLYMPIC TEAM 2020

Yusra Mardini

Swimming



PERSONAL DETAILS

Date of birth:	5 March 1998
Country of Origin:	Syria
Residence:	Hamburg, Germany

SPORTING DETAILS

Sport:	Aquatics
Event:	100m Butterfly
Best Performance (in last 2 years):	1:05.91 at 2021 Eindhoven Qualification Meet event (NED)
Coach:	Veith Sieber (Germany)
Host NOC:	Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund

BACKGROUND

Prior to the war in Syria, Yusra was a competitive swimmer who represented her country in international competitions. As the war intensified, Yusra and her sister left Damascus in early August 2015 and reached Berlin in September 2015.

Since then, Yusra has been training at the Wasserfreunde Spandau 04 club, which is a partner of the Elite Schools of Sport in Berlin. She was selected to compete at Rio 2016 as part of the first ever Refugee Olympic Team, and was appointed the youngest ever UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador in April 2017.