Italy

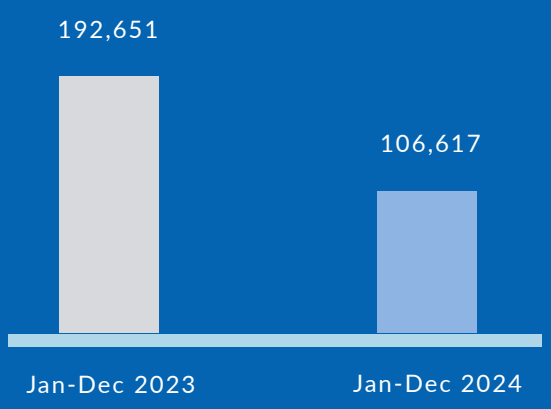
December 2024

In December, **3,080 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy by sea**. Most originated from Bangladesh (40%), the Syrian Arab Republic (15%), and Pakistan (14%). **13 per cent were children**. Other people reached Italy via land and air.

On 5 December, UNHCR, the Municipality of Bologna, and ASP Città di Bologna signed a **Memorandum of Understanding to enhance refugee integration** through the 'Spazio Comune,' a multi-service center providing essential services to refugees.

From 13 to 17 December, UNHCR joined a mission by the Foundation E.G. Ghirardi in Amman under the **'Goldsmiths for Italy labour corridor'**. Ten Syrian refugees were selected to work with the Italian jewellery company Mattioli in Turin.

TOTAL ARRIVALS



Source: Ministry of Interior for arrivals by sea. UNHCR estimates for arrivals by land and air. Please note that arrivals from Ukraine are not included in the chart.

KEY FIGURES

66,617

People reached Italy by sea disembarking in different ports across the country in January-December 2024. 57,023 (86%) were informed about asylum procedures by UNHCR staff and partners following disembarkation. (Source: Ministry of Interior and UNHCR)

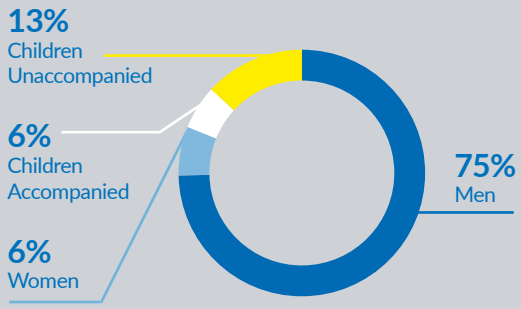
200,331

Temporary protection applications of people fleeing Ukraine as of end of December 2024. 70% of applicants are females. (Source: Civil Protection)

SEA ARRIVALS BY MONTH IN 2024

Source: Ministry of Interior. In addition to sea arrivals, Italy also receives land and air arrivals. This chart focuses on sea arrivals only.

SEA ARRIVALS BY GENDER AND AGE



Source: Ministry of Interior. Please note that the chart refers to the latest cumulative data available. Gender breakdown for children is not available.

Arrivals

- **Access to territory (sea arrivals).** In December 2024, **3,080 people reached the Italian shores** in 69 disembarkations, a 41 per cent decrease compared to the same month in 2023. Among arrivals, 13 per cent were children (same as in November). **Forty per cent originated from Bangladesh** (22% in November), followed by 15 per cent from **the Syrian Arab Republic** (19% in November), and **14 per cent from Pakistan** (9% in November). Other nationalities of people arriving by sea were Egyptians (6%), Algerians (4%), Malians and Afghans (3% each), and Tunisians and Guineans (2% each). In December, **four-fifths of sea crossings departed from Libya** (**81%**, 2,498 people), followed by 11 per cent from Tunisia (327 people), 4 per cent from Türkiye (129 people) and 4 per cent from Algeria (126 people). In December, **less than half of the people arriving by sea** (**43%**, 1,596 people) were disembarked in Italy **as a result of Search and Rescue (SAR) operations**.[1]
- **Access to territory (land arrivals).** Around **500 people who reached Italy by land** were intercepted in December by the Border Police at Italy's northern borders with Slovenia, bringing the total estimated number of detected arrivals to 7,300 in 2024. Those arriving by land via south-eastern Europe mainly originated from **Bangladesh**, **Türkiye, the Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan and Pakistan**. Instances of ill-treatment by the Police along the Western Balkan route continued being reported. UNHCR staff conducted outreach activities informing arrivals on their rights and how to apply for international protection in Italy and collecting testimonies.

Integration

- On 5 December, **UNHCR, the Municipality of Bologna, and ASP Città di Bologna**—the public company responsible for managing the International Protection Service on behalf of the Municipality—signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**. The MoU aims to enhance integration pathways also through the establishment of the 'Spazio Comune,' a multi-service center for refugees and migrants providing essential integration services through a 'one-stop shop' model. This initiative is part of the Charter for the Integration of Refugees, a collaborative effort developed by UNHCR in partnership with several Italian Municipalities.[2]

Signing of the MoU between UNHCR, the Municipality of Bologna and APS. © Comune di Bologna/Giorgio Bianchi

- On 10 December, as part of the UNHCR Community matching programme, Centro Immigrazione Asilo e Cooperazione Internazionale (CIAC), partner of UNHCR, presented a research on the positive impact of social relations in fostering cohesive communities and integration at an event held at UNHCR's premises. Representatives from the donor, the **Istituto Buddista Italiano Soka Gakkai**, were also present. During the event, the book Uno più uno non fa due was presented, featuring personal testimonies, data, and field research from over 300 participants in the 2023 programme's edition, and illustrating how fostering relationships and proximity can support refugee integration and transform communities into more inclusive and welcoming societies. The research presented complements the findings available in the 2024 Community Matching Factsheet.

[1] For further information on sea arrivals in Italy, please refer to the Italy page of the UNHCR data portal.

[2] See also, Comune, ASP Città di Bologna e UNHCR siglano un accordo per promuovere l'integrazione delle persone migranti, rifugiate e richiedenti asilo, 5 December 2024.

Resettlement and complementary pathways

- From 13 to 17 December, UNHCR took part in a training and selection mission in Amman, Jordan, organized by E.G. Ghirardi (Professional school for goldsmiths) as part of the **'Goldsmiths for Italy labour pathway' initiative for refugees**. The mission aimed at providing training to 12 pre-selected refugees, mainly from the Syrian Arab Republic, and to evaluate the participants' craftsmanship, leading to the final selection of 10 persons who will embark on new professional journeys with the Italian jewellery company Mattioli, in Turin. The initiative 'Goldsmiths for Italy' is one of three pilot labour mobility projects that are currently being implemented by UNHCR in collaboration with a **network of partners, including Talent Beyond Boundaries, Diaconia Valdese, and the Unione Industriale di Torino**. Labour mobility projects pave the way for dignified employment opportunities and demonstrate the potential of refugees as valuable contributors to the Italian workforce and society at large.[3]

Training and selection mission in Amman with E.G. Ghirardi ©UNHCR

Child protection

- On 19 December, UNHCR and Save the Children Italy presented an updated **mapping study on the implementation of age assessment procedures, voluntary guardianship, and the reception of unaccompanied foreign minors**. This marked the third year of partnership in the "Voluntary Guardianship, Age Assessment, and Psychological Support: Steps Beyond" project, dedicated to reinforcing Italy's protection framework for unaccompanied minors. The study provides a comprehensive overview of current practices and highlights critical areas for improvement. It also includes actionable recommendations for institutional stakeholders, aimed at enhancing the protection and rights of unaccompanied minors in line with national legislation. Findings seek to contribute to the development of a more robust, child-centered reception and protection system across Italy.[4]

Training

- On 5 December, UNHCR facilitated a session on '**Trafficking of women from Nigeria, Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire in the context of refugee status determination**' within the multi-agency Working Group on trafficking of persons established at the Lamezia Terme (in Calabria) Municipality.

Policy developments

- On 4 December, the Italian Parliament converted **Law Decree 145/2024 on migration flows into law**, introducing updates to migration and asylum management. These updates include provisions on labour mobility, Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedures, including safe country of origin (SCO) designation, access to reception measures, regulations on SAR operations, and protection for victims of labour exploitation. During the parliamentary discussion, **UNHCR shared recommendations** on asylum procedures, the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers, and labour mobility pathways for refugees.

[3] See also, UNHCR Italy twit on X.

[4] See also, Minori migranti: Save the Children e UNHCR presentano i risultati di una mappatura sullo stato di attuazione delle procedure per l'accertamento dell'età, la tutela volontaria e l'accoglienza dei minori stranieri non accompagnati, 19 December 2024

External engagement

- On 10 December, UNHCR hosted its **bi-annual briefing for Embassies and diplomatic missions to Italy and the Holy See**, providing an overview of its protection activities in Italy in 2024 and on the external dimension of its engagement. The briefing, which was attended by some 40 participants from European countries and beyond, covered key protection issues such as the implementation of the Italy-Albania Protocol, integration activities for refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons, and labour mobility schemes to Italy.
- On 11 December, the UNHCR Representative for Italy, the Holy See, and San Marino, Chiara Cardoletti, participated in the **celebration of the Community Sponsorship Programme** organized by the Embassy of Canada in Italy in collaboration with the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative. The event was opened by the Ambassador of Canada to Italy, Elissa Golberg, and brought together high-level officials from the Italian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior, alongside civil society, and partner organizations, providing an opportunity to exchange updates on joint projects related to refugee resettlement and integration. In her intervention, the UNHCR Representative highlighted the strong and effective collaboration between Canadian authorities, the Canadian Embassy in Italy, and UNHCR, emphasizing the critical role of resettlement and complementary pathways in providing durable solutions for refugees, especially in a world where forced displacement is dramatically increasing.[5]

Community sponsorship programme event at the Embassy of Canada in Rome

HIGH-LEVEL MISSIONS

On 20 December, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, alongside the UNHCR Representative for Italy, the Holy See, and San Marino, and the Head of UNHCR's Private Sector Partnership in Italy, participated in an event organized by Mediobanca's Corporate Social Responsibility Department. Mediobanca, a key donor supporting UNHCR's child protection and gender-based violence response activities, hosted the event under the theme '**Migration and inclusion: The reception of unaccompanied foreign minors**'.

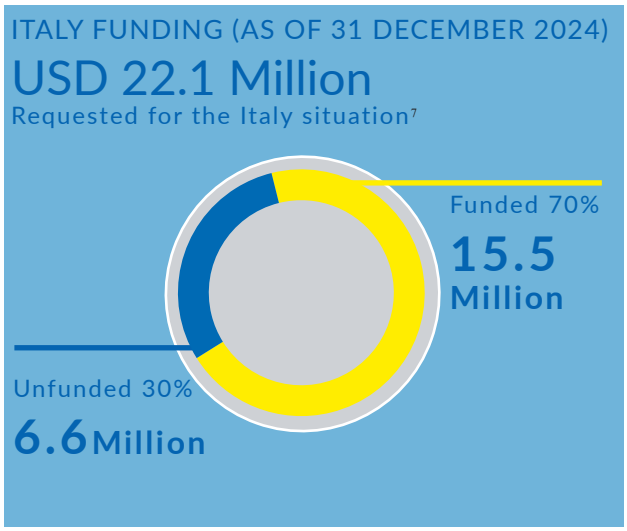
The UN High Commissioner for Refugees participating to the Mediobanca event in Milan

Opened by Mediobanca's CEO, Alberto Nagel, the event provided a platform to discuss forced displacement and migration from an economic, social, and humanitarian perspectives. In his keynote address, the High Commissioner emphasized the critical importance of protecting and integrating unaccompanied children, highlighting the complex dynamics of forced displacement and **stressing the need to address its root causes while promoting inclusive approaches** to safeguard the rights, dignity, and well-being of the most vulnerables.

[5] See also, UNHCR Representative for Italy, the Holy See and San Marino, Chiara Cardoletti's twit on X; Embassy of Canada to Italy trit on X.

[6] See also, UNHCR Representative for Italy, the Holy See and San Marino, Chiara Cardoletti's twit on X.

Financial information



UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided to the UNHCR Multi-Country Office (MCO) in Italy in December, and throughout 2024, including for earmarked, softly earmarked, unearmarked and tightly earmarked contributions.[8]

Fundraising

- In December, the **Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation / Directorate General for Development Cooperation**, generously allocated funds to support UNHCR's humanitarian activities in Bangladesh, Chad, Iraq, Mali, Moldova, Pakistan, and Sudan, across several intervention areas, including shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, legal aid, access to justice, health, education, and livelihood opportunities forforcibily displaced populations. Additionally, the Ministry of Interior provided funds to UNHCR to support the National Asylum Commission activities in the Refugee Status Determination procedure for 2024 in Italy. In 2024, **Italy ranked among UNHCR's top 20 donors with a contribution of 61 million euros** contributing to critical emergency responses to new and protracted displacement crises worldwide.

- UNHCR MCO Italy is also grateful for the generous contributions from the private sector and individuals. In December, **4.9 million euros** was raised from private sector donors in Italy, including Adyen, Barilla, Chiesi Farmaceutici, COOP Italia, ENEL, Only the Brave Foundation, Reale Mutua Foundation, and Nando ed Elsa Peretti Foundation. In 2024, UNHCR received a total of **31.4 million euros** from private donors in Italy, for which it is deeply grateful.

CONTACTS

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LINKS UNHCR data portal - UNHCR Italy - Twitter - Facebook - LinkedIn - Global Focus

[7] Unearmarked funding is allocated and reallocated multiple times during the year to allow UNHCR to fund priorities activities. The funding update includes an indicative allocation of funds so as to accurately represent the resources available for the country. The contributions earmarked for Italy MCO shown above are combined with an indicative allocation of the softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions listed below. This allocation respects different levels of earmarking. Adjustments relate to indirect support costs and carry-over.

[8] Softly earmarked contributions allow UNHCR to use them across the range of countries, activities or themes in a given region or situation in accordance with identified priorities; softly earmarked contributions can potentially be used for the Italy operation due to their earmarking to a related situation or theme, or to the region or sub-region. Donors of unearmarked contributions of USD 10 million or more are: Sweden, España con ACNUR, Norway, Japan for UNHCR, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Denmark, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), France, Private donors in the Republic of Korea, Germany, Private donors in Italy, Switzerland, Republic of Korea, Sweden for UNHCR, Japan, Private donors in the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Australia.