

TUNISIA

January 2019

UNHCR **assists and protects** refugees including those identified in a context of **mixed migration movements**. UNHCR also supports emergency preparedness efforts in case of a **potential major influx**.

UNHCR commends Tunisia's continued policy of **saving lives** through **rescue at sea**, and its humanitarian response, **permitting disembarkation** in Tunisia.

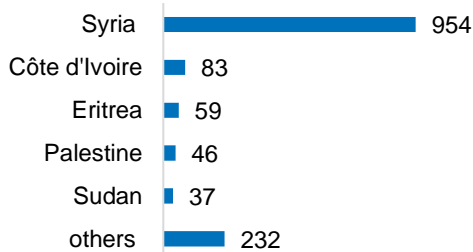
UNHCR continues to advocate for the **establishment of a national asylum system**, and supports **national capacity building** on protection for refugees and asylum-seekers.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

1139 Refugees
 272 Asylum-seekers

Total: 1,411 persons of concern

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN (of persons of concern)

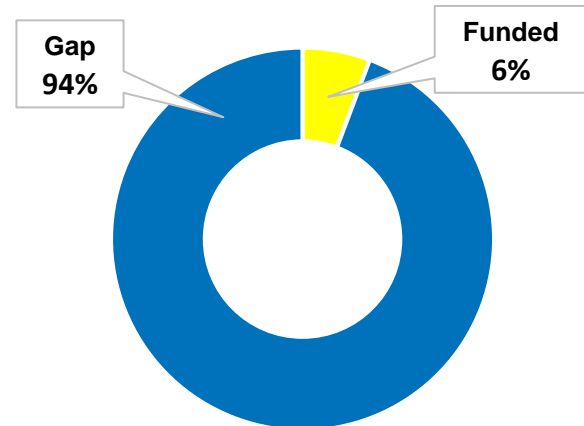


As of January 2019

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR 2019

USD 7.4M

requested for the Tunisia operation



As of January 2019

Working with Partners

- UNHCR operates from its Country Office in Tunis and a Field Office in Zarzis, while also maintaining a presence in Sfax and Medenine.
- UNHCR cooperates closely with the **Tunisian authorities**, notably with the Ministries of Justice, Interior, Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs, Employment, Education, Health and Women, Family, Children and Seniors.
- UNHCR Tunisia has formal partnership agreements with four NGOs:
 - The **Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC)**: counselling of new arrivals; provision of core relief items; shelter management; health-care coordination and reimbursements; educational support; counselling on social and assistance issues
 - The **Arab Institute for Human Rights (IADH)**: capacity building and advocacy on international protection; asylum issues including the context of mixed migration movement and legal assistance
 - The **Tunisian Association for Management and Social Stability (TAMSS)**: vocational training, supporting micro-projects and wage employment, facilitating employment processes
 - The **Tunisian Council for Refugees (CTR)**: counselling and recreational support in the context of mixed migration, case management, psychosocial support and assistance for persons with specific needs.

UNHCR is a member of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Tunisia and contributes to the 2015-2020 United Nations Development Assistance Framework's (UNDAF) planning and reporting activities.

Main Activities

Protection

- In the absence of a formal national asylum system, UNHCR conducts **registration of asylum-seekers and refugee status determination** in Tunisia, to ensure that persons of concern to UNHCR are identified and documented. This helps to prevent arbitrary arrest, detention or *refoulement*. In 2017, UNHCR introduced biometric enrolment to improve the quality of data collected and to help prevent fraud.
- Together with civil society partners, UNHCR continues to advocate for the Government of Tunisia to present the draft **National Asylum Law** to parliament for adoption. At the request of the Government, UNHCR provided technical guidance to the Centre for Legal and Judicial Studies during the drafting process.
- UNHCR trains border officials to raise their awareness of **asylum and protection issues in a context of mixed migration**. Tunisian border guards frequently rescue boats in distress off the Tunisian coast, including some that have departed from Libya. Groups of migrants and refugees making irregular crossings of the Tunisia-Libya land border (traveling in either direction) are also frequently intercepted. UNHCR's objective is to ensure that border management takes into consideration the protection needs of refugees and asylum-seekers.
- UNHCR Tunisia is using a participatory approach to enhance **community-based protection**, building links between different service providers and increasing engagement with refugee communities. Through CTR's work developing safe spaces and promoting communication with affected communities, UNHCR and all its partners can better identify and refer people with specific needs or heightened protection risks, such as survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and unaccompanied or separated children.

Health

- Refugees and asylum-seekers have **access to basic public health facilities**, on a similar level to Tunisian nationals. UNHCR, through its partner TRC, reimburses medical expenses and medicines for basic primary health care, chronic diseases, and emergency medical interventions for vulnerable asylum-seekers or refugees.

Education

- Children who are refugees or asylum-seekers have access to local schools. To increase school attendance, UNHCR and its partners provide education grants to help parents purchase books and schools supplies. In some locations, refugee children also benefit from accelerated learning programs to support their integration.



UNHCR's partner, TRC, distributes the refugee identification card, which helps refugees to show their refugee status and to access services. Photo: TRC

Livelihoods and Self-reliance

- With its partner TAMMS, UNHCR is enhancing refugees' **self-reliance and livelihood opportunities**, by supporting their access to tailored vocational training, income-generating projects and direct employment with private companies.

Solutions

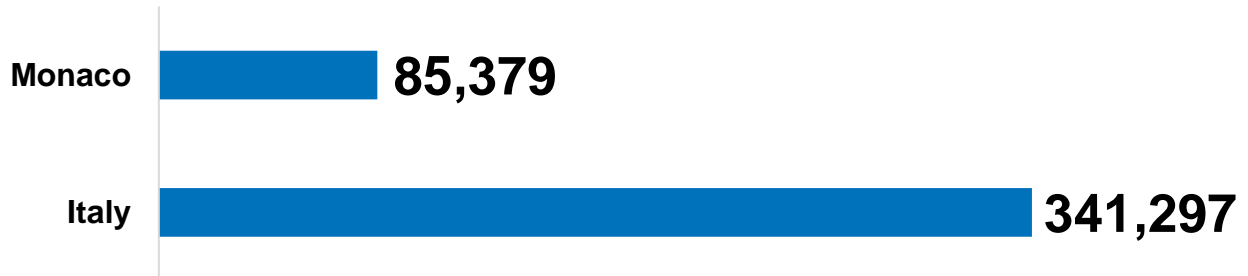
- UNHCR endeavours to find **solutions for refugees**, such as private sponsorship, family reunification and naturalization. When conditions are suitable, UNHCR facilitates the assisted voluntary repatriation of refugees. In other cases, UNHCR supports refugees to integrate temporarily within Tunisian society and economy. In certain cases, where UNHCR identifies people who meet specific protection criteria, the agency supports refugees to be resettled in other countries.

Emergency preparedness

- Since 2014, UNHCR has been leading the coordination of **inter-agency preparedness efforts** in case of a mass influx from Libya, upon the request of the Tunisian Government, and in close cooperation with the government, IOM and partners. A collaborative revision process requested by the Government has been initiated in early 2019, following which UNHCR will share the draft with Tunisian authorities for endorsement.

External / Donors Relations

Thanks to the donors providing earmarked funds to this operation for a total of USD **426,676** in 2019



Special thanks to the major donors of softly earmarked and unearmarked funds

Denmark | European Union | Finland | France | Germany | Italy | Japan | Luxembourg | Netherlands | Norway | Monaco | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America

CONTACTS

Ian Brightwell, Reporting Officer, brightwe@unhcr.org

Siwar Bouraoui, Executive Assistant, bouraoui@unhcr.org