

TUNISIA

31 December 2019

Key figures

3,294

Persons of Concern to UNHCR

2,066

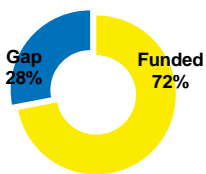
Newly registered asylum-seekers and refugees since January 2019 (following profiling)

64%

of people who arrived in Tunisia in 2019 as part of mixed population movements expressed intention to seek asylum in Tunisia

Funding

USD **7.9 M** required for 2019 operations



USD **5.7 M** received as of 7 January 2020

Highlights

During 2019, UNHCR registered 2,066 new refugees and asylum seekers, resulting in an increase of 155% of the overall registered population within one year. Moreover, more than 1,600 individuals are still waiting to be registered, while 1,248 of the registered are waiting for their Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedure to be finalized. Tunisia maintained an open-door policy towards people who are fleeing violence and persecution in neighbouring countries.

Following the agreement between Turkey and the Government of National Accord (GNA) led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Serraj to provide military support to the latter, Tunisia strengthened security measures along Tunisian-Libyan border, with deployment of security units and the army along the coast and on the country's eastern border. On 26th December, UNHCR and IOM held a meeting with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to coordinate emergency preparedness efforts in case of major influx from Libya and continued to lead inter-agency sectorial contingency planning.

Operational Response

UNHCR partner the Tunisian Association for Management and Social Stability (TAMSS) was awarded with the National Price of the President of Republic for its engagement in the promotion of socio-economic rights of vulnerable people, including refugees and asylum seekers. In 2019, TAMSS supported 106 refugees and asylum seekers finding a regular employment or setting up their own business. In December, a new office in Sfax was inaugurated in order to scale up the program, that will continue in 2020 and beyond thanks to the support of Switzerland and Monaco governments.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Women, Children, Family and the Elderly signed a partnership agreement with UNHCR partner Tunisian Refugee Council (CTR). The agreements will enable refugees and asylum seekers in Tunisia to access social services offered by the respective Ministries and will aim to enhance the Ministries' capacity in regard to mainstreaming human rights.

During the year 2019, 420 refugee and asylum seeker households received multi-purpose cash assistance, which they used to buy clothes or essential household products.

UNHCR Tunisia provided special assistance to some 130 unaccompanied and separated children in 2019. They were prioritised for registration and Refugee Status Determination (RSD); and they were supported in terms of shelter, financial assistance, healthcare, psycho-social follow-up while their best interest was assessed and durable solutions were found for them.

In 2019, reception capacity in southern Tunisia was enhanced with the opening of two additional temporary shelters in Zarzis, making around 200 additional beds available for vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers. However, due to the increase in number and in the vulnerability of new arrivals, the capacity is still largely insufficient.

UNHCR is grateful for the support of Italy | United States of America | RDPP NA – EU | Netherlands | Switzerland | Luxembourg | Monaco and to those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and softly earmarked funds.