

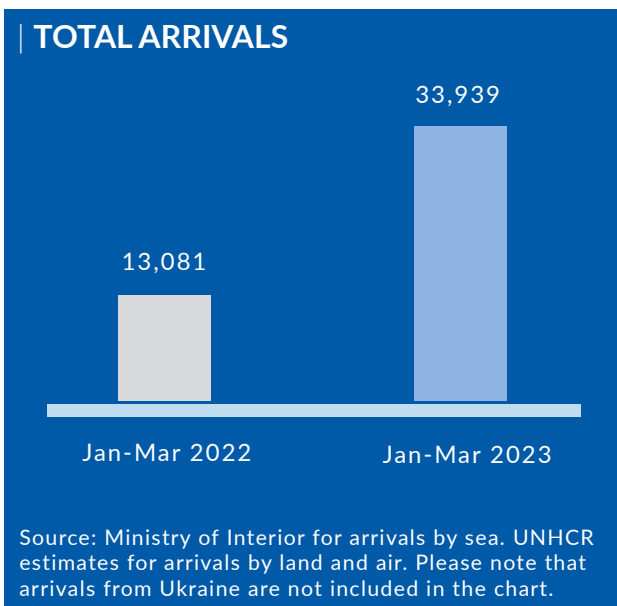
Italy

March 2023

In March, **13,263 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy by sea**. Most originated from Côte d'Ivoire, Pakistan, Egypt and Guinea. 16% were children. Additional arrivals came **via land and air**.

On 21 March, the results of the **Community Matching programme** were discussed in a public event, confirming the **positive integration impact on refugees' lives**.

In **March**, high level missions from UNHCR HQs took place, including by **High Commissioner** Filippo Grandi attending the opening of the **Milan Field Office**.



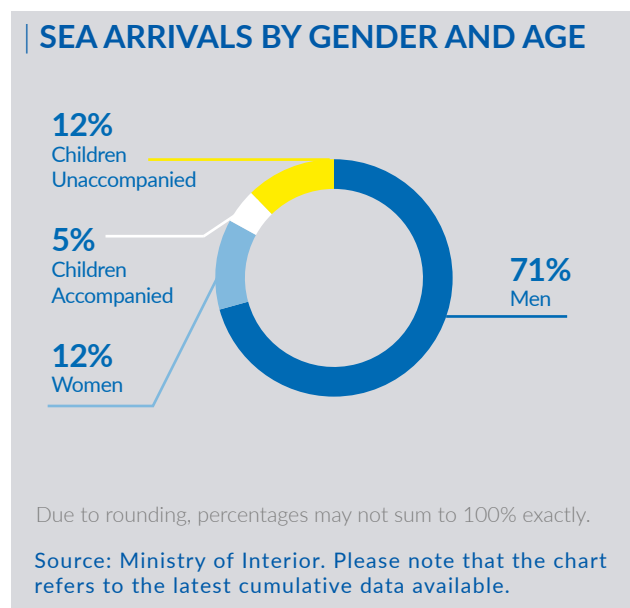
KEY FIGURES

27,690

Sea arrivals to Italy disembarked at different sites across the country in January-March 2023. 22,313 (81% of the total) were informed about asylum procedures by UNHCR staff following disembarkation. (Source: Ministry of Interior and UNHCR)

173,816

Temporary protection applications of people fleeing Ukraine as of end of March 2023. 71% of applicants are females. (Source: Civil Protection)




Policy developments

- On 9 March, the Council of Ministers meeting - held in Cutro, the site of the 26 February shipwreck - issued **Law Decree 20/2023**, which entered into force on 11 March. The Law Decree provides for increased sanctions against smugglers, while special rules are introduced in cases of serious contractual breaches by managing entities running hotspots, governmental and temporary reception facilities, and pre-removal facilities. A specific clause is introduced, which allows for the appointment of an Extraordinary Commissioner who would take over the management of the contract and eventually publish a simplified call for tender. Additional measures concern legal entry flows of migrant workers and conditions to grant special protection. The **Representative was heard in front of the I Commission (Constitutional Affairs) of the Senate** and talked about the importance of legal entry channels, of the fight against smuggling and trafficking and of the need to grant access to the territory and the asylum procedure. MCO Italy has been working on **amendment proposals** and is following parliamentary discussions occurring prior to the conversion of the Law Decree into Law.
- On 17 March, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in agreement with the Ministers of Interior and Justice, adopted a decree updating the **Safe Countries of Origin list**. The decree will enter into force on 9 April and provides that **four countries are added** to the list (Gambia, Georgia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria). 12 countries (Albania, Algeria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Morocco, Montenegro, Senegal, Serbia, Tunisia) already in the list are confirmed. **Ukraine**, which was already suspended, is now definitively **removed**. For the four new countries, the decree will apply to the asylum applications submitted after its entry into force.


Arrivals

- **Access to territory (sea arrivals).** In March, Italy continued to receive a significant number of refugees and migrants via the Mediterranean Sea. During the month, **13,263 persons reached the shores in Italy** - an increase of 40% compared to February - mainly originating from **Côte d'Ivoire** (21%), followed by **Pakistan** (14%), **Egypt** (13%) and **Guinea** (12%). 28% of new arrivals recorded in March were **children and women**. Nationals originating from Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea mostly embarked in Tunisia, while Egyptians and Bangladeshis departed from Libya. In this regard, in March, 57% of migrants and refugees, who reached Italy by sea, departed from **Tunisia**, 43% from **Libya** and less than 1% from Algeria. As of 28 March, the total number of confirmed victims following the **shipwreck** occurred off the coast of Crotona (Calabria) was 91, with 10 people estimated to be still missing. UNHCR continued supporting the Italian authorities informing survivors on access to international protection and referring persons with specific needs to relevant actors. The team also provided support in listing family links of all survivors and gathering testimonies. Several other shipwrecks occurred in the Mediterranean Sea, with **161 people, who died or went missing** along the Central Mediterranean route in March, and 477 in the first three months of



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

² See also UNHCR, [UNHCR e OIM esprimono cordoglio per la perdita di vite a largo della costa crotonese](#), 26 February 2023 (in Italian).

the year. In March, almost 7,500 persons (56% of the total) were disembarked in Italy as a result of **Search And Rescue (SAR) operations**. MCO Italy is mapping the specific and increased **needs in southern regions** such as Sicily, including Lampedusa, and Calabria, in order to come up with short-, medium- and long-term plans to address them.

- **Access to territory (land arrivals)**. In addition to arrivals via sea, **around 2,625 land arrivals were intercepted at Italy's northern borders with Slovenia since January**. In the same period in 2022, around 1,086 arrivals were recorded. Those travelling by land via south-east Europe, mainly originated from **Afghanistan, Bangladesh** and **Pakistan**. Many reported about ill-treatments along the Balkan route. Towards the end of the month, increased arrivals of Kurdish families originating from the areas affected by the earthquake in **Türkiye** were also recorded. Reception issues continued affecting land arrivals in March. Despite some transfers to other Italian regions, dozens of people were reported sleeping rough in informal settings around the Trieste province. UNHCR staff continued to conduct **outreach activities**, collecting testimonies from new arrivals and informing them on their rights and ways to apply for protection in Italy.



Integration

- **Spazio Comune**. On 3 March, UNHCR and the **Naples Municipality** signed a protocol aimed at facilitating refugee integration by promoting access to coordinated services at local level.³ The protocol entailed the launch of a Spazio Comune, a **multifunctional integration center**, to be realized also through UNHCR's partnership with Action Aid. Refugees will receive support in obtaining the necessary administrative documents, as well as in searching for accommodation and work opportunities. The Municipality of Naples, among those which signed the **UNHCR's Integration Charter** in 2022, facilitated refugees' social and work inclusion also through its support to UNHCR programmes such as Community Matching and Welcome.
- **Community Matching**. On 21 March, the **2022 results of the Community Matching programme** were presented in a public event,⁴ with the participation of UNHCR's partners contributing to the project and the Istituto Buddista Italiano Soka Gakkai, which financed it, together with representatives of the Ministry of Interior, the private sector, ANCI (National Association of Italian Municipalities), volunteers, refugees and journalists. The **Community Matching** was launched in 2022 and is active in **ten Italian cities**. The initiative aims at promoting the encounter between refugees and local communities, with the objective to **promote inclusive communities and integration pathways**. By December 2022, 358 matches were activated, involving people of 41 different nationalities. The assessment of 115 matches confirmed the **positive impact** of the project on refugees' lives, from a greater economic and housing stability to the learning of the Italian language and general wellbeing.



Participants in the Community Matching programme. ©RWI/Dario Fratello

³ See also UNHCR, [UNHCR-Comune di Napoli: uno Spazio Comune per l'integrazione dei rifugiati](#), 3 March 2023 (in italian).

⁴ See also UNHCR, [Community Matching: rifugiati e comunità insieme per l'integrazione](#), 21 March 2023 (in italian).

Protection

- Thanks also to the initial draft compiled by UNHCR, in collaboration with its partner CIDAS, the Dublin Unit of the Ministry of Interior adopted a **single Best Interest Assessment form for Family Reunion under the Dublin Regulation**. The form will become the official tool at national level and will be accompanied by guidelines.

External engagement

- In March, the Representative participated, in close coordination with the Representative in Libya and the Special Envoy on the Central Mediterranean, in the 4th meeting of the Steering Committee of the *'Support to Integrated Border and Migration Management in Libya'* project implemented by the Ministry of Interior. Moreover, MCO Italy pursued a regular engagement with Government and political counterparts discussing the global displacement situation as well as the situation in Lampedusa, among others. The Representative also participated in the first meeting of the Working Group on mixed migration management at the Ministry of Interior. On 30 March, on the occasion of the anniversary of the election of Pope Francis, the Representative was granted the honour of Dame Grand Cross of the Pian Order by the Holy See.

Fundraising

- In March, UNHCR raised **2.7 million Euros from private donors** in Italy, totalling 11 million Euros since the beginning of the year. The major private donors in Italy contributing to UNHCR activities this month were Afmal, AGN Energia, Assomusica, Biofin, Chiesi Farmaceutici, Comifar, Coop, Ferragamo, Fondazione Berenice, Fondazione De Agostini, Fondazione Pesenti, and Selle Royale.

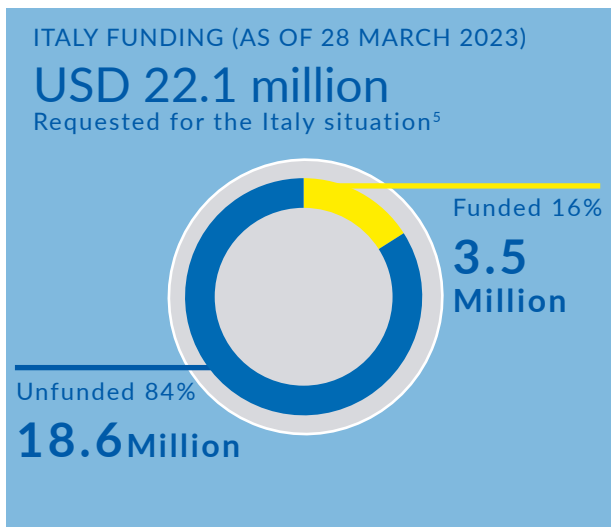
High-level missions to Italy

The Assistant High Commissioner for Protection (AHC-P) visited Italy on 13 and 14 March. During her mission, the AHC-P met the Head of Cabinet of the Ministry of Interior to discuss the **migratory situation currently affecting Italy and possible solutions**, including UNHCR's proposals. Moreover, the AHC-P participated in the first **bilateral dialogue with the Holy See**, to strengthen the cooperation between UNHCR and the Holy See. On 16 March, the Special Advisor on Development came on mission to Italy and met Cassa Depositi e Prestiti, Italy's development bank, to discuss **opportunities of collaboration**, and the Head of Italy's Development Cooperation Agency. The agenda of the Deputy High Commissioner (DHC), who was on mission to Italy on 28-30 March to attend the IASC meeting at FAO, included visits to MCO Italy **partners** and meetings with **private sector** partners and donors. In addition, the DHC met with the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to discuss about **global displacement** and UNHCR's partnership with the Ministry. Lastly, the High Commissioner was in Italy on 31 March for the **opening event of the Milan Field Office**, which was attended by a wealth of high profile institutional and private sector actors, including the Mayor of Milan and CEOs of relevant companies.



The High Commissioner, Filippo Grandi, meets the Mayor of Milan, Giuseppe Sala. ©UNHCR/Agnese Morganti

Financial information



UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors, who have contributed to the Italy operation:

L'Istituto Buddista Italiano Soka Gakkai | European Union

UNHCR is also grateful to the donors, who have contributed to UNHCR operations globally, including Italy, with unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions.⁶

CONTACTS

Francesca Conte, Reporting Assistant, contef@unhcr.org

Cristina Franchini, External Relations Associate, franchin@unhcr.org

LINKS

[UNHCR data portal](#) - [UNHCR Italy](#) - [Twitter](#) - [Facebook](#) - [LinkedIn](#) - [Global Focus](#)

⁵ Unearmarked funding is allocated and reallocated multiple times during the year to allow UNHCR to fund priorities activities.

⁶ Unearmarked contributions are without restrictions on their use, allowing UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk globally. 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; Norway; Denmark; Netherlands; Germany; Switzerland; Belgium; Ireland. Donors of softly earmarked contributions of USD 10 million or more are: Private donors Canada; private donors Sweden.