

## **EUROPE** MONTHLY REPORT



Recipients of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees, Sounion, Greece.

## TRENDS AND KEY FIGURES

In March, just over 4,400 refugees and migrants entered Europe via Italy, Greece and Spain. Arrivals to Greece (1,250 versus 2,400) increased by almost 100% while arrivals through routes to Spain (1,500 versus 1,300) and Italy (1,050 versus 1,060) remained consistent with the previous month. In the first three months of the year some 16,640 refugees and migrants arrived to Europe by sea compared to nearly 31,000 that arrived in the same period last year, marking a 106% decrease.

In Italy, the number of refugees and migrants arriving in March by sea (almost 1,050) was the lowest via the Central Mediterranean route since late 2013. Of those crossing the sea in March, approximately 76% departed from Libya, compared to 56% in February. While departure numbers from the Libyan coast are lower in general, the Libyan Coast Guard has reported rescuing or intercepting over 700 persons in February. As of the end of March, arrival numbers by sea to Italy are 74% lower than in the first three months of 2017. The primary nationalities that have arrived by sea in March are Eritreans (23%), Tunisians (12%), and Sudanese (10%).

In March, over 2,400 refugees and migrants arrived by sea in Greece compared to over 1,500 whom arrived in the same period in 2017 (a 60% increase). Persons arriving in Greece in March mainly originated from the Syrian Arab Republic (43%), Iraq (26%) and Afghanistan (9%). As of the end of March, sea arrivals to Greece have increased 33% compared to the same quarter in 2017. In addition, the number of persons rescued or intercepted after departing from the Turkish coastline has more than doubled this year compared to the same period last year. At the land border, there were over 1,480 recorded arrivals to Evros in March, a significant increase in comparison to the 530 arrivals in February and the

Mediterranean

16,640 arrivals in 2018 <sup>1</sup>

estimated dead/missing in 2018 1

Greece

**Italy** 

6,300

Feb

Feb

**Spain**<sup>2</sup>

**Cyprus** 

5,000 1.518

2.182

Jan Feb Jan New asylum applications in EU+ countries 3

> **67,740** applications in 2018 650,000 applications in 2017 1,236,370 applications in 2016 1,325,565 applications in 2015

data.unhcr.org/mediterranean as of 31 March 2018.
Includes land and sea arrivals in the Mediterranean and to the Canary Islands

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Source: <u>Eurostats</u>. Partial data for Jan-Feb 2018



Relocated in total 4

Source: European Commission, as of 26 March 2018.

from Greece

from **Italy** 

12,329

Returns EU-Turkey statement 12

<sup>12</sup> Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Greece as of 26 March 2018.

560 arrivals in January and almost seven times more than the 223 arrivals of the same period in 2017.

In Spain, nearly 1,300 people crossed the land and sea borders from North Africa in March, an increase of 8% compared to March 2017, when unusually high numbers (over 1,600) crossed the land borders. So far, the primary countries of origin of arrivals are Guinea, the Syrian Arab Republic and Cote d'Ivoire. So far in 2018, almost 130 people are believed to have died while crossing the sea to Spain, making this the second most deadly route after the sea route to Italy.

Resettlement: So far in 2018, 3,349 persons have been resettled to Europe. Almost 6,214 refugees were submitted by UNHCR for resettlement to 25 countries in Europe in the first quarter of 2018.

Dead and Missing: As of 31 March, over 480 people have died or gone missing while trying to reach Europe by sea which is a 44% decrease compared to the number of deaths between January and March in 2017 (870). On 17 March, 16 people drowned when their boat capsized off Agathonisi, the first recorded deaths on this route this year and the highest number in a single incident since April last year. So far this year, at least 15 refugees or migrants have died along land routes in Europe or at Europe's borders.

Relocation: According to the European Commission (EC), just over 3,300 asylum-seekers have been relocated from Greece and Italy as of 26 March 2018, including 21,994 from Greece (out of 66,400 originally foreseen, 33% of the total) and 12,329 from Italy (out of 39,600 originally foreseen, 31% of the total). The pending transfers of asylum-seekers from Greece to other EU Member States under the relocation scheme concluded with 22,000 people relocated by April 2018.



**UNHCR Bureau Europe** @Refugees\_EU



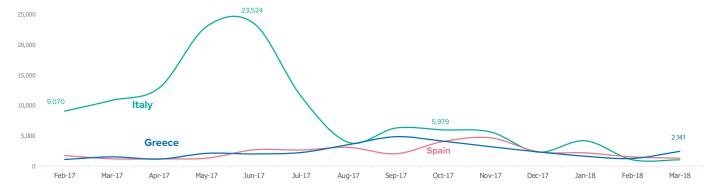
We commend efforts on relocation by Ireland & other EU MS. Relocation is an important gesture of solidarity, it helped ease the humanitarian situation in Greece & improved the lives of many seeking protection. It should continue & expand as long as there are eligible candidates.



UNHCR Greece @ @UNHCRGreece

More than 130 Syrian asylum-seekers flew to Ireland last week, concluding EU prog that has relocated some 22,000 from #Greece to EU states. Although initial target was only partially met, relocation scheme proved vital. Such #solidarity mechanisms..

#### MEDITERRANEAN ARRIVALS - JANUARY 2017 to MARCH 2018



### OTHER SITUATIONS

## Turkey 3.9 million

Refugees and asylum seekers 5

Syrian Arab Republic 3,567,000 Afghanistan 170,000 146,000 Iraq

> 50,000 Iran

<sup>5</sup> Source: UNHCR as of 31 March 2018

# Ukraine 1.8 million

Internally Displaced Persons 6 and Conflict Affected Persons7

3,257 Refugees: 8

Asylum seekers: 9 5,525

Stateless persons: 10

<sup>6</sup> Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA).
<sup>7</sup> Estimated number of conflict-affected people living along the line of contact in government-controlled areas (GCA) and non-government controlled areas (NGCA).
<sup>8</sup> UNHCR, State Migration Service of Ukraine as of 30/06/2017
<sup>9</sup> UNHCR as of 14/04/2018
<sup>10</sup> State Migration Service of Ukraine as of 30/06/2017



### KEY DEVELOPMENTS



Includes Serbia and Kosovo (S/RES/1244 (1999))

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Na

**ARMENIA:** The Administrative Court of Appeal announced that it has prioritized asylum cases to be processed by a new panel of judges for March 2018. These cases were originally scheduled for review in 2019. The positive advancement of these cases follows recommendations made by UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations, George Okoth-Obbo, during his visit in December 2017.

**AUSTRIA**: European Council President Donald Tusk arrived in Vienna on 13 March for talks on Austria's upcoming EU presidency. Chancellor Sebastian Kurz has announced that asylum and migration will be one of the priorities of Austria's Presidency of the Council of the European Union. He was quoted in media saying that he did not believe in a "forced distribution mechanism" amongst Member States and that Europe should shift its focus towards securing external borders. UNHCR recalls the recommendations previously shared in its Better Protecting Refugees in the EU and Globally.

FRANCE: Following the presentation of the new immigration and asylum bill in late February, on 13 March, UNHCR addressed the French parliament on the draft law. The hearing focused on legal, social and medical assistance, accommodation, detention and the appeals process. UN-HCR reaffirmed its positions initially communicated to the French government in December 2017 and made public on 5 March 2018, calling for the adoption of amendments.

Starting 26 March, <u>UNHCR</u> participated in <u>UNESCO's Mo-</u> bile Learning Week at UNESCO Headquarters promoting education for refugees. Students enrolled through the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI programme) participated in the weeklong event. DAFI enables young refugees to unlock their potential by addressing key barriers to higher education. Alongside Learning Equality and Google, UNHCR co-organized a workshop on

"Designing digital standards for Education in crisis". Maren Kroeger from **UNHCR Education** team addressed the "Closing inequalities and gender divides" plenary session on 27 March.



GERMANY: UNHCR's Deputy High Commissioner, Kelly Clements, visited a reception and transit centre for refugees and asylum-seekers in Manching on 22 March. During her visit, she spoke with staff at the centre as well as refugees. The centre in Manching serves as a blueprint for a centralized accommodation and asylum facility to be rolled-out country-wide by the new government. Details in the implementation of the centralized processing are yet to be confirmed. UNHCR values Germany's dedication to supporting refugees and stands ready to assist in any capacity building needs for such centres.



Kelly T. Clements ② @KellyTClements · Mar 23 Strong #German engagement extends to local level - in Bavaria, refugee integration a priority, as we heard yesterday from #Munich officials

Filippo Grandi 🔮 @RefugeesChief

I join @WFPChief in thanking Chancellor #Merkel and the German government for their strong, continued support to UN humanitarian organizations. @GermanyDiplo @GermanyUNGeneva @UNHCR\_de twitter.com/wfpchief/statu...



**GREECE**: There was a notable increase of arrivals both by sea (2,512 in March 2018 versus 1,526 in March 2017) and land (1,486 in March 2018 versus 223 in March 2017) in March further straining hosting facilities already at maximum capacity. In Evros for instance, increased arrivals have heavily impacted the limited capacity of Fylakio Registration and Identification Centre (RIC). Some 1,040 people, including families with young children, are estimated to be in police detention in surrounding areas awaiting transfer to the RIC, already above full capacity. UNHCR is closely monitoring the developments and is advocating for urgent response measures, particularly for persons with specific needs. Due to the limited accommodation capacity in the mainland, the pace of transfers from the islands reduced in March with 622 transfers to State-run sites and UNHCR accommodation, out of 3,600 transfers so far this year. The population on the islands increased by 1,000 to 12,000 in March amid the slowdown in transfers and the higher number of arrivals.

Recent developments in funding allocation for NGO-provided shelters to unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) have come under serious strain. The services are at risk of being reduced by half of the already limited places in age-appropriate shelters for the 3,000 UASC present in Greece. UNHCR has called on authorities to find an immediate solution to ensure dignified and safe shelter of all UASC in the country.

According to the Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN) report of 2017 released in March, over 100 incidents were reported last year by 42 organizations. In 34 incidents, the victims were refugees or migrants who were reportedly targeted on grounds of ethnic origin, religion, colour and/or gender identity, while the report notes that the authorities have developed clearer and faster reactions. The Network called on the government to further intensify its efforts to protect people against racist, homophobic and transphobic violence. In 2011, UNHCR founded the Racist Violence Recording Network along with the National Commission for Human Rights and continues to be an active member together with many NGOs.

ITALY: In March 2018, an incident occurred in international waters between the Libyan Coast Guard and Spanish NGO Proactiva Open Arms disputing over who would conduct the rescue of a boat carrying some 80 persons. Local authorities in Italy have launched an investigation into the case and proceedings against the NGO are currently underway. UNHCR reiterates that saving lives remains a priority as crossings in the Mediterranean Sea are dangerous, making rescue-at-sea operations all the more critical. It is important to ensure effective coordination among all actors, including NGOs, during search and rescue (SAR) operations and disembarkation of those rescued to a place of safety without delay.

MONTENEGRO: Within the context of the new Law on Foreigners effective as of 03 March, a statelessness determination procedure (SDP) was included among new policies of the law. Many improvements have been included in the law, such as recognizing statelessness as a legal status and allowing persons granted such status the right to apply for a statelessness passport, a temporary residence permit

as well as access to employment. The relevant by-laws are expected to be adopted within six months from the law entering into force. UNHCR welcomes the new law and continues to encourage effective solutions for stateless persons.

**THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION:** On 28 March, Jean-Noel Wetterwald, interim UNHCR Representative in Russia, <u>visited the Russian International Affairs Council</u>. A meeting with Mr. Andrey Kortunov, Director General of Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) was held where discussions focused on cooperation between UNHCR and RIAC on international migration and refugee issues in the context of regional situations.

SERBIA: On 22 March, the Serbian Parliament adopted a new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, as well as new laws on Foreigners and on the Protection of State Borders. All three new laws will be relevant for managing the refugee and migration situation. The new Asylum Law, for example, aligns Serbian legislation to international and EU standards by including an improved refugee definition and enhanced provisions for unaccompanied and separated asylum-seeking children. It took effect on 26 March, where-after authorities are preparing its implementation for another 60 days.

**SPAIN**: UNHCR has <u>issued</u> protection guidelines on applications by Venezuelans in need of international protection on 15 March. In 2017, Venezuelans represented the fourth largest number of asylum applications in Spain.

and the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees launched on 27 March its second phase with the support of UNHCR. Following a successful first phase in 2017, the Council of Europe launched in Greece a new phase of the project for the 2018-2020 period. This new phase involves



the original partners from Greece, Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom, widening the scope to new actors participating from Armenia, Canada, France, Germany and the Netherlands. "The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees is a credible assessment that could be used by higher education institutions, employers and other integration stakeholders to facilitate and accelerate its holders' integration into the host community", said Roland-François Weil, UNHCR Representative to the European Institutions in Strasbourg.



On 22 March 2018, the Council of Europe's Human Rights Commissioner <u>submitted</u> to the ECtHR updated written observations in the case of *ND and NT v. Spain* (Grand Chamber hearing on 18 April 2018) concerning push-backs from Melilla to Morocco. The Commissioner underlined that returns take place outside of any formal procedure and without identification and assessment of the persons concerned. He stated that this practice prevents people from effectively exercising their right to seek international protection.

**THE UNITED KINGDOM:** Angus MacNeil's Private Member's Bill on refugee family reunification was debated in the House of Commons on Friday 16 March and passed its first stage of scrutiny, moving it one step closer to becoming a law. MPs voted in favour of the bill which would allow a wider range of family members to be reunited with refugees in the UK. This would provide young refugees a better chance to be reunited with their parents. It would also reintroduce

legal aid so that refugees who have lost everything can afford to navigate the complicated process of reuniting with separated family members.

Reacting to the news, Yohannes, a 19-year-old refugee from Eritrea who is living in the UK, said: 'I'm so happy that MPs are helping to bring refugee families together. I came to the UK as a child refugee and three years on, I'm still living here alone, while my sister is stuck in a camp in Ethiopia on her own...".

The <u>Families Together campaign</u> is supported by many famous faces including actors Patrick Stewart and Peter Capaldi who have <u>called</u> on their MPs to also support the Refugees Family Reunion Bill. A coalition of organisations, including UNHCR, the Refugee Council, Amnesty International, the British Red Cross, Oxfam, and Student Action for Refugees (STAR) have come together in backing the bill.



### EU RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

On 05 and 06 March, UNHCR's High Commissioner had meetings with EU counterparts, including Commissioner for Civil Protection, Humanitarian Aid and Operations Stylianides Christos Stylianides, High Representative/Vice President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner for Home Affairs, Migration and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos. Among other issues, they discussed issues relating to Greece, Libya, Myanmar, Syria, Venezuela, and the emergency transit mechanism in Niger.

On 08-09 March, a <u>Justice and Home Affairs</u> council took place in Brussels, Belgium. Ministers notably discussed the state of play and next steps regarding migration. An overview of key data for 2017 can be found <u>here</u>, while UNHCR's recommendations for EU asylum and migration policies can be found <u>here</u>.

On 22-23 March, a <u>European Council</u> took place in Brussels, Belgium. In that context, EU Leaders adopted conclusions on the Western Balkans, noting that migration will be on the agenda of the 17 May 2018 EU-Western Balkans Summit. UNHCR had made <u>recommendations</u> to the Bulgarian Presidency on enhancing protection in the Western Balkans as part of the pre-accession process.

On 26 March, an <u>informal EU-Turkey high-level meeting</u> took place in Varna, Bulgaria. The meeting was attended by President of the European Council Donald Tusk, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, Bulgaria's Prime Minister Boyko Borisov, and President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Topics discussed included the EU-Turkey partnership on migration and refugee support.



### FEATURE ON UKRAINE

UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner calls for improved access to pensions for the internally displaced in Ukraine

On 23 March, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner (AHC) for Operations Mr. George Okoth-Obbo, and the Regional Director for Europe, Ms. Pascale Moreau, concluded a week-long visit to Ukraine, where four years of conflict have displaced an estimated 1.5 million people. UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations Mr. George Okoth-Obbo has called for enhanced actions to address the plight of conflict-affected persons and to secure their rights, including access to pensions and freedom of movement.

Accompanied by the UNHCR Representative in Ukraine, Mr. Pablo Mateu, they travelled to eastern Ukraine to observe UNHCR's activities on the ground and meet with people affected by the conflict. At the meeting in a community centre run by UNHCR partner Slavic Heart, people highlighted the difficulties they face in accessing their pensions, the risk of being unable to pay for and losing

their accommodation at the centres at which they are staying, poor living conditions at the centres and their hopes of being able to exercise voting rights in local elections. Since the conflict started in 2014, people living in non-government controlled areas (NGCA) must travel to and register as IDPs in government controlled areas to undergo regular verification procedures in order to be able to receive their pensions. This travel involves passing back and forth through one of five checkpoints available at the "contact line", a particularly trying experience for the elderly and people living with disabilities. After witnessing the long queues in the extreme cold and snow at Maiorsk checkpoint, Mr. Okoth-Obbo said: "These people are traumatized twice. Firstly, by the experience of the ongoing conflict and, secondly, by the complex requirements and procedures which make it very difficult for people to receive their legitimate pensions and social security payments or even be at risk of losing them." Full press release here.

UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations Mr. George Okoth-Obbo visits



Watch the latest video stories produced by UNHCR's Michelle Hoffman and Bela Szandelszky who visited Eastern Ukraine in late March



Ukrainian pensioners struggle to cross the conflict line

Since armed conflict divided eastern Ukraine back in 2014, almost 1.3 million pensioners have found themselves caught in the middle, living in territory now outside of government control but dependent on state institutions for their hard-earned retirement pensions. To try to maintain access to those funds, the old and frail are forced repeatedly to make a difficult, costly and dangerous journey across the "line of contact".

UNHCR 20-April-2018

#### Ukraine: Cut off on the Donetsk conflict line

Far from the headlines, 4.4 million people in eastern Ukraine continue to live in the grips of an armed conflict that has divided their region, restricting freedom of movement and displacing many.



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### Pensioners caught up in Ukraine conflict struggle to survive

By Kate Bond in Starhonativka, Ukraine I 23 March 2018

Shelling, landmines and long queues are among the hazards facing elderly residents as they try to collect their pensions.

Svetlana Shuko worked for decades in the local coal plant, earning a pension she hoped would see her through retirement. Now, with armed conflict dividing Ukraine, eight months have passed since the 78-year-old received any cash. Living with cancer and barely able to leave her home in the battered town of Starhonativka, it is only thanks to neighbours and the non-governmental organization Proliska that the pensioner receives help.



Svetlana Shuko can barely leave her bed and struggles to receive her pension.

To receive her pension, Svetlana must visit an office in the town every three months to prove her identity and go through verification procedures as an internally displaced person (IDP) with state authorities. She finds the journey difficult because of her poor health, so avoids the once-a-day overcrowded buses and hires a taxi instead. "I go in the back seat, propped up with pillows. It is really difficult for me to keep going." Svetlana is one of nearly 1 million elderly IDPs living in eastern Ukraine who struggle to receive their pensions. Many are too frail or isolated to make the journey to be verified. For those who do, there is the constant worry of shelling, landmines and long queues in freezing temperatures. With a terminal illness and children who fled to Russia after the conflict began, Svetlana is among those who rely on Proliska, a partner of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. They help her to obtain medical treatment, heat her home, cook, clean, and be dealt with quickly at the pension office so that she does not need to endure an agonizing wait. Last year, the NGO with other partners helped UNHCR to provide 60,000 people with winter assistance.

#### Life is a daily battle for families in Ukraine conflict zone

By Kate Bond in Mariinka, Ukraine | 27 March 2018

It was just an ordinary day for Liuba and her son Misha in Mariinka, a town devastated by the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

They were used to the rattle of machine guns as they prepared breakfast. So when they fell silent, 10-year-old Misha ran to his grandmother's house nearby. Then a shell exploded without warning, Liuba recalls. "Suddenly, I couldn't see him anymore. But I heard this sound and someone screaming 'mama'." The first thing she remembers seeing was blood pouring from his head, where fragments from the shell had lodged. With the nearest hospital 30 kilometres away and hostilities in Mariinka intensifying, Liuba knew there was little hope of an ambulance. Fortunately, a relative from a nearby town was able to drive them there and Misha survived. Now Liuba says gunfire still scares her but silence frightens her more. Liuba still lives with the trauma of how close her son came to losing his life. Since his ordeal, their house has been shelled four times and young Misha dreams of moving away. Liuba and Misha are among more than 600,000 people caught inside the conflict zone. Shelling and landmines have turned thousands of lives upside down, making it difficult to collect benefits, food and medicine, or find jobs.



Misha holds a piece of shrapnel that was removed from his head.



### REFUGEE STORIES

youth together with refugees

By Josie Le Blond in Amsterdam, the Netherlands 26 March 2018

Adrian Laidley grew up fearing for his life. As a gay man in Jamaica, he had to hide his sexuality to protect himself against violent attacks. Now a refugee in the Netherlands, he has found safety and personal freedom as part of a revolutionary housing project for refugees and Dutch youth.



Terrified of being cast out by his family, Adrian concealed his sexual orientation for as long as he could. But he couldn't hide forever. Early in 2015, Adrian left his country hoping to find safety in Europe.

Just weeks after he arrived in Netherlands, an acquaintance outed Adrian to his family and friends back in Jamaica. His two brothers and most of his friends disowned him, while his mother and sister warned him never to return home. "I felt totally rejected," said Adrian. "If I had still been in Jamaica, I'd probably be dead."

Adrian was granted asylum and was given a studio apartment at Startblok, a new municipality-run housing project in the outskirts of Amsterdam. Startblok consists of nine blocks of shipping containers stacked on a former sports ground were transformed into affordable housing for 565 residents; half of them refugees, the other half young people from the Netherlands. Since Adrian moved in there and suddenly found he was no longer isolated. Taking advantage of regular events, classes and meetups held in Startblok's clubhouse, Adrian soon built a group of friends from all over the world. Adrian is now studying and working part-time for Startblok, giving tours to interested visitors from all over the world. Living at Startblok is about more than integrating, finding friends and building a network. It's a chance for Adrian at last to live openly, free of fear.

### Revolutionary housing project brings Dutch Afghan lost boys provide a bridge in Crete between nations

By Leo Dobbs in Heraklion, Greece 23 March 2018

Ali Sher Kashimi arrived in Greece as a young boy. Now, he helps other asylum seekers by interpreting for them.

The 22-year-old, Ali Sher Kashimi is an ethnic Hazara from Afghanistan, and a refugee who has spent the last decade in Crete. His role is vital: he is the interpreter who can help navigate language challenges and make daily life of asylum-seekers easier. "All the people of concern need interpreters," explains Ali, who is fluent in Urdu, Farsi, Dari and of course Greek. "You're the bridge connecting two nations," adds fellow interpreter and Hazara ethnic, Habibala. The two friends interpret for about 80 of the more than 600 people who have been provided with apartment places and support in Crete under UNHCR's ESTIA accommodation and cash assistance programme, which has helped tens of thousands of people.

The EU-funded accommodation scheme did not exist when Ali and Habibala arrived in Greece in 2008. As youngsters, they were taken to Anogia, the first shelter for unaccompanied children in Crete which opened in 2001. Now, they are involved in every step of the process to welcome asylum seekers, starting with arrival. The Heraklion Development Agency (HDA), which is implementing the scheme in Heraklion, Sitia and Chania employs 11 interpreters, including Ali and Habibala, working in Arabic, Farsi, Dari, Sorani and Urdu.

Ali explains where to shop, how to use public transport, how to get medical services and enrol children at school. He helps them to register their address and active cash cards. Social orientation is important and Ali advising other asylum-seekers on how to function in a new community and adapt to their hosts' culture and lifestyle.

The young man is proud of his work, "I feel that I am doing something important. I'm helping people to rebuild their lives and that gives me great satisfaction."





# <u>UNHCR and British School in Baku support football tournament for refugee and local</u> schoolboys

A three-day mini-football tournament with participation of eight teams of local and refugee teenagers came to final at the Tofig Bahramov Republican Stadium in the capital of Azerbaijan on 15 March. The two mini-football teams, consisted of teenage boys from Afghan, Chechen and Iranian refugee communities residing in Baku, undertook the play offs along with the children from public secondary schools, as well as from the private ones like the British School in Baku and the Modern School.

The tournament was initiated and financed by the British School Baku with the support of the UNHCR Representation in Azerbaijan and the Baku Education Department. "UNHCR highly values this initiative which brings together refugee children with the local community and fosters an environment of tolerance, understanding and solidarity" said Furio De Angelis, UNHCR Country Representative.



Winners of the football tournament supported by the UNHCR, the British School Baku and the Baku Education Department, 14 March 2018 (UNHCR's photo)



### Key Documents from the Web Portal



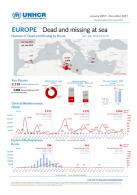
<u>Desperate Journeys - January</u> 2017 to March 2018

Overview of trends of movements by refugees and migrants to and through Europe in 2017



GREECE Cash Assistance
March 2018

In March, 41,803 eligible refugees and asylum-seekers received cash assistance in Greece, in 92 locations.



Mediterranean: Dead and Missing at Sea - March 2018

Number of dead and missing in the Mediterranean by route.



Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe - September 2017

Accompanied, unaccompanied and separated refugee and migrant children in Europe.



UNHCR Northern Europe
Country Factsheets

Key data on persons of concern in Northern Europe



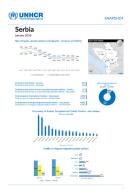
<u>Italy Weekly Snapshot - 15 April</u> 2018

Summary of key statistics of recent arrivals to Italy as well as asylum applications and relocation.



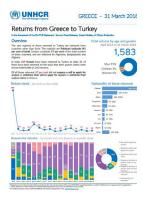
Resettlement to Europe December 2017

Rented housing scheme for vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees in Greece.



Serbia Snapshot March 2018

Summary of population statistics including asylum applications and observed pushbacks.



Returns from Greece to Turkey March 2018

Returns from Greece to Turkey (under EU-Turkey statement) as of 31 March 2018

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## ELINE OVERVIEW

#### 20 March 2016

Start of the EU-Turkey Statement .

#### 03 April 2016

Greece implemented a new law highlighting the creation of the Reception and Identification Service, restructuring of the Asylum Service, the creation of an Appeals' Authority, and the creation of new Regional Asylum Offices.

#### 04 April 2016

First returns take place under the EU-Turkey Statement: 202 people returned to Turkey from Greece.

#### 06 April 2016

The European Commission (EC) published Communication on reforms to Common European Asylum System (CEAS).

#### 07 April 2016

Turkish government amended the Temporary Protection Regulation regarding access to temporary protection for Syrian nationals who irregularly travel to Europe and who are returned to Turkey from Greek islands.

#### 27 April 2016

Turkey amended labour legislation to grant those holding subsidiary protection work permits.

#### 04 May 2016

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The EC released Proposals to reform the CEAS, with proposals to reform the Dublin Regulation, the EURODAC system and to turn the European Asylum Support Office into an European Union Agency for Asylum.

#### 18 May 2016

The Turkish President approved the legislative framework regarding the EU-Turkey Statement with regards to the readmission of people from Greece.

#### 13 July 2016

The EC released:

- Its proposals to <u>recast</u> the Asylum Procedures Directive, recast the Qualification Directive and <u>amend</u> the Reception Conditions Directive.
- Its proposal on an EU Resettlement Framework.

#### 20 September 2016

Leader's Summit on Refugees was held in New York bringing together countries and international organisations, and announced pledges to increase efforts in support of refugees.

#### 06 October 2016

The EC officially launched the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG) Agency.

#### 08 December 2016

The EC released a recommendation to Member States to gradually resume Dublin transfers to Greece under certain circumstances.

#### 31 December 2016

362,376 refugees and migrants reached Europe in 2016 and 5,096 went dead or missing.

#### 19 January 2017

UNHCR, IOM and 72 other partners launched the <u>Regional Refugee and</u> <u>Migrant Response Plan</u> to help respond to the situation of refugees and migrants in Europe in 2017

#### 02 February 2017

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<u>UNHCR and IOM released a joint statement</u> on addressing migration and refugee movements along the Central Mediterranean route.

Informal European Council meeting. EU Leaders adopt the Malta Declaration on "addressing the Central Mediterranean route".

#### 14 February 2017

UNHCR calls for concrete measures to be adopted by the Greek authorities, the EU and its Member States to ensure wwadequate care, support and solutions for the women, men and children seeking asylum in Greece.

#### 07 March 2017

UNHCR is deeply concerned at a new law which has been voted at the Hungarian Parliament and which foresees the mandatory detention of all asylum seekers, including many children, for the entire length of the asylum procedure.

#### 09-10 March 2017

European Council Migration on the agen-

#### 25 March 2017

Informal European Council meeting. EU Leaders adopt the Rome Declaration. Migration and asylum included in the "safe and secure Europe" overarching area of work.

#### 10 April 2017

UNHCR urges suspension of transfers of asylum-seekers to Hungary under the Dublin Regulation.

#### 12 April 2017

The EC releases the communication on the protection of children in migration.

UNICEF and UNHCR welcome EU policy to protect migrant and refugee children.

#### 12 May 2017

On 12 May, Frontex' Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights, which UNHCR is co-chairing, published its Annual Report

On 18 May, a Justice and Home Affairs Council took place in Brussels. Among other issues, EU Home Affairs Ministers discussed the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), focusing on the issues of responsibility and solidarity.

#### ······ 13 June 2017

The European Commission (EC) released i) the 13th Report on Relocation and Resettlement; ii) the 6th Report on the EU-Turkey Statement; iii) the 4th Report on the Migration Partnership Framework and iv) the 4th Report on the European Border and Coast

#### 15 June 2017

The EC launched infringement procedures regarding the reloca-tion programme against Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic.

#### 04 July 2017

the EC released an Action Plan on Measures to Support Italy, Reduce Pressure along the Central Mediterranean and Increase Solidarity.

#### 26 July 2017

The EC <u>moved to the next</u> <u>step</u> of infringements procedures against Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic for non-compliance with the relocation decisions

#### 26 September 2017

Marks the two-year plan of the EU Relocation scheme

#### 04 November 2017

November 4, 2017 marked the third anniversary of UNHCR's #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness

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#### 22 December 2017

The first evacuation from Libya to Italy took place on 22 December, 2017, where 162 asylum-seekers were supported by UNHCR and Italian authorities.

#### 25-26 January 2018

An informal Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council took place in Sofia, Bulgaria and Ministers of Home Affairs discussed the global aspects of migration and refugee issues.

2018