

# EUROPE MONTHLY REPORT



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On the frontline of the Mediterranean crisis, refugee singers, dancers and international stars perform in a music and dance show in the Sicilian port city of Catania, to mark World Refugee Day 2018.

## TRENDS AND KEY FIGURES

In June, just over 14,000 refugees and migrants arrived to Europe via Italy, Greece and Spain, bringing the total number of refugees and migrants who have arrived by land and sea routes to these three countries to just under 56,600 in the first half of 2018. This marks a reduction of 46% from the 104,400 that arrived in Europe via the three countries in the first six months of 2017. The primary nationalities amongst arrivals in this period were Syrians, Guineans, and Iraqis. While increased arrivals of refugees and migrants have been recorded so far in Greece and Spain, the overall reduction in arrival numbers in Europe this year is primarily due to lower numbers of refugees and migrants being able to cross to Italy from Libya. In the first six months of 2018, most arrivals to Europe were to Greece (22,000) by land and sea, and Spain (17,900).

**Italy:** Just over 3,100 refugees and migrants arrived by sea in June, a decrease compared to the 3,900 that arrived in May and a significant reduction compared to the 23,500 refugees and migrants that crossed the sea, mostly from North Africa, in June 2017. Approximately 70% of sea arrivals to Italy in June, amounting to 2,200 persons, departed from Libya.

As of 10 June, non-Italian flagged NGO vessels were no longer allowed to disembark in Italy. On this day, Italy refused disembarkation permission to the NGO vessel Aquarius carrying over 600 refugees and migrants. Malta too denied disembarkation permission. Aquarius subsequently disembarked in Spain following permission granted by the Spanish government, a decision welcomed by UNHCR. Subsequent to this, the NGO vessel Lifeline carrying over 230 persons was granted disembarkation permission in Malta at the end of June following commitments by other European countries to relocate some of the rescued persons. At the same time, apart from the NGO vessels (as none of them have the Italian flag), Italian Coast Guards as well as Italian and non-Italian commercial vessels continued disembarking in Italy. This included a Danish-flagged

Mediterranean  
**56,585**  
arrivals in 2018<sup>1</sup>

**1,288**  
estimated dead/missing in 2018<sup>1</sup>

**Greece<sup>2</sup>**  
**21,963**

6,658	4,374	3,515
Apr	May	Jun

**Italy**  
**16,566**

3,171	3,963	3,136
Apr	May	Jun

**Spain<sup>2</sup>**  
**17,940**

1,690	3,937	7,313
Apr	May	Jun

**Cyprus**  
**73**

0	0	61
Apr	May	Jun

**New asylum applications in Europe<sup>3</sup>**

Jan-Jun 2018:	<b>218,600</b>
Jan-Dec 2017:	<b>819,000</b>
Jan-Dec 2016:	<b>1,323,000</b>
Jan-Dec 2015:	<b>1,471,000</b>

### UNHCR 7-August-2018

<sup>1</sup> [data.unhcr.org/mediterranean](http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean) as of 30 June 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Greece and Spain both include sea and land arrivals; Spain includes sea arrivals in the Mediterranean and to the Canary Islands.

<sup>3</sup> Sources: Eurostats for EU+ countries (Only partial data for May and June 2018). All data is provisional and last updated 25 July 2018; UNHCR for Eastern Europe (as of 31 December 2017), Turkey (as of 31 December 2017) and South Eastern Europe (as of 30 June 2018).

cargo vessel that had rescued over 100 persons and was ultimately granted disembarkation permission in Italy after several days of waiting off the Italian coast for permission.

After 10 June, the Libyan Coast Guard increasingly took responsibility for interceptions or rescues of vessels that had departed from Libya's coast. As a result, over 3,400 refugees and migrants were disembarked in Libya in June, including over 1,000 Sudanese and Eritrean nationals. Those intercepted or rescued were subsequently transferred to detention facilities in Libya. Also in June, the existence of Libya's Search and Rescue Region was confirmed by the International Maritime Organization.

The largest groups that arrived by sea in Italy in June were from Sudan (24%), Eritrea (11%), and Guinea (10%). Amongst those disembarked in Italy were persons showing injuries sustained at the hands of traffickers in Libya demanding ransom money who then subsequently sold them on to other traffickers. However, as of the end of June, most arrivals in Italy by sea in 2018 had been from Tunisia (18%), Eritrea (15%) and Sudan (9%).

**Greece:** Over 2,400 refugees and migrants arrived by sea to Greece in June, a reduction from the over 2,900 in May but still a 21% increase compared to last June. A decrease was particularly noted in the number of Syrians and Iraqis crossing the sea to Greece with the number of Syrians dropping 71% from May to just under 400 and the number of Iraqis reducing by 40% to 350. As a result, persons from Afghanistan (20% of arrivals in June) were the primary sea arrivals in Greece in June ahead of Syrians and Iraqis and increases in the numbers of persons from the Democratic Republic of Congo (12% of all arrivals), and Cameroon (10% of arrivals) were noted. Reasons for the reduction in numbers of Syrians and Iraqis are thought to include increased controls in the west of Turkey around key departure points and in land locations. In addition, over 8,300 refugees and migrants arrived in Greece via the land border with Turkey in the first six months of the year, already more than the 5,700 that arrived via this route in the whole of 2017.

**Spain:** Some 7,300 refugees and migrants arrived in June via the land and sea borders, the highest number in a single month so far this year, with some 95% arriving by sea, a slightly higher proportion than in previous months. In the first half of the year, some 17,900 arrived in Spain, an 89% increase from the 9,500 that arrived in the first half of 2017. Those crossing the sea to Spain do so via a variety of vessels with most crossing the Alboran Sea or the Straits of Gibraltar. Arrivals by land to one of the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla reached almost 2,900 in the first six months of the year, slightly less than the same period in 2017. So far, the primary countries of origin of arrivals to Spain are Guinea, the Syrian Arab Republic and Cote d'Ivoire. As of the end of June, some 302 refugees and migrants are believed to have died at sea en route to Spain.

**Balkans:** Higher numbers of arrivals continued to be recorded in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania and Montenegro as refugees and migrants diversified the routes onwards from Greece and Serbia. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, some 7,600 new arrivals have been recorded since the start of

the year, some of whom have travelled from Greece via Albania and Montenegro and others who are trying to move onwards from Serbia. The largest groups have been from Pakistan (30%), Syria (17%), Afghanistan (12%), Iran (11%) and Iraq (10%). In this period some 680 persons have applied for asylum and 166 unaccompanied or separated children have been identified. As a result of the increased movement through Bosnia-Herzegovina, in the northwestern region of the country (Una-Sana Canton) the daily influx of new arrivals in June 2018 was estimated to be between 70 and 90. In the same month it was also estimated that there were over 3,500 refugees and migrants in Una-Sana Canton without proper accommodation or access to basic services and health care. Most of these people are constantly on the move, attempting to cross into Croatia and Slovenia, often trying dangerous routes with the help of smugglers and exposing themselves to various risks. To avoid risky journeys UNHCR encouraged people stay and apply for asylum in Bosnia-Herzegovina. At the same time UNHCR offered support to the government of the country to address arising humanitarian needs.

With many of the refugees and migrants in Bosnia-Herzegovina trying to move onwards to Croatia and Slovenia en route to other EU Member States, Croatia has recorded some 3,000 arrivals so far this year and Slovenia some 1,300. In Serbia, almost 2,000 new arrivals were assisted by UNHCR and partners in June compared to the 800 assisted in May. Most of those were from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria and the majority are understood to have arrived in the country via the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Many new arrivals are thought to remain undetected by UNHCR and authorities. UNHCR and partners continue to receive many reports of push-backs from multiple states in the region, often resulting in denial of access to asylum procedures, and sometimes including allegations of violence or theft by some state authorities. Some 18 people are known to have died along land routes in the Balkans so far this year, with most deaths the result of drowning, especially at the Slovenia-Croatia border.

**Dead and Missing:** By the end of June 2018, some 1,288 refugees and migrants are believed to have died while trying to cross the Mediterranean sea to Europe. June was the [deadliest](#) month this year for those crossing the Central Mediterranean with some 564 persons believed to have [died](#) at sea, amounting to one [death](#) for every seven persons who crossed to Europe via the Central Mediterranean route. As of the end of June some 938 refugees and migrants had died along the route, most after departing from Libya.

Most deaths continued to occur along the Central Mediterranean route from North Africa to Italy (938 or 73%) but the 302 deaths recorded at sea along the route to Spain is far higher than the 57 recorded in the same period last year. Additionally, at least 47 refugees and migrants are known to have died along land routes in Europe or at Europe's borders so far this year. Of these, most deaths occurred in the Western Balkans (18), followed by along the route across the land border between Greece and Turkey (16) where most deaths were the result of vehicle accidents or drownings in the Evros River.

# 34,691

Relocated in total <sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Source: [European Commission](#), as of 29 June 2018.

from  
**Greece**  
**21,999**  
 (33% of 66,400)

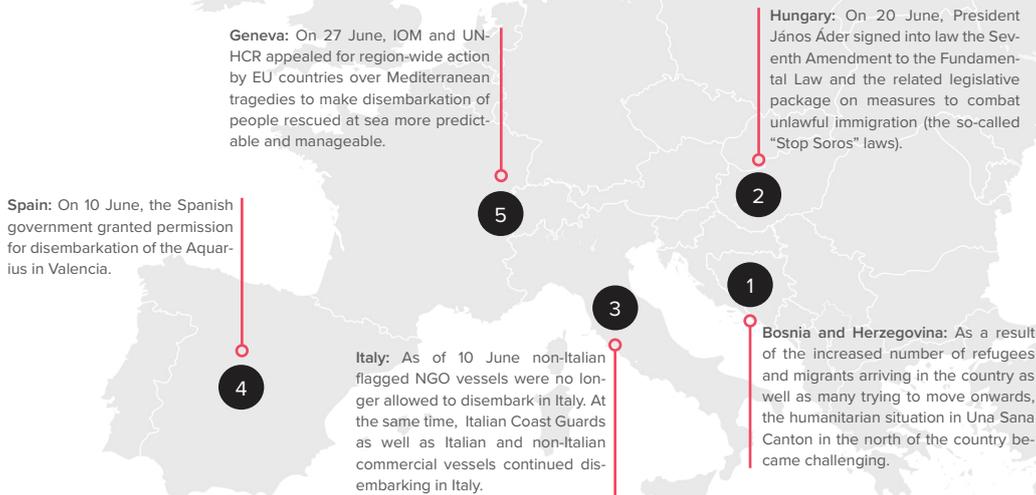
from  
**Italy**  
**12,692**  
 (31% of 39,600)

# 1,650

Returns EU-Turkey statement <sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Source: [Ministry of Citizen Protection](#), Greece as of 30 June 2018.

# 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 Nations.

**Austria:** In preparation for Austria's assumption of the EU Presidency from 1 July, UNHCR developed a set of recommendations that were subsequently released with a press statement. With migration at the top of the agenda for the Austrian Presidency, these [recommendations](#) include calls for a relocation mechanism as part of the reformed Dublin Regulation; a predictable regional mechanism in the Mediterranean for the disembarkation and processing of persons rescued-at-sea; and ensuring that cooperation with countries of origin and transit results in expanding the global protection space rather than in shifting protection responsibilities outside of the EU.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina:** As a result of the increased **1** number of refugees and migrants arriving in the country as well as many trying to move back and forth and trying to move onwards, the humanitarian situation in Una Sana Canton in the north of the country, was particularly challenging. Over 3,500 refugees and migrants were estimated to be in the canton, with informal settlements being established in Bihać and outside Velika Kladuša, in the immediate vicinity of the Croatian border. Living and sanitary conditions in the informal sites were poor and some security incidents took place, including a Moroccan national stabbed to death. With few people successful in moving on to Croatia, and with more people arriving to the area, the numbers in these sites had increased. UNHCR and partners are continuing to advocate with authorities for the need for proper accommodation and reception conditions and advocating with persons of concern to stop moving and apply for asylum

in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Bulgaria:** The Government of Bulgaria adopted an Action Plan for 2018 for the implementation of the National Strategy on Migration, Asylum and Integration (2015-2020) to facilitate the integration of refugees granted international protection. The adoption of the plan follows extensive advocacy from UNHCR and partners, including the submission of comments during previous consultations.

**France:** Around 400 persons, including Eritreans, Ethiopians and Afghans, some of whom are likely to have international protection needs, have been living in informal sites around Calais. Authorities have regularly dismantled informal shelters to discourage settlement in the area and only some 15 persons were voluntarily transferred from Calais to the CAES (centre d'accueil et d'examen des situations) in the region in order to initiate asylum procedures. In Grande-Synthe, around 450 persons, including some 30 families with children, settled in the municipality with some new arrivals in the area and some having returned from reception centres. To avoid any new settlements in Grande-Synthe, the Préfecture of the Nord Department intervened several times in June and transferred persons to the CAES in the region. However, many subsequently returned.

**Greece:** Although the numbers of refugees and migrants arriving in Greece by sea dropped slightly despite the onset of summer, according to UNHCR estimations there were still almost 15,000 refugees and migrants on the islands. In Lesbos, Chios and Samos, more than 11,000

people were in the Reception and Identification Centres (RICs), despite these having capacity for only 3,800. The overcrowding has been further exacerbated by the limited space available in sites on the mainland, which has delayed transfers from the islands. UNHCR has continued to urge the Greek government to ease overcrowding, accelerate transfers, improve reception conditions, and identify appropriate accommodation. On Lesbos, the situation remains particularly difficult in Moria RIC, where 6,500 people are hosted at a facility with capacity for 2,000. Families are living in cramped conditions, while high temperatures have increased the hardships. At the end of June, Deputy Migration Policy Minister Balafas committed to reducing the population in the Moria RIC to 3,500. On Chios, almost 1,900 refugees and migrants were staying in a site with capacity for 1,100. Some 650 refugees and migrants there were living in deplorable conditions in tents or makeshift structures. Similarly, on Samos where over 2,600 refugees and migrants were in a site with capacity for 700, health, hygiene, security and protection conditions are concerning.

Between 24 and 27 June, UNHCR's Deputy High Commissioner Kelly Clements was on mission to Greece where she visited Moria RIC and Kara Tepe in Lesbos, met with refugees in Athens, as well as met with Greek authorities and members of the diplomatic corps. Following the visit, she noted the harsh conditions in Moria and [called](#) for measures to ease overcrowding and increase security at the sites on the islands.

Also in June, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe [called for immediate action](#) to improve reception conditions in Greece, particularly in the hotspots, warning of the increasing tension amongst RIC residents, as well as with the host community; to speed up processing of asylum applications while ensuring safeguards and fair procedures; increase reception capacity across the country and improve their quality; to respond to the needs of the 3,500 unaccompanied children in Greece; to protect the rights of vulnerable including through faster vulnerability assessments; to intensify efforts for integration.

At Greece's Evros land border, some 1,000 refugees and migrants arrived in June, compared to 1,400 in May and 3,600 in April. At least 22 people are known to have died while crossing the border or shortly after crossing since the start of the year with most deaths the result of vehicle accidents or drownings in the Evros River. Several organizations have reported receiving distress calls from people who have crossed the border and have either become lost or fear being pushed back by authorities. UNHCR has also received several further reports of push-backs at the land border in June.

**Hungary:** President János Áder signed into law the **2** Seventh Amendment to the Fundamental Law (which entered into force on 29 June) and the related legis-

lative package on measures to combat unlawful immigration (the so-called "Stop Soros" laws). These measures will significantly restrict the ability of NGOs and individuals to support asylum-seekers and refugees who have entered Hungary irregularly. Penalties include up to one-year imprisonment. UNHCR is monitoring the implementation of the new laws and their impact on partners and people of concern.

**Ireland:** On 27 June, Ireland's Minister of Justice and Equality introduced new rules that will give asylum-seekers the right to work in most sectors once they have been waiting for a decision on their application for nine months or more. It will also remove minimum earning requirements for asylum-seekers, offering real and substantial access to job opportunities for people in the system. The government estimates the decision will affect 3,000 people.

**Italy:** As of 10 June, non-Italian flagged NGO vessels **3** were no longer allowed to disembark in Italy. At the same time, apart from the NGO vessels (as none of them have the Italian flag), Italian Coast Guards and Frontex as well as Italian and non-Italian commercial vessels continued disembarking in Italy. On 12 June, the US Naval ship Trenton rescued a group of 41 individuals in international waters off the Libyan coast who were subsequently transferred to an Italian Coast Guard ship several days later. Similarly, on 22 June, a Danish-flagged commercial vessel Alexander Maersk rescued 113 persons in international waters, under the coordination of the Italian MRCC. After several days anchored off the Sicilian coast, it was eventually granted disembarkation permission in Pozzallo on 26 June.

At Italy's border with France, UNHCR conducted outreach activities in Ventimiglia where numbers have generally decreased in the first half of 2018. This is as a result of, inter alia, decreasing sea arrivals, increased police controls at train stations and in urban areas, and the dismantling of the informal settlements along the Roya River. However, a number of refugees and migrants continue to sleep rough in different parts of town and humanitarian support available is limited. Refugees and migrants continue to be transferred from Ventimiglia to the Crotona hotspot. Some unaccompanied and separated children were transferred to Crotona, according to the authorities, either because they were registered as adults or as a mistake, but not as common practice. UNHCR, together with NGOs working with UASC, is working on a common strategy to address the needs of UASC in the area.

**Malta:** On 21 June, Dutch-flagged NGO Mission Lifeline rescued 235 persons in international waters. After some delay while a port of safety was sought, Malta subsequently granted disembarkation permission following commitments by eight other European States (France, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Ireland, Belgium, and Norway) to transfer some of those on board.

On 27 June, the vessel arrived in Malta and the group was transferred to the Initial Reception Centre and selection processing by the other European States have since been initiated. UNHCR continues to provide monitoring, information and interpretation support.

Following Lifeline's docking in Valetta, the vessel's captain appeared in court on the charge of having steered the ship within Maltese territorial waters without the necessary registration and license. The vessel has also been impounded thus preventing Lifeline assisting with rescues off the Libyan coast. Other NGOs have faced similar restrictions with the German NGO Sea Watch being prevented from leaving Malta at the end of June. Additionally, on 26 June, French NGO SOS Méditerranée Gibraltar-flagged vessel Aquarius was denied entry to Malta territorial waters and port of Valetta for re-supply and crew change resulting in the vessel having to travel to Marseille, thus entailing more time away from the rescue zone off the Libyan coast. On 28 June, the Maltese Government issued a press statement announcing that: (a) Malta needs to ascertain that operations being conducted by entities using its port services and operating within the area of Maltese responsibility are in accordance with national and international rules, including in terms of registration; and (b) until investigations by independent authorities clarify issues, Malta cannot allow authorities with structures similar to those under investigations to use Malta's ports. UNHCR in July issued a [press statement](#) that also noted its concern about the increasing restrictions being placed on NGOs.

**Netherlands:** On 19 June, UNHCR, in cooperation with the Canadian Embassy, the Advisory Committee for Asylum Affairs and the De Maatschappelijke Alliantie organized a Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative roundtable in The Hague. The GRSI aims to assist and inspire other countries to open new pathways for refugee protection by sharing Canada's experience and leadership in private sponsorship and by supporting the adoption of new programmes in new environments. Senior officials from the Ministry of Justice and Security and the Ministry of Social Affairs were present, as well as civil society organisations, philanthropic foundations, and academics.

**Strasbourg developments:** On 27 June, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a [Resolution](#) on 'International obligations of Council of Europe Member States to protect life at sea'. The Assembly called for "clear geographical responsibilities" for international search and rescue at sea, and urged coastal states to assist ships carrying out rescue, as well as allowing them to enter their ports. In a separate [resolution](#), based on a report by Tineke Strik (Netherlands, SOC), the Assembly warned that the EU should "refrain from externalising migration control" to countries that could not guarantee basic human rights standards under the ECHR and UN Refugee Convention.

**Spain:** The Spanish government granted permission for disembarkation of the Aquarius in Valencia. The vessel docked in Valencia on 17 June and the largest groups that disembarked were from Sudan and Nigeria. UNHCR provided support with the identification of protection needs and persons at risk, as well as with information provision on international protection, visits to reception premises, supporting communication with the group, and overall monitoring and follow-up on lessons learned and good practice exercises, with a view to applying these to other arrival situations on the southern coast. Furthermore, UNHCR has been liaising with local authorities and following-up on the different groups of persons in Valencia and in the neighbouring provinces of Alicante and Castellon where women and unaccompanied children have been referred to, in order to ensure adequate identification, and consideration of international protection-related issues.



**Turkey:** In June 2018, a decrease in rescues/apprehensions at land and sea borders has been observed which is attributed to tightened security controls and road checks by law enforcement units around key departure points. 1,900 individuals were rescued/apprehended by the Turkish Coast Guards at sea borders of Turkey during June 2018, a 43% decrease from May 2018. Just over one third of those rescued/apprehended were Syrian (36% or 700). According to the Turkish Land Forces figures, 3,200 persons were apprehended at the western land borders (Greece and Bulgaria) of Turkey during June 2018, a 38% decrease from May.

**Ukraine:** During the month of June, the security situation in eastern Ukraine continued to deteriorate. UNHCR field partners recorded damage to 186 houses in June 2018 alone, representing a substantial increase as compared to previous months. Villages such as Maiorsk, Zhovanka, Svetlodarsk, Novhorodske and Chyhari suffered disproportionately. In particular, in the village of Chyhari 13 houses burned to the ground. UNHCR has been supporting the 150 inhabitants who have been displaced from Chyhari as a result of increased hostilities and shelling. Some 25 people (including one single mother with 4 children included) remain in the village. UNHCR has been advocating for ways to have a security window for some of the families to go back and retrieve their personal items left behind. Through NGO partner Proliska,

UNHCR distributed solar chargers to families left in the village as electric supplies have been cut since the beginning of June. Additionally, during a UNHCR field visit, villagers from the front-line village Kalchyk in the Donetsk region, asked how they could prevent sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in the community and respond to the needs of survivors. To support the community, on 20 June, the NGO Women's League of Donetsk, with the support of UNHCR and UNFPA, provided an induction training to community members on ways of raising awareness, reporting, delivering support to sur-

vivors, with a particular focus on persons with specific needs. On 18 June, brigades and UNHCR started damage assessment in Luhansk oblast. UNHCR's shelter programme plan to distribute construction materials to some 700 houses owners who have the capacity to rehabilitate their own homes. In Donetsk oblast, UNHCR successfully repaired some 200 houses on 31 March 2018 and is currently repairing an additional 110 damaged houses which are located close to the contact line but still considered secure to reside.

## EU RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

On 12 June, [UN High Commissioner for Refugees Grandi urged fair and coherent approach to European asylum policies](#). Grandi, who was speaking at the end of a two-day visit to Copenhagen, warned that increasingly restrictive asylum policies and unilateral measures by European States marginalize refugees, and make successful integration more difficult – harming both refugees and the societies hosting them.

Countries around the world are currently discussing a Global Compact on Refugees, to be adopted by the United Nations General Assembly later this year. Good European regional and national policies can help shape how refugee situations are managed globally, and show how solidarity and shared responsibility pays dividends all round. Recent proposals to externalize the asylum process, with the aim of shifting responsibility away from Europe's borders and limiting access to asylum for those arriving in Europe, run counter to these global efforts and must be avoided.

"We need solidarity and cooperation, not responsibility-shifting. Nine out of ten forcibly displaced people are not in Europe, but in their own countries or neighbouring ones," Grandi added. "When Europe closes its doors, the compassion and solidarity of those countries is bound to falter."

On 22 June, [UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi made a statement on Europe and asylum](#). Grandi urged European States to find a new and united approach that answers the shared needs of all countries to be able to manage their borders and their migration policies, in a way that simultaneously upholds the European and international asylum standards that emerged from the Second World War.

He said that this is achievable and that UNHCR is here to help – "We are ready to work with European states in developing a way forward that is both realistic and principled. One rooted in solidarity and cooperation, and which avoids the recent tendency towards responsibility-shifting and other actions that harm refugees on the one hand, and Europe itself on the other. One that guarantees that those in distress at sea will be rescued and disembarked in a predictable manner, and addresses what happens to them once they are brought ashore. One that removes doubt about the genuineness of the reasons driving people to flee, and that provides for the return home of those

who are not refugees, or otherwise entitled to stay."

Europe today is no longer in the crux of a migration or refugee crisis. Mediterranean arrivals numbers are at pre-2014 levels and are dropping towards their long-term historic averages. More than 9 in 10 of the world's forcibly displaced people are outside Europe - either in their own countries or in immediately neighbouring ones: countries mostly of the Global South. And European support, solidarity and collaboration with these countries, as well as countries of transit, has become more critical than ever.

On 27 June, [IOM and UNHCR appealed for region-wide action by EU countries over Mediterranean tragedies](#).

**5** Concerned with the ongoing human tragedy in which almost 1,000 refugees and migrants have perished while being smuggled across the Mediterranean this year, UNHCR and IOM appealed to European Union (EU) countries for concerted, region-wide action to greatly reduce needless loss of life at sea.

UNHCR and IOM believe a [new collaborative and regional approach](#) is needed to make disembarkation of people rescued at sea more predictable and manageable, to save lives. This should build on ongoing collaboration between the EU, UN and African Union. People rescued in international waters should be quickly brought ashore in safe locations in the EU, and potentially elsewhere too.

The approach needs to be complemented by intra-EU solidarity (including a fair and efficient distribution mechanism), more resettlement places, family reunification and other solutions within the EU and beyond, and increased support to countries where people are disembarked.

On 28 and 29 June, EU leaders gathered in Brussels for a European Summit. Asylum and migration were high on the meeting's agenda. In the Council Conclusions, EU leaders notably called upon the Council and the European Commission to swiftly explore the concept of "regional disembarkation platforms". They suggested the establishment by EU Member States, on a voluntary basis, of "controlled centres" on the EU's territory, where people disembarked would be processed. On the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), EU leaders noted 'the need to find a speedy solution to the whole package', calling for 'continued work' with a view to "concluding as soon as possible". There will be a report on progress during the October European Summit.

# WORLD REFUGEE DAY

“Helping refugees rebuild their lives needs all of us – working together so that they can achieve what most of us take for granted - education, a place to live, a job, being part of a community. Over time, the impact is enormous – for refugee families and those who welcome them.”

UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi on World Refugee Day 2018.

From breakdancing to concerts, football to food festivals, millions of people around the world are taking part in events marking World Refugee Day, celebrating the strength and resilience of people forced to flee their homes and seek safety elsewhere. We offer you a few highlights from Europe:

**Strasbourg, France:** An Alsatian restaurant serves traditional “tarte flambée” with an Iraqi twist, as the Refugee Food Festival gets going in Strasbourg.



**Tallinn, Estonia:** Visitors, young and old, to the Maritime Museum in Tallinn are paying tribute to the many Estonians who were forced to flee on fishing boats during the Second World War.



**Dublin, Ireland:** Delicious Syrian man’oushe (flat bread) is being served up in Ireland.



**Moscow, Russia:** Afghan refugees are taking part in a basketball masterclass with BC Khimki, as part of events in Moscow.



**Kyiv, Ukraine:** In a country where four years of conflict have forced more than 1.5 million people from their homes, Clowns Without Borders are bringing smiles to the faces of refugee and displaced children.



**Presevo, Serbia:** UNHCR staff, refugees and the local community have been busy planting trees at two schools in Presevo, Serbia, to show their support.



**Rome, Italy:** Pope Francis stands in solidarity #WithRefugees. A person’s dignity does not depend on them being a citizen, a migrant, or a refugee. Saving the life of someone fleeing war and poverty is an act of humanity. #WithRefugees @M\_RSection



# STATELESSNESS IN EUROPE

**On 20 June, the Spanish Senate authorized the accession to the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.** Spain's domestic legislation is fully compliant with the 1961 Convention, therefore the accession is mostly a reinforcement of Spain's commitment to reduce statelessness and to stand out as an example for other States.

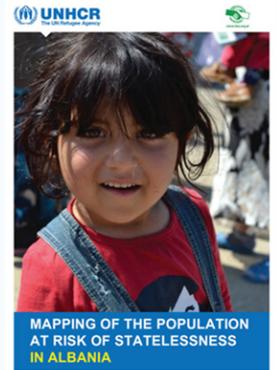
**The Parliament of Iceland adopted amendments to the Icelandic Nationality Act:** The amendments ensure among other things, the granting of Icelandic citizenship through notification to stateless persons born in the country after 3 years of habitual residence, facilitation of naturalization for stateless migrants, and further facilitation of naturalization for persons under 21 years of age who are stateless or granted international protection

**Briefing on statelessness for media professionals in Belarus:** The event took place on 28 June on the premises of the Press Club – a capacity-building platform for me-

dia professionals in Minsk, facilitated by Statelessness Unit of the Bureau for Europe. It brought together some 30 media professionals. The statelessness issue is relatively new to Belarusian media, and the briefing was an important step in the preparation for the International Statelessness Conference in Minsk in November 2018.

## Mapping of the population at risk of statelessness in Albania:

In collaboration with the Government of Albania, on 8 June UNHCR launched the report aimed at improving identification and registration of persons at risk of statelessness.



# TRENDING ON TWITTER IN JUNE



Follow

Take a moment to listen to this inspirational short story from 10 year old Frasier, who has autism.

❤️ "If we could find friendship our world would be good"

@save\_children #RefugeeWeek2018



Follow

This win is dedicated to migrant and refugee children, especially on #WorldRefugeeDay. Wanna join me? Take the #LongestGoal challenge. The best clips will be featured on billboards around the world! @unicef #AChildIsAChild #LongestGoal uni.cf/goool



Follow

On #WorldRefugeeDay The Strangers' Case, Shakespeare's powerful call to #StandWithRefugees from Sir Thomas More is as relevant as ever. Film created by @IRCEurope for #RefugeeWeek2018



# OTHER SITUATIONS IN EUROPE

Turkey **3.9 million**

Refugees and asylum seekers <sup>5</sup>

Syrian Arab Republic **3,563,000**

Afghanistan **166,000**

Iraq **141,000**

Other nationalities **53,000**

<sup>5</sup> Source: UNHCR as of 30 June 2018

Ukraine **1.8 million**

Internally Displaced Persons <sup>6</sup> and Conflict Affected Persons<sup>7</sup>

Refugees: <sup>8</sup> **3,257**

Asylum seekers: <sup>9</sup> **5,610**

Stateless persons: <sup>10</sup> **35,294**

<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 01/01/2018

<sup>9</sup> UNHCR as of 20/07/2018

<sup>10</sup> State Migration Service of Ukraine as of 01/01/2018

# REFUGEE STORIES - NO STRANGER PLACE

**No Stranger Place** is a series of stories profiling refugees and their hosts across Europe, developed by photographer Aubrey Wade in partnership with UNHCR, profiling refugees and their hosts across Europe. In June 2018, coinciding with World Refugee Day, the French chapter told the stories of some of the people in France who invited refugees into their homes. The exhibition will go on display at Ground Control in Paris, on 20 June 2018.



The event at Ground Control ended with jam sessions with well-known French artists, such as Matthieu Chedid, Catherine Ringer and Naâman, along with refugee musicians, namely Team SpiRythm, Ghandi Adam, Aida et Babak et Refugees of rap.

## Retired French couple take Sudanese refugee into their home

SAINT-JOSSE, France – The generosity of retired couple Catherine Jean-Pierre Pocheron knows no bounds. Twenty years ago, they took in two girls from Chernobyl and ever since they have given shelter or donated their time to others who have had the good fortune to cross their path. This year Catherine and Jean-Pierre provided a haven of peace and safety for a young man traumatized by the horrors of the “Jungle”.



“We go with our feelings, our heart, so we didn’t ask ques-

tions, but at first our children were not keen. You hear so many things, so at the beginning we were careful,” says Catherine knowingly. “Now I wonder how I could be so wrong!” These days there is complete trust among all those living at the house. “You have seen for yourself that he is part of the family.”

## Afghan couple are like second parents to French hosts’ toddler

SAINT-PRIEST, France – Sitting around a table in their garden on a warm day, Anaïs and Vincent, parents of two-year-old César and former residents of Paris, recall the time they first heard about refugees in the news.

“We were still living in Paris and we felt powerless, although we wanted to do something,” says Anaïs. “When we had César, we had outgrown our Parisian little apartment and weren’t in a position to put anyone up.”

In early 2016, the couple moved to the charming village of Saint-Priest a few kilometres from Lyon, which has given them a more comfortable lifestyle and room to take in a refugee couple from Afghanistan.

“Here, we had a spare room and we thought it would be a good time to give it a go.”



After settling in and having a few renovations done to the house, they met an Afghan refugee couple, Battarine and Zulfeqar through the organization [SINGA](#), which helps integrate refugees in France.

Zulfeqar and Battarine are looking for more permanent accommodation, although the couple’s departure will leave a big hole in their lives and their hearts, “especially for César. They are like second parents to him and it will be difficult to see them leave.”

## Frenchman and Syrian bond over shared interest in cooking

LYON, France – A friend gave Lucien, a musician in his 50s, the idea of taking in a refugee. They quickly found they enjoyed discovering new dishes together.

“You see, my mother was Algerian and my father was a ‘pied noir’ (Algerian-born Frenchman),” he told UNHCR. “My parents left Algeria in 1962, leaving everything be-

# REFUGEE STORIES - NO STRANGER PLACE

hind, and settled in France. So I know what being an exile means.”



“Broadly speaking, we are discovering a lot about our respective cultures”, adds Lucien. “We all have our convictions, our prejudices, our ways of thinking, the defences we build around ourselves every day. When you have to deal with others, it shakes those defences up a little. In that sense, it’s really positive. We all need that.”

Hussam adds eagerly: “Lucien has unlocked the door to French life for me. He has taught me lots of French words and explained their origin, which I find very interesting.”

## French couple welcome LGBT activist from Mali

PARIS, France – Louis fled his native Mali without a backward glance to escape persecution for his sexuality and his activities in the LGBT community. In France, he found the moral support and understanding he needed with Armand and Christophe.

“I lost my mother when I was two and my father when I was 11. When I was 16, my grandmother died, so I was living alone in Bamako”. “Since 2007 I had been working as a team leader for an anti-aids NGO. I gave talks on awareness-raising and prevention, focusing on gays and lesbians.”



After a long and hazardous journey, Louis found refuge in Paris with Armand and Christophe. The pair, who travel a lot, say they are open-minded and acutely aware of the rights and freedoms they enjoy in France compared to other parts of the world.

In 2015, they had the idea of taking in a refugee. “You know, there are some things that just touch a nerve,” says Armand. “For us, it was a tragic image that spread around the world, the photo of little Alan Kurdi found drowned in Turkey. We thought we had to do something in the face of such a human tragedy.”

## Afghan swaps hardship of the “Jungle” for suburbs of Paris

LES LILAS, France – There is plenty of room for everyone on the three sofas arranged in a semi-circle in Marion’s welcoming living room. The apartment is perfect for receiving guests.

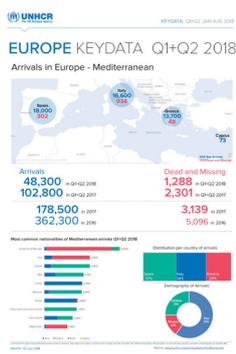
Shir Bahadar, 26, from Afghanistan, and his 16-year-old brother Abdurrahman are sitting next to each other on one of the seats.



“I had been going to the ‘Jungle’ for a couple of months to help out,” said their host Marion. “I did a bit of everything – peeling onions, handing out clothes, teaching French.

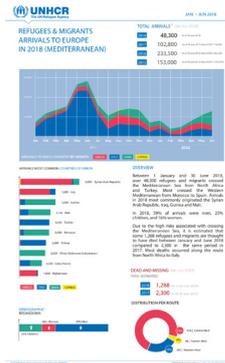
“There were problems in Calais. There were constant fights and I hate fighting. So, I decided I’d had enough of Calais,” said Shir Bahadar. “I phoned Marion and she said ‘come’”. About six months ago, the Les Lilas household received news that turned their lives upside down: Shir Bahadar’s young brother Abdurrahman, whom everyone thought dead, traced his older brother via the internet

# Key Documents from the Web Portal



## Key data for Europe June 2018

Summary of data on asylum applications and decisions, arrivals, resettlement and relocation.



## Refugee and Migrant arrivals to Europe - June 2018

Refugee and migrant arrival trends in Europe



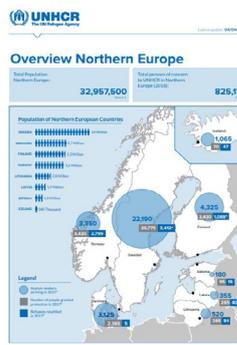
## Resettlement to Europe January to March 2018

Overview of resettlement submissions to European countries.



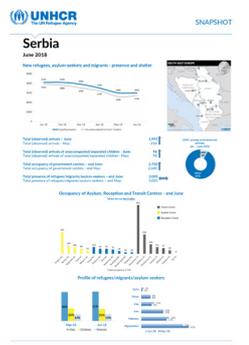
## Greece cash assistance update June 2018

Cash assistance programme for vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees in Greece.



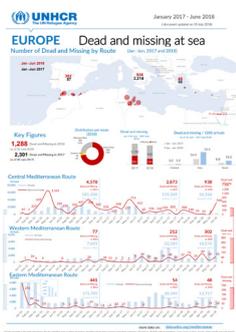
## UNHCR Northern Europe Country Factsheets

Key data on persons of concern in Northern Europe.



## Serbia statistical snapshot June 2018

Summary of population statistics including asylum applications and observed pushbacks.



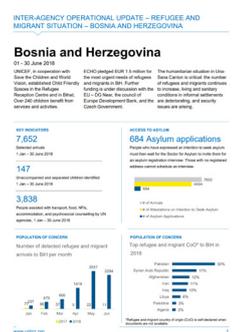
## Mediterranean: Dead and Missing at Sea - June 2018

Number of dead and missing in the Mediterranean by route.



## Ukraine operational update June 2018

Ukraine operational update highlighting UNHCR activities



## Bosnia and Herzegovina operational update - June 2018

Summary of the interagency humanitarian response.



# TIMELINE OVERVIEW

2016

**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**

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 [recast](#) the Asylum Procedures Directive, [recast](#) the Qualification Directive and [amend](#) the Reception Conditions Directive.  
• Its proposal on an EU [Resettlement Framework](#).

**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 [Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan](#) to help respond to the situation of refugees and migrants in Europe in 2017.

**02 February 2017**

[UNHCR and IOM released a joint statement](#) 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 adequate 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 [agenda](#).

**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.

2017

**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](#)

**18 May 2017**

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 Guard.

**15 June 2017**

The EC launched [infringement procedures](#) regarding the relocation 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 [moved to the next step](#) 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.

**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.

2018

**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.

**27 February 2018**

UNHCR addressed the European Parliament (EP)'s committees on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs and on Foreign Affairs for an inter-parliamentary meeting. The AHC-P outlined progress on the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and how the EP can support its implementation.

**24 April 2018**

UNHCR and OECD [launch](#) Action Plan to Boost Refugee Employment.

**03 May 2018**

UNHCR addressed the Permanent Council of OSCE participating States (pS) on the Global Compact for Refugees and on OSCE's role in addressing large movements. Joint UNHCR-OSCE efforts were discussed including [anti-trafficking projects](#), training on the [Protection Checklist](#), and the [Regional Housing Programme](#) in South-Eastern Europe.

**27 June 2018**

IOM and UNHCR [appealed](#) for region-wide action by EU countries over Mediterranean tragedies and believe a [new collaborative approach](#) is needed to make disembarkation of people rescued at sea more predictable and manageable.