

Italy

August 2021

UNHCR Italy joined **UNHCR's global efforts to support the Afghan people** displaced by violence and insecurity through a dedicated fundraising appeal.

Two **MoU on complementary pathways** were signed by UNHCR: on Humanitarian Corridors from Lebanon and on the "Pagella in Tasca" project from Niger for unaccompanied children.

30 August marked the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the **1961 UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness**, to which Italy has been a State Party since December 2015.

KEY INDICATORS (AUGUST 2021)

10,286

Total sea arrivals to Italy disembarked at different sites across the country (Source: Ministry of Interior)

9,148

Sea arrivals assisted and informed about asylum procedures by UNHCR staff following disembarkation (Source: UNHCR)

6,444

Inquiries received and followed-up through UNHCR partner **ARCI toll-free number** (Source: ARCI)

43

Individuals received **medical assistance and psychosocial counselling** from UNHCR partners (Source: MEDU and LHIVE-LILA)

Sea arrivals in 2021 by disembarkation site



Sea arrivals POPULATION OF CONCERN

39,410

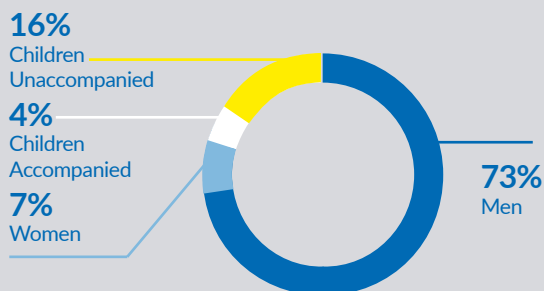
19,339

Jan-Aug 2021

Jan-Aug 2020

Source: Ministry of Interior. In addition to sea arrivals, Italy also receives land arrivals and air arrivals. This chart focuses on sea arrivals, as per official figures provided by the Italian Ministry of Interior.

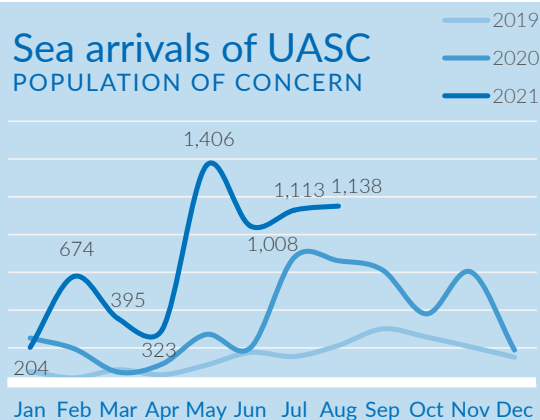
Sea arrivals by gender and age POPULATION OF CONCERN



Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100% exactly.

Source: Ministry of Interior. In addition to sea arrivals, Italy also receives land arrivals and air arrivals. This chart focuses on sea arrivals, as per official figures provided by the Italian Ministry of Interior. Gender breakdown for children is not available.

Sea arrivals of UASC POPULATION OF CONCERN



Source: Ministry of Interior. Please note that the chart refers to the latest available data.



Situation in Afghanistan



Violence and insecurity prompted the new displacement of some 600,000 Afghan civilians this year. While the full impact of the evolving political situation is not yet clear, **UNHCR has witnessed many forced to flee within Afghanistan amid what is now a humanitarian emergency of internal displacement.** The majority of those displaced within the country have not returned to their previous locations due to damaged or destroyed homes, lack of employment opportunities and continuing uncertainty. UNHCR, as part of the broader UN country team, is staying and delivering for the Afghan people.



To Italy and Europe, UNHCR asks: 1. For **coherence between narrative and facts.** Afghans who arrive at the European borders have the same protection needs as those who have been evacuated to Italy; it is dangerous to think that those evacuated are refugees and those who arrive at our borders are migrants. 2. That the small proportion of Afghan nationals who do arrive in Italy are given **rapid access to a fair asylum procedure** in line with Italy's obligations under EU and international law. 3. That the **use of humanitarian visas and family reunification be enhanced**, the latter representing a crucial safe pathway to protection and preservation of family unity with untapped potential to be used in emergency situations. UNHCR stands ready to provide support on the creation of prioritized channels at the national and local level in Italy and at diplomatic level abroad. 4. To **halt all returns to Afghanistan**, in line with the [UNHCR Position on Returns to Afghanistan](#) issued in August ([here](#) in Italian).

UNHCR Italy stands ready to: 1. **Support the National Commission for the Right of Asylum** both in processing the claims of Afghan evacuees and in providing information with regards to international protection procedures in Italy. 2. Provide support on the creation of **prioritized channels for family reunification** at national and local level. 3. Continue its collaboration and partnership with the Ministry of Interior on the **monitoring of conditions in reception facilities**, whose capacity has already been increased to provide accommodation and services to evacuated Afghans. 4. Support the Government with the **integration of Afghan nationals**, in particular with regards to job inclusion. 5. Develop **community matching programmes** that would pair Afghan nationals with Italian citizens and refugee-led organizations to support their integration in local communities.

Unfortunately, UNHCR is unable to assist Afghans inside Afghanistan to leave the country. On the [UNHCR HELP page for Afghanistan](#), UNHCR has provided links to evacuation/relocation programs that have been announced for Afghans by different countries. If you or your family/friends are outside Afghanistan, UNHCR operations in affected countries are updating their HELP pages with relevant information. As these sites become available, they can be accessed through the global [UNHCR HELP](#) site.

If you are a beneficiary of international protection in Italy or an Italian citizen with eligible family members in Afghanistan or neighbouring countries, you can submit an application for Family Reunification. If you need assistance in submitting or following up on the reunification request, please contact our partner ARCI at the Helpline for refugees (+39 800 905 570 or +39 3511376335 for Lycamobile users/Whatsapp, e-mail numeroverderifugiati@arci.it).

- **Public information.** The Afghanistan situation dominated Italian media in August, driving **1,186 unique pieces of print, online and RTV coverage mentioning UNHCR**. The office operated in an extremely fluid and uncertain environment to convey key messages, lead the narrative and adapt the global content for Italian audiences. Relevant briefings to journalists and interviews by the Representative and the Spokesperson to a range of national outlets included Rai Radio 1 and 3, [Radio Vaticana](#), Unomattina Estate (Rai 1), Radio Anch'io, TGcom24, [Io Donna](#), [Domani](#), Skytg24, La Repubblica, Radio 24, Radio Popolare, Sky News International, In Onda (La 7), Gente, Repubblica.it – Metropolis and Rainews24. An interview by the High Commissioner was published on [Corriere della Sera](#), while several pieces of global communications were adapted into Italian.¹

- **Access to territory (sea arrivals).** In August, **10,286 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy by sea**, a significant increase compared to the number recorded in July (8,592), as well as to the same month in recent years (5,326 sea arrivals recorded in August 2020 and 1,268 in August 2019). Between January and August 2021, 39,410 persons arrived in Italy by sea, compared to 19,339 (+104%) and 5,135 (+667%) in 2020 and 2019, respectively. As in July, Tunisia was the first country of departure for sea arrivals in August, with almost 5,000 arrivals (43%), followed by Libya with more than 3,000 arrivals (32%), the Eastern route (Turkey and Greece, almost 2,000 arrivals, 15%) and Algeria (over 100, 1%). The most common nationalities of sea arrivals in 2021 so far are: Tunisia (28%), Bangladesh (13%), Egypt (9%), Côte d'Ivoire (7%), the Islamic Republic of Iran (5%), Eritrea (4%), Guinea (4%), Sudan (4%), Morocco (4%) and Iraq (3%).² **A total of five NGO vessels were at sea in August:** three with search and rescue (SAR) capacity (Sea-Watch 3 operated by Sea-Watch, Ocean Viking operated by SOS Méditerranée and Geo Barents operated by MSF) and two undertaking monitoring activities and assisting boats in distress (Nadir operated by ResQship and Astral operated by Open Arms). At the beginning of the month, both the Sea-Watch 3 and the Ocean Viking, which had rescued more than 800 persons in nine search and rescue (SAR) events, had to wait for between four and five days for the assignation of a Port of Safety. On 20 August, the Sea-Eye 4 (Sea-Eye NGO) was released from the administrative seizure ordered in May 2020 following a Port State Control inspection. Following the quarantine period ordered after the disembarkation on 7 August, the Sea-Watch 3 set sail towards the port of Burriana, in Spain, marking the first time since 2020 in which an NGO vessel was not subjected to a State Port Control inspection following its arrival and disembarkation in Italy. With the exception of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and some other persons with specific needs, all new sea arrivals reaching shore in Sicily usually observe quarantine on offshore ferries. **Over the month of August, it was particularly challenging to ensure transfer of COVID-19 positive UASC from Lampedusa.** Due to continuous and simultaneous landings on the island, the Hotspot in Lampedusa operated well above capacity for the whole month, reaching peaks of more than 800 being hosted (including hundreds of UASC) against an official capacity of 250. On the occasion of World Humanitarian Day 2021, a UNHCR Italy staff member working at the frontline released an interview to the [InTerris](#) outlet, outlining what the work of humanitarians means in today's world.



Photo: @UNHCR/Alessio Manno

¹ See for example: "Donne e bambini pagano il prezzo più alto del conflitto in Afghanistan"; "L'UNHCR emette un avviso di non rimpatrio per l'Afghanistan"; "L'UNHCR avverte che i bisogni umanitari all'interno dell'Afghanistan non devono essere dimenticati"; "Dopo i ponti aerei". Commento alla stampa attribuibile all'Alto Commissario ONU per i Rifugiati, Filippo Grandi".

² For further information on sea arrivals in Italy, please refer to the Italy page of the UNHCR data portal, available at [UNHCR - Mediterranean Situation](#).

- **Access to territory (land arrivals).** In August, more than 1,300 persons were reportedly intercepted at the Italy – Slovenia border or spontaneously presented themselves to authorities to apply for international protection, including 192 UASC.³ The major nationalities observed throughout the month were Bangladesh (around a third of total arrivals), Pakistan and, to a lesser extent, Afghanistan. On the Italy-France border, a steady weekly presence of approximately 250/300 refugees and migrants transiting through Ventimiglia was observed in August, with an increase noticed towards the beginning of the month. The majority were adult men, mostly nationals of Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Tunisia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Morocco, who reported having entered Italy by sea. A smaller but significant presence of persons originating from Afghanistan, Pakistan and to a lesser extent Bangladesh having entered Italy through the Balkan route was also reported. Local NGOs and CSOs report that Italian and French authorities continue to conduct joint patrol activities at Ventimiglia's train station. **The persistent absence of a reception facility remains one of the major protection gaps in the area,** where not even basic services are provided, exposing persons stranded there to significant health and protection risks including lack of access to legal information and international protection procedures.
- **Quarantine, reception and detention.** As of 31 August, 77,299 persons were accommodated in reception facilities across Italy, of whom 51,398 in first-line reception facilities, 25,213 in second-line facilities and 688 in hotspots.⁴ A general trend of conversion of facilities from reception to quarantine centres continued to be observed across the country in August. UNHCR conducts regular monitoring missions to quarantine and reception facilities for refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as to pre-removal facilities (Centri di permanenza per il rimpatrio (CPR)). **One such mission was carried out in August to several facilities across Sicily, where areas for improvement were identified,** particularly the need to increase the focus on criteria of gender, age and diversity, along with the need to reinforce health, psycho-social and cultural mediation services.



- **Statelessness.** On 30 August, the international community marked the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the 1961 UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, one of two treaties which form the foundation of the international legal framework to address statelessness and the unique international treaty designed to prevent cases of statelessness from arising. **As of the end of August 2021, 77 States have joined the 1961 Convention, with accessions accelerating in the last decade.** Since 2010, 40 States have formalized their commitment to reduce statelessness by

becoming parties, most recently Iceland and Togo. In the same period, more than 800,000 stateless people are known to have had their nationality confirmed and statelessness resolved. As UNHCR High Commissioner Filippo Grandi reminded on the occasion, “having a nationality – and the protection of a government that nationality affords – can make a life-saving difference, even more so in times of crisis, whether it's vaccination, evacuation or providing a social safety net that is needed”.⁵ While Italy acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons in 1962 and to

³ Please note that land-arrivals figures on the Italian – Slovenian border constitute an approximation calculated by UNHCR to the best of its knowledge based on information gathered from institutions (Border Police, Prefectures, Social Services) and, on ad hoc occasions, through media and partners' outreach and monitoring activities. As a consequence, they likely constitute an underestimation of the total number of interceptions at the Italian-Slovenian border and, given the unknown number of weekly undetected entries, they cannot be considered comprehensive.

⁴ Ministry of Interior, *Cruscotto statistico al 31 agosto 2021*, available at [cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_31-08-2021.pdf](https://www.interno.gov.it/it/immigrazione/cruscotto-statistico-giornaliero-31-08-2021) ([interno.gov.it](https://www.interno.gov.it)) (in Italian).

⁵ You can find further information about the anniversary at [UNHCR - The 1961 Statelessness Convention: 60 years of promoting and protecting the right to a nationality](https://www.unhcr.org/en/press/2021/08/161-convention-60-years) (in English) or at [La Convenzione del 1961 sull'apolidia: 60 anni di promozione e protezione del diritto alla nazionalità](https://www.interno.gov.it/it/immigrazione/la-convenzione-del-1961-sullapolidia) – UNHCR Italia (in Italian).

the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness in 2015 and has established a statelessness determination procedure through either administrative or judicial means, **few stateless persons have their status formally recognized in the country**. Although no comprehensive official statistics on the stateless population in Italy exist, approximately 3,000 stateless persons live in Italy according to the available estimates. Most of the stateless population belongs to Roma communities originating from ex-Yugoslavia, with the rest mainly originating from countries or territories such as the former USSR, Occupied Palestinian Territories and China (Tibet). In view of the anniversary of the Convention and the ongoing #IBelong campaign, UNHCR urges the Italian Government to take the necessary steps to address the situation of stateless persons or persons at risk of statelessness in the country in line with the **UNHCR Recommendations on the relevant aspects of the protection of stateless persons in Italy**.⁶ UNHCR also strongly advocates for the full inclusion of stateless persons in integration and housing alternatives programmes provided by local authorities to those evicted from formal or informal settlements.

- **Child protection.** In the first eight months of 2021, 6,261 unaccompanied and separated children arrived in Italy by sea. Following the peak of 1,406 arrivals in May, the number recorded over the summer months remained stable at slightly more than 1,000. This figure nonetheless represents a significant increase compared to the same period in the last two years: 3,259 UASC arrived between June and August 2021 compared to 1,777 between the same months in 2020 (+83%) and 529 in 2019 (+516%). **As of 31 August 2021, 9,131 unaccompanied children – who arrived in Italy by sea, land and air – were accommodated in dedicated facilities across the country: 97 per cent were boys and 64 per cent were aged 17.** The main nationality recorded among UASC is Bangladesh (26%) and 34 per cent of the total are hosted in Sicily.⁷ In August, UNHCR participated in a **live chat** on how to prepare for the Territorial Commission's Refugee Status Determination interview organized by U-Report on the Move.
- **Resettlement and complementary pathways.** Two key Memoranda of Understanding on complementary pathways were signed by UNHCR Italy in August: the first by UNHCR, INTERSOS, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Interior and Labour and Social Policies, the Fondazione Migrantes, the Municipality of Turin, the CPIA Network Piedmont and the Archdiocese of Turin on the **"La pagella in tasca. Canali di studio per minori rifugiati" project, which aims to provide 35 students between 16 and 17 years of age who are currently refugees in Niger support in completing their secondary education or in undergoing vocational training in Italy**.⁸ The second Memorandum was on Humanitarian Corridors from Lebanon and was signed by the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Federazione delle Chiese Evangeliche in Italia, Tavola Valdese and Sant' Egidio. It foresees the arrival of 1,000 refugees.
- **Community engagement.** In line with its efforts to advocate for the full inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in the national COVID-19 vaccination campaign and for the removal of all related barriers,



The cartoon that became a symbol of the dramatic episode of 18 April 2015, when the body of a 14-year-old boy was found among the thousand victims of a shipwreck, carrying a school report card sewn inside his jacket. Photo courtesy of © Makkox

⁶ Further information on the situation of statelessness persons in Italy, including a soon-to-be-published updated version of the Recommendations, can be found at <https://www.unhcr.org/it/chi-aiutiamo/apolidi/>.

⁷ Ministry of Labour, *Report mensili MSNA*, August 2021, available at [Report-MSNA-mese-agosto-2021.pdf](https://report-msna-mese-agosto-2021.pdf) (lavoro.gov.it) (in Italian) or at [ENG Report](https://report-msna-mese-agosto-2021.pdf) (lavoro.gov.it) (summary in English).

⁸ Further information on the project can be found at *Minori: al via il progetto "Pagella in tasca", per permettere ai ragazzi rifugiati di arrivare in Italia per proseguire gli studi* – UNHCR Italia (in Italian).

UNHCR welcomed in August the Circular issued by the Extraordinary Commissioner for COVID-19 calling on Regions and Prefectures to renew their efforts to ensure administrative flexibility for the full inclusion of temporary documentation holders in the vaccination campaign and the subsequent appeal by UNAR for the full application of the Circular in order to combat discriminatory treatments. In August, UNHCR partner INTERSOS vaccinated over 1,000 persons residing in different settlements in Apulia, including refugees and asylum-seekers. A significant increase in individual requests for assistance from Afghan nationals was recorded both by the UNHCR front-desk in Rome, to which refugees and asylum-seekers have direct access for information and legal counselling purposes, and to the toll-free number and the Jumamap services.

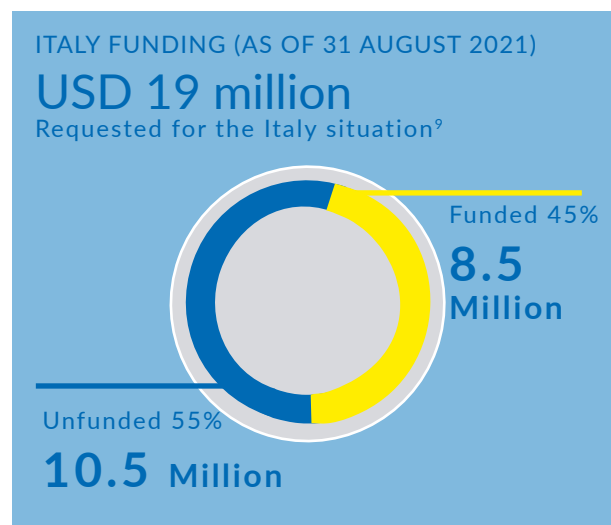
- **Fundraising.** In August, UNHCR raised **2 million Euros from private donors** in Italy, totalling 14.7 million Euros since the beginning of the year. The major private donors in Italy contributing to UNHCR operations worldwide this month were Bolton Hope Foundation, Calzedonia S.p.A., Prosolidar Foundation, Only the Brave (OTB) Foundation Onlus, Yamamay and Mrs. Srenger.

In August, UNHCR Italy put strenuous efforts into raising funds for the Afghanistan emergency, reaching a total of **558,864 EUR** thanks to the generous support of 1,683 donors (including individual donors, corporate partners and foundations). In particular, UNHCR would like to thank Calzedonia S.p.A., OTB Foundation Onlus, Fondazione Prosolidar Onlus and Bolton Hope Foundation for their generous support on Afghanistan.

The full appeal is available [here](#), while the press release can be found [here](#).



Financial information



BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of broadly earmarked contributions that can potentially be used for this operation due to their earmarking to a related situation or theme, or to the region or sub-region.

United States of America 17.2 M | **Private donors**
Australia 6.1 M | **Private donors** **Germany** 2.6 M

Japan | Luxembourg | Norway | Spain | Private donors

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Norway 80 M | **Sweden** 66.9 M | **Private donors of Spain** 49.7 M | **Netherlands** 36.1 M | **Denmark** 34.6 M | **United Kingdom** 28.4 M | **Germany** 26 M | **Private donors Republic of Korea** 25 M | **Japan** 23.4 M | **Private donors Japan** 20.7 M | **France** 20.2 M | **Switzerland** 16.4 M | **Ireland** 12.5 M | **Private donors Italy** 12.3 M | **Belgium** 11.9 M | **Private donors Sweden** 11.9 M | **Italy** 10.7 M

Algeria | Armenia | Australia | Bulgaria | Austria | Bulgaria | Canada | Costa Rica | Cyprus | Estonia | Finland | Holy See | Iceland | Liechtenstein | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | Morocco | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Portugal | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Singapore | South Africa | Thailand | Turkey | Uruguay | Private donors

ITALY'S SUPPORT TO UNHCR OPERATIONS WORLDWIDE

In the month of August, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation / Directorate General for Development Cooperation contributed an amount of **EUR 250,000** to UNHCR Supplementary Appeal for Afghanistan, and provided, with the technical support of the Agency for Development Cooperation, a generous contribution of **EUR 3.5M** to assist refugees through secondary health care in Lebanon.

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LINKS

UNHCR data portal - UNHCR Italy - Twitter - Facebook - LinkedIn - Global Focus

⁹ Unearmarked funding is allocated and reallocated multiple times during the year to allow UNHCR to fund prioritised activities. The contributions earmarked for Italy shown above are combined with an indicative allocation of the softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions. This allocation respects different levels of earmarking.