ITALY FACT SHEET

Italy

February 2025

Italy has been a State Party to the 1951 Refugee Convention since 1954. The same year, UNHCR established a country office in Italy, which in 2020 became a multi-country office covering Italy, the Holy See and San Marino.

In line with Italy's strategic priorities. UNHCR developed in 2024 the labour mobility program for refugees in close cooperation with relevant ministries as well we through partnership with the private sector and civil society organizations.

UNHCR is committed to supporting Italy strengthen its asylum system to protect forcibly displaced people, including through providing assistance in the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.

POPULATION STATISTICS* (as of mid-2024)

Refugees	**306,908**
Asylum-seekers	**180,062**
Stateless people	**3,000**

Top three countries of origin*

Refugees

Ukraine	169,768
Nigeria	19,853
Afghanistan	17,600

Asylum-seekers

Bangladesh	37,777
Pakistan	23,820
Egypt	23,385

**UNHCR Mid-Year Statistical Report 2024 and UNHCR data finder*

2024: A record year for access to higher education & labour inclusion for refugees in Italy

Working for Refugee inclusion - In 2024, the Welcome program facilitated the creation of over 17,000 labour inclusion pathways—marking a 47 per cent increase from 2023. The programme saw more companies applying for the Welcome logo, awarded based on commitment to refugee inclusion. Since 2017, the program partnered with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, Confindustria, Global Compact Network Italy, and the Italian Association for Personnel Management, has more than 700 companies in its network.

UNICORE - In partnership with the MFA, Caritas, Diaconia Valdese and Centro Astalli, UNHCR supports refugee access higher education through the University Corridors for Refugees (UNICORE) program. In 2024, UNICORE awarded 62 scholarships across 38 universities, offering 385 courses to refugees from multiple African countries. Strategic partnerships were also introduced with Miles4Migrants for ticket coverage and Banca Etica, benefitting from an increased private sector engagement in 2024, thanks to the synergy with UNHCR's Welcome. Working for Refugees Integration program.

HIGHLIGHTS

Arrivals by land and sea

In 2024, Italy recorded the highest number of sea arrivals in Southern Europe, with 66,617 people arriving by sea. Despite a 58 per cent drop in compared to 2023, the proportion of reported dead and missing persons (estimated at 1,692 in 2024) increased significantly compared to 2023, making the Central Mediterranean the deadliest route in the Mediterranean Sea. Around 7,300 people were intercepted through land border, a decrease from 2023, likely due to temporary Schengen controls with Slovenia.

Forced migration and Italian G7 Presidency

In October 2024, in the framework of Italy's G7 Presidency, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Director of UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe participated in the G7 Interior Affairs and Development Ministerial meetings. They called for States to support protection and solutions along the routes, enhanced protection for victims of human trafficking, the expansion of safe pathways, and the urgency of addressing humanitarian needs in the Middle East.

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LABOUR CORRIDORS TO ITALY

In January 2025, the first two refugees arrived in Italy under the "Navigating for the Future" pilot labour corridor initiative. Developed in collaboration with the Italian MoI, MFA and MoL and other stakeholders, the project is one of three pilots aiming to create safe and legal labour pathways to Italy. The two refugees from Sudan and South Sudan (after completing vocational training in Egypt, where they were registered as refugees) will now work in Trieste's naval shipbuilding sector with the partner company Orienta. This marks a milestone in fostering integration through employment opportunities.

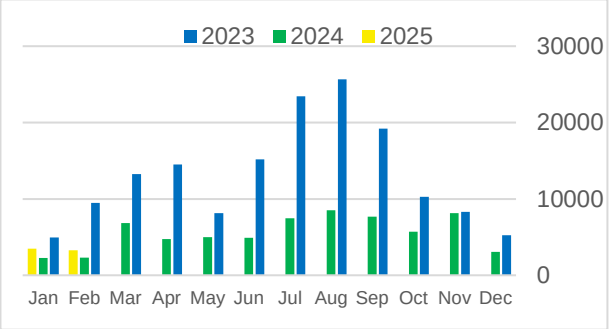
Key Priorities

- **Access to territory**: UNHCR works with authorities to ensure those people arriving are provided with assistance, referral to services and information on international protection. In 2024, UNHCR and partners provided 57,023 people with information on international protection.
- **Access to asylum:** In 2024, UNHCR assumed a monitoring and counselling role in the implementation of the Protocol between Italy and Albania on migration.
- **Registration.** From July - December 2024, UNHCR provided support to authorities on registration of asylum applications in Immigration Offices nationally. The support responded to the case backlog caused by a rise in asylum applications in 2023.
- **Inclusion:** In 2024, multiple Municipalities signed the Charter for the Integration of Refugees which encourages the exchange of good practices and promotes the creation of '*Spazi Comune*'—multi-service centres providing key services for the inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers. This progress was also made possible by collaboration with the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI), with which UNHCR signed an MoU in March 2024.
- **Resettlement and pathways:** Coordination with the Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), and Italian CSOs resulted in 797 vulnerable people in need of international protection arriving in Italy in 2024 through humanitarian corridors. Additionally, 225 vulnerable people were evacuated from Libya and received by NGOs and the Reception and Integration System while 84 Afghans arrived from Iran through the resettlement channel and 62 refugee students via university corridors.
- **Law and Policy:** UNHCR shared recommendations during parliamentary processes in 2024, including measures for the protection of unaccompanied foreign children, stateless people, victims of labour exploitation, and in the framework of the development of the 'Mattei Plan for Africa'.

Working with Partners

- In 2024, Italy remained amongst its top 20 donors with a contribution of $65 million, enabling critical humanitarian responses to protracted displacement crises. Italy's renewed engagement with African States through the 'Mattei Plan for Africa' and the Rome Process opened new avenues for cooperation with UNHCR.
- In July, UNHCR strengthened its partnership with Italy through the first annual Strategic Dialogue with the MoFA and MoI, focusing on migration and asylum management at the global level. In September 2024, UNHCR and the Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration convened the first High-Level Protection Dialogue, bringing together the Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Labour, Justice, and Health. The dialogue emphasized partnership and cooperation in effectively implementing the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, as well as expanding legal migration pathways and inclusion initiatives.
- In 2024, UNHCR collaborated with 16 Italian NGOs, and established 3 grant agreements with refugee-led organizations to address inclusion, health, child protection, community mobilization, and statelessness. Globally, UNHCR partnered with 34 Italian NGOs and maintains relations with the Italian private sector, fostering partnerships to provide assistance and long-term livelihood opportunities to refugees.

MONTHLY SEA ARRIVALS TO ITALY



Source: Mediterranean Situation Data Portal

Statelessness

- Italy has acceded to both the 1954 and 1961 UN Conventions on Statelessness.

UNHCR Presence in Italy

Staff:	**Offices:**
85 National Staff	1 Multi Country Office in Rome
8 International Staff	1 Field Office in Milan

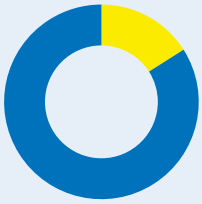
UNHCR staff are also present in several border areas and disembarkation points throughout the country.

Financial information* (31 January 2025)

** Information relates to Italy, the Holy See and San Marino.*

Financial requirements

$22.2 M



Funded 16%
$ 3.5 M

Funding gap 84%
$ 18.7 M

UNHCR is grateful for the support from our top government donors in 2024 and 2025:

Australia | Belgium | Denmark | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Netherlands | New Zealand | Norway | Republic of Korea | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sweden | Switzerland

UNHCR is also grateful for the generous contributions from the private sector and individuals.