

# TUNISIA

November 2018

In Tunisia, UNHCR aims to support the **establishment of a national asylum system**, and to **build national capacity** for refugee protection.

UNHCR **identifies, assists and protects** refugees in a context marked by **mixed migration movements**. UNHCR also maintains preparedness efforts in view of a **potential major influx**.

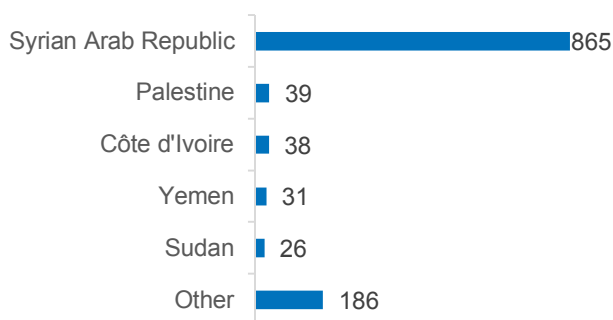
UNHCR commends Tunisia's continued policy of **saving lives** through **rescue at sea**, and its humanitarian response, **permitting disembarkation** in Tunisia.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

**997 Refugees**  
**188 Asylum-seekers**

**Total: 1,185 persons of concern**

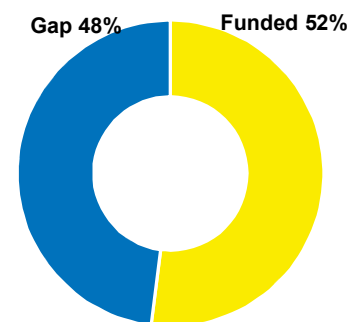
### COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN (of persons of concern)



(As of 31 October 2018)

## FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR 2018

**USD 5.7 M**



(As of 5 November 2018)

## Working with Partners

- UNHCR operates from its Country Office in Tunis and a Field Office in Zarzis, while also maintaining a presence in Sfax and Medenine.
- UNHCR cooperates closely with the **Tunisian authorities**, notably with the Ministries of Justice, Interior, Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs, Women, Family and Childhood, Employment and Health.
- UNHCR Tunisia has formal partnership agreements with four NGOs:
  - The **Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC)**: counselling of new arrivals; provision of core relief items; shelter management; health-care coordination and reimbursements; educational support; counselling on social and assistance issues; awareness raising
  - The **Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR)**: capacity building and advocacy relating to the development of the national protection system and to protection in the mixed migration context; sensitization of civil society; legal assistance
  - The **Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)**: business support; job-seeking support; employment process facilitation (assisting with work and residency permit procedures)
  - The **Italian Council for Refugees (CIR)**: counselling and recreational support in the context of mixed migration
- UNHCR is a member of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Tunisia and contributes to the 2015-2019 United Nations Development Assistance Framework's planning and reporting activities.

# Main Activities

## Protection

- In the absence of a formal national asylum system, UNHCR conducts **registration of asylum seekers and refugee status determination** in Tunisia, to ensure that persons of concern to UNHCR are identified and documented. This prevents arbitrary arrest, detention or *refoulement*. In 2017, UNHCR introduced biometric enrolment to improve quality of the data collected and prevent fraud.
- **The national asylum law has reached its final preparation stage** and was shared with the Prime Minister's Office in June 2016. UNHCR is advocating with the authorities to expedite the adoption process and have the law presented before Parliament.
- UNHCR trains border officials to raise awareness of **asylum and protection in a context of mixed migration**. Tunisian border guards sometimes rescue boats in distress off the Tunisian coast, mostly departing from Libya. Groups of migrants and refugees crossing irregularly from Tunisia to Libya as well as from Libya to Tunisia are also regularly intercepted. UNHCR's objective is to ensure that border management takes into consideration the protection needs of refugees and asylum-seekers.



Young refugees and asylum-seekers enjoy a puppet show at the launch of a child-friendly space in UNHCR's emergency shelter in Medenine. Photo: UNHCR

## Education

- Refugees and asylum-seekers have access to local schools. To increase school attendance, UNHCR and its partners provide cash grants to help parents purchase books and schools supplies. In some locations, catch-up classes and French language classes are also provided for.

## Health

- Similar to Tunisian nationals, refugees and asylum-seekers have **access to basic public health facilities**. UNHCR, through its partner TRC, reimburses medical expenses and medicines for basic primary health care, chronic diseases, and emergency medical interventions for vulnerable asylum seekers or refugees.

## Community empowerment and Self-reliance

- With its partner ADRA, UNHCR is enhancing refugees' **self-reliance and livelihood opportunities**, through tailored vocational training, income-generating projects and direct employment with private companies. Refugees having signed work contracts and received work permits from authorities are entitled to a temporary residency permit.

## Solutions

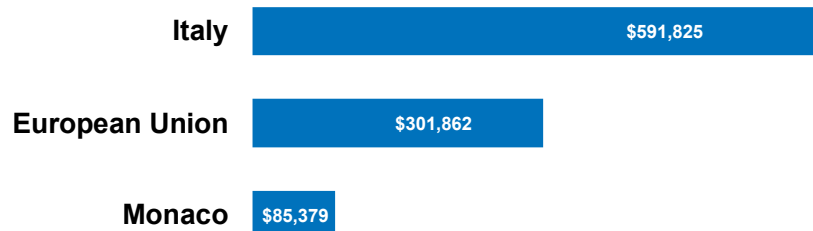
- UNHCR endeavours to achieve **solutions for refugees**, such as private sponsorship, family reunification and naturalization. When conditions are suitable, UNHCR facilitates the assisted voluntary repatriation of refugees. In other cases, UNHCR supports refugees to integrate temporarily within Tunisian society and economy. In certain cases, where UNHCR identifies people who meet specific protection criteria, the agency supports refugees to be resettled in other countries.

## Emergency preparedness

- Since 2014, upon the request of the Tunisian Government, and in close cooperation with the government, IOM and partners, UNHCR has been leading the coordination of **inter-agency preparedness efforts** in case of a mass influx from Libya. In 2017, the revised and finalized plan was translated into Arabic and French and endorsed by the Tunisian authorities.

## External / Donors Relations

Thanks to the critical support provided by donors to this operation in 2018 for a total of USD 979,066



### Special thanks to the major donors of softly earmarked and unearmarked funds in 2018

Denmark | Finland | France | Germany | Italy | Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland |  
United Kingdom | United States of America

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