

EUROPE MONTHLY REPORT



A Roma woman and her child, who were at risk of statelessness, receiving birth and citizenship certificates from a lawyer of Vaša prava BiH, UNHCR's free legal aid partner in Bosnia and Herzegovina that helped them obtain the vital documents.

TRENDS AND KEY FIGURES

In May, an estimated 10,760 refugees and migrants arrived to Europe via Italy, Greece and Spain, bringing the total number of arrivals by land and sea routes to these three countries to an estimated 35,300 so far in 2018. This marks a significant decrease of 52% compared to the first five months of 2017, a period in which almost 74,150 refugees and migrants entered Europe via these three countries. The decrease so far this year is largely due to fewer people crossing from Libya to Italy. As of the end of May, the two primary nationalities arriving via the three Mediterranean routes to Europe were Syrians and Iraqis.

In **Italy**, just under 3,900 refugees and migrants arrived by sea in May, a slight increase compared to April but still a significant reduction compared to May 2017 when nearly 23,000 people crossed the sea, mostly from North Africa. Approximately 65% of sea arrivals to Italy in May, amounting to over 2,500 persons, departed from Libya. More than 1,700 refugees and migrants were disembarked in Libya last month after being rescued or intercepted by the Libyan Coast Guard. Of those who have arrived in Italy by sea so far this year, the largest groups have been Tunisians (20%), mostly departing from Tunisia, and Eritreans (16%), departing from Libya. UNHCR continued to encounter many persons with international protection needs during disembarkation in Italy, among which many reported being detained for a year or more by armed groups and tortured for ransom. Amongst arrivals in Italy, there have been over 1,700 unaccompanied or separated children so far. A further eight persons were believed to have died in May while attempting to cross the sea to Italy contributing to a total of 374 deaths through the Central Mediterranean route so far this year. Of those making the journey from Libya, the rate of deaths in the first five months was approximately one death for every 25 persons who reached Italy.

Over 2,900 refugees and migrants arrived by sea to **Greece** in May compared to just over 3,000 in April and 2,100 in May last year (a 38% increase). As with previous months, a high proportion of sea arrivals appear likely to be in need of international protection. As of the end of May, most sea arrivals to Greece

Mediterranean
35,300
 arrivals in 2018 ¹

659
 estimated dead/missing in 2018 ¹

Greece			Italy		
11,278			13,362		
2,441 Mar	3,032 Apr	2,916 May	1,049 Mar	3,171 Apr	3,895 May

Spain²			Cyprus		
10,639			12		
1,300 Mar	1,690 Apr	3,949 May	0 Mar	0 Apr	0 May

New asylum applications in Europe ³
139,054 applications in 2018
819,000 applications in 2017
1,323,000 applications in 2016
1,471,000 applications in 2015

34,691

Relocated in total ⁴
⁴ Source: [European Commission](#), as of 12 June 2018.

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

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

1,630

Returns EU-Turkey statement ¹²
¹² Source: [Ministry of Citizen Protection](#), Greece as of 31 May 2018.

had been from the Syrian Arab Republic (43%), Iraq (23%) and Afghanistan (11%). Many of those arriving in recent months have been families, and children have comprised some 38% of all sea arrivals to Greece so far this year. As of the end of May, sea arrivals to Greece have increased by 55% compared to the same period in 2017 but remain far below arrival levels for 2015 and 2016. Seven people, including three children, drowned in May while trying to cross to Greece when their boat sank off the north coast of Lesbos. At the land border, the number of refugees and migrants arriving decreased compared to last month with over 1,400 recorded arrivals to Evros in May, including many families from Syria and Iraq. The total number of arrivals via Evros from January-May was some 7,300 compared to an estimated 5,600 for the whole of 2017, according to data collated by UNHCR. Despite fewer arrivals in Greece's Evros region during May, problems still remain regarding access to asylum and timely registration as stated in a [press release](#) issued by UNHCR.

Figures on support in Greece: UNHCR continues to provide accommodation in rented housing across Greece, along with cash based assistance coupled with protection interventions, thus offering asylum-seekers decent living conditions and a return to normalcy. UNHCR's [Accommodation Scheme](#) is part of the ESTIA programme (Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation) of the EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO). By the end of May 2018, UNHCR had secured almost 25,110 places in the accommodation scheme, in 4,324 buildings in 21 cities across Greece; and benefitting a total of over 48,283 people under the programme since November 2015. UNHCR also provides [cash assistance](#) in Greece, as part of the ESTIA programme, funded by the European Commission. In May, 49,057 eligible refugees and asylum-seekers (23,118 households) received cash assistance in Greece, in 93 locations. Additionally, UNHCR is providing support to the authorities through its stock of relief and shelter material in response to the increase in arrivals and limited availability of accommodation in mainland sites.

In **Spain**, almost 4,000 refugees and migrants crossed the land and sea borders from North Africa in May, triple the same month in 2017, when just over 1,300 arrived in Spain by land and sea. This means that in the first five months of the year, some 10,600 refugees and migrants arrived in Spain by land and sea, an average of just over 2,100 per month. So far, the primary countries of origin of arrivals are Guinea, the Syrian Arab Republic and Côte d'Ivoire. Deaths continued to occur during attempts to cross the sea to Spain. In May, a further 20 people are believed to have died at sea along this route making a total of 247 in the first five

months of 2018, more than the whole of 2017, and amounting to one death for every 33 refugees and migrants who crossed the sea to Spain.

Movement through the Balkans, including of refugees and migrants moving onwards from Greece and Bulgaria, continued with a variety of routes in use. In the first five months of 2018, over 2,100 arrivals have been recorded in Albania (two times more than the total number of arrivals in 2017 (1,049), some 1,260 in Montenegro (already surpassing the figure from the whole 2017 - 849) and an estimated 4,800 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is almost seven times more than in entire 2017. Croatia has also noted some 2,210 attempts to irregularly enter and exit the country between January and May in 2018, a 52% increase compared to the same period last year. Over 8,500 people are estimated to have entered the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia this year from Greece and from Serbia, the vast majority of whom have stayed in the country only for a brief period of time. In Serbia, UNHCR has also noted a high increase in the number of new arrivals (over 2,100 in the first five months 2018, incl. 800 assisted in May alone), most of whom reported arriving through the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It has also been observed that many in Serbia continue to attempt to move onwards, reportedly mainly to Bosnia and Herzegovina, while also noting an increase in push-backs or other returns from Croatia, Hungary, Romania and Bosnia and Herzegovina. People have been reported crossing through Bosnia-Herzegovina this year, including traveling from Albania via Montenegro, or entering from Serbia. In May, two men drowned in separate incidents while trying to cross rivers from Croatia to Slovenia. At the end of May, one incident involving a van reported to have been smuggling Iraqi and Afghan nationals was stopped by Croatian police who fired at the van injuring two children.

Dead and Missing: By the end of May 2018, more than 650 refugees and migrants are believed to have died while trying to cross the sea to Europe. Most deaths continued to occur along the Central Mediterranean route from North Africa to Italy (374 or 57%) but there has also been a worrying increase in the number of deaths along the sea route to Spain. At least 33 refugees and migrants have died along land routes in Europe or at Europe's borders so far this year, along the land route from Turkey to Greece, or while trying to cross Italy's northern borders. Amongst the deaths in May was a toddler killed in Belgium as police fired on a van believed to be smuggling people after it failed to stop.

OTHER SITUATIONS IN EUROPE

Turkey **3.9 million**

Refugees and asylum seekers ⁵

Syrian Arab Republic	3,517,000
Afghanistan	169,000
Iraq	142,000
Other nationalities	52,000

⁵ Source: UNHCR as of 31 May 2018

Ukraine **1.8 million**

Internally Displaced Persons ⁶ and **Conflict Affected Persons** ⁷

Refugees:	3,257
Asylum seekers:	5,594
Stateless persons:	35,294

⁶ Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA).
⁷ Estimated number of conflict-affected people living along the line of contact in government-controlled areas (GCA) and non-government controlled areas (NGCA).

⁸ UNHCR, State Migration Service of Ukraine as of 31/01/2018

⁹ UNHCR as of 21/06/2018

¹⁰ State Migration Service of Ukraine as of 31/01/2018

KEY DEVELOPMENTS



AUSTRIA: Following the Austrian government's draft asylum amendments presented in April, UNHCR published its [legal analysis](#) accompanied by a [press release](#) on 09 May. Of serious concern are some measures proposed in the bill including the seizure of cash and electronic devices of asylum-seekers, and a prolonged waiting period for refugees before they are able to apply for Austrian citizenship. UNHCR [calls](#) on the Federal Government to keep refugee protection at the centre of asylum law.

1 AZERBAIJAN: 24 May 2018 marked the inauguration of Gobu Park residential complex for internally displaced persons (IDPs) located in the Garadagh district of Baku. The inauguration ceremony was attended by President Ilham Aliyev and First Vice-President Mehriban Aliyeva. The new complex features 11 nine-story residential buildings for over 1,000 families, and includes a school and kindergarten buildings. According to the State Committee for Refugees and IDPs, a list of beneficiaries is currently under consideration and the apartments will be open for residents to move in before the start of the 2018-2019 academic year in mid-September.

2 BELGIUM: The Federal Minister responsible for employment announced on 17 May that recipients of humanitarian visas and those who received regularization can now work as soon as they have received the annually renewable residence permit. Previously individuals had to wait for several years before being granted work permits. According to the media, 2,125 humanitarian visas were issued in Belgium in 2017 (compared to 277 in 2016), mainly to Syrians. This number includes persons who were resettled to Belgium.

3 GERMANY: German Government Cabinet approves new family reunification law which was passed on 09 May. The new law will allow people with subsidiary protection

status to bring their close family members to Germany as of 01 August. In a [press release](#) and a [legal comment](#), UNHCR has recommended prioritizing families with small children for the quota and urged for transparent and simple criteria to identify families for the procedure and the legal possibility for reunification with young siblings. The new legislation is particularly significant for Syrian refugees in Germany, the majority of whom have subsidiary status.

GREECE: A violent clash on the evening of 25 May in Moria Reception and Identification Centre (RIC) on Lesbos between residents from different Syrian Arab, Kurdish and Yazidi groups resulted in the hospitalization for injuries of six Kurdish people, as [reported by media](#). Following the event, some 100 people, primarily families, left Moria citing safety concerns, and marched towards Mytilene. Hundreds of people followed in different groups over the next couple of days. In total 900 people are estimated to have left Moria RIC. They found temporary shelter elsewhere on the island, in sites run by UNHCR and local NGOs Lesbos Solidarity and Humans-4Humanity.

Since then, some families returned to Moria, those whose geographical restriction was lifted moved to the mainland while some remained in the two NGO-run sites of Larsos and PIKPA. The authorities with UNHCR's support have worked on outreach to the communities involved. The authorities are also working with the assistance of UNHCR and other humanitarian actors to establish an early warning system as well as response measures in the event that similar incidents occur in the future.

The incident highlights the urgent need to transfer those authorized from the islands' reception centres to the mainland, to help ease overcrowding. Priority must be given to Moria

RIC where over 5,000 people reside in a site intended for 2,000. The Government is also working to increase accommodation for asylum-seekers and refugees across Greece. This would help the transfer of more people from the islands. UNHCR has offered refugee housing units and tents from its stock, to assist the authorities' efforts in the camps.

In Evros, the response of the authorities has improved as a result of a decrease of arrivals and UNHCR's advocacy and support. A higher number of third country nationals now conclude their reception and identification procedures in Fylakio RIC faster, while 'pre-RIC' detention (new arrivals channelled directly to police premises instead of RIC) has decreased. However, gaps in interpretation, medical and psychosocial assistance in the RIC remain, hampering the further acceleration of the procedures. [UNHCR urges authorities](#) to continue efforts to ensure access to asylum and timely registration in Greece's north-eastern Evros region.



On 11 May the United Kingdom's Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall accompanied by the Representative [visited](#) UNHCR's accommodation programme in Crete, and UNHCR's Supported Independent Living for unaccompanied children. Their Royal Highnesses met refugees benefiting from the EU-funded accommodation programmes run by UNHCR in the village of Archanes where they also met local dignitaries and staff from partner, the Heraklion Development Agency (HDA).

HUNGARY: UNHCR [urged](#) the Government of Hungary to ⁴ withdraw a package of laws set to be introduced in the Hungarian Parliament that would significantly restrict the ability of NGOs and individuals to support asylum-seekers and refugees. UNHCR is seriously concerned that these proposals, if passed, would deprive people who are forced to flee their homes of critical aid and services, and further inflame tense public discourse and rising xenophobic attitudes. "UNHCR appeals to Hungary to remain committed to protecting refugees and asylum-seekers, including by facilitating the essential role and efforts of qualified civil society organizations," said Pascale Moreau, Director of UNHCR's Europe Bureau. "Without their work, many refugees and asylum-seekers will inevitably suffer serious hardship as they would be deprived of important services such as medical and psycho-social care, housing, education, employment, access to information and legal aid."

IRELAND: Ireland passed a decision on 24 May to voluntarily opt-in to the (recast) Reception Conditions Directive ⁵ following a decision of the Supreme Court early February, which declared Ireland's complete ban on employment for asylum-seekers to be unconstitutional. The new legislation will, among other things, allow asylum-seekers to seek employment, nine months after filing their application for international protection and if a first instance decision has not been made. UNHCR [had expressed its opinion](#) on the issue in a co-op with the Irish Independent prior to the decision, and [had welcomed Ireland's decision](#) to opt in to the directive on several occasions since the government first indicated its intentions in 2017.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: On 23 May, UNHCR took part in a meeting of the Consultative Group on Human Rights of the Expert Council under the Federal Ombudsman. The meeting was devoted to statelessness and the asylum system in the Russian Federation, gathering key experts in those fields, including the representatives of relevant departments of the Minister of Interior (Mol). The participants highlighted that the quality of the asylum system requires improvement, including further development of the legislation.

ECtHR Related Updates: The European Court of Human Rights' (ECtHR) Chamber judgment in the case of [Ljatici v. "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"](#) was published on 17 May 2016 concerning the issue of national security considerations being applied to remove international protection. The case concerned a complaint brought by a Serbian national, under an imminent threat of forcible expulsion at any time, who had been ordered to leave the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as she was deemed a risk to national security according to local authorities. On this ground her right to asylum was terminated by the Ministry of the Interior. The ECtHR found that the domestic courts had failed to prove that the applicant posed a risk to national security. In particular, the court noted that local authorities based their decision on a classified document which had never been made available in its entirety to either the court nor to the applicant. The Court found therefore a violation of Art. 1 of Protocol No. 7 ECHR regarding "the right of aliens to procedural guarantees in the event of expulsion from the territory of a State".

On 31 May, the ECtHR published two judgments - [Abu Zubaydah v. Lithuania](#) (No. 46454/11) and [Al-Nashiri v. Romania](#) (No. 33234/12) - concerning involvement by a Council of Europe (CoE) member state, respectively Romania and Lithuania, in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the United States federal government's secret detainee programme (the applicant Abu Zubaydah is a stateless Palestinian). Reiterating its previous case law in *Husayn v. Poland*, the Court found numerous violations of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and hence reconfirmed that also in times of war against terrorism, CoE member states have to comply with the ECHR. The Court held, unanimously, that there had been violations of Article 3 (prohibition of torture) of the ECHR, because of the Government's failure to effectively investigate Mr. Husayn's allegations and because of its complicity in the CIA's actions that had led to ill-treatment; and violations of Article 5 (right to liberty and security), Article 8

(right to respect for private life), and Article 13 (right to an effective remedy), in conjunction with Article 3.

THE UNITED KINGDOM: UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, visited London between 01-04 May, accompanied by Pascale Moreau, Director of UNHCR's Europe Bureau. During his visit, he met with the Secretary of State for International Development, Penny Mordaunt. Grandi also met with the Immigration Minister where he thanked the Home Office for its collaboration, and urged for continuity in the constructive ongoing discussions on resettlement, alternatives to detention and integration.

UKRAINE: In the beginning of May 2018, the security situation in the east of Ukraine deteriorated with almost daily shelling was reported along the contact line. UNHCR field partners have recorded damage to over 90 houses in May 2018 alone – a four-fold increase as compared to April 2018, and a ten-fold increase as compared to March 2018. Some of the villages suffered greater shelling than others, including: Mayorsk, Zhovanka, Svetlodarsk, Novhorodske, Chighari. UNHCR has been accompanying the situation of Chigari quite closely since the beginning of the year because of its location in between the two sides. On 17 May, UNHCR started receiving worrying reports from this village of the deterioration of the security situation. Since, it has been estimated that 150 villagers from Chigari have left the village. These newly displaced persons are staying in different towns further away from the contact line, such as Toretsk and Sloviansk. Others have fled to NGCA to towns such as Horlivka and Donetsk. UNHCR is providing support to the displaced through protection partners. Some 25 people (one single mother with 4 children included) have refused to move out of the village. The situation in Chigari is quite dire, reportedly, humanitarians that have been able to access the town mention that approximately 13 houses have been burned to the ground and all other houses left standing have sustained some sort of damage from the continuous shelling. Furthermore, humanitarian access to Chigari has been difficult because of changes in procedures by the military authorities after the Law on Reintegration of Donbas that is now designated as a "Red Area". So far, only OSCE and OHCHR has been allowed to access the village (although UNHCR had visited the village frequently before May, 2018). Right to Protection is the Legal Partner that is providing legal counselling to the IDPs of Chigari. At the moment, the villagers can only access the village during the daytime by foot. Since the security situation deteriorated, UNHCR has been advocating for private vehicles to be able to access the village. From

24 to 25 May, a negotiated window of silence allowed some people to leave on foot. Therefore, families left at short notice and without even collecting basic items from their houses. UNHCR is looking for ways to have a security window for some of the families to go back and retrieve items left behind.

UNHCR's legal partner, Right to Protection (R2P), won an important case regarding pensions in the administrative chamber of the Supreme Court. The case rules as an "exemplary case" that then serves as a precedent for lower courts deciding cases in similar circumstances. The case involved an IDP who was deprived of her pension because she remained in NGCA for more than 60 days. The Supreme Court ruled that an individual holds a property right in his/her pension. The Pension Fund acted unlawfully in depriving the individual of this property. The Supreme Court also noted that IDP registration is not a legal status and is not a basis for restricting access to rights. The Pension Fund may appeal the case to the Grand Chamber of the Supreme Court, so the decision has not yet entered into legal force.

OSCE Related Update: On 3 May, Volker Turk, the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection (AHC-P) addressed the Permanent Council of the 57 OSCE participating States (pS) on the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) and on OSCE's role in addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. He referred to already existing examples of joint UNHCR-OSCE efforts such as close collaboration in [anti-trafficking projects](#), trainings for OSCE field staff on the [Protection Checklist](#), as well as the [Regional Housing Programme](#) in South-Eastern Europe. He reminded pS that stronger co-operation on refugee protection was needed and urged for further commitments from States to expand opportunities for safe pathways.

Deputy High Commissioner (DHC), Kelly Clements, visited Sweden and Norway on 29-30 May: The purpose of her visit was to continue the collaborative dialogue with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs in respect of donor support and global needs. In Sweden, the DHC met with the Swedish State Secretary for Development and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and held discussions with SIDA's Director for Asia and Humanitarian Affairs and the Director for Africa. While in Norway she met with the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs. In both countries the topic of discussion was: CRRF, accountability/anti-corruption and support in protecting people forced to flee their homes.

EU RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

On 02 May, the European Commission released its proposal for a Regulation on the next EU budget (2021-2027), the so-called "Multiannual Financial Framework" (MFF). The MFF will provide an important opportunity to effectively address forced displacement globally, as well as protection needs in the EU. To support this objective, UNHCR has released recommendations on the next MFF.

On 29 May, the European Commission [announced](#) that an additional EUR 18 million would be allocated to UNHCR

through the [EU Trust Fund for Africa](#). This additional funding aims to provide international and emergency protection to refugees evacuated from Libya to Niger in the context of the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) and to facilitate the resettlement out of Niger for those eligible. As of 28 May 2018, UNHCR had evacuated 1,609 individuals out of Libya (1,287 to the ETM, 312 to Italy and 10 to Romania) and submitted 436 cases for resettlement.

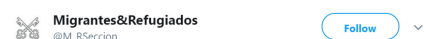
TRENDING ON TWITTER IN MAY



France's **#Eurovision** song was inspired by a baby called Mercy who was born on a refugee rescue ship in the Mediterranean Sea



Woman gives birth to baby girl on refugee rescue boat
 A baby has been born on a ship rescuing refugees in the Mediterranean Sea as charities brace to save thousands of migrants launched by smugglers from Libya with independent.co.uk



"A la solidaridad con los **#emigrantes** y los **#refugiados** es preciso añadir la voluntad"
 Papa Francisco



Magid Magid came to the UK from a refugee camp. And now he's the first ever British-Somali lord mayor of a major city.



I am launching a \$100,000 campaign for Turkish refugees in Greece. Let's show them that they're not alone.
youcaring.com/turkishrefugee...



New stats out today show that Scotland has resettled nearly a fifth of Syrian refugees resettled in UK. Proud that **#ScotlandWelcomesRefugees?** Join us @AmnestyScotland @scotrefcouncil & @globaljusticesc on World Refugee Day in George Sq to show solidarity facebook.com/events/1828798...



"Resilience in a time of complete desperation. What an important, necessary + strong voice to shout to the world about refugees. This story is one for centuries to come." - UNHCR supporter @NomzamoMbatha is at **#Cannes2018** with @omarsamra



STATELESSNESS IN EUROPE

Study visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina

During 15-17 May 2018, a study visit of the Georgian delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina took place to exchange good practices on Roma and statelessness issues. The study visit was organized in the framework of the joint OSCE/ODIHR-UNHCR project on statelessness which was [launched in 2016](#).



The main objective of the visit was to obtain first-hand information on legislation and practice on statelessness which largely affects Roma communities in BiH; learn about the rights and available services for Roma in BiH; explore mechanisms for mapping and outreach activities in combination with parallel provision of free legal aid; examine the good practices on methods of communication with Roma, including engagement of Roma mediators and CSOs.

The delegation of Georgia included representatives of the Ombudsperson's office, State Ministry for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of IDPs from the Occupied territories, Accommodation and Refugees, as well as a representative (Roma herself) of the NGO working on Roma rights and UNHCR partner NGO in Georgia and Director of the Innovations and Reforms Center – UNHCR's NGO partner in Georgia

4th Course on statelessness at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law

The annual course was organized by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law with the cooperation and support of UNHCR. The course welcomed 36 participants from 25 countries, including from Albania, Malta, Ukraine and Turkey in Europe. The credit for the group photo from Sanremo is Patricia Panizzi, International Institute of Humanitarian Law.



REFUGEE STORIES

Refugees and music students strike a chord in Vienna

By Helen Womack and Julia Meier

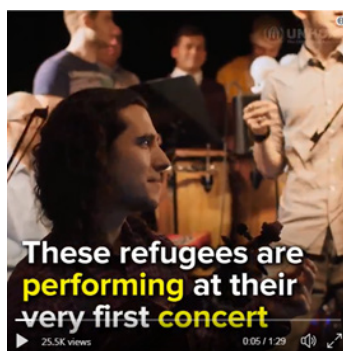


Vienna, Austria - On a Saturday night at the Schwarzb erg music pub refugees are jamming with music students who have been teaching the newcomers how to play their instruments as part of a musical exchange called “Unisono”. Unisono is an initiative of the Vienna branch of Live Music Now, an international organization founded by violinist Yehudi Menuhin. Ute Ulrike Schmidt, project manager of Live Music Now-Unisono, had the idea of bringing refugees together with students from Vienna’s music universities such as the Jam Music Lab and the University of Music and Performing Arts (MDW).

As a result, 42 refugees are working with 10 music students from the Jam Music Lab in the fields of jazz and popular music, while some 20 refugees and 20 students are concentrating on classical music at MDW, where tuition is more likely to be one-to-one.

For the first time the refugees are performing in public, Khadija has dressed to give a hint of the 1920s. She has gained confidence, thanks to the lessons. “I started from scratch,” she says. “I did not even know how to touch the instrument. I was the only girl in my class, which made me feel a bit uncomfortable. But the teacher was nice and put me at ease.

“I would like to encourage other girls to join the project. Often you think, ‘what would other people say?’ But I’d like to tell women and girls that they only live once and should do whatever they like and enjoy.”



UN Refugee Agency @Refugees
 Refugees are jamming with music students in Austria who have been teaching the newcomers how to hit the right note
 trib.al/YKsrr
 16:32 - 25 May 2018
 101 51 people are talking about this

Refugee children find voice in Romania’s inclusive choirs

By Helen Womack

Bucharest, Romania - Lina Jammal knew her son Sam was musical. When he was a small boy, he would jump up on the sofa and sing along with the celebrities on the radio or television, using a hairbrush as a microphone. Now Sam and his sister Sara have joined a choir as part of a Romanian programme to integrate children from different backgrounds, including refugees, through singing.

The Syrian family came from war-torn Aleppo to Bucharest in 2013. Three generations of the nine-member family live in a three-room flat on the edge of the city. Lina’s husband Jihad, 46, has a job selling textiles. Her elder daughter, Budur, 22, and son, Abdul, 20, are at university, studying medical and civil engineering respectively.

Sam, 12, and Sara, 10, attend choir practice twice a week at Bucharest’s Scoala Gimnaziala Ferdinand I (King Ferdinand High School). The school is taking part in a nationwide programme called Cantus Mundi aimed at bringing children together in choirs. Only a few refugees are involved so far but the organizers want to include more. They see singing as one of the best ways to integrate refugees, as the newcomers learn the language and culture and interact with residents. Primary teacher and choir coordinator Simona Spirescu is committed to including refugee children in her classes: “I read a lot about the refugees. I suffered and cried when I heard about them. I see this as a way to help them.”

12-year old Sam from Syria, whose family found refuge in Bucharest, Romania raps out his own song about the war in Syria:

“When we go to school,
 Say ‘goodbye’ to mother,
 If we come back home,
 Will we see each other?

Miss the crowded streets,
 Syrian bazaars,
 Remember sound of bombs,
 Like bullets in my body.

When I watch TV,
 Rather see the weather,
 Don’t wanna see friends dying,
 Don’t wanna see them hurt.

We are Syrians,
 Gonna build Syria again,
 We are Syrians,
 Gotta forget our pain.”

Key Documents from the Web Portal



[Desperate Journeys - January 2017 to March 2018](#)

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



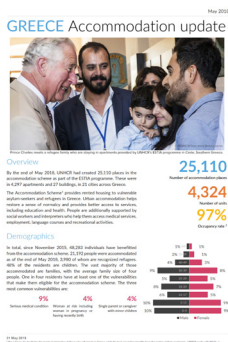
[Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe in 2017](#)

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



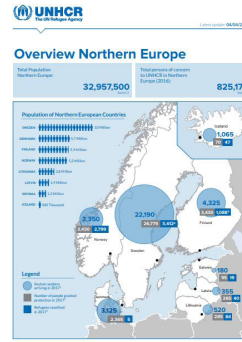
[Resettlement to Europe January to March 2018](#)

Overview of resettlement submissions to European countries.



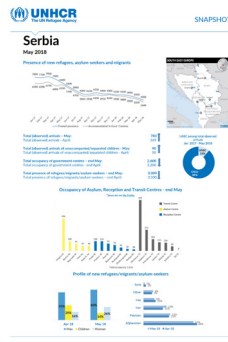
[Greece accommodation update May 2018](#)

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



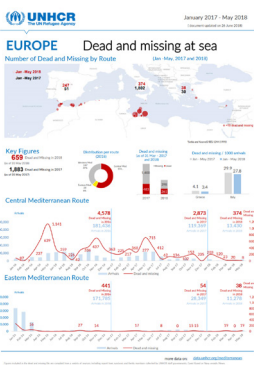
[UNHCR Northern Europe Country Factsheets](#)

Key data on persons of concern in Northern Europe.



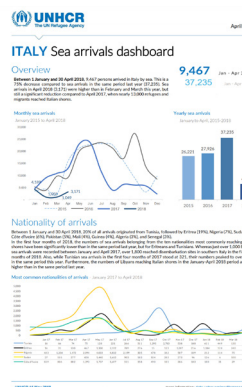
[Serbia Snapshot May 2018](#)

Summary of population statistics including asylum applications and observed pushbacks.



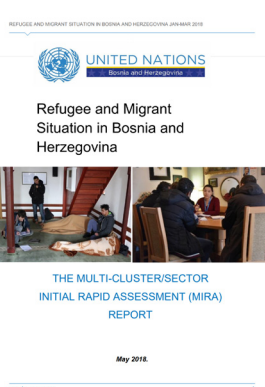
[Mediterranean: Dead and Missing at Sea - May 2018](#)

Number of dead and missing in the Mediterranean by route.



[Italy sea arrivals - April 2018](#)

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



[Refugee and Migrant situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

Multi cluster/sector initial rapid assessment report.



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

Assistant High Commissioner for Protection 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.