

Cyprus

September 2021

UNHCR has been present in Cyprus since 1974. In 2000, Cyprus adopted its first refugee legislation and asylum procedures, and took over asylum adjudication in 2002.

Context: Among EU member states, Cyprus is a frontline state that has the highest per capita numbers of arrivals, among whom are people forced to flee and in need of international protection.

UNHCR counters negative **public perceptions** with interviews, statements, positive social media content, and supporting the promotion of human rights and social inclusion.

POPULATION OF CONCERN*

Refugees and Subsidiary Protection holders	14,037**
Asylum-seekers	20,483
Persons under UNHCR's Mandate in the northern part of Cyprus	86
Persons in the British Sovereign Base Areas	21

**The majority of decisions granted are for subsidiary protection.

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Syria	8,797	Syria	4,415
Palestine	2,105	Cameroon	2,350
Iraq	962	India	2,089

*Data source: UNHCR 2020 Global Trends Report and UNHCR [data finder platform](#)

New asylum-seekers from January to June 2021 are mainly from: Syria, DRC, Nigeria, India, Cameroon, Nepal, Somalia, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Bangladesh.

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Advocacy: UNHCR successfully advocated for the inclusion of persons of concern in the National Vaccination Plan.

Inclusion: Since asylum-seekers have no access to the general health care system, collaboration with partners, NGOs and the Ministry of Health resulted in solutions such as mobile units to offer vaccination to reception centre residents.

Communication with Communities: UNHCR and partners shared vaccination information on the Help Platform and social media, and through Refugee Outreach Volunteers, and developed print material addressing misconceptions regarding vaccines.

Health: UNHCR continues to monitor and advocate for improved hygiene conditions and prevention of the spread of COVID-19 among reception facility residents.

HIGHLIGHTS

UNHCR donated relief assistance

and offered technical expertise and counselling to improve conditions at the reception centers, which currently operate within capacity, including for vulnerable individuals and UASC. UNHCR is ready to further support the authorities with the challenges faced.

Integration

Over the years, UNHCR has offered recommendations to enhance integration prospects of refugees. Some are included in the new [National Integration Plan for Third-Country Nationals](#) for the programming period 2021 – 2027 published in June 2021

Portraits & Human Stories

UNHCR has collaborated with photographer Sebastian Rich to capture portraits of refugees and asylum-seekers to accompany human stories highlighting the challenges they face, as well as their strength and contributions to society. A printed publication is forthcoming.

UNHCR'S PROTECTION CHIEF VISITS CYPRUS, ADDRESSES CHALLENGES IN ACCESS TO ASYLUM

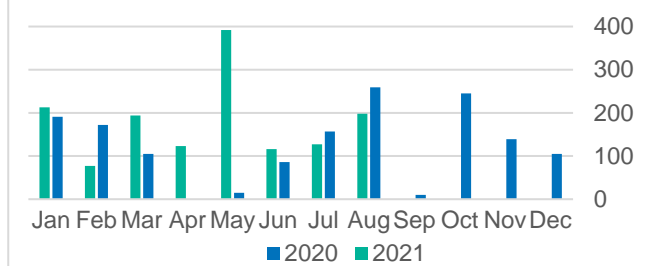


Access to territory and asylum and improving reception conditions for asylum-seekers dominated the four-day visit of the UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, Gillian Triggs to Cyprus in April 2021.

Key Priorities

- **Monitoring and promoting** respect for refugee rights and the standards of treatment of asylum-seekers, particularly as **regards** access to asylum procedures, reception conditions and detention.
- **Influencing legislation** affecting refugees and asylum-seekers by providing expert advice and comments on relevant draft laws to ensure compliance with international and EU standards.
- **Providing technical assistance**, legal advice and other support to assist the authorities in further strengthening their refugee status **determination** procedures and ensure quality decision-making.
- **Monitoring and advocacy** on timely and accurate identification of UASC to ensure that UASC have effective access to the national child protection system with respect to accurate and timely identification; registration and documentation; guardianship and legal representation; adequate care and supervision; tracing and family reunification by way of best interest determination.
- **Training of key stakeholders** from the government and civil society on basic protection **issues**, including refugee rights, reception conditions for asylum-seekers, durable solutions and child protection.
- **Integration:** Promoting good practices in relation to policies and measures that support effective integration of refugees into the **social**, economic and cultural fabric, including advocacy for naturalization, long-term residence permits and family reunification.
- **Promoting accession** to the Statelessness Conventions.
- **Strengthening public information** through **education**, awareness-raising, with media, campaigns, events and constituency-building.
- **Strengthening partnerships with NGOs** and other civil society actors involved in refugee **protection**.

MONTHLY SEA ARRIVALS TO CYPRUS



Source and more information: [UNHCR Data Portal: Mediterranean Situation](#)

Working with Partners

- **The Government** is UNHCR's key partner to ensure protection of refugees and asylum-seekers in accordance with EU and international standards. UNHCR co-operates with Parliamentary committees, Ombudsman, Office of the Child Commissioner, diplomatic missions and the media.
- **UNHCR** has forged links across civil society. Currently, UNHCR has a funding-based partnership agreement with two NGOs.

Statelessness

- Cyprus has not acceded to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions. Provisions in the Refugee Law allowing for humanitarian status for stateless persons in need of protection outside the scope of the refugee definition have since 2014 been abolished, leaving stateless persons without any protection. Most still resort to asylum procedures.

UNHCR Presence in Cyprus

Staff:

11 National Staff
 1 International Staff
 3 Affiliated Staff

Offices:

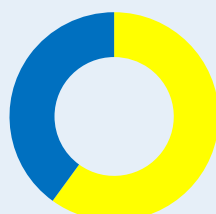
1 Country Office in Nicosia

Financial information (28 September 2021)

Financial requirements

USD 3.1 M

Funding gap
 48%
 1.5 M



Funded
 52%
 1.6 M

UNHCR is grateful to the donors of unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions to the 2021 global programmes. Donors of USD 10 million or more are:

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