

Mustafa, a refugee from Afghanistan, living in Hungary since 2009 has now been reunited with his family



EUROPE

| OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS |

- UNHCR made progress in its efforts to improve asylum systems in Europe by promoting consistency in procedures and better reception conditions, and advocating that detention be used only as a last resort.
- In South-Eastern Europe, UNHCR worked with IOM to help governments build the capacity of their asylum and migration systems to respond in a protection-sensitive manner to the needs of people of concern in mixed migration flows.
- UNHCR and its partners, including the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), helped the Bulgarian authorities to improve reception conditions to cope with a sudden influx of Syrian asylum-seekers.
- While most States in the region granted some form of protection to Syrians, “pushbacks” were observed at some borders. Several States offered places to Syrian refugees through the Humanitarian Admissions Programme or by increasing their resettlement intake.
- The tragedy in October at Lampedusa, where hundreds of lives were lost at sea, prompted greater collaboration between UNHCR and various partners, including governments. The organization’s Central Mediterranean Sea Initiative proposes a number of measures to be taken within the European Union (EU) and in countries of origin, transit and first asylum to prevent such disasters. The European Union has now established a Task Force for the Mediterranean.
- Calling for the eradication of statelessness in Europe by 2024, UNHCR advocated for those States that were not yet parties to the Statelessness Conventions to accede to them. Since the commemorations marking the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness in 2011, nine European countries have acceded to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and/or to the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons. In 2013, Lithuania and Montenegro acceded to the 1961 Convention and Ukraine acceded to both the 1954 and 1961 Conventions, making a total of 37 States Parties to the 1954 Convention and 27 States Parties to the 1961 Convention in Europe.
- Durable solutions remained a priority. UNHCR began consultations with concerned governments in the Western Balkans on the cessation of refugee status for refugees displaced from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia as a result of the conflicts in the region between 1991 and 1995, pursuant to the “ceased circumstances” clauses of the 1951 Convention. In partnership with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), UNHCR monitored the Regional Housing Programme (RHP) in four countries in the Western Balkans. The programme aims to facilitate the local integration of 74,000 individuals displaced during the 1991-1995 conflicts.



| Working environment |

According to the data available, almost half a million people sought asylum in Europe in 2013, a 32 per cent increase since 2012. However, this figure should be treated with caution, as many individuals submit applications in more than one European country within the same year. The largest groups of asylum-seekers came from the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria), the Russian Federation, Serbia and Kosovo (Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)), Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Eritrea and Iraq. The 28 EU Member States registered 87 per cent of all asylum claims in Europe, with Germany, France, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Italy receiving the bulk of the claims.

Of the total number of asylum-seekers registered in the European Union during the year, 53,800 originated from Syria. Of these, nearly 33,000 applied for asylum in just three countries: Sweden (16,300), Germany (11,900) and Bulgaria (4,500). Of all the countries in the Europe operational region, Turkey received the most asylum requests, mainly from Syrians, Afghans, Iraqis and Iranians. Turkey's adoption in 2013 of a new Law on Foreigners and International Protection, which provides a framework for the protection of all asylum-seekers and refugees, regardless of their country of origin, is a welcome move forward.

UNHCR's activities in Europe included advocacy for access to territory, limits on the use of detention, improved and harmonized asylum procedures, and protection in mixed-migration contexts, including rescue at sea.

While the influx of Syrians was the main challenge for operations in the region, UNHCR also focused its attention on protracted refugee situations and related durable solutions, as well as on accession to the Statelessness Conventions.

In some countries, the challenging economic climate led to a rise in racism, religious intolerance and xenophobia directed at people of concern. UNHCR sought to address these issues through advocacy and legal protection.

As the year came to a close, the region felt the reverberations of the escalating tensions in Ukraine. Alongside its involvement in the Ukraine inter-agency contingency planning exercise, UNHCR called upon the European Commission (EC), EASO and relevant EU

and non-EU States to their contingency plans to cope with any potential outflows from Ukraine.

| Working with others |

UNHCR's extensive collaboration with the European Union and its institutions and agencies, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other partners, aims to ensure that asylum-seekers, refugees and others of concern to the organization are protected, and their right to safety and dignity respected, in all 49 countries of the European region. Over the years, UNHCR has also established close relationships with the EC, EASO, the European border management agency Frontex, and representatives of Member States, in areas related to asylum and migration.

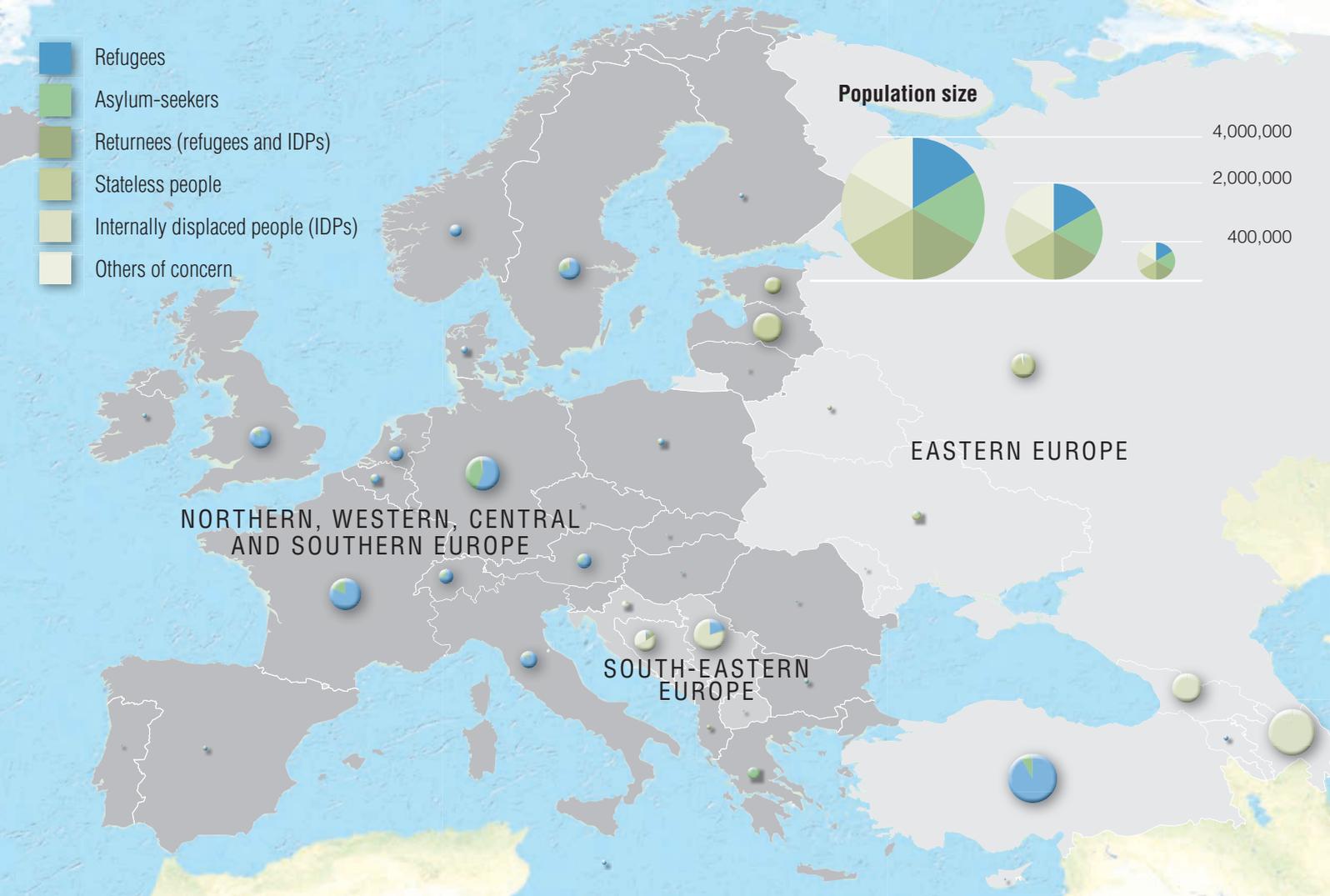
Other important partners in Europe include IOM, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), the European Council on Refugees and Exiles and the European Network on Statelessness. UNHCR also works with numerous asylum- and migration-related NGOs, members of the judiciary and institutions of higher learning.

| Achievements and impact |

UNHCR engaged with the media to raise awareness of humanitarian emergencies, advocate for the protection of people of concern in European countries, and promote positive public attitudes towards refugees. This involved a multi-pronged approach that combined public campaigns and the staging of events highlighting issues related to displacement. Efforts were made to ensure the accuracy of information in the media, increase the use of social media in aid of the displaced, and promote compelling human-interest stories.

In response to the rise in the number of refugees and migrants lost at sea, UNHCR developed the Central Mediterranean Sea Initiative. For its part, the European Union established a Task Force for the Mediterranean, taking into consideration UNHCR's recommendations.

To address the increase in mixed movements of refugees and migrants in South-Eastern Europe, UNHCR and IOM helped governments in the region to strengthen national and regional



capacities to respond to these flows in a protection-sensitive manner. A first draft of a regional action plan gives priority to the establishment of protection-sensitive entry systems, improved reception conditions and fair and efficient asylum procedures.

Access to protection for those fleeing the conflict in Syria improved, with all 49 European countries offering them some form of protection. The quality of protection offered, however, varied from country to country, with some States recognizing the Syrians as refugees and others granting them a lesser status.

To foster greater harmonization in the response to asylum-seekers across Europe, UNHCR provided guidance on RSD procedures and appropriate reception conditions to governments and partners in the region. It also supported the adoption by the EU Parliament of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), which aim to establish standards for reception and asylum and harmonize procedures throughout the European Union.

UNHCR's Quality Initiative Projects assessed asylum procedures and decisions in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The

use of checklists and standard operating procedures has helped to improve asylum procedures in each of these countries. UNHCR and the OSCE also developed a protection checklist, to be launched in 2014, for use in OSCE field missions in Europe and beyond.

Considerable emphasis was placed on credibility and vulnerability assessments and on claims from individuals who either feared that they were at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) or were already victims of it. Publication of *Too Much Pain, Female Genital Mutilation and Asylum in the European Union. A Statistical Overview*, helped improve protection for victims of the practice.

UNHCR pursued a strategy of judicial engagement through formal intervention in 10 cases in national and European courts on issues of concern to the organization. The courts have noted the value of UNHCR's provision of country-of-origin and country-of-asylum information.

Strong efforts were made to find durable solutions for the 1,000 long-staying Afghan refugees in need of international protection in the Russian Federation. An assessment of the needs of 784 of these individuals

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Executive Committee-approved budget of USD 197 million for 2013 operations in Europe was revised at the end of the year to USD 385 million. The increase was designed to address additional needs related to the Syria crisis in Turkey and in several EU Member States, most notably Bulgaria, Germany and Sweden. The revised figure represents an increase of USD 151 million from the 2012 budget, which stood at USD 234 million at the end of the year.

Some 86 per cent of the operational budget was allocated to refugee and asylum programmes, with the remainder going to programmes for internally displaced people (9 per cent), stateless people (3 per cent) and reintegration activities (2 per cent). Other than in Turkey and Bulgaria, expenditures in the region remained stable.

Of the USD 385 million that was required for its 2013 operations in Europe, UNHCR was able to spend only 44 per cent (USD 170.8 million) due to a shortfall in funding. This hampered the organization's ability to offer comprehensive protection monitoring and response in some parts of Europe and rendered it difficult to build the capacity of its partners in the region.

determined that approximately one third of them were in need of international protection, with 87 in urgent need of resettlement. UNHCR will persist in seeking solutions for these individuals in 2014.

The Integration Working Group and the Refugee Integration Capacity and Evaluation project, financed by the European Refugee Fund, strengthened support and advocacy for refugee integration in the European Union. Following a 2012 Donors' Conference in Sarajevo, implementation of the Refugee Housing Project which was approved in four European countries began in 2013. The project is expected to help a total of 8,000 vulnerable individuals, of whom 300 had already benefited from it by the end of 2013.

UNHCR, IOM and the ICMC continued their cooperation in the EC-funded European Resettlement Network, which has increased its focus on emergency resettlement as an important life-saving measure. Belgium and Switzerland started regular resettlement programmes in 2013, while a number of other European countries, including Austria, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and the Republic of Moldova, offered *ad hoc* resettlement and/or acceptance under the Humanitarian Assistance Programme in response to UNHCR's call for the admission of 30,000 Syrians into Europe in 2013-2014. UNHCR hopes to increase resettlement in those countries in the region with the capacity to expand admissions. Some 5,500 people were resettled in Europe in 2013, as against some 5,600 in 2012.

UNHCR boosted its advocacy with governments for accession to the Statelessness Conventions, resulting in Lithuania and Montenegro each acceding to the 1961 Convention, and Ukraine acceding to both the 1954 and 1961 Conventions.

| Constraints |

Access to territory, "pushbacks", detention, consistency in RSD, statelessness, xenophobia and racism were the principal challenges in Europe in 2013.

Bulgaria was unprepared for a surge of arrivals in 2013, leading it to request UNHCR's intervention. With the support of various partners, including the EASO, the organization helped the Bulgarian Government to improve reception conditions for refugees.

Asylum systems in Eastern Europe remained fragile and vulnerable to political changes and sensitivities. Low recognition rates, as well as cases of *refoulement* and abduction, were noted in the subregion, while resource constraints hampered local integration. While most governments in South-Eastern Europe have adopted legislation that corresponds to international norms, implementation is often inadequate.

The rise in the number of arrivals by sea put immense pressure on coastal countries in 2013, especially in the aftermath of the tragedy in Lampedusa. Italy, Greece, Spain and Malta received the majority of sea arrivals in 2013, which totalled some 60,000, three times the number in 2012.

Statelessness remains a concern in Europe, affecting some 670,000 people, most of them former Soviet citizens now living in the Russian Federation and the Baltic States. Statelessness is also a concern among the Roma population in South-Eastern Europe, many of whom lack civil-registration documents. UNHCR called on governments to step up their efforts to ensure these individuals can acquire or confirm a nationality. Statelessness is also found among migrant populations.

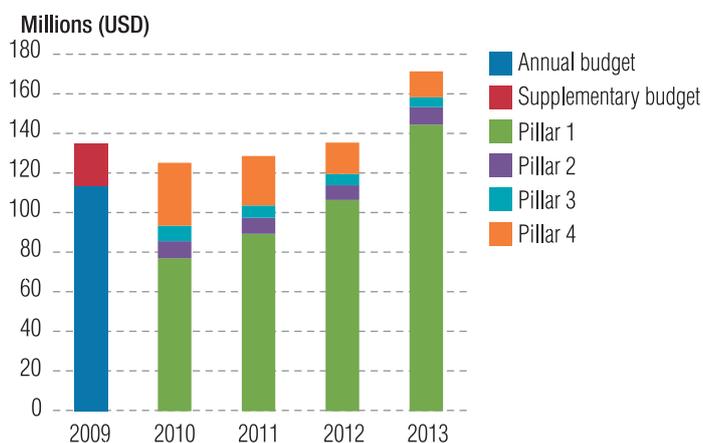
Only a few countries established a formal Statelessness Determination Procedure and/or a legal framework for the protection of stateless people. With the 60th commemoration of the 1954 Convention in 2014, and following pledges from various countries in 2011, UNHCR looks forward to welcoming as parties to the Statelessness Conventions those European States which have not yet acceded to them. Of the 49 countries of the European region, 12 countries have yet to accede to the 1954 Convention and 22 are not yet party to the 1961 Convention. In total 12 countries are party to neither of the two Conventions.

Economic challenges throughout the region, an increase in political and public pressure on policy makers to limit irregular migration and the blurring of the distinction between those in genuine need of asylum and irregular migrants fuelled intolerance, racism and xenophobia. Several incidents were reported, including aggression specifically targeting people of concern. ■

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE IN EUROPE | USD

Operation		Pillar 1 Refugee programme	Pillar 2 Stateless programme	Pillar 3 Reintegration projects	Pillar 4 IDP projects	Total
EASTERN EUROPE						
Armenia	Budget	4,238,618	83,192	0	0	4,321,810
	Expenditure	1,843,891	83,192	0	0	1,927,082
Azerbaijan	Budget	4,528,287	323,577	0	1,048,633	5,900,497
	Expenditure	2,992,580	55,337	0	289,860	3,337,776
Georgia	Budget	2,188,385	802,505	0	12,027,628	15,018,517
	Expenditure	1,524,639	558,926	0	4,902,468	6,986,033
Russian Federation	Budget	7,838,378	593,503	0	0	8,431,881
	Expenditure	5,449,288	517,712	0	0	5,967,000
Turkey	Budget	225,385,010	173,391	0	0	225,558,401
	Expenditure	68,282,276	41,170	0	0	68,323,446
Ukraine Regional Office ¹	Budget	10,407,276	1,315,000	0	0	11,722,276
	Expenditure	6,968,569	298,813	0	0	7,267,382
Subtotal	Budget	254,585,954	3,291,168	0	13,076,261	270,953,382
	Expenditure	87,061,243	1,555,149	0	5,192,328	93,808,719
SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE						
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Budget	3,401,638	1,635,389	0	4,117,966	9,154,993
	Expenditure	2,284,727	988,930	0	2,413,281	5,686,938
Croatia	Budget	1,622,763	408,355	2,969,382	0	5,000,500
	Expenditure	899,376	293,572	1,763,381	0	2,956,329
Kosovo (S/RES/1244 (1999))	Budget	3,127,562	1,371,306	4,251,858	216,667	8,967,393
	Expenditure	1,199,178	1,218,992	3,211,855	0	5,630,025
Montenegro	Budget	4,315,047	247,815	0	0	4,562,862
	Expenditure	2,421,128	169,170	0	0	2,590,297
Serbia	Budget	2,133,223	1,202,359	0	15,915,225	19,250,806
	Expenditure	1,394,361	1,044,916	0	5,389,097	7,828,375
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Budget	3,598,315	385,829	0	0	3,984,144
	Expenditure	1,946,641	317,083	0	0	2,263,724
Subtotal	Budget	18,198,548	5,251,053	7,221,240	20,249,857	50,920,698
	Expenditure	10,145,410	4,032,664	4,975,236	7,802,378	26,955,688

EXPENDITURE IN EUROPE | 2009-2013



<i>Operation</i>		Pillar 1 Refugee programme	Pillar 2 Stateless programme	Pillar 3 Reintegration projects	Pillar 4 IDP projects	Total
NORTHERN, WESTERN, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN EUROPE						
Belgium Regional Office ²	Budget	12,892,458	1,710,837	0	0	14,603,295
	Expenditure	11,215,274	1,404,218	0	0	12,619,492
Hungary Regional Office ³	Budget	13,105,174	1,389,143	0	0	14,494,317
	Expenditure	9,278,196	1,066,159	0	0	10,344,354
Italy Regional Office ⁴	Budget	21,518,182	210,702	0	0	21,728,884
	Expenditure	18,759,704	114,120	0	0	18,873,824
Spain	Budget	1,958,882	32,841	0	0	1,991,722
	Expenditure	1,958,882	32,841	0	0	1,991,722
Sweden Regional Office ⁵	Budget	2,600,966	773,066	0	0	3,374,032
	Expenditure	1,749,357	614,188	0	0	2,363,545
Regional Activities	Budget	7,076,939	0	0	0	7,076,939
	Expenditure	3,840,176	0	0	0	3,840,176
Subtotal	Budget	59,152,601	4,116,589	0	0	63,269,190
	Expenditure	46,801,588	3,231,526	0	0	50,033,114
Total Europe	Budget	331,937,104	12,658,810	7,221,240	33,326,118	385,143,271
	Expenditure	144,008,241	8,819,339	4,975,236	12,994,706	170,797,521

¹ Includes activities in Belarus and the Republic of Moldova

² Includes activities in Austria, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, the Liaison Office in Switzerland and the United Kingdom

³ Includes activities in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia

⁴ Includes activities in Albania, Cyprus, Greece, and Malta

⁵ Includes activities in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Norway

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO EUROPE | USD

<i>Donor</i>	Pillar 1 Refugee programme	Pillar 2 Stateless programme	Pillar 3 Reintegration projects	Pillar 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
Armenia					98,172	98,172
Australia	719,040					719,040
Austria	196,871				46,752	243,623
Azerbaijan	6,948					6,948
Belgium	91,609					91,609
Canada	1,407,095					1,407,095
China	1,000,000					1,000,000
Croatia					70,032	70,032
Czech Republic					26,665	26,665
Estonia	165,563					165,563
European Union	17,748,817		950,833	761,792		19,461,442
France	767,834					767,834
Germany				373,134		373,134
Hungary					194,854	194,854
International Organization for Migration	41,672					41,672
Ireland	715,026					715,026
Italy	2,087,217				180,000	2,267,217
Japan	7,500,000					7,500,000
Kuwait	10,752,688				125,000	10,877,688
Malta	51,656					51,656
Netherlands				1,364,177		1,364,177
Norway				36,783		36,783
Poland					69,100	69,100
Portugal	108,696					108,696
Private donors in the Czech Republic					1,337	1,337
Private donors in Germany		135,685				135,685
Private donors in Greece	76,628					76,628
Private donors in the Netherlands	187,668					187,668
Private donors in Serbia				20,416		20,416
Private donors in Spain	6,468					6,468
Private donors in Switzerland					522	522
Romania					131,665	131,665
Russian Federation				100,000	450,000	550,000
Spain	503,685				499,455	1,003,140
Switzerland	870,511			539,957		1,410,468
United Kingdom	666,667					666,667
United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security				11,439		11,439
United States of America	43,156,580				25,600,000	68,756,580
UN Fund for Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict	9,940					9,940
Total	88,838,878	135,685	950,833	3,207,699	27,493,552	120,626,646