

# Cyprus

February 2022

**Increased arrivals:** In 2021 some 13,235 new asylum applications were lodged, ranking Cyprus as the top asylum receiving country per capita among European Union (EU) member States.

**First reception conditions:** Asylum-seekers face deteriorating conditions and difficulties with State aid, housing and employment, all exacerbated by delays in the examination of asylum applications.

**Integration:** UNHCR has identified early access to comprehensive civic learning and orientation programmes as one of the most important unmet needs in the integration of refugees.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN\*

Refugee and Subsidiary Protection holders	<b>15,141</b>
Asylum-seekers	<b>21,919</b>
Persons under UNHCR's Mandate in the northern part of Cyprus	<b>100</b>
Persons in British Sovereign Base Areas	<b>21</b>

## TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN\*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Syrian Arab Republic	<b>9,820</b>	Syrian Arab Republic	<b>4,750</b>
State of Palestine	<b>2,152</b>	Cameroon	<b>2,642</b>
Iraq	<b>974</b>	India	<b>2,132</b>

\*Data source: UNHCR 2021 Mid-Year Statistical Report and UNHCR [data finder platform](#)

## COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

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

**Inclusion:** Through collaboration with partners, NGOs and the Ministry of Health, asylum-seekers who do not have access to the general health care system were able to receive vaccinations through mobile units at the reception centres and walk-in clinics in towns and cities.

**Communication with Communities:** UNHCR and partners shared vaccination information via the [Help Platform](#), social media and through the Refugee Outreach Volunteers.

**Health:** UNHCR monitored the conditions provided for positive cases at the new Limnes Multi-purpose Centre, arranged for sick and vulnerable persons to be moved and advocated for an in-house doctor at the centre.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Provision of relief assistance

In recent months, UNHCR provided 45 tents, 8,064 blankets, 48 Refugee Housing Units and 500 camp beds to assist the authorities in meeting the pressures of increased arrivals at the first reception centre.

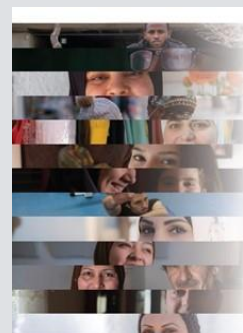
### Third Annual Integration Conference

The conference highlighted the role of local authorities in enhancing social inclusion, as well as the power of the individual in society. UNHCR brought together speakers from local municipalities in Cyprus, academia, partner NGOs, UNHCR Europe Bureau, the Council of Europe, civil society actors, the media and the refugee population.

### Refugee Outreach Volunteers

Eight new Refugee Outreach Volunteers have been selected to participate in the 2022 programme, which was first launched in Cyprus in 2018.

## UNHCR LAUNCHES THE PHOTO-ESSAY BOOK: UNTOLD STORIES OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN CYPRUS



**Untold Stories**  
Refugees  
and Asylum-Seekers  
in Cyprus

**Ανείπωτες Ιστορίες**  
Πρόσφυγες  
και αιτητές ασύλου  
στην Κύπρο

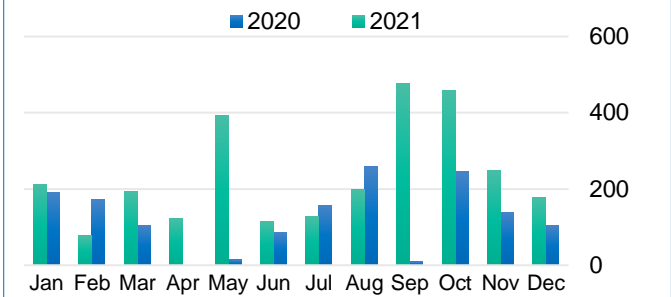


UNHCR [launched a bilingual photo-essay book](#) in December, shedding light on the lives of refugees and asylum-seekers in Cyprus, and on the global refugee story, through the photos of Sebastian Rich.

## Key Priorities

- **Protection monitoring** and promoting respect for refugee rights and the standards of treatment of asylum-seekers, particularly access to asylum procedures, reception conditions and detention.
- **Influencing legislation** by providing expert advice 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 unaccompanied and separated children to ensure effective access to the national child protection system; registration and documentation; guardianship and legal representation; adequate care and supervision; and tracing and family reunification by way of a best interest determination.
- **Training key stakeholders** from the Government and civil society on key protection issues, including refugee rights, reception conditions for asylum-seekers, durable solutions and child protection.
- **Advocating** for the effective social, economic and cultural integration of refugees, including for long-term residency, naturalization and family reunification.
- **Promoting accession** to the Statelessness Conventions.
- **Raising public awareness** via public information and media relations; education activities; World Refugee Day and other events; campaigns and constituency-building.
- **Strengthening partnerships with NGOs** and other civil society actors working in refugee protection.

## MONTHLY SEA ARRIVALS TO CYPRUS



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

## Working with Partners

- **The Government of the Republic of Cyprus** is UNHCR's key partner in ensuring the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers in accordance with EU and international standards. UNHCR works with Parliamentary committees; the Offices of the Ombudsman and the Child Commissioner; diplomatic missions and the media.
- **Civil society engagement** is key to UNHCR's work in supporting communities of concern in Cyprus, including through funding-based partnership agreements with two local 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 been abolished since 2014, leaving stateless persons without protection. Most still resort to asylum procedures.

## UNHCR Presence in Cyprus

### Staff:

- 1 International Staff
- 12 National Staff
- 4 Affiliate Staff

### Offices:

- 1 Country Office in Nicosia

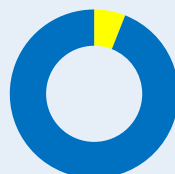
## Financial information (22 February 2022)

### Financial requirements

**USD 2.9M**

Funding gap  
94%

**USD 2.7M**



Funded  
6%  
**0.2M**

UNHCR is grateful to the donors of unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions to the 2022 global programmes. Donors of USD 10 million or more are:

**Sweden | Norway | Netherlands | Denmark | Germany | Switzerland | Belgium | Ireland**

Unearmarked contributions provide UNHCR with vital flexibility in determining how best to protect and assist persons of concern who are in the greatest need or at the greatest risk.