Portugal

February 2026

Portugal has recently undergone **migration and asylum reform**, leading to changes in the institutional set up and procedures as well as the restructuring of the border control and reception schemes.

Throughout 2024 - 2025, the **border procedure, asylum** and **reception systems** were consolidated. Other changes regarding border control, returns and decentralized reception are still being implemented.

UNHCR advocates for upholding protection standards in **reception and asylum procedures**, while strengthening **early identification and referral** of asylum-seekers with specific needs.

POPULATION STATISTICS (as of mid-2025)*

Refugees	**66,541**
Asylum-seekers	**2,933**
Stateless people**	**31**

***Figures include both displaced & non-displaced stateless people*

Top three countries of origin*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Ukraine	55,872	Afghanistan	400
Nigeria	2,216	Colombia	390
Syrian Arab Rep.	951	The Gambia	299

** UNHCR Refugee Data Finder*

Protecting forcibly displaced and stateless people in Portugal

Age Assessment Procedures Workshop

UNHCR organized an Age Assessment Workshop at the National Institute for Legal Medicine, with the participation of unaccompanied children, child protection agencies, representatives of a reception center and IOM. It aimed to highlight the impact of current procedures, which use medical methods, on unaccompanied children, clarify their role within the asylum system, and reflect on future requirements under the EU Pact. Further developments are expected as national authorities continue to consider the future framework for age assessment procedures.

Legal counselling for refugees and asylum-seekers

In 2025, UNHCR, through its partner the Portuguese Refugee Council (CPR), provided 5,233 individuals with legal information and counselling on the asylum procedure, and other matters, including family reunification and nationality. Throughout 2025 UNHCR engaged with CPR and national authorities to prepare its responsible disengagement from legal counselling in 2026.

HIGHLIGHTS

Legislative initiative on the return framework

In December 2025, the Portuguese Government submitted a draft law that aims to accelerate returns of irregularly staying third-country nationals. UNHCR shared preliminary comments during a meeting of the National Council for Migration and Asylum meeting, attended by the Minister for the Presidency and the Deputy Minister for the Presidency and Immigration.It will continue its engagement through technical input in the legislative process to promote safeguards in line with international standards.

Statelessness back on the Parliament agenda

Following engagement by UNHCRduring the legislative process of the new citizenship bill, a draft legal proposal establishing a statelessness determination procedure was submitted to Parliament. The proposal is currently under parliamentary consideration and UNHCR will provide technical comments.



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Rebuilding the future in Portugal, one match a time

The Afghan Youth National Football Team, Ayenda FC, played a friendly match against a local team, in the Fan Zone of the UEFA Women's Champions League, held at the the iconic Praça do Comércio in the heart of Lisbon. “Ayenda” means “future” in Dari. The event was supported by UNHCR, Social Innovation Sports and the Benfica Foundation.

Key Priorities

- **Asylum procedures:** Through its partner, the Portuguese Refugee Council, UNHCR works to ensure refugee and asylum-seeker access to legal information, counselling and facilitates access to legal aid. Due to reprioritization of resources impacting partner capacity, and in line with UNHCR's aim to promote sustainable state-provided legal support, UNHCR engages with the relevant authorities to explore alternative arrangements.
- **Protection:** In cooperation with national asylum and reception institutions, UNHCR advocates for and works to strengthen identification and referral mechanisms for asylum-seekers with specific needs within the asylum procedure. UNHCR also provides technical advice and training sessions to national authorities, including border control and asylum entities, as well as service providers to reinforce procedures, day-to-day care and children's inclusion within in communities.
- **EU Pact on Migration and Asylum:** UNHCR is engaging with the authorities on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum and shared recommendations for its implementation with competent authorities, in line with international protection standards.
- **Family reunification and complementary pathways:** UNHCR .supports flexible family reunification procedures and efforts for growing education pathways and enabling refugee access to labour mobility pathways.
- **EU solidarity and global responsibility sharing:** For 2026, Portugal has indicated financial contribution under the EU Annual Solidarity Pool, without committing relocation places. No resettlement quotas have been communicated under the Union Resettlement Framework for the 2026-2027 cycle.

Working with Partners

- **The Government of Portugal** is UNHCR's key partner in working towards the protection and inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR collaborates with a wide range of state authorities including the Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA), the Social Security Institute, the Police as well as the National Republican Guard. Other key actors include the Ministry of the Presidency, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ombudsperson's Office, the High Council of Judges.
- **Non-Governmental partners** and counterparts include UN agencies, NGOs (particularly the Portuguese Refugee Council) and refugee-led organizations. UNHCR also coordinates with the National Partner Portugal for UNHCR (Portugal com ACNUR).

Statelessness

- Portugal has acceded to both the 1954 and 1961 UN Conventions on Statelessness. In August 2023, UNHCR advocacy efforts led Portugal to adopt legal changes recognizing the stateless status and prescribing an obligation to establish a statelessness determination procedure, in line with the Government's pledge at the GRF in 2019. The legal proposal establishing a statelessness determination procedure is currently being discussed in Parliament.

UNHCR Presence in Portugal

Staff:
2 National Staff

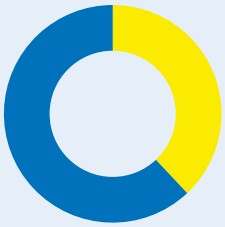
Offices:
1 National Office in Lisbon

Financial information (28 February 2026)

**Information relates to UNHCR's Country Offices in Austria; Switzerland and Liechtenstein; Portugal; UNHCR Representation in Strasbourg; UNHCR Liaison Office Vienna.*

Financial requirements

$ 4.2 M



Funded 38%
$ 1.6 M

Funding gap 62%
$ 2.6 M

UNHCR is grateful for the support from our top government donors in 2026:

Austria | Australia | Belgium | Denmark | Germany | Ireland | Norway | Switzerland | Sweden

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