



**Albania
Andorra
Austria
Belgium
Cyprus
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany**

**Greece
Holy See
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta**

**Monaco
Netherlands
Norway
Portugal
San Marino
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland**



Northern, Western and Southern Europe

| Working environment |

The subregion covers more than two dozen countries facing different but often inter-related challenges, many of which are addressed in the context of the European Union's efforts to build a Common European Asylum System. In the first half of 2009, countries in this subregion accounted for three-quarters of all asylum requests in Europe, as well as nearly all refugee resettlement in European countries. Furthermore, the subregion includes 15 of UNHCR's top 20 donor countries, an active civil society and influential media.

Access to territory and to asylum procedures, the harmonization of legislation relating to refugee status and complementary forms of protection, the quality and consistency of asylum decisions, the integration of beneficiaries of international protection and the promotion of resettlement are key concerns of UNHCR. While some countries have long experience with asylum and resettlement, others have become refugee-receiving countries more recently. In these countries, UNHCR is advocating for and supporting governments in the development and maintenance of an international protection regime. Across the subregion, UNHCR remains preoccupied by differences in standards of protection and by manifestations of racism and xenophobia.

The overall number of asylum applications in this subregion rose by 13 per cent in 2008 when compared with the year before, but there were wide disparities from country to country. Southern European countries saw a 20 per cent increase, with the majority of applications lodged in Italy and Greece. At the same time, applications in Norway more than doubled, while applications in the other Nordic countries decreased.

Iraqi refugees arrive in Germany where they will be resettled with support from UNHCR and the German Government.



In the first half of 2009, the overall number of asylum applications rose once again by 13 per cent, and again there were considerable differences from one country to another. The largest decreases were recorded in Spain, Cyprus and Sweden, with the largest increases in Finland, Denmark and Norway. Across the region there has been a general rise in the number of applications from separated children, most sharply in Finland. These trends and the implementation of the Dublin II Regulation, which identifies the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application, have stimulated a wider debate on responsibility sharing within the European Union (EU).

Strategy

UNHCR's strategy has three prongs: to preserve asylum space in the broader migration context while upholding and improving protection standards; to increase efforts to find durable solutions for people of concern, including through resettlement to this subregion; and to mobilize resources and support for refugee protection worldwide.

The Office will pursue these aims through partnerships with, among others, the EU institutions, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Organization for Migration, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, as well as NGOs and the private sector.

UNHCR will continue to support the EU as it progresses toward establishing a Common European Asylum System and a European Asylum Support Office. Working arrangements between UNHCR, the Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) and the EU Fundamental Rights Agency will be strengthened.

UNHCR's activities are led by three regional offices (Brussels, Stockholm and Rome) which ensure support to country offices and coherence in UNHCR's work. Coordination among these regional offices, and the regional office in Budapest, will enable UNHCR to implement consistent strategies throughout Northern, Western, Southern and Central Europe.

Constraints

Concerns of States regarding irregular migration and security have an impact on access to territory and to asylum procedures. Border control measures, penalties for illegal entry and increased use of detention all affect persons seeking asylum. Ensuring the consistent application of evolving EU legal norms remains a challenge. Political changes and the economic downturn also affect the attitudes of host communities toward asylum-seekers and refugees.

Operations

Asylum space within migratory movements

In many countries in this subregion—Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain in particular—UNHCR’s activities will be dominated by challenges emerging from mixed flows of irregular migrants. In all countries, UNHCR will promote protection-sensitive border measures to make sure that persons seeking protection are properly identified and have access to territories and procedures where their needs can be assessed.

In France, UNHCR will continue its work in the Calais region, aimed at ensuring that international protection standards are met. UNHCR will also support countries facing particular pressures, such as Greece and Malta, to improve their reception conditions. In these countries and throughout the subregion, UNHCR will promote alternatives to detention, especially for separated children.

Upholding international protection norms

UNHCR will offer technical advice and support at national and EU levels, and submit its views to national and regional courts as appropriate, in order to uphold and improve protection standards and to promote improved quality and consistency of asylum decisions. The experience gained through the “Quality Initiative” projects in the United Kingdom and in Central Europe will be applied to extend similar initiatives to other European countries. UNHCR will continue its operational role in the national asylum procedures in France, Italy and Spain.

In all countries, UNHCR will advocate for appropriate protection for unaccompanied and separated children who seek asylum. UNHCR will also work to find solutions for non-citizens and stateless people and advocate for further

accessions to the international Conventions relating to statelessness.

Durable solutions

UNHCR will focus on finding durable solutions for people of concern, notably through integration, and will emphasize the need to take age and gender diversity factors into account. UNHCR will pay particular attention to the importance of family reunification for successful integration.

The Office will also work closely with States and the European Commission to increase resettlement possibilities and will participate in efforts to promote intra-EU responsibility sharing.

Worldwide partnerships

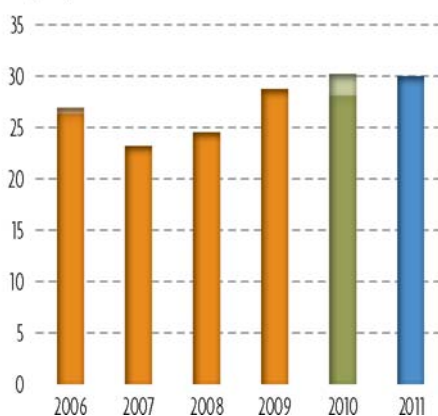
Many of UNHCR’s largest donors and partners are in this region, providing strong political and financial support for UNHCR’s global priorities. UNHCR will continue to mobilize resources from governmental, inter-governmental and private sources. Partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations are critical to UNHCR’s work worldwide. Offices across the subregion will also seek to gain broad public understanding for UNHCR’s work worldwide.

Financial information

Of the overall subregional budget of 30.2 million, 93 per cent is allocated for refugees and the remainder for stateless people. The budget reflects increased activities to improve the quality and consistency of asylum decision making; promotion of resettlement and intra-EU responsibility sharing; and efforts to identify and resolve situations of statelessness.

UNHCR’s budget in Northern, Western and Southern Europe 2006 - 2011

Millions (USD)



Note: Includes Albania and Cyprus, which were part of other subregions before 2010.

UNHCR budget for Northern, Western and Southern Europe (USD)

COUNTRY	2009 REVISED BUDGET	2010			2011
		REFUGEE PROGRAMME PILLAR 1	STATELESS PROGRAMME PILLAR 2	TOTAL	
Albania	674,041	0	0	0	0
Austria	1,064,436	0	0	0	0
Belgium Regional Office ¹	7,371,612	4,236,924	455,882	4,692,806	4,641,700
Cyprus	889,908	0	0	0	0
France	2,759,641	2,765,974	104,214	2,870,188	2,893,800
Germany ²	2,247,683	3,528,899	503,781	4,032,680	3,756,900
Greece	1,251,103	0	0	0	0
Ireland	753,925	579,115	34,834	613,949	619,900
Italy Regional Office ³	5,240,271	12,466,941	183,397	12,650,338	10,958,000
Malta	282,128	0	0	0	0
Portugal	85,653	0	0	0	0
Spain	1,675,940	1,346,208	170,342	1,516,550	1,800,500
Sweden Regional Office ⁴	1,931,979	1,772,807	459,570	2,232,378	4,023,700
Switzerland	739,677	0	0	0	0
United Kingdom	1,757,102	1,436,769	197,586	1,634,355	1,285,400
TOTAL	28,725,099	28,133,637	2,109,606	30,243,243	29,979,900

¹ Belgium Regional Office includes activities in Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the Liaison office in Switzerland as of 2010.

² Germany includes activities in Austria as of 2010.

³ Italy Regional Office includes activities in Albania, Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Portugal as of 2010.

⁴ Sweden Regional Office includes activities in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania and Norway as of 2010.