

Albania

February 2023

UNHCR advocates for a strengthened national asylum system and integration in line with the [Strategy for UNHCR engagement in mixed movement in the Western Balkans](#).

UNHCR advocates for **an enhanced implementation of the Albanian Law on Asylum**, further aligning access to protection and durable solutions with international and EU law and standards.

UNHCR gives renewed priority to its longstanding work on strengthening access to and quality of legal counselling and assistance under the **EU-funded IPA III Regional Programme**.

UNHCR POPULATION STATISTICS AS OF MID-2022*

Refugees	2,306
Asylum-seekers	6
Others of concern	2,033
Stateless persons	1,948

Top three countries of origin*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Ukraine	2,192	Syrian Arab Republic	6
Serbia and Kosovo**	57		
Syrian Arab Republic	20		

*UNHCR 2022 Mid-Year Trends and UNHCR [data finder](#)
 **All designations of Kosovo are without prejudice to positions on status and are in line with the UN Security Council Resolution S/RES/1244 (1999).

UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION RESPONSE

As of mid-February 2023, **2,686 refugees from Ukraine** were present in Albania.

Policy and legal development: The Albanian government took two key decisions in March 2022, granting refugees from Ukraine the right to enter and stay in Albania for up to one year without a residence permit, or to protection under the temporary protection scheme for those requesting it.

The majority of refugees from Ukraine who have arrived in Albania have so far opted to benefit from the right to enter and stay and have not requested temporary protection.

Coordination: In March 2022, UNHCR and the Ministry of Interior collaborated on mapping existing capacities and services for refugees from Ukraine, covering multiple sectors and incorporating input from relevant stakeholders across the country including UN agencies and NGOs. UNHCR is prepared to activate this network if necessary and assist the authorities in addressing needs.

HIGHLIGHTS

Access to territory and asylum

UNHCR continued its advocacy on enhancing access to territory and to asylum procedure, including identifying and referring persons with specific needs, which remains a priority in the context of continued onwards movement of refugees and migrants in the Western Balkans region. In 2022, an estimated 1.4% of refugees and migrants traveling in mixed movements to the borders of Albania were referred to the asylum procedure.

First instance decisions on asylum claims

In 2022, 13 first instance decisions on asylum claims were taken by the asylum authority, granting subsidiary protection to nationals from Afghanistan, Egypt, Syrian Arab Republic, and Tunisia. No decisions granted refugee status.



UNHCR RAISES AWARENESS ABOUT REFUGEES DURING UNITED NATIONS WEEK IN TIRANA

UNHCR joined forces with other UN agencies and the Government of Albania to mark United Nations Week with a series of events throughout the country in October 2022. UNHCR in Tirana set up an information tent which became a hub of activity, as people from various backgrounds stopped by to ask questions and gain a deeper understanding about refugees and the role of UNHCR. Learn more [here](#).

Key Priorities

- **Mixed Movements:** UNHCR, in partnership with IOM, promotes a differentiated pathways and procedures approach to support refugees and migrants travelling in mixed movements.
- **Access to territory and asylum:** UNHCR and its partners conduct protection monitoring at the borders, including during the pre-screening process, in support of the identification and referral of persons who may wish to seek international protection in Albania or who may have specific needs and vulnerabilities.
- **Asylum procedures:** UNHCR encourages the Government of Albania in implementing its commitment to improve the quality of asylum decision-making, as pledged at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum. UNHCR implements a regional quality assurance initiative to enhance all components of the asylum procedure.
- **Documentation:** UNHCR, in collaboration with the Government of Albania, facilitates access to electronic services, including applications for resident permits and registration at the civil register, for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, by providing them with biometric identification cards.
- **Integration:** UNHCR promotes economic inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in Albania, partnering with various stakeholders as part of its integration strategy. UNHCR works to raise awareness on integration and inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers. It also offers technical support to local partners to enhance livelihoods. Partnering with NGOs, UNHCR continues to create opportunities for entrepreneurship and skills development, while also enhancing access to financial services.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR's main government counterpart is the Ministry of Interior, including the Directorate of Policies for Asylum, Foreigners and Citizenship, the Border and Migration Police, and the Reception Centre for Asylum. UNHCR cooperates with other line ministries to improve inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in national systems.
- External engagement: Other key external partners include the EU Delegation, EU agencies (EUAA and Frontex), diplomatic missions, UN agencies and civil society organisations.
- UNHCR partners with EUAA, Frontex and IOM under the EU-funded IPA III Regional Programme.

Statelessness

- The Government of Albania is a party to both UN Statelessness Conventions and has made strides towards fulfilling its statelessness commitments, including passing laws on citizenship and foreigners, which protects the rights of all children born in Albania and establishing a statelessness determination procedure. UNHCR collaborates with the Albanian Institute of Statistics to identify statelessness-related risks relevant for the upcoming 2023 population and housing census.

UNHCR Presence in Albania

Staff:

16 National Staff
 2 International Staff
 1 International UNV

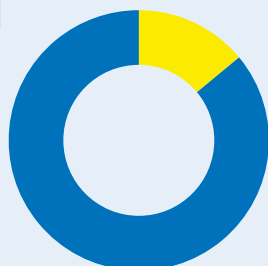
Offices:

1 Country Office in Tirana
 1 Field Unit in Gjirokastra
 1 Field Unit in Korça

Financial information (February 2023)

Financial requirements
USD 3.5 M

Funding gap
86%
3 M



Funded
14%
0.5 M

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