

Albania

May 2018

123

Refugees and persons granted subsidiary protection.

1406

Asylum requests in 2018 (By 31 May).

2275

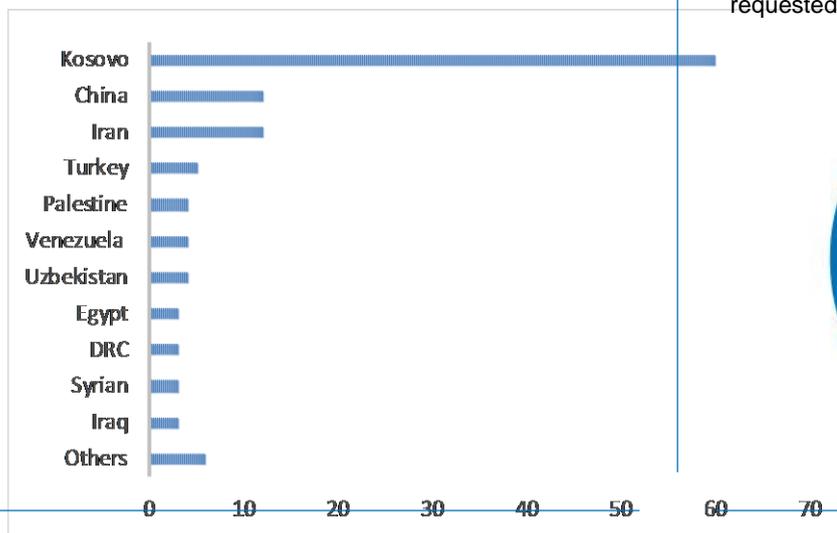
Persons intercepted by Border Police in 2018 (By 31 May)

2719

Persons holding temporary humanitarian permits

POPULATION OF CONCERN

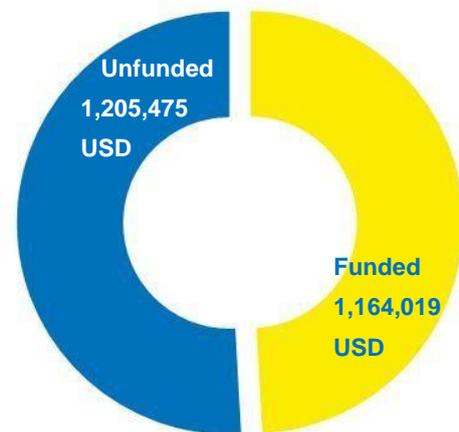
Countries of Origin



FUNDING (AS MAY 2018)

USD 2,396,494

requested for the Albania situation



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

- 13 National Staff
- 4 International Staff

Offices:

- 1 Representation Office in Tirana
- 1 Field Office in Gjirokastra



Operational context

Refugees and asylum seekers

Albania remains a transit country for asylum seekers and refugees and the limited access to socio-economic opportunities triggers onward movement to neighbouring countries. Nonetheless, Albania has seen a substantial increase in arrivals in the last quarter of 2017 and 2018. From January to May 2018, the number of asylum requests is four times higher than in 2017. In light of the increase numbers, coordination with the government counterparts, non-governmental organizations, other UN agencies, as well as the donor and diplomatic community has been reinforced to ensure preparedness.

Statelessness

The majority of persons at risk of statelessness in Albania are entitled to nationality but experience difficulties in having it confirmed, mostly due to obstacles in birth registration linked to lengthy and costly administrative and judicial procedures. Roma and Egyptian minorities are at risk as a result of social and economic marginalization and children of Albanian returnees face obstacles to have their births registered and their Albanian nationality confirmed.

Main Activities

■ **ACCESS:**

UNHCR has a Field Unit at the southern border with Greece to monitor border trends, promote coordination among relevant actors and improve identification and referrals of asylum seekers with specific needs in the context of mixed migration flows. UNHCR and its partners support Border Police to ensure that pre-screening at the border is done with sufficient safeguards.

■ **RECEPTION:**

UNHCR provides support to the National Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Tirana, with provision of services and material support. The capacity of the National Asylum Centre was doubled in 2017 and it is now able to host 180 persons. The project was a result of a partnership between UNHCR and UNDP and was funded by the EU Commission. In cooperation with the Municipality of Gjirokastra and Border and Migration Police UNHCR has increased the reception capacity at the border areas, with a differentiated approach for vulnerable categories.

■ **SOLUTIONS:**

UNHCR regularly consults with refugees and asylum seekers on their integration prospects and needs. UNHCR partners provide Albanian language courses, vocational training and support to access the labour market. In addition, UNHCR is working with Ministry of Interior to promote naturalization of refugees who fulfil the criteria.

UNHCR also supports revision of the legislative framework and procedures to ensure that the rights of asylum seekers, refugees and persons at risk of statelessness are adequately factored in.

■ **ENGAGE:**

UNHCR main Government counterpart is Ministry of Interior, specifically Directorate for Asylum and Citizenship and Border Migration Police. In addition, UNHCR cooperates with line Ministries, particularly Ministry of Health and Social Protection and Ministry of Education, to ensure inclusion of refugees in national systems. UNICEF, OSCE and Council of Europe (CoE) have proven to be key partners to build capacities and promote refugee rights. The EU Delegation and key diplomatic missions, namely the US Embassy have also substantially contributed to build the asylum system in Albania.

External / Donors Relations

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2018

European Union and US

Contacts

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Links

<http://www.unhcr.org/albania.html> - <https://www.un.org.al/un-agencies/united-nations-high-commissioner-refugees> - <https://www.facebook.com/unhcr.tirana/>

<https://www.unhcr.org/see/where-we-work/albania>