



OUTCOME AREA 3

Myanmar refugees legally work at a construction site in central Thailand following a landmark policy change in August 2025 that, after years of advocacy, now allows registered refugees from camps along the Thai Myanmar border to access lawful employment and support their families. © UNHCR/Apipar Norapoompipat

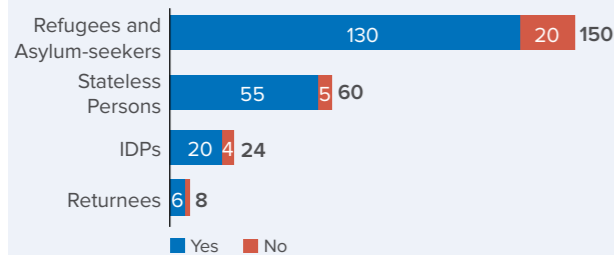
Protection policy and law

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
UNHCR promotes laws and policies that uphold the rights of forcibly displaced and stateless people. This work includes supporting States to accede to key international instruments, withdraw reservations, and align domestic laws with international standards,

including the 1951 Refugee Convention, its 1967 Protocol, the 1954 and the 1961 statelessness conventions, and core human rights treaties. Currently, 149 States are party to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol, with 68 maintaining reservations or declarations.

Core output indicator

UNHCR engaged in legislative and judicial processes in **132 of 155 reporting countries** to strengthen laws and policies for the protection of forcibly displaced and stateless people and/or the reduction and prevention of statelessness (see results by population group below).



Key results

- In Europe, UNHCR worked with the European Union institutions and Member States to align national asylum and reception systems with the forthcoming EU Pact on Asylum and Migration. This included legislative analysis, recommendations on applicable standards and capacity building support for national authorities.
- UNHCR supported legal and policy reform to strengthen national asylum and protection frameworks, including in Iraq, Malawi, Mauritania and South Africa.
- UNHCR strengthened protection safeguards by helping prevent refoulement, expand access to procedures and promote protection-sensitive responses to mixed movements. In Jordan, UNHCR advocacy and interventions led to the release of some refugees and the cancellation of deportation orders in other cases.

- UNHCR enhanced the capacity of national institutions and duty-bearers through training and technical support for border officials, judges, asylum authorities and others responsible for applying legal and policy standards. UNHCR issued its [Strategic Approach to Strengthening National Asylum Systems](#), with a plan of action and practical steps for States and other stakeholders to improve system integrity and efficiency.
- Several States adopted laws and policies facilitating access to rights and strengthening national systems, including Brazil, Ethiopia, Kenya and Thailand.
- UNHCR also helped prevent statelessness by advocating for legal reforms, supporting implementation of statelessness standards and protecting stateless children. In Kenya, UNHCR supported amendments to the Citizenship and Immigration Act, drawing on consultations with stateless communities.
- In Burkina Faso, UNHCR advised on comprehensive legal reforms to prevent statelessness and protect stateless persons. The new Code of Persons and the Family improves access to civil registration, strengthens safeguards for foundlings, creates a statelessness determination procedure and simplifies naturalization for stateless persons.
- In Viet Nam, UNHCR supported policy dialogue and provided technical advice on amendments to the Nationality Law. The amendments make it easier for people to restore or reacquire Vietnamese nationality after previously renouncing citizenship to obtain another nationality.
- UNHCR partnered with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the High Commissioner on National Minorities to launch a [guide](#) on good practices in the prevention of childhood statelessness.

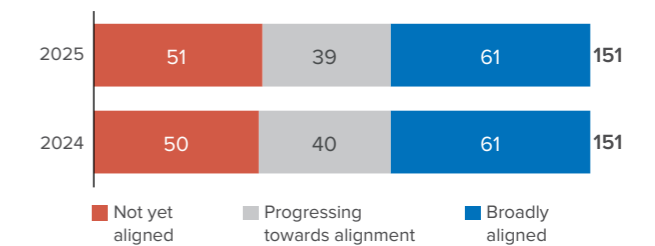
Challenges

Weak or absent systems for determining asylum claims and statelessness continued to undermine protection. At the same, asylum and migration policies in many countries became more focused

on security and deterrence, reducing access to protection and increasing the risk of refoulement. Limited political support, funding shortfalls and gaps in technical capacity further narrowed opportunities for protection-oriented reforms.

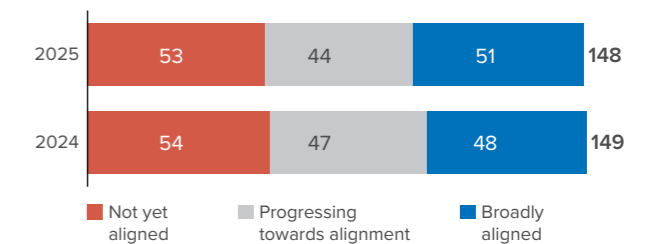
Core outcome indicators

Number of countries where the national legal framework is in line with the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol



On refugee law, 61 of 151 countries (40%) reported national legal frameworks aligned with the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol, unchanged from 2024. About 26% of countries are progressing towards better alignment, and 51 countries (34%) are not yet aligned.

Number of countries where the national legal framework is in line with the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness



On statelessness, 51 of 148 countries (34%) reported national legal frameworks aligned with the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, up slightly from 48 countries in 2024. About 30% of countries are progressing towards better alignment, and 53 countries (36%) are not yet aligned.

Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Protection policy and law

- With the funds available, UNHCR could spend **\$125 million** towards budgeted needs of **\$259 million**.
- **20% decrease** in expenditure compared with 2024
- **\$134 million** of unmet needs or **52%** of the budget.
- **61%** of total expenditure under this outcome area, or **\$76 million**, was funded by flexible funding, including **\$53 million** of unearmarked funding.

Protection policy and law: largest operations by expenditure

These operations accounted for **\$34 million** or **27%** of global expenditure for this area in 2025

