



OUTCOME AREA 2

Melissa Ines Yango, a Central African refugee in Gado Badzéré, Cameroon, gained freedom of movement and access to services after receiving refugee documentation and a national ID card. © UNHCR/Charity Nzomo

Status determination

Fair and efficient status determination procedures are life changing for refugees, providing legal recognition that enables safety, rights and access to services. Fair and efficient asylum systems also help States manage borders effectively, address security concerns and prevent misuse by those without international protection needs. UNHCR's focus is on strengthening existing national systems to increase fairness, efficiency and sustainability, and on supporting States to establish such systems.

In situations where there is no fair and efficient asylum system in place, UNHCR continues to conduct refugee status determination (RSD) under its mandate. For stateless persons in a migratory context, statelessness determination procedures help identify them, grant legal status and secure their rights under the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons.

Core output indicators

- UNHCR provided capacity development support to strengthen national refugee status determination systems in **104 of 114 countries**, up from 100 in 2024.
- For statelessness determination, UNHCR supported national capacity in **23 of 29 countries**, up from 19 in 2024.

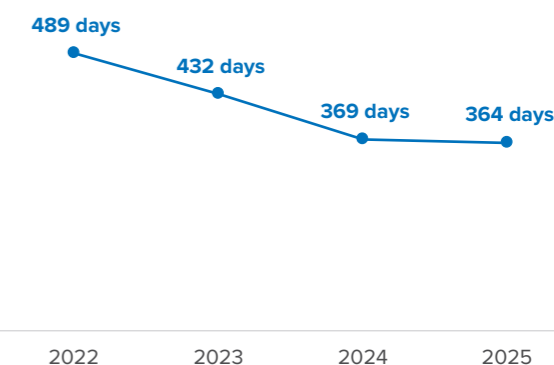
Key results

- In line with the [Strategic Approach to Strengthening National Asylum Systems](#), UNHCR provided technical, financial and operational support to help national institutions make asylum procedures fairer and more efficient.
- In Colombia, UNHCR supported improved case tracking and workflows, helping reduce average processing time from 1,345 to 1,096 days.

- In Türkiye, UNHCR upgraded the country of origin information database, enabling faster access to reliable and up to date information for RSD processing.
- In Kenya, UNHCR strengthened the capacity of the Department of Refugee Services, contributing to improved efficiency and quality of asylum procedures that saw 15,616 decisions made.
- In Ecuador, UNHCR helped the asylum authority identify bottlenecks and monitor interviewer performance.
- In South Sudan, UNHCR facilitated the work of the Refugee Eligibility Committee and maintained continuity of first-instance decision making with access to appeal.
- In Niger, UNHCR sustained policy dialogue with authorities to align the national asylum system with international standards.
- UNHCR issued RSD decisions under its mandate for 33,900 people in 37 countries that lack fair and efficient national asylum systems, including in Egypt and Malaysia.

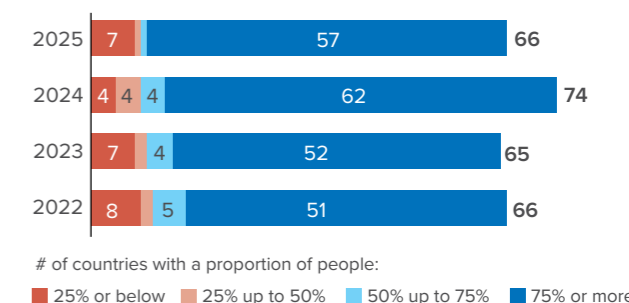
Core outcome indicators

Average processing time from registration to first instance asylum decision



In 2025, the average processing time was 364 days across 63 countries, a slight improvement from 369 days across 64 countries in 2024. These gains reflect improvements in procedural efficiency, targeted technical assistance and deliberate efforts to reduce accumulated backlogs. Colombia and Kenya were among the countries that made significant progress.

Proportion of people undergoing asylum procedures who have access to legal representation

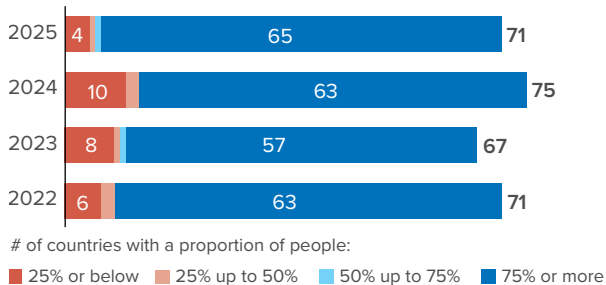


In 2025, 57 of 66 reporting countries (88%) indicated that more than 75% of refugees and asylum-seekers undergoing asylum procedures had access to legal representation, compared with 62 of 74 countries (84%) in 2024.

Challenges

Significant funding reductions constrained UNHCR's ability to sustain adequate staffing and provide the technical, financial and operational support required by governments to reduce backlogs and strengthen procedures. In many large, under-resourced national asylum systems and UNHCR mandate operations, these cuts deepened existing procedural challenges. Backlogs grew, quality assurance efforts slowed, and UNHCR could not respond effectively to many government requests for support. At the same time, a growing number of States pursued more restrictive asylum policies, narrowing access or increasing procedural hurdles, rather than prioritizing efficiency reforms that enable quicker processing while upholding access to asylum and due process guarantees.

Proportion of people undergoing asylum procedures who have access to an effective appeal mechanism after first instance rejection of their claim



In 2025, 65 of 71 reporting countries (92%) indicated that more than 75% of refugees and asylum-seekers undergoing asylum procedures had access to an effective appeal mechanism following a first-instance rejection, an increase from 63 of 75 countries (84%) in 2024.

Financial overview

Global expenditure and budget for Status determination

- With the funds available, UNHCR could spend **\$93 million** towards budgeted needs of **\$203 million**.
- **19% decrease** in expenditure compared with 2024
- **\$110 million** of unmet needs or **54%** of the budget.
- **45%** of total expenditure under this outcome area, or **\$41 million**, was funded by flexible funding, including **\$30 million** of unearmarked funding.

Status determination: largest operations by expenditure

These operations accounted for **\$31 million** or **33%** of global expenditure for this area in 2025

