

Italy

September 2020

Nearly **4,400 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy by sea** in September, the majority disembarking in Lampedusa. This despite no NGO rescue vessels being operational at month's end.

Significant arrivals were also recorded of **refugees and migrants travelling by land through South-East Europe**, at the border with Slovenia in Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

The situation in a number of onshore **quarantine facilities** was challenging owing to limited capacity and the additional COVID-19 requirements.

KEY INDICATORS (SEPTEMBER 2020)

2,557

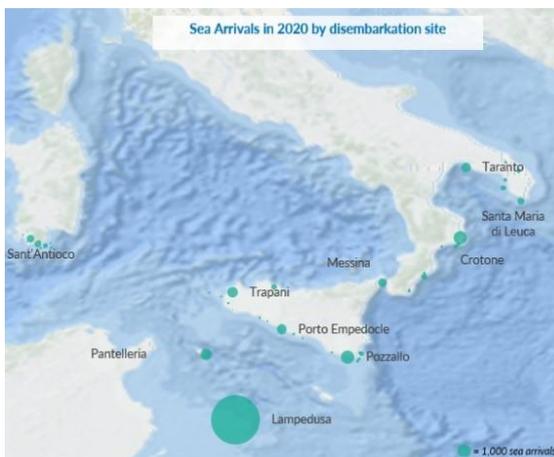
Sea arrivals assisted and informed on asylum procedures by UNHCR staff upon disembarkation (Source: UNHCR)

2,721

Inquiries received and individually followed-up through **ARCI toll-free number** (Source: ARCI)

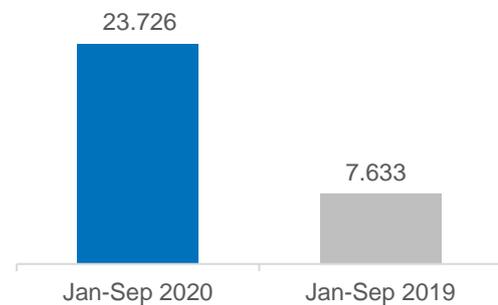
196

Individuals who received **medical assistance and psychosocial counselling** by UNHCR partners (Source: MEDU and LILA)



POPULATION OF CONCERN

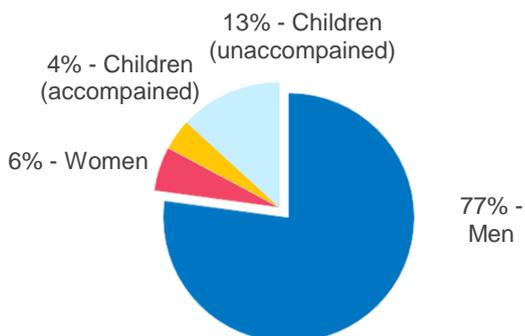
Sea arrivals



Source: Ministry of Interior. In addition to sea arrivals, Italy also receives land arrivals and air arrivals. This chart focuses on sea arrivals, as per official figures provided by the Italian Ministry of Interior.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

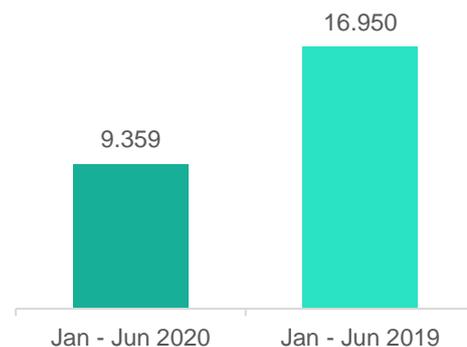
Sea arrivals by gender and age



Source: Ministry of Interior. In addition to sea arrivals, Italy also receives land arrivals and air arrivals. This chart focuses on sea arrivals, as per official figures provided by the Italian Ministry of Interior. Gender breakdown for children is not available.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Asylum applications



Source: Ministry of Interior. Please note that the chart refers to the latest available data.

Operational Context

- In September, **4,387 refugees and migrants reached Italian shores**, down from 5,326 in August and 7,064 in July. Over 2,000 refugees and migrants embarked in Tunisia and over 1,400 embarked in Libya¹. On four occasions, disembarkation followed a stand-off over the identification of a port of safety. Due to the impounding of vessels and post-disembarkation quarantine for crews, no NGO rescue ships were operating in the Central Mediterranean by month's end. Over half of monthly sea arrivals **disembarked in Lampedusa**, putting the island's hotspot under strain in the first half of the month, with over 1,000 persons accommodated as against a capacity of 200. After increasing transfers of new arrivals from Lampedusa to other facilities, the hotspot was again functioning within capacity by month's end.
- While official statistics are not yet available for arrivals at Italy's border with Slovenia, there was a steady stream of **refugees and migrants arriving by land** throughout September. Arrivals included both families and children travelling on their own. Most originated from Afghanistan and Pakistan. An average of 20 to 50 people arrived daily in the Udine area, causing sustained pressure on the limited number of reception facilities. Increasing numbers of refugees and migrants travelled to **Ventimiglia** during the month intending to move onward to France. Following the closure of the Red Cross-run Campo Roya facility in July, as many as 250 persons were estimated to be sleeping rough in the area, often going hungry and failing to secure essential items.
- Consistent with COVID-19 containment measures, **sea arrivals observe quarantine in onshore or offshore facilities**. By the end of September, five offshore quarantine vessels were operational off the Italian coast. As noted, the situation in some onshore quarantine facilities was challenging due to overwhelmed capacity. In several instances, authorities failed to separate adults and unrelated children in quarantine facilities and many children travelling on their own were kept in inappropriate facilities. The situation was particularly acute in Udine, where buses were used for quarantine and in Crotona, where unaccompanied children were kept locked in makeshift or adult facilities.
- As of 30 September, **82,072 asylum-seekers and refugees** were accommodated in **reception** facilities in Italy². Of these, 57,796 were asylum-seekers in first-line reception facilities and temporary facilities, while 24,359 were refugees and unaccompanied children in second-line reception facilities.
- Following a pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic, **all Territorial Commissions** except those in Foggia and Udine resumed in-person asylum interviews in September. Delays in accessing asylum procedures were reported in various locations. In Udine, asylum-seekers have been unable to lodge claims since March 2020 due to restrictions introduced during the COVID-19 emergency. In the first six months of 2020, 9,357 persons initiated asylum applications in Italy. Approximately 20% of applicants originated from Pakistan, followed by Bangladesh (8%), El Salvador (6%), Peru (5%), and Venezuela (5%). In the same period, 10% of applicants were recognized as refugees while 9% were granted subsidiary protection and an additional 5% were given other forms of protection³.

¹ For further information on sea arrivals in Italy, please refer to the Italy page of the UNHCR data portal, available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5205> (last access 7 October 2020)

² Ministry of the Interior, *Cruscotto statistico*, available at

http://www.libertacivilimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_30-09-2020.pdf (last access 7 October 2020)

³ Eurostat, *Asylum quarterly report*, available at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report (last access 2 October 2020)

Main Activities

- UNHCR has been regularly present with staff on the ground in southern Italy providing new arrivals with information on their rights and obligations and on asylum procedures. UNHCR has **stepped up its staff presence** in Lampedusa to address the increasing number of sea arrivals over the last several months. In September, UNHCR conducted an assessment mission to the island focusing on ways to improve the identification of sea arrivals with specific needs – such as children travelling alone, survivors of torture or sexual and gender-based violence – so that they can be prioritized in referrals to support services.
- **UNHCR's Representative to Italy, the Holy See and San Marino, Chiara Cardoletti**, travelled to northern Italy in the last week of September, with visits to Trieste, Milan and Turin. In **Trieste**, she examined the situation at the Italy-Slovenia border and heard reports of refugees and migrants being returned to Slovenia outside the legal framework for such returns as well as of serious ill-treatment of asylum-seekers and refugees while travelling through South-East Europe. UNHCR is reinforcing its presence at the Italy-Slovenia border and working with its partner in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, CIR, to conduct outreach activities with asylum-seekers and refugees, including those at the Fernetto border crossing point near Trieste.
- In **Turin**, refugees set out problems they had experienced obtaining residence and travel documentation, which impaired their ability to integrate. In **Milan**, the Representative learned about authorities' efforts towards ensuring the inclusion of refugees and visited a centre for unaccompanied minors where best practices of individualized assistance are implemented⁴.
- In September, UNHCR staff visited a first-line adult reception facility in **Crotone**, which is currently also being used as a quarantine facility for both adults and unaccompanied children. UNHCR raised concerns regarding the presence of children, their exposure to sub-standard accommodation conditions and the lack of services tailored to their needs, advocating with the authorities for the prompt transfer of the children to appropriate facilities. By early October, 35 unaccompanied children had been transferred to dedicated facilities.
- UNHCR staff also visited the **Ponte Galeria pre-removal facility** in Rome, where asylum-seekers are also held. UNHCR examined COVID-19 containment measures adopted at the facility and advocated with the authorities for solutions vis-à-vis issues of concern, such as the presence of vulnerable individuals and self-declared children at the facility.
- In September, UNHCR assisted 179 refugees and asylum-seekers by providing **individual counselling** through its drop-in service in Rome as well as remotely. Notably, following a number of advocacy interventions by UNHCR with competent authorities over the last three years, a family reunion case concluded successfully in September, with an Eritrean child joining his refugee mother in Rome. UNHCR staff welcomed the child upon his arrival in Italy.



UNHCR Representative, Chiara Cardoletti, talks with an unaccompanied child during her mission to Milan.
Photo ©UNHCR/Dario Bosio

⁴ UNHCR Representative spoke about her mission in an interview with ANSA, also published in English on InfoMigrants, *UNHCR denounces problems in the north-east for migrants*, 6 October 2020, available at <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/27755/unhcr-italy-denounces-problems-in-north-east-for-migrants> (last access 7 October 2020)

- Representatives of community-based and refugee-led organizations selected to participate in the empowerment and capacity building **PartecipAzione** run by UNHCR together with its partner **Intersos**, attended a three-day in-person training in Rome on communications, focusing on interviewing and public speaking techniques. This was the first in-person PartecipAzione training held in 2020 owing to the COVID-19 emergency. Earlier trainings had been conducted remotely through the **PartecipAzione Lab** platform.



Refugees taking part in the 11-13 September PartecipAzione training in Rome.

- In September, the **national toll-free number** managed by UNHCR partner ARCI to provide refugees with free legal counselling and information took 2,721 calls and messages. During the month, ARCI addressed 3,365 inquiries raised by refugees who reached out to them, including through the toll-free number. Furthermore, the COVID-19 [page](#) on ARCI's Juma Map platform – an open source map of services and resources available for refugees across Italy – was updated with materials specifically focusing on the return to school after the COVID-19 emergency. Some 3,780 persons visited Juma Map in September.
- In September, UNHCR co-delivered trainings in Faenza, Genoa and Messina in the context of the “Leaving violence, living safe” project with partner **D.i.RE**. The project aims at providing caseworkers and cultural mediators with relevant information to support asylum-seeking and refugee women and girls who have survived **sexual and gender-based violence**. UNHCR also gave training to social workers in the Marche region, focusing on refugees and migrants with **specific needs**, including survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, victims of trafficking, and LGBTI persons.
- In September, UNHCR spoke at a round-table discussion on people-centred development in Modena; and at *Partnerships for Progress: alliances as an engine for resilience and inclusivity*, an event organized by Reale Mutua Foundation focusing on Sustainable Development Goal 17, that is, revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development.



A UNHCR staff member briefs one of the group of refugee students from Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo who arrived in Italy on 11 September, through the University Corridors project.

UNIVERSITY CORRIDORS

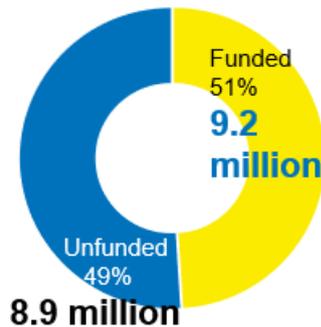
The University Corridors UNICORE 2020 project is promoted by 11 Italian universities with the support of UNHCR, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and other partners. It offers 20 scholarships to refugee students to attend a master's degree programme at an Italian university. After a pilot project was implemented in 2019 with six Eritrean students arriving in Italy to continue their studies in Bologna and Rome, the project continued into 2020 with the second cohort of students arriving in Rome on 11 September. Further information is available [here](#).

Financial information

ITALY FUNDING (AS OF 29 SEPTEMBER 2020)

USD 18.2 million

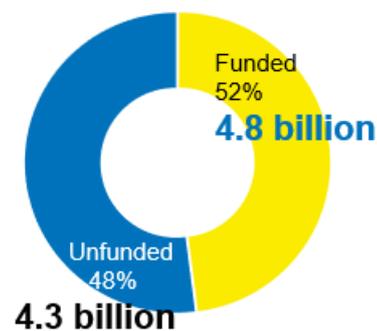
requested for the Italy situation



GLOBAL FUNDING (AS OF 1 OCTOBER)

USD 9.1 billion

current budget



UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Mol Italy (AMIF EMAS) 662 K | Private donors United Kingdom 19 K | Private donors Italy 5.6 K
 (Please note that this does not include additional projected contributions by the Italian Ministry of the Interior)

BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of broadly earmarked contributions that can potentially be used for this operation due to their earmarking to a related situation or theme, or to the region or sub-region.

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France | Morocco | Private donors

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions.

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