

# Malta

February 2021

**Context:** UNHCR is present since 2005, and aims to promote and monitor access to territory, fair and fast asylum procedures, and durable solutions, while supporting Government and partners.

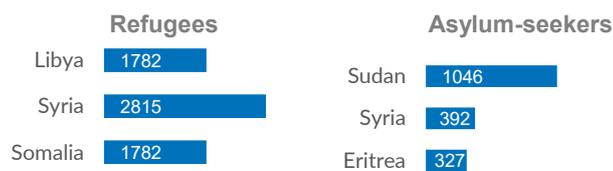
**Addressing Detention:** Over the past six months, UNHCR Malta has been engaging with the authorities to address the de facto unlawful detention of many asylum-seekers, including children, for prolonged periods.

**Livelihood:** UNHCR Malta advocates with the government and partners to promote and improve access to integration opportunities to enable PoCs to rebuild their lives in Malta.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

Refugees	<b>9,173</b>
Asylum-seekers	<b>3,873</b>
Stateless people	<b>11</b>

## TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



Data source: UNHCR 2020 Annual Statistical report and data shared by the International Protection Agency for January 2021. For stateless, [data tabled in Maltese Parliament](#) by Government. **NOTE** that the above figures relate to **processed cases**, not solely sea arrivals.

## COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

**Advocacy:** UNHCR has advocated for non-discriminatory inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees in the national COVID-19 prevention and response plans. UNHCR engages with the Health Authorities to offer support (e.g. translation of information) to facilitate the inclusion of POC, most recently with information on the vaccination.

**Communication with Communities:** UNHCR ensured access to updated health and regulations information, by creating tailored messages, translating them into common languages, and distributing them among communication channels, including Whatsapp broadcasting.

**Health:** UNHCR [donated thousands of hygienic items](#) to reception centres to help safeguard POC against the pandemic. UNHCR also offered interpretation support to the national COVID-19 helpline.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### AHC-P Triggs' visit

from 20-24 July: she met with authorities on further support to asylum procedures and reception. UNHCR supported authorities by providing information on asylum procedures to more than 1,500 asylum-seekers during disembarkations and monitoring visits to reception centres.

### Detention

Advocacy with authorities contributed to reducing the number of detained individuals through transfer of over 1,000 asylum-seekers to open centres and closure of one of the most problematic detention facilities. UNHCR supported authorities in managing detention incidents and advocated for the improvement of reception arrangements in open and closed facilities.

### Special Needs

UNHCR supported authorities with identification of more than 100 asylum-seekers with specific needs for referral to support services during monitoring visits to detention and open reception centres.



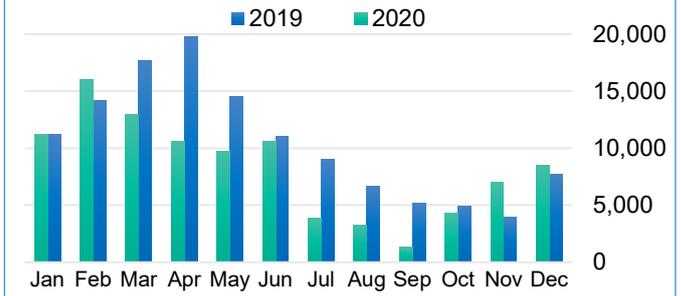
## Women asylum-seekers eased into their full potential

A community theatre organises confidence-boosting courses to prepare refugee women for the job market. Read more [here](#)

## Key Priorities

- **Access to territory:** UNHCR monitors that asylum-seekers have effective access to territory, with a focus on search and rescue operations, and are able to apply for international protection in Malta.
- **Asylum procedures:** UNHCR supports the authorities to develop fair and fast asylum procedures with due access to legal remedy in line with European and international legal standards.
- **Detention monitoring:** UNHCR monitors detention conditions through regular visits and communication with the Detention Services, advocating for using detention as a measure of last resort.
- **Integration:** Basic and in-depth integration support (counselling/drop-in) through implementing partner JRS; partnership with NGO Hal Far Outreach to deliver online English classes to open centre residents; promotion of information-sharing on services and projects through Integration Roundtable, a quarterly meeting of various stakeholders.
- **Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance:** Coaching for Refugee-led Organisations to build capacity; Focus Group discussions with community leaders to assess information needs.
- **Promoting social cohesion:** Providing input to the launch of the National Action Plan Against Racism and Xenophobia (NAPRAX) to develop further the integration and anti-racism frameworks for refugees; collaborating with employment stakeholders for a series of videos on the conditions of work, rights and entitlements; supporting local actors and councils to facilitate refugee integration in communities.
- **Advocacy:** With COVID-19, UNHCR's advocacy efforts focused on ensuring access to territory, sharing good practice for adapting asylum procedures, access to health information and services; improving POC's working conditions; more accessible accommodation; facilitated access to documentation and drafting the second part of the integration strategy.
- **Capacity building:** UNHCR provided training to teachers and employers on raising awareness on POCs and their entitlements. UNHCR supported the Detention Services with capacity building sessions for new detention staff recruits, on international protection. UNHCR staff also delivered lectures in the Refugee Law credit to University students.

## MONTHLY SEA ARRIVALS TO (COUNTRY)



Source and more information: [UNHCR Data Portal](#)

## Working with Partners

- Supporting local NGOs in providing language classes or other training for POC; and collaborating with international organisations (IOM) and Government entities (e.g. on employment); and setting up a roundtable with civil society and host communities to address legislative gaps. UNHCR's partnership with its legal partners, Jesuit Refugee Service and aditus foundation have provided asylum-seekers with legal information and psychosocial support whilst UNHCR's continuous engagement and partnership with refugee led organizations and communities informed UNHCR's activities and communication.
- **External Engagement:** Ensuring that key information on health and legislation is translated and disseminated among POC; highlighting stories of refugees and asylum-seekers in community (integration and journey narratives) with general public amplifying the work of partners through social media and being present with advocacy points in mainstream media.

## Statelessness

- Malta acceded to the 1954 Statelessness Conventions in December 2019 but still does not have a statelessness determination procedure in place. Continuous efforts are conducted with the Ministry for Home Affairs, Security and Law Enforcement in this regard, as a SDP will also improve data collection of stateless persons in Malta.

## UNHCR Presence in Malta

### Staff:

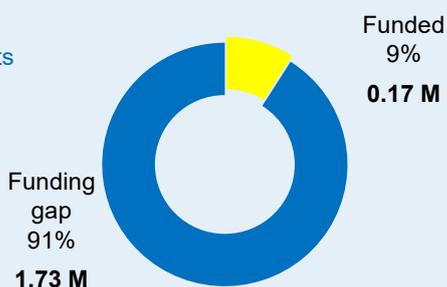
13 National Staff  
2 International Staff

### Offices:

1 Branch Office in Hamrun

## Financial information (February 2021)

Financial Requirements  
**1.8 M**



UNHCR is grateful to the major donors of unearmarked contributions\* to the 2021 global programmes (USD, as of 28 February 2021):

Norway 80 M | Sweden 66.9 M | Netherlands 36.1 M | Denmark 34.6 M | Germany 22.1 M | Switzerland 16.4 M | Ireland 12.5 M | Belgium 11.9 M

\*Unearmarked contributions allow UNHCR for critical flexibility in how best to reach populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Above are donors of USD 10 million or more.