

# Tunisia

March 2018

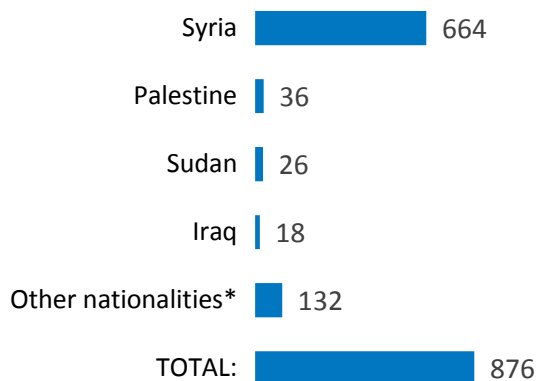
In Tunisia, UNHCR aims to support the **establishment of a national asylum system**, and to **build national capacity** for refugee protection.

UNHCR **identifies, assists and protects** refugees in a context marked by **mixed migration movements**. UNHCR also maintains preparedness efforts in view of a **potential major influx**.

Together with its partners, UNHCR identifies **solutions** to help refugees build a new life through **socio-economic integration, resettlement** and other alternative pathways.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

### Countries of origin

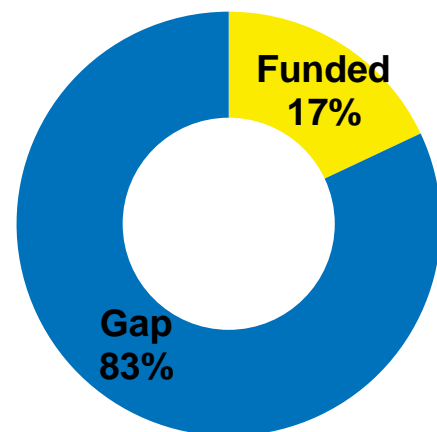


(Figures as of 31 March 2018)

\* Other nationalities (23)

## FUNDING REQUIREMENTS (as of 19 March 2018)

**USD 5.5 M** requested for 2018



## Working with Partners

- UNHCR operates from 2 offices in Tunis (Representation) and Zarzis (Field Office) and ensures presence in Sfax and Medenine.
- UNHCR cooperates closely with **Tunisian authorities**, notably with the Ministries of Justice, Interior, Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs, Women, Family and Childhood, Employment and Health.
- UNHCR Tunisia has formal partnership agreements with four NGOs:
  - The **Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC)**: counselling of new arrivals; provision of core relief items; shelter management; health care coordination and reimbursements; educational support; counselling on social and assistance issues; awareness raising
  - The **Arab Institute for Human Right (AIHR)**: capacity building and advocacy relating to the development of the national protection system and to protection in the mixed migration context; sensitization of civil society; legal assistance
  - The **Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)**: business support; job-seeking support; employment process facilitation (assisting with work and residency permit procedures)
  - The **Italian Council for Refugees (CIR)**: counselling and recreational support in the context of mixed migration
- UNHCR is a member of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Tunisia and contributes to the 2015-2019 United Nations Development Assistance Framework's planning and reporting activities.

# Main Activities

## Protection

- In the absence of a formal national asylum system, UNHCR conducts **registration of asylum seekers and refugee status determination** in Tunisia, to ensure that persons of concern to UNHCR are identified and documented. This prevents arbitrary arrest, detention or *refoulement*. In 2017, UNHCR introduced biometric enrolment to improve quality of the data collected and prevent fraud.
- **The national asylum law has reached its final preparation stage** and was shared with the Prime Minister's Office in June 2016. UNHCR is advocating with the authorities to expedite the adoption process and have the law presented before Parliament.
- UNHCR is training border officials to raise awareness on **asylum and protection in a context of mixed migration**. Tunisian border guards sometimes rescue boats in distress off the Tunisian coast, mostly departing from Libya. Groups of migrants and refugees crossing irregularly the border from Tunisia to Libya as well as from Libya to Tunisia are also regularly intercepted. UNHCR's objective is to ensure that border management takes into consideration the protection needs of refugees and asylum-seekers.



*Training of academics and NGO activists within the framework of the joint capacity building and advocacy program on asylum and mixed migration (27 and 28 March 2018)@AIHR*

## Education

- Refugees and asylum-seekers have access to local schools. To increase school attendance, UNHCR and its partners provide cash grants to help parents purchase books and schools supplies. In some locations, catch-up classes and French language classes are also provided for.

## Health

- Similar to Tunisian nationals, refugees and asylum-seekers have **access to basic public health facilities**. UNHCR, through its partner TRC, reimburses medical expenses and medicines for basic primary health care, chronic diseases, and emergency medical interventions for vulnerable asylum seekers or refugees.

## Community empowerment and Self-reliance

- With its partner ADRA, UNHCR is enhancing refugees' **self-reliance and livelihood opportunities**, through tailored vocational training, income-generating projects and direct employment with private companies. Refugees having signed work contracts and received work permits from authorities are entitled to a temporary residency permit.

## Solutions

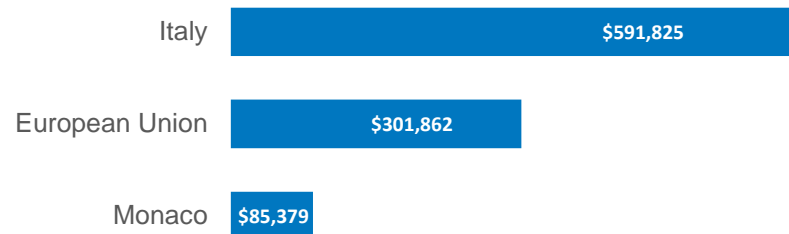
- UNHCR endeavours to achieve **solutions for refugees and other alternative legal pathways**, such as private sponsorship, family reunification and naturalization. Over 2017-2018, UNHCR supported the voluntary repatriation of five refugees, the resettlement of seven families (21 individuals) and the naturalization of seven refugees. In addition, five individuals left Tunisia under a private sponsorship scheme.

## Emergency preparedness

- Since 2014, upon the request of the Tunisian Government, and in close cooperation with the government, IOM and partners, UNHCR has been leading the coordination of the **inter-agency preparedness efforts** in case of a mass influx from Libya. In 2017, the revised and finalized plan was translated into Arabic and French and endorsed by the Tunisian authorities.

## External / Donors Relations

Thanks to the critical support provided by donors to this operation in 2018 for a total of USD 979,066



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

Sweden (98 M) | Norway (43 M) | Netherlands (39 M) | United Kingdom (32 M) | Denmark (25 M) | Australia (19 M) | Switzerland (15 M)

### Thanks to other donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2018

Bosnia and Herzegovina | Canada | China | Estonia | Finland | Indonesia | Kuwait | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Serbia | Singapore | Sri Lanka | Thailand | Turkey | UN Peacebuilding Fund | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private Donors

### CONTACTS

Selma Fazzani, Associate Reporting Officer, [fazzani@unhcr.org](mailto:fazzani@unhcr.org)