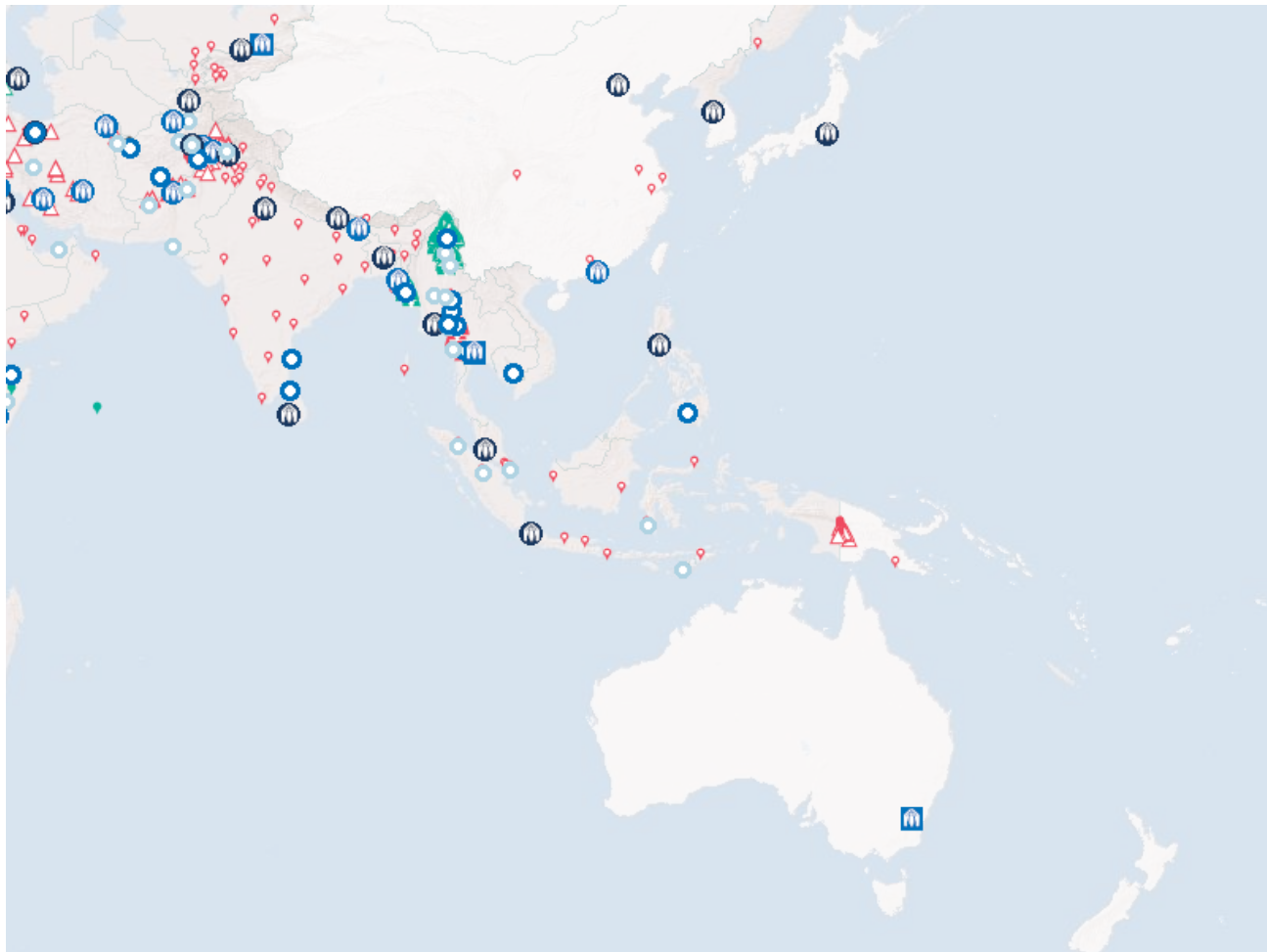
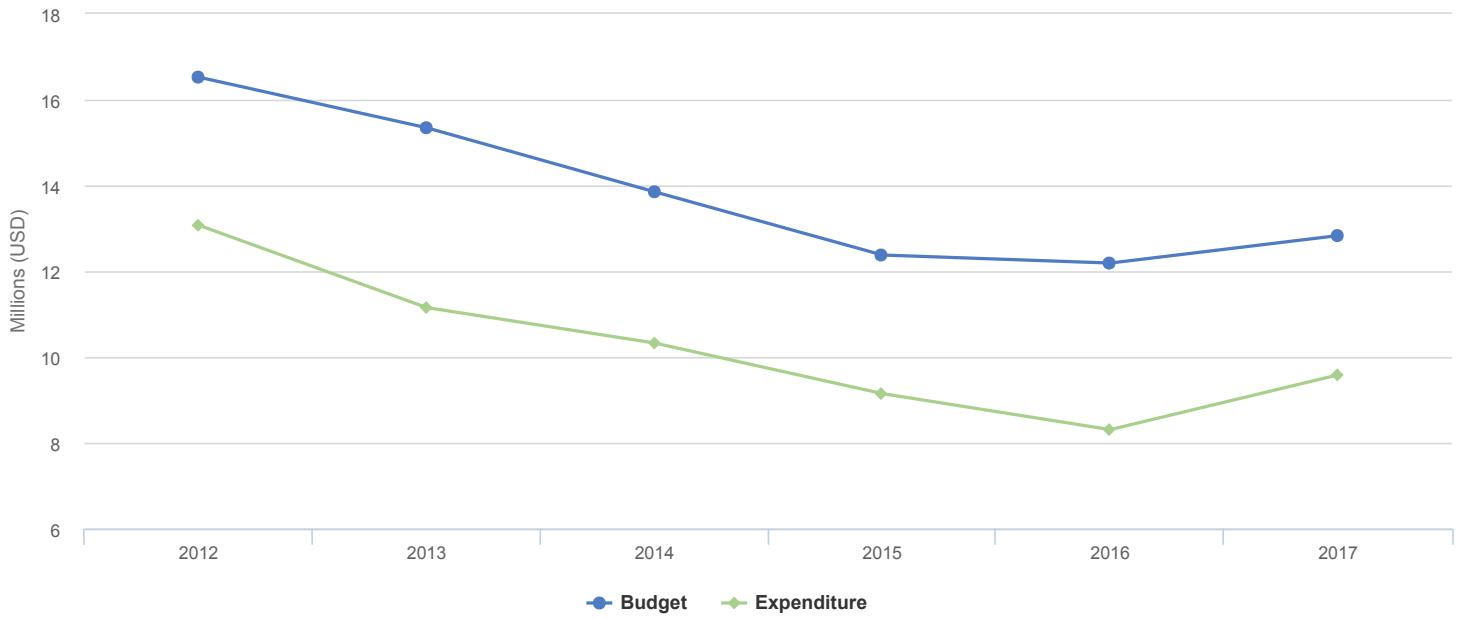


Subregion: East Asia and the Pacific

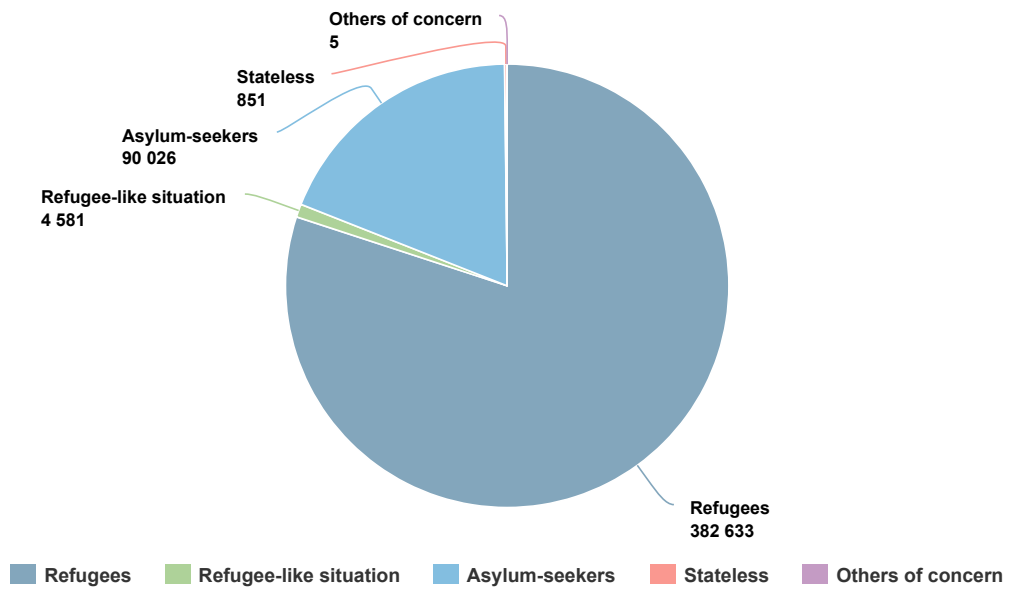
| Australia | China (including Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions) | Japan | New Zealand | Pacific Island States | Papua New Guinea | Republic of Korea |



Budgets and Expenditure in Subregion East Asia and the Pacific



People of Concern - 2017



Response in 2017

In 2017, a total of 12,200 protection visa applications were lodged in **Australia**; the majority of applicants originated from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan. No asylum-seekers arrived to Australia by sea due to interceptions and push-backs. As of 31 December 2017, there were some 2,100 people of concern on Manus Island and Nauru. **New Zealand** received some 350 new asylum applications during 2017, nearly double that of 2016. Excluding people under transfer arrangements between Australia, **Papua New Guinea** and Nauru, the number of people of concern in the **Pacific Island** countries was 25 people which repeats the nearly 25 per cent decrease from 2016.

The situation of the 2,100 refugees and asylum-seekers whom Australia transferred to Papua New Guinea and Nauru, starting in 2013, remained precarious. Through regular monitoring missions, UNHCR documented the significant and continuing deterioration in the well-being of the men, women and children subjected to off-shore processing.

UNHCR also supported implementation of the Bilateral Relocation Agreement between Australia and the United States of America, a one-time opportunity to achieve solutions for refugees in Nauru and Papua New Guinea. UNHCR's engagement focused on achieving the best outcome for refugees, namely voluntary relocation to the United States.

Pacific Island Countries with existing refugee and statelessness related legislation were engaged in initiatives to further develop response and protection. Several states were supported in activities related to development of national policy or legislation. Other countries, have been engaged in policy and thematic discussions in capacity building activities and through regional fora, primarily with the Pacific Immigration Directors Conference (PIDC) and the UNHCR Pacific Protection Learning Programme (PLP).

China is a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, but is yet to enact formal legislative or administrative provisions governing asylum. In the absence of a national legal framework, UNHCR conducts refugee status determination (RSD) and assists the government by seeking durable solutions for refugees. In 2017, UNHCR focused its efforts on advocating for a legislative framework on asylum and statelessness and undertook capacity building activities with relevant government counterparts.

In **Japan**, the number of asylum-seekers continued to rise in 2017, reaching over 19,000, an increase of 80 per cent as compared to the previous year. This has placed significant stress on the existing RSD system. With the 20 refugees recognized in 2017, the total number of recognized refugees comes to approximately 700 since the asylum regime was introduced in 1982. In 2017, 45 individuals were granted special permission to stay on humanitarian grounds, which brings the total figure of individuals with humanitarian status to 2,500.

Japan received 29 Myanmar refugees from Malaysia as part of the formal resettlement programme in 2017. Through JICA's scholarship programme, Japanese Initiative for the future of Syrian Refugees (JISR), the first cohort of 32 Syrian refugees (19 students, 5 spouses, and 8 children) arrived in Japan from Jordan and Lebanon in August 2017 to start their studies. UNHCR provided policy and technical support to JICA, including a session during the initial orientation programme for refugees upon their arrival in Japan.

In 2017, UNHCR maintained a constructive dialogue with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) through regular and high-level bilateral meetings. The partnership in the area of capacity building was further enhanced with a number of new initiatives, including the launch of Professional Day and study sessions for the officials involved in the refugee status determination (RSD), the first training at the Nagoya Immigration Bureau, and a thematic session on the notion of Internal Flight Alternatives. UNHCR also provided on-the-job training for the MoJ officials on County of Origin Information. UNHCR's active participation in the Monitoring Committee's discussion led to publication of its first report, with significant inputs from UNHCR, in order to enhance the quality of RSD. The first training session for judges initiated a discussion with the Supreme Court for further cooperation in capacity building activities.

Enhancing partnership with various stakeholders remained a priority for UNHCR, including the government authorities, parliamentarians, academics, other UN agencies and NGOs, community organisations, student groups, and the private sector. The office continued to foster relationships with its main private sector partner, Japan for UNHCR (J4U), in view of ensuring broader support for UNHCR throughout the country.

2017 Voluntary Contributions to East Asia and the Pacific | USD

Earmarking / Donor	Pillar 1 Refugee programme	All pillars	Total
East Asia and the Pacific overall			
United States of America	0	9,145,000	9,145,000
<i>East Asia and the Pacific overall subtotal</i>	0	9,145,000	9,145,000
Australia Regional Office			
Australia	385,470	0	385,470
<i>Australia Regional Office subtotal</i>	385,470	0	385,470
China Regional Office			
China	0	17,942	17,942
<i>China Regional Office subtotal</i>	0	17,942	17,942
Japan			
Private donors in Japan	25,068	0	25,068
<i>Japan subtotal</i>	25,068	0	25,068
Total	410,538	9,162,942	9,573,480

Note: