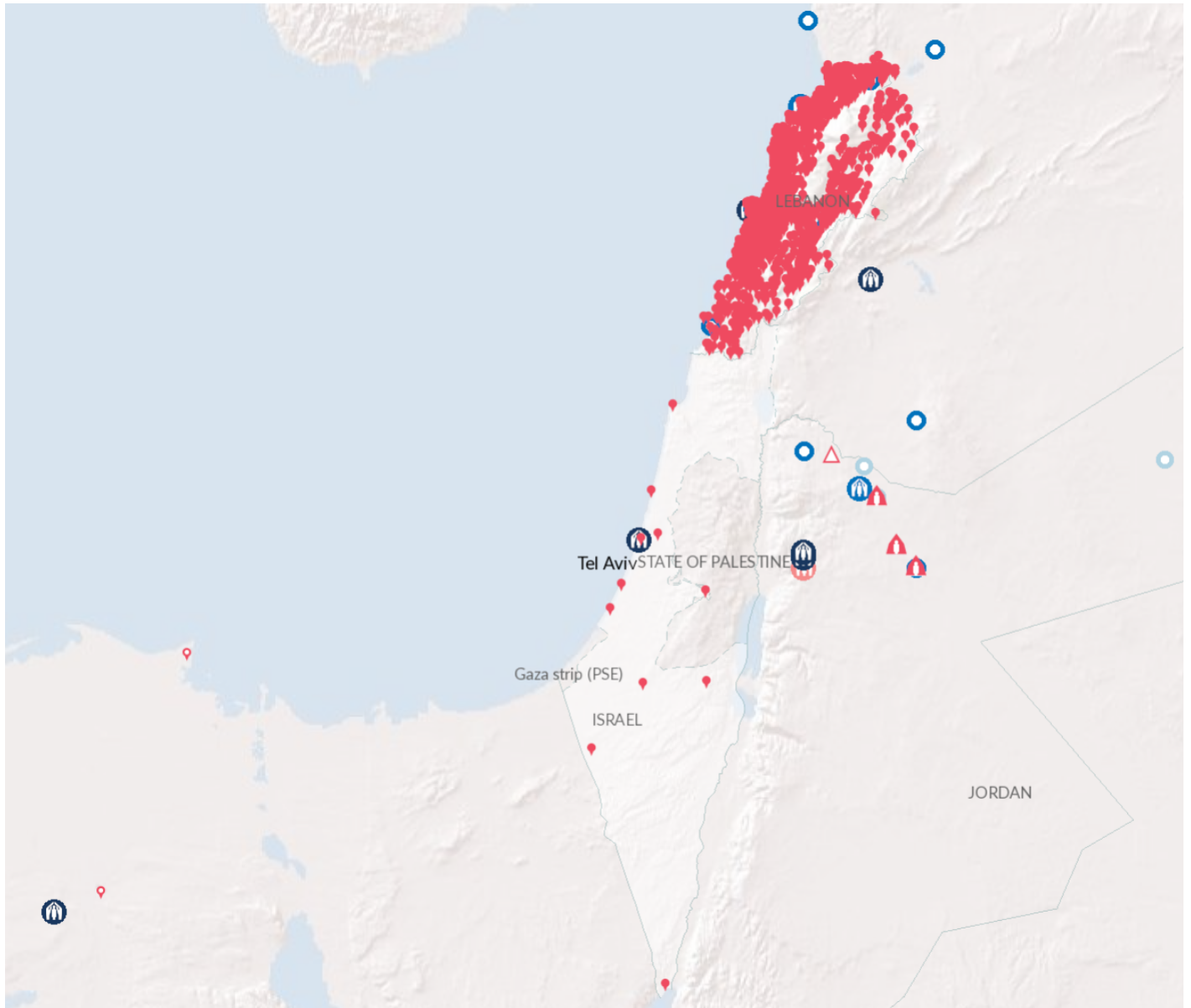


Operation: Israel

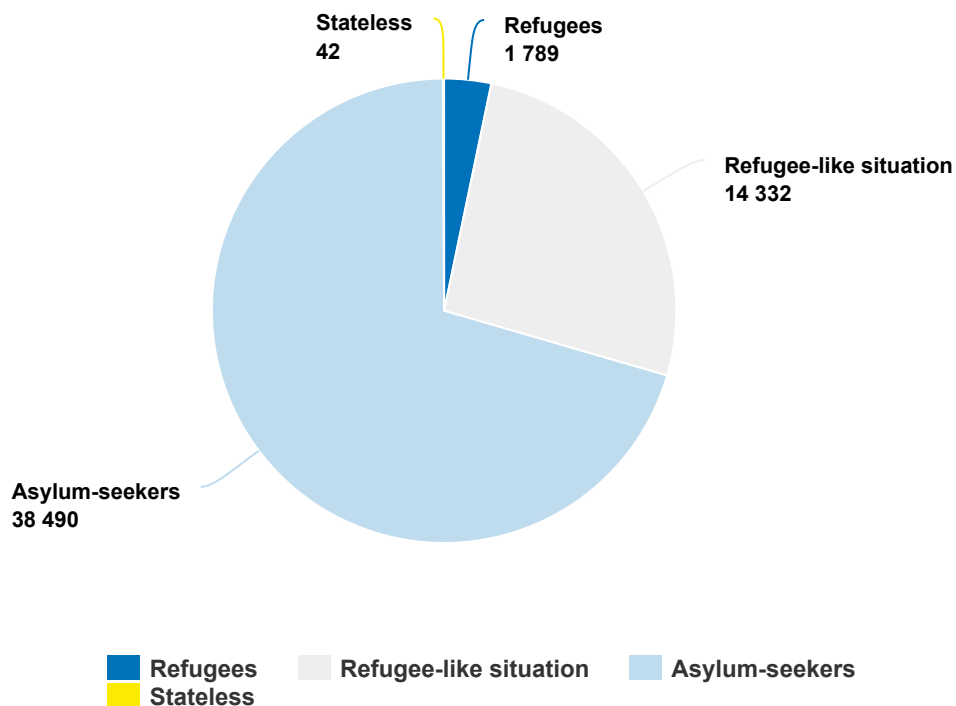


The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

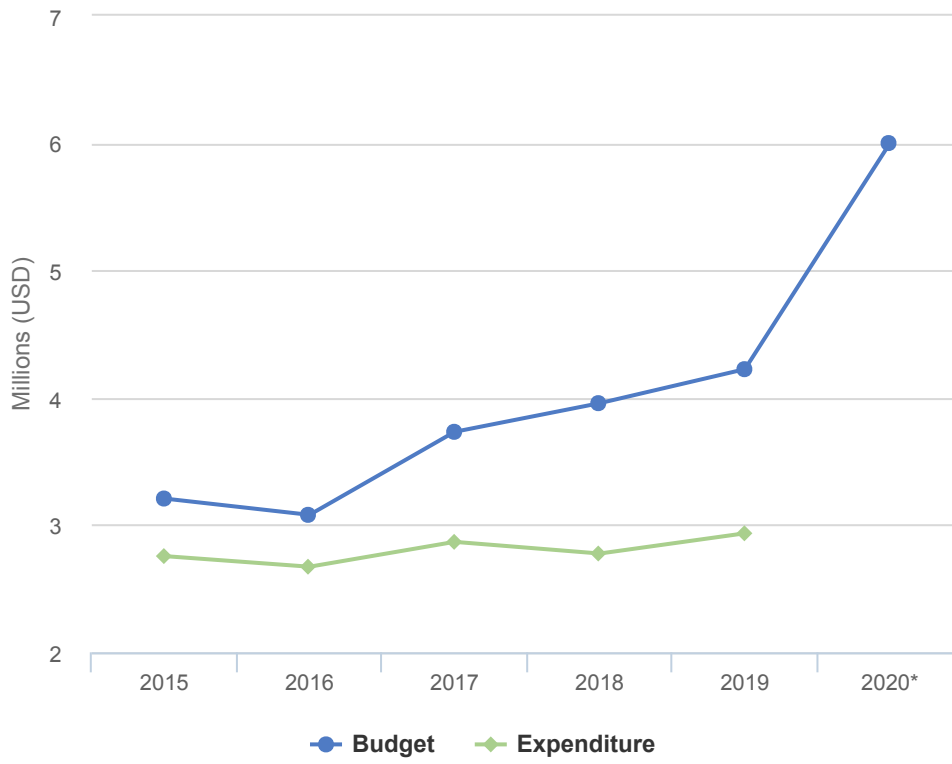
People of Concern

INCREASE IN
1 % 2019

2019	54,653
2018	54,181
2017	55,250



Budgets and Expenditure for Israel



Operational context

The protection environment in Israel in 2019 remained challenging, with restrictive policies and practices affecting asylum-seekers' access to gainful employment, public health services, social assistance and the grant of refugee status.

UNHCR's advocacy work during the reporting period focused on efforts to revive the "Framework of common understanding" signed between UNHCR and the Government of Israel in April 2018, which had sought to find a durable solution for some 30,000 Eritrean and Sudanese asylum-seekers who had faced legal and social uncertainty in Israel for over a decade. The agreement was subsequently cancelled by the Government a day following its signature, after it was signed. Meanwhile, living conditions for asylum-seekers deteriorated even further following the adoption of legislation requiring employers to withhold 20% of net salaries until departure from Israel. The loss of one-fifth of their already limited income considerably impacted asylum-seekers' ability to afford basic necessities such as food, accommodation, and health insurance.

In a positive development, "conditional release" visas issued to Eritrean asylum-seekers were extended up to a six-month period, and up to one year for Sudanese nationals, allowing the holder to pursue limited employment.

Population trends

As of 31 December 2019, there were over 50,000 people of concern to UNHCR (not including children born in Israel, who numbered over 7,600). The majority were Eritreans and Sudanese (close to 30,000). No new arrivals of Eritreans or Sudanese were recorded since May 2016. Instead, a reverse trend was observed: since 2014, nearly one-third of Eritreans and Sudanese had left Israel.

Achievements

- UNHCR provided technical support to improve the national refugee status determination system - a two-month expert study and field mission by an external consultant resulted in a set of recommendations to the Government.
- UNHCR expanded its community outreach activities, participatory needs assessments and new initiatives for community-based protection
- UNHCR planned and implemented several activities for the prevention of and response to SGBV through multi-stakeholder engagement (including awareness-raising, self-defense training, and safe accommodation).

Unmet needs

- Significant gaps remained between the basic needs of people of concern in Israel and the resources available from the Government, UNHCR and refugee-assisting NGOs.
 - The number of extremely vulnerable refugees in need of urgent resettlement greatly exceeded available places.
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