



| OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS |

- UNHCR worked to preserve asylum space in Europe, inter alia through border-monitoring activities, instituting a new presence in north-western France and counselling in reception facilities in Italy and Greece.
- Targeted interventions with asylum authorities as well as national and regional courts helped UNHCR promote respect for international protection standards.
- UNHCR implemented two major projects on asylum processes, namely the Asylum System Quality Assurance and Evaluation Mechanism Project and the Asylum Procedures Directive Study. In addition, UNHCR-sponsored national-level Quality Initiatives improved the quality of asylum decisions in several countries.
- Advocacy for resettlement resulted in a number of new initiatives. The Emergency Transit Centre in Romania, operated with national authorities and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and a second facility in the Slovak Republic, facilitated the resettlement of vulnerable refugees.
- Nearly 6,500 refugees were resettled from Europe, mostly from Turkey. European States accepted nearly 7,000 people for resettlement.
- Progress was made on local integration in Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, resulting in better housing, education, vocational training and national social protection schemes for people of concern. An integration evaluation tool was developed to enable the monitoring of refugee integration.
- Thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Eastern Europe, including in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, the Russian Federation and Serbia, received legal assistance. Very vulnerable persons were provided with material assistance. Housing and livelihoods support as well as self-reliance programmes were also implemented.
- A reinvigorated effort was undertaken to close the chapter on displacement originating from conflicts in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. UNHCR supported regional dialogue to resolve outstanding issues and continued to help persons of concern find decent living conditions. As a result, 13 collective centres were closed in Serbia alone.
- To prevent and reduce statelessness, UNHCR advocated for States' accession to the Conventions on statelessness. In the western Balkans and Eastern Europe, UNHCR helped thousands of people to obtain civil documents and complete their civil registration, thus enabling them to exercise their rights.

EUROPE

A woman with dark hair in braids, wearing a red zip-up hoodie, is sitting on a bed covered with a dark brown blanket. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful or concerned expression. The room has white walls decorated with silver tinsel garlands and small religious pictures, including a crucifix and a nativity scene. The overall atmosphere is one of quiet reflection during the Christmas season.

As Christmas approached, asylum-seekers decorated their accommodations at the Ta'Kandja Detention Centre, Malta.

| Working environment |

UNHCR works in a total of 48 European countries and territories in contexts involving mature and developing asylum systems, return and reintegration, protracted refugee situations, internal displacement and statelessness. Nearly 80 per cent of asylum applications in the industrialized world are lodged in Europe, representing more than 291,000 people in 2009. In many countries, political attention was focused on the control of irregular migration, making refugee protection particularly challenging.

Asylum claims in Central Europe increased to nearly 20,000, while the number of asylum-seekers in the Baltic States remained low. In Turkey, a key entry point to Europe, UNHCR received applications from more than 7,800 persons. In South-Eastern Europe the number of applications, although low, increased slightly, whereas in Eastern Europe, 7,500 persons sought asylum, a decrease of 8 per cent from 2008.

In Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe in particular, UNHCR was concerned about low refugee recognition rates and the increasing use of complementary forms of protection, rather than Convention status.

In mid-2009, the Office of the Director of the Bureau for Europe moved to Brussels and merged with the former Liaison Office to the European Union, while the Deputy Director and staff covering Eastern and South-Eastern Europe remained in Geneva. This new organizational arrangement proved to be cost effective but required adjustments to the Bureau's work practices.

| Achievements and impact |

UNHCR's priorities in Europe for 2009 included:

- Preserving asylum space in the broader migration context.
- Ensuring standards of protection in compliance with international norms.
- Facilitating durable solutions; particularly by promoting greater European engagement in refugee resettlement.
- Preventing and reducing statelessness.
- Working with partners to achieve these goals.

• *Preserving asylum space*

Most European countries faced challenges related to mixed migration. UNHCR aimed to promote a protection-sensitive approach to migration management by monitoring borders, training border guards and cooperating with the EU borders agency, Frontex. Formal border-monitoring agreements involving governmental and in some cases

non-governmental partners were implemented in Belarus, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovenia and Ukraine.

• *Ensuring standards of protection*

UNHCR advised States in the drafting of legislation and consolidation of institutional frameworks on asylum. New laws or by-laws on which UNHCR was consulted were adopted inter alia in Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Croatia, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Spain and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (TFYROM). In Greece, UNHCR worked with governmental and non-governmental partners on the development of new legislation and asylum procedures.

The Asylum Quality Assurance and Evaluation Mechanism (ASQAEM) was completed in eight Western and Central European countries to contribute to the development of a Common European Asylum System, support fair and efficient procedures and establish permanent quality assurance mechanisms in national asylum systems.

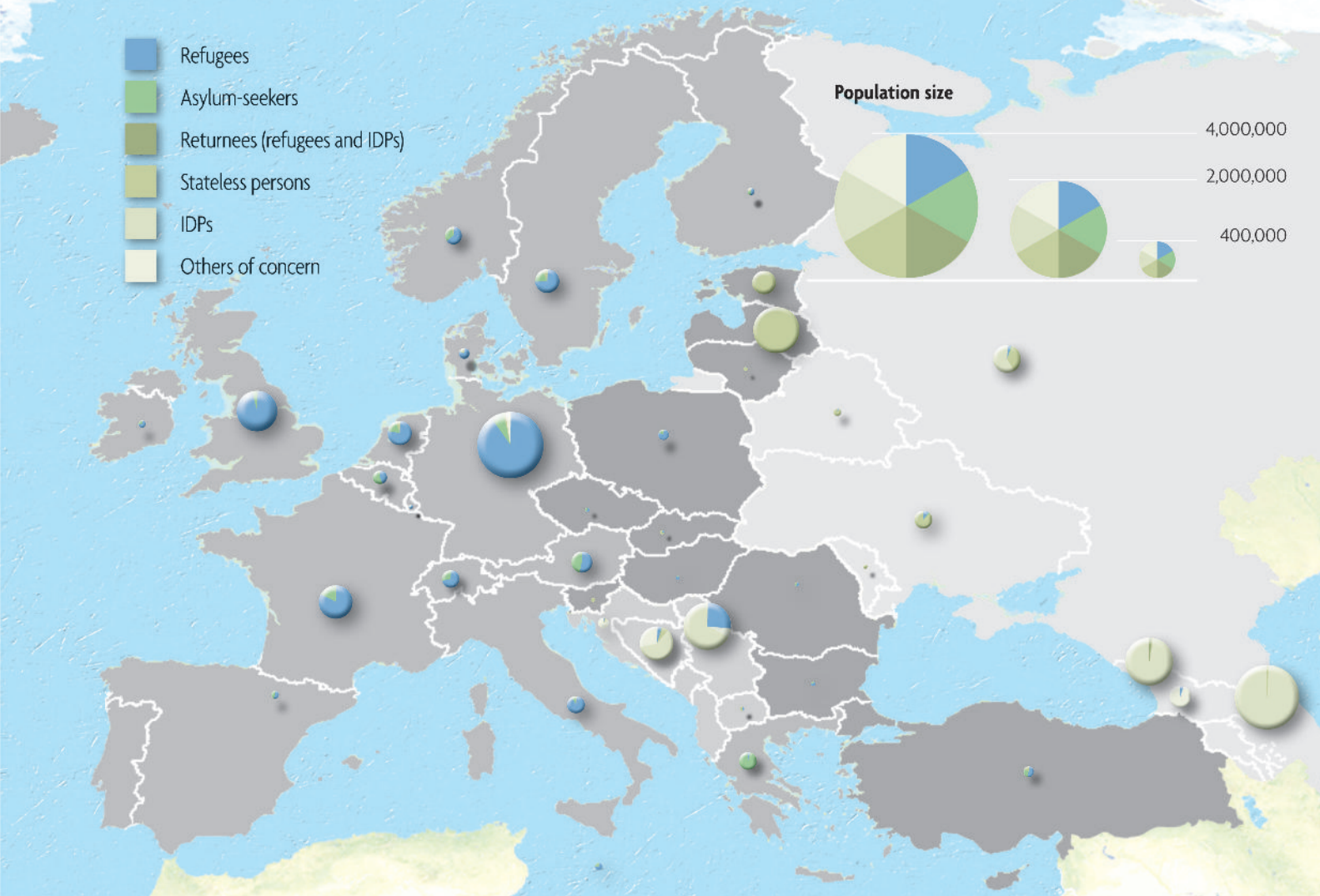
Judicial engagement was an important part of the strategy across Europe. UNHCR submitted its views to national courts in numerous cases, seeking to ensure respect for principles of international refugee law. The Office intervened as third party before the European Court of Human Rights on several occasions, including at the request of the Court, and issued statements relating to requests for preliminary rulings pending before the European Court of Justice. Meetings with judges were organized and cooperation with the International Association of Refugee Law judges pursued.

Particular attention was devoted to the situation of unaccompanied and separated children applying for asylum in Europe. More than 15,000 such children, of whom 40 per cent were Afghans, applied for asylum in 27 countries. UNHCR worked to reinforce cooperation in Europe with key child protection partners, both from the UN family and the NGO world.

In a number of countries, UNHCR led the development of standard operating procedures on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) to assist governmental and non-governmental partners engaged with asylum-seekers, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). A regional project to prevent and respond to SGBV among displaced populations in the southern Caucasus was successfully completed.

• *Facilitating durable solutions*

An integration evaluation tool was developed in cooperation with the Migration Policy Group to



provide governments with an instrument to assess their frameworks for integrating refugees.

Listening to the voices of refugees remained a priority. UNHCR cooperated with governmental and non-governmental bodies on participatory assessments with asylum-seekers, refugees and IDPs to fulfil its commitment to incorporate age, gender and diversity considerations into all its work. The Office recognizes the need to become more involved in issues related to local integration.

UNHCR promoted greater engagement by European countries and by the European Union in refugee resettlement. In 2009, more than 8,180 refugees were resettled in Europe with UNHCR's assistance. Of these, 25 per cent were Iraqis resettled in Germany under a special initiative. By the year's end, 12 European countries had annual resettlement programmes. Among them were the Czech Republic and Romania, which had their first resettlement intakes in 2009. In Turkey, UNHCR conducted refugee status determination and sought resettlement for refugees in the absence of locally available durable solutions. Some 6,000 refugees were resettled from Turkey in 2009.

The Office facilitated subregional dialogue and supported Serbia's plan to convene a Regional Ministerial Conference on Durable Solutions in early 2010. UNHCR

advocated for the integration of those displaced persons who were unable or unwilling to return home. In this regard, it welcomed the adoption by Montenegro and TFYROM of National Action Plans that open prospects for the sustainable integration of populations of concern.

UNHCR continued to be engaged in situations of internal displacement in a number of Eastern European countries. The Georgian Government made noteworthy progress towards finding solutions for IDPs. Progress was also made in the Russian Federation, although security incidents continued to limit the humanitarian space and have an impact upon return conditions.

○ *Preventing statelessness*

Advocacy for accession to the Statelessness Conventions continued. In 2009, Hungary acceded to and Liechtenstein ratified the 1961 Convention on the reduction of statelessness. In the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe, UNHCR helped thousands of people to obtain civil documents and complete civil registration.

○ *Working with partners*

UNHCR in Eastern Europe redoubled efforts to provide legal counseling to asylum-seekers, refugees, IDPs and stateless people. More than 50,000 legal consultations were provided in Eastern Europe.

Public information campaigns contributed to a better understanding among the general European public of the situation of refugees and the work of UNHCR, in spite of often negative public attitudes to foreigners. An UNHCR-IOM educational kit on asylum and migration, “Not Just Numbers”, was launched mid-year.

In the European Union, UNHCR supported efforts to develop a fair and effective Common European Asylum System. Cooperation with the Council of Europe (COE), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and other intergovernmental organizations, such as IOM, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development and the Inter-governmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees, also provided opportunities to address important issues.

Many UNHCR offices in Europe worked to raise funds. Public and private contributions from European sources

accounted for more than 43 per cent of UNHCR’s funding in 2009. The European Commission was again UNHCR’s second-largest donor. Private-sector contributions to UNHCR from European sources totalled more than USD 21 million.

| Constraints |

Europe is characterized by asylum systems that are at very different levels of development. The political priority accorded to the control of irregular migration and security issues is often at odds with the need to keep borders open to persons seeking protection. In the countries of Western Europe, where the majority of asylum applications are concentrated, harmonization of policies and practices remains high on the political agenda, along with the costs of managing large and complex asylum systems. In Eastern Europe, frozen conflicts continued to hinder the achievement of durable solutions. ■

Budget and expenditure in Europe (USD)						
Country	Final budget			Expenditure		
	Annual budget	Supplementary budgets	Total	Annual budget	Supplementary budgets	Total
Eastern Europe						
Armenia	1,821,214	0	1,821,214	1,728,256	0	1,728,256
Azerbaijan	4,186,049	0	4,186,049	4,163,712	0	4,163,712
Belarus	1,718,191	0	1,718,191	1,445,622	0	1,445,622
Georgia	34,346,971	28,040,248	62,387,219	16,650,810	17,698,822	34,349,632
Republic of Moldova	1,497,631	29,449	1,527,080	1,166,952	29,449	1,196,401
Russian Federation	12,722,492	124,127	12,846,619	11,296,188	124,127	11,420,315
Ukraine	4,399,445	0	4,399,445	3,449,050	0	3,449,050
Regional activities ¹	836,263	0	836,263	543,060	0	543,060
Subtotal	61,528,256	28,193,824	89,722,080	40,443,649	17,852,398	58,296,047
South-Eastern Europe						
Albania	635,284	0	635,284	599,139	0	599,139
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6,103,311	0	6,103,311	5,847,831	0	5,847,831
Croatia	3,636,180	488,155	4,124,335	3,216,127	199,868	3,415,995
Montenegro	2,564,283	0	2,564,283	2,457,706	0	2,457,706
Serbia	24,228,908	6,860,900	31,089,808	21,528,848	1,667,887	23,196,735
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	3,047,472	0	3,047,472	2,734,776	0	2,734,776
Subtotal	40,215,438	7,349,055	47,564,493	36,384,427	1,867,755	38,252,182
Central Europe and the Baltic States						
Bulgaria	826,891	0	826,891	797,122	0	797,122
Cyprus	922,162	0	922,162	824,541	0	824,541
Czech Republic	445,914	0	445,914	370,292	0	370,292
Hungary	3,280,455	0	3,280,455	3,142,087	0	3,142,087
Poland	712,761	0	712,761	564,926	0	564,926
Romania	1,171,272	0	1,171,272	988,980	0	988,980
Slovakia	791,678	99,000	890,678	569,273	2,951	572,223
Slovenia	170,000	0	170,000	63,894	0	63,894
Turkey	6,449,699	1,695,650	8,145,349	5,774,096	1,449,963	7,224,059
Regional activities ²	100,000	0	100,000	56,784	0	56,784
Subtotal	14,870,832	1,794,650	16,665,482	13,151,995	1,452,914	14,604,909
Western Europe						
Austria	1,009,436	0	1,009,436	948,905	0	948,905
Belgium	6,376,737	0	6,376,737	5,913,408	0	5,913,408
France	3,085,636	0	3,085,636	2,866,814	0	2,866,814

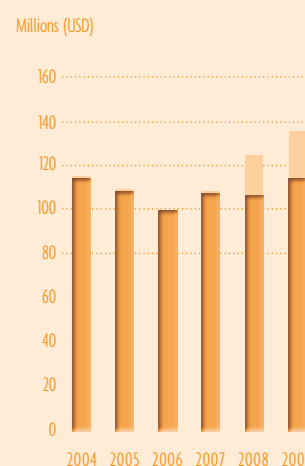
The 17 per cent increase in Europe's budget between 2008 and 2009 mainly reflects enhanced resources for Georgia and Serbia.

Funding for the staff-intensive operation in Turkey remained a challenge. By the end of 2009 a backlog of nearly 6,000 persons awaiting decisions by UNHCR on their asylum applications had accumulated.

The budget for Western and Central Europe, including the Baltic countries, was less than a quarter of the overall budget for Europe and mainly reflected staff costs. Activities in this subregion mainly relate to UNHCR's supervisory responsibility under its Statute and Article 35 of the 1951 Convention. This requires staff with the legal qualifications to work in the different national systems. UNHCR seeks to find a balance between the funding of this type of protection work and the more traditional operational activities in other parts of the region.

Expenditure in Europe 2004-2009

■ Annual budget
■ Supplementary budget



Country	Final budget			Expenditure		
	Annual budget	Supplementary budgets	Total	Annual budget	Supplementary budgets	Total
Germany	2,191,686	0	2,191,686	2,012,629	0	2,012,629
Greece	1,281,040	0	1,281,040	1,225,920	0	1,225,920
Ireland	856,002	0	856,002	625,593	0	625,593
Italy	5,346,181	0	5,346,181	4,438,454	0	4,438,454
Malta	373,037	0	373,037	308,466	0	308,466
Portugal	91,421	0	91,421	90,313	0	90,313
Spain	1,595,180	0	1,595,180	1,309,426	0	1,309,426
Sweden	1,685,333	0	1,685,333	1,515,046	0	1,515,046
Switzerland	741,010	0	741,010	679,563	0	679,563
United Kingdom	1,639,262	0	1,639,262	1,448,309	0	1,448,309
Subtotal	26,271,961	0	26,271,961	23,382,846	0	23,382,846
Total	142,886,487	37,337,529	180,224,016	113,362,917	21,173,067	134,535,984

Note: Excludes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions against supplementary programmes and the "New or additional activities-mandate-related" (NAM) reserve.

¹ Includes activities in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine.

² Includes promotion of refugee law.

Voluntary contributions to Europe (USD)

Donor	Regional funding	Annual Budget ¹	Supplementary Budgets	Total
Austria		65,309		65,309
Belgium		93,539		93,539
Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)			935,000	935,000
Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB)		474,253		474,253
Cyprus		14,447		14,447
Deutsche Stiftung für UNO (Germany)		30,729		30,729
Divac Foundation (Serbia)		219,924		219,924
España con ACNUR (Spain)		35,000		35,000
European Commission		15,230,503	6,839,907	22,070,409
Finland			210,090	210,090
France		541,800		541,800
Germany		572,246		572,246
Greece		212,765	18,600	231,365
HQ Online Donations (Switzerland)			59	59
Hungary		6,588		6,588
Ireland		174,368		174,368
Italy		2,197,086		2,197,086
Japan	206,612	640,496		847,107
Japan Association for UNHCR			1,656	1,656
Malta		66,429		66,429
Netherlands		8,254		8,254
Private donors in Cyprus		10,513		10,513
Private donors in Italy		27,579		27,579
Private donors in Sweden			2,395	2,395
Private donors in Turkey		7,402		7,402
Romania		70,323	483,966	554,290
Spain		666,240		666,240
Statoil Azerbaijan		65,000		65,000
Sweden		5,445,084		5,445,084
Switzerland		1,444,253	403,854	1,848,107
The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ (Japan)			11,282	11,282
UN Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund		439,216		439,216
UN Trust Fund for Human Security		979,269		979,269
UNIQLO Co., Ltd (Japan)			15,292	15,292
United Kingdom		555,896		555,896
United States of America	50,000	32,342,786	9,317,146	41,709,932
USA for UNHCR		60,450		60,450
World Food Programme (WFP)		100,000		100,000
Total	256,612	62,797,747	18,239,247	81,293,606

¹ Includes earmarking at the subregional, country, thematic and sector levels.

Note: Contributions shown exclude indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions against supplementary programmes and the "New or additional activities - mandate related" (NAM) Reserve.