

# Europe

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Eastern Europe

South-Eastern Europe

Central Europe and  
the Baltic States

Western Europe



# Europe

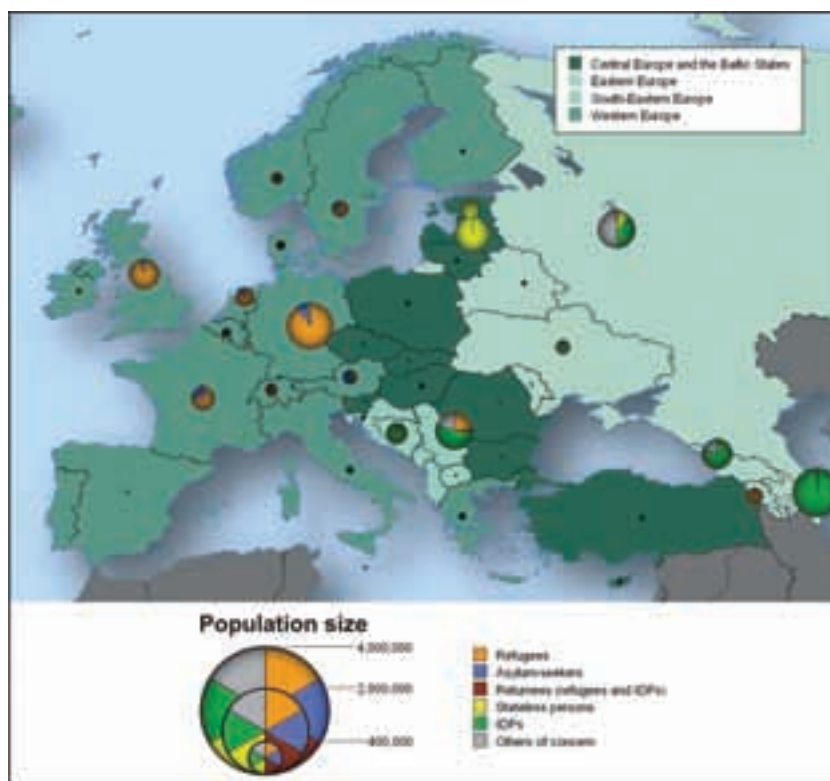
## Working environment

UNHCR's operations in Europe, covering 48 countries, respond to a wide variety of challenges including mixed migration flows, internal displacement, and the search for durable solutions. These occur within the context of ever-tightening border controls, an increase in administrative detention - particularly of children seeking asylum, and rising discourse on xenophobia and integration of foreigners in societies. In the European public debate, UNHCR seeks to uphold internationally respected norms and principles while assisting governments to find commonalities between State interests and those of people of concern to UNHCR.

The number of irregular arrivals on the Mediterranean shores has decreased, but the dangers such as drowning and arrest have increased. UNHCR actively supports the Governments involved (Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain) to ensure that national authorities respond to the needs of persons on unseaworthy ships and that those who may be in need of international protection have access to asylum procedures. However, more people are arriving by land and air borders. UNHCR's 10-Point Plan of Action for addressing the protection aspects of mixed migratory movements is implemented in southern European countries and on the eastern and south-eastern land borders of the European Union.

Even though the numbers have decreased, South- Eastern Europe continues to host the largest number of refugees and internally-displaced persons (IDPs) in Europe. Possibilities for durable solutions are conditioned by the uncertainty over the status of the province of Kosovo within the Republic of Serbia. UNHCR has reinforced its activities for people displaced from and within Kosovo, with targeted efforts to address the situation of the Roma, Ashkalia and Egyptians, particularly to reduce and prevent their risk of statelessness.

The deteriorating security situation in the northern Caucasus in the Russian Federation has led to the closure of the Ingushetia Office and has hampered the delivery of assistance for more than 15,000 displaced people from Chechnya. UNHCR's presence in the region is limited to Vladikavkaz, from where short missions to Ingushetia and Chechnya are organized, security permitting. In Georgia, work is continuing on the follow-up activities linked to the February 2007 National IDP Strategy.



The number of asylum-seekers in Turkey has nearly doubled compared to 2006, some 40 per cent of them from Iraq. Following enhanced registration and assessment procedures, more than 1,800 Iraqi refugees were submitted for resettlement to the United States. UNHCR hopes that asylum and protection matters will be high on the Turkish political agenda as there is a need to establish adequate mechanisms to deal in a protection-sensitive manner with people arriving irregularly in Turkey.

As UNHCR seeks to reinforce support to regional structures, regional offices will be further consolidated in Western and Central Europe as of 2008. In addition, coordination of operations in the Western Balkans and Southern Caucasus will be further strengthened.

## Strategic objectives

Keeping in mind the Office's Global Strategic Objectives, the Bureau for Europe has envisaged the following four overarching priority areas:

- **Preserving space for asylum in the broader migration context**
  - **Border monitoring / access to territory and asylum procedures.** Along the eastern and Mediterranean borders of the European Union Member States, UNHCR will invest further efforts in monitoring

States' practices, seeking to ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers are granted access both to territory and to asylum procedures. Reception facilities in particular require much attention.

- **Detention.** UNHCR is becoming increasingly concerned about the detention of asylum-seekers by a number of States. Through monitoring, advocacy, national and legal interventions, UNHCR will strive to address this issue.
- **Ensuring standards of protection**
  - **Quality decision making.** A cornerstone of the work in Europe will be in maintaining and improving credible and fair asylum systems in a situation where the public debate is centered on the migration and security aspects, and in many countries, influenced by negative public perceptions towards foreigners. Recognizing the importance of the development of a common asylum system in the European Union, key priorities will focus on supporting Member States to work actively with all partners in improving the quality of decisions. UNHCR will also focus on practical cooperation measures to enhance the capacity for fair and effective decision making.
  - **Statelessness.** The ExCom Conclusion adopted in October 2006 on the identification, prevention and reduction of statelessness and protection of stateless persons, provides a clear platform and opportunity to enhance UNHCR's activities to address statelessness in Europe, in partnership with other UN agencies, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). UNHCR will prioritize activities to address the remaining consequences of the status of individuals resulting from the dissolution of the Soviet Union and of the former Yugoslavia through advocacy efforts in cooperation with key partners such as the Council of Europe, and, where appropriate, by promoting citizenship campaigns enabling stateless people to acquire citizenship.
- **Durable solutions**
  - **Voluntary return, sustainable local integration and resettlement opportunities.** The identification and realization of durable solutions for refugees, including voluntary return and resettlement - where and when possible - is a challenge. UNHCR seeks to maintain and expand resettlement possibilities in Western European traditional resettlement countries, as well as to identify new resettlement opportunities in Central and Eastern Europe, including the Baltic States.
  - UNHCR aims to promote solutions for IDPs in Europe, both through direct operational responses and through public

outreach and advocacy. The identification of sustainable solutions for IDPs will also reinforce efforts to eliminate social, legal and economic discrimination.

- **Supporting UNHCR's work through partnerships**
  - Major platforms for collaboration include the Council of Europe (including the European Court of Human Rights); the Organization for Security and Cooperation for Europe; the International Organization for Migration; the Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement and NGOs. Regional Representations play a key role in the UNHCR's overall fund-raising efforts, seeking to ensure adequate funding for operations worldwide from governmental, corporate and private sources, and identifying new sources of support.

Throughout **Europe**, the Office aims to mainstream the results of the age, gender and diversity mainstreaming strategy (AGDM) and to put in place standard operating procedures to address sexual and gender-based violence among people of concern.

In the **Western and Central Europe, including the Baltic States**, UNHCR will focus on influencing asylum law, policy and practice at both national and European Union levels. Offices in European capitals play a key role in the debate on the external dimension of the EU asylum policy, upholding UNHCR's protection mandate. In this regard, the promotion of resettlement, where available, will receive particular attention. The Office seeks to improve monitoring and input into judicial processes that affect not only individual refugees' lives, but set precedents and best practice. UNHCR will cooperate with EU institutions and the Council of Europe to address statelessness both within and outside the European Union.



Refugee children from Bosnia and Herzegovina living in a family settlement in Vrujy, in a remote area in Montenegro.

UNHCR receives significant resources and support from European Governments and donors, including European institutions. As such, its strategic presence in the region is an effective launching point from which to further its global policy agenda and mobilize resources.

**In South-Eastern Europe**, large numbers of refugees and internally displaced have been assisted to find solutions. UNHCR, in cooperation with its partners, is expected to continue the Sarajevo Process based on the Sarajevo Declaration of 2005. Developments with regard to the future status of Kosovo and the need to identify durable solutions for its displaced population will preoccupy the Office for some time to come.

**In Eastern Europe**, UNHCR will continue to support the development of asylum systems that comply with international standards. The Office will assist federal and local authorities to prevent and reduce the risk of statelessness. In the northern Caucasus, UNHCR is looking forward to a gradual stabilization of the humanitarian situation in the three republics which should lead to a greater possibility for durable solutions and the effective implementation of the UN Inter-agency Transitional Workplan. In the southern Caucasus, the Office will continue to invest in the development of the asylum systems in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, and will remain substantially engaged in providing protection and material assistance to internally displaced populations and refugees.

In Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, the Office will continue to pursue the development of asylum systems and durable solutions, including for stateless people. Particular attention will be paid to building regional and cross-border cooperation and to developing action plans to address mixed migratory movements, especially through the Söderköping Process as well as the

10-Point Plan of Action. In this regard, emphasis will also be given to coordinated and strategic border monitoring.

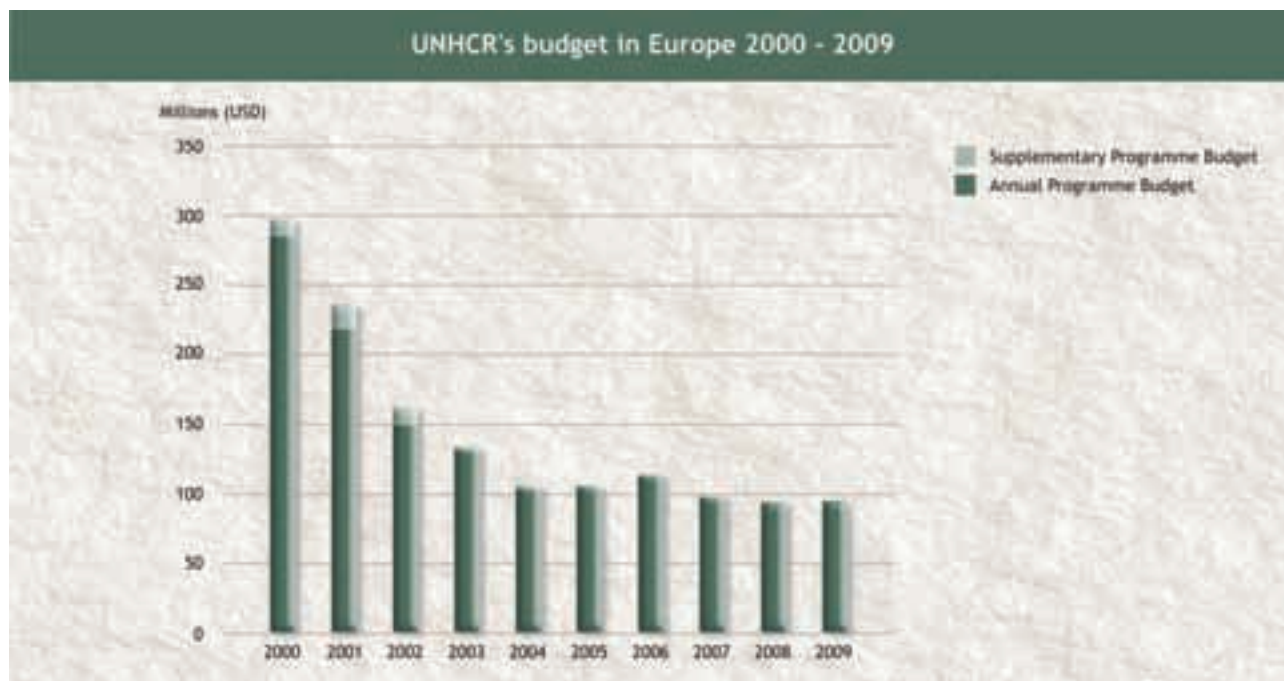
## Challenges

In Western and Central Europe, access to asylum procedures remains a concern for the Office. Accordingly, UNHCR is seeking to increase its capacity to provide support along the land, sea and air borders of the Member States of the European Union to ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers are granted access both to territory and to appropriate procedures.

Political and security tensions remain high in some areas, and have hampered access to people of concern and project monitoring, particularly in the Caucasus.

The uncertainty surrounding the future status of Kosovo is attenuating UNHCR's search for durable solutions for refugees and IDPs. The Sarajevo Process in the Western Balkans has not yet fully resolved the outstanding issues that would allow the remaining refugees to return to their former habitual place of residence or to integrate locally.

UNHCR offices in Europe will seek to cultivate increased tolerance in Europe and address exploitative messages, such as the right to seek and enjoy asylum for those in need of protection and the right to citizenship for those who are stateless. These efforts will include working with governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the media with the aim of evoking empathic, as well as rational responses to people seeking international protection.



Budget (USD)					
Activities and services	2007			2008	2009
	Annual Programme Budget	Supp. Programme Budget	Total	Annual Programme Budget	Annual Programme Budget
Armenia	1,410,270	0	1,410,270	1,294,127	1,265,348
Azerbaijan	3,023,063	0	3,023,063	2,962,902	3,095,745
Belarus	977,312	0	977,312	1,007,851	938,825
Georgia	4,462,858	0	4,462,858	4,680,511	4,710,683
Republic of Moldova	618,977	0	618,977	606,496	453,141
Russian Federation	13,415,656	0	13,415,656	12,511,699	12,447,737
Ukraine	3,073,876	0	3,073,876	2,853,172	2,930,524
Regional activities <sup>1</sup>	100,000	0	100,000	50,000	50,000
Sub-total Eastern Europe	27,082,012	0	27,082,012	25,966,758	25,892,003
Albania	734,890	0	734,890	758,726	672,730
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6,702,164	0	6,702,164	5,615,204	5,584,304
Croatia	3,191,177	0	3,191,177	2,821,722	2,821,722
Serbia	20,956,650	0	20,956,650	19,054,388	20,315,870
Montenegro	2,162,812	0	2,162,812	2,312,508	2,347,880
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	3,085,829	0	3,085,829	2,685,404	2,698,152
Sub-total South-Eastern Europe	36,833,522	0	36,833,522	33,247,952	34,440,658
Bulgaria	846,372	0	846,372	769,887	707,932
Cyprus	710,813	0	710,813	812,369	812,370
Czech Republic	420,643	0	420,643	363,526	367,426
Hungary	2,060,516	0	2,060,516	2,365,178	2,369,277
Poland	807,938	0	807,938	827,981	718,797
Romania	979,681	0	979,681	870,022	796,770
Slovakia	496,666	0	496,666	515,324	469,615
Slovenia	194,000	0	194,000	184,299	184,299
Turkey	6,716,171	1,489,621	8,205,792	5,535,009	6,059,897
Regional activities <sup>2</sup>	240,000	0	240,000	100,000	210,000
Sub-total Central Europe and the Baltic States	13,472,800	1,489,621	14,962,421	12,343,595	12,696,383
Austria	903,189	0	903,189	955,395	955,395
Belgium	3,135,633	0	3,135,633	3,553,431	3,805,033
France	2,586,052	0	2,586,052	2,603,133	2,603,133
Germany	2,287,121	0	2,287,121	2,383,557	2,383,557
Greece	1,055,939	0	1,055,939	1,112,951	1,112,951
Ireland	622,061	0	622,061	671,690	671,690
Italy	2,583,528	0	2,583,528	3,030,090	3,162,160
Malta	35,320	0	35,320	39,221	39,221
Portugal	51,679	0	51,679	45,000	45,000
Spain	978,285	0	978,285	929,701	929,701
Sweden	1,712,091	0	1,712,091	1,831,095	1,831,097
Switzerland	653,170	0	653,170	651,187	651,187
United Kingdom	1,499,071	0	1,499,071	1,644,736	1,657,690
Sub-total Western Europe	18,103,139	0	18,103,139	19,451,187	19,847,815
Total Europe	95,491,473	1,489,621	96,981,094	91,009,492	92,876,859

<sup>1</sup> Includes activities in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine.

<sup>2</sup> Includes promotion of refugee law.

Note: The Supplementary Programme Budget excludes a 7 per cent support cost that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.