

19 July – 8 August 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

KEY FIGURES

262,935

Refugees and migrants arriving by sea to Europe in 2016 (as of 8 August).

3,177

Refugees and migrants estimated to have died / gone missing at sea in 2016 (as of 8 August). Compared to 3,771 in 2015.

160,914

Estimated sea arrivals to Greece in 2016 (as of 8 August) compared to 856,723 total arrivals in 2015.

99,545

Estimated sea arrivals to Italy in 2016 (as of 8 August) compared to 153,842 total arrivals in 2015.

13,705

Estimated unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) arrived by sea to Italy in 2016 compared to 12,360 total UASC in 2015.

USD 669.9M

Total 2016 requirements for UNHCR's activities in the context of the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Europe.

USD 205.4M

Funding received for UNHCR's activities thus far in Europe in 2016.

PRIORITIES

- Strengthen reception capacity and living conditions through support and advocacy with States and civil society actors.
- Empower community-based initiatives aimed at finding immediate and long-term solutions for asylum-seekers and refugees.
- Ensure concentrated support to persons with specific needs such as cases concerning SGBV and UASC.

- As of 8 August 2016, some 262,935 people had crossed the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. During the reporting period, the trend in sea arrivals through the Eastern Mediterranean slightly increased, with 1,920 people arriving to Greece, contributing to a total of 160,297 arrivals by the end of July 2016. As of 8 August, 99,545 persons had arrived by sea to Italy in 2016, compared to 93,540 at the end of July 2015.
- More than 13,000 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) have arrived to Italy between January and July 2016, representing a 116 % increase in comparison to the same period last year. In response to the increasing protection needs of UASC in Italy, UNHCR is engaged in capacity-building activities promoting good practices for best-interest assessments, as well as qualified and informed access to the international protection procedure.
- During July, UNHCR and its partners distributed over 63,000 core relief items to refugees and migrants residing in sites on the Greek islands and mainland.
- UNHCR's partner METAdrasi and the Greek Council for Refugees launched a legal aid programme on the Greek islands and mainland in support of asylum procedures in Greece. At the end of July, 26 lawyers were deployed to six islands and another six lawyers at four different sites on the mainland. The programme, funded by the European Commission, aims at bridging a gap in the provision of free legal aid during the asylum procedure in Greece.
- In collaboration with INTERSOS, UNHCR launched a micro-grants project in Northern Greece aimed at connecting refugees and host communities. The project will fund community-based organizations with ten grants of up to EUR 12,000 to implement social cohesion initiatives in refugee hosting areas.
- Following the new Hungarian border legislation introduced on 5 July, the situation in Serbia and at the Serbia-Hungary border remained challenging. The numbers of those awaiting entry into the two transit zones located in the North reached 1,000, including those camping in the open and accommodated in Serbian governmental facilities. Humanitarian agencies continue to provide assistance to address protection, security, and humanitarian concerns. UNHCR has provided counseling on asylum procedures and assisted individuals including those with special needs.



A young girl on her way to collect water at Röszke makeshift refugee camp, near the Hungary-Serbia border.

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OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Trends on sea arrivals

In total, 93,774 people arrived to Italy by the end of July 2016, while recorded arrivals were 93,540 in 2015 and 87,915 in 2014 during the same period. Worth noting is the increase in the number of UASC among sea arrivals to Italy: 13,705 UASC arrived between January and July 2016, making up 15% of the population of arrivals in comparison to 7% in the same period in 2015. As of 31 July, main nationalities of UASC arriving to Italy by sea include Gambia (13.9% of all UASC arrived by sea), Eritrea (13.2%), Egypt (13.1%) and Nigeria (10.5%). During the reporting period, the trend in sea arrivals through the Eastern Mediterranean slightly increased towards the end of July. On the Aegean Islands, the arrivals are still much lower compared to 2015 and the first months of 2016. In July, 1,855 refugees and migrants arrived by sea to Greece, indicating a slight rise from the 1,554 who crossed in June 2016. By 8 August, 160,914 people had crossed the sea to Greece in 2016 compared to 130,103 in the same period in 2015. In the past four months, only 8,770 refugees and migrants have crossed the sea to Greece, in comparison to 117,662 in the same period in 2015. The main nationalities among those reaching Europe by sea continue to be from top refugee producing countries, including the Syrian Arab Republic (30%), Afghanistan (16%), and Iraq (10%). In Italy, there is an increase in the number of people coming from Nigeria, now at 20% when in 2015 it was 14.9%, while another small reduction in the percentage of Eritrean arrivals has been noted, with presently 12% this year compared to 23% in 2015. Further information can be found at [UNHCR's data portal](#).

By the end of July 2016, there have been 3,127 reported dead or missing at sea in 2016, which surpasses the number of those lost during the same period in 2015, which was 2,077.

Situation Overview and Response in Greece

The large scale pre-registration exercise led by the Greek Asylum Service, supported by UNHCR and EASO, was completed on 25 July. The exercise was a temporary measure to ease the surplus in the Skype pre-registration system and provide access to those in urban settings. The Asylum Service will continue to provide access via Skype to those who were not registered through the exercise. Key data on family composition, specific needs, and UASC were collected and will be vital to orient planned interventions and support solutions.

UNHCR and other partners are committed to supporting the Government of Greece in the management of sites on the mainland and on the islands. On 2 and 3 August, UNHCR provided training to service providers from various organizations on site management, protection, and coordination response in Athens.

The small increase of refugees and migrants arriving on the Aegean islands has placed additional pressure on the already overstretched reception facilities. A total of 1,920 new arrivals were recorded on the islands during the reporting period, nearly 400 more than in the previous month. UNHCR, together with partners and other organizations, continued to provide immediate response upon arrival to refugees and migrants on all islands. Escalated tensions and rioting that have occurred in various reception sites across the country over the last months are affecting the security and safety situation of people living and working at the sites. This is of concern to UNHCR and the Office continues to advocate for increased security measures among authorities. In sites throughout Greece, UNHCR remains actively engaged in coordination meetings where the latest needs and gaps and identification of solutions related to the daily management of the sites are discussed. UNHCR chairs the regional Protection Working Group meetings in Thessaloniki, covering all sites in Northern Greece, as well as the nation-wide Protection Working Group.

Situation Overview and Response in Italy

At the beginning of August, the situation at northern border points with France and Switzerland intensified, namely at Ventimiglia (Italy-France border) and Como-Ponte Chiasso (Italy-Switzerland border). Arrivals to Ventimiglia continued steadily, with persons who are refused entry to France gradually transferred to the official temporary reception facility ran by the Red Cross, while the main informal settlement at Roja Park was closed on 1 August. As of 2 August, 600 persons were hosted at the official facility despite a capacity of only 360. In the following days, tensions rose with reports of

clashes between people and police. In Como and Ponte Chiasso, some 450 persons were hosted in informal settlements throughout parks and train stations, as well as in Red Cross tents and at a local parish. Basic assistance was provided by NGOs, and no official reception facilities were available at the time of reporting. The office of the Minister of Interior and the local Prefect were working to identify an official facility to where persons can be transferred.

In close cooperation with the Government and other partners, UNHCR in Italy is engaged at border points by providing information on asylum, identification and referral of people with specific needs, and directly participating in refugee status determination, in areas of sea arrivals, Territorial Commissions and hotspots. With regard to sea arrivals, UNHCR monitors disembarkation procedures and provides counseling services, having deployed 10 teams in various locations in southern Italy. This includes activities to ensure that people with specific needs are identified quickly and appropriately, including unaccompanied and separated children. In this context, UNHCR has deployed expert teams on child protection and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Most of these activities are either funded by the Government of Italy or by the EU Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF). UNHCR provides further support to the Italian authorities in the strengthening of the reception system.

Situation in Serbia and at the Serbia-Hungary Border

The overall estimated number of refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers in Serbia grew from 2,800 in mid-July to approximately 4,000 as of 8 August. At the end of the reporting period, close to 70% of them were accommodated in the governmental facilities such as asylum centres (AC), reception centres (RC) and refugee aid points (RAP). Consequently, the occupancy of the RC in Presevo, the three RAPs in the West and Subotica increased significantly, with over 2,000 refugees and migrants accommodated there at the end of the reporting period.

The total number of asylum-seekers near the border with Hungary peaked at 1,553 on 24 July, consisting mainly of women and children (63%) from Afghanistan (64%) and Syria (25%). Attempts by authorities, UNHCR and partners to decongest the border at Horgoš and Kelebija, by offering better conditions in governmental centres, bore fruit and the number of asylum-seekers waiting at these two sites shrunk from 840 at the beginning to 583 at the end of the reporting period. Sanitary, food and other conditions at the sites also improved. Hungarian authorities continued to admit around 30 asylum-seekers through the “transit zones” in Horgoš/Rozske and Kelebija/Tompa per day. UNHCR, authorities and partners collected about an equal number of reports of asylum-seekers having been pushed-back from Hungary without being given access to asylum procedures, including allegations of excessive use of force by Hungarian authorities. Since new legislation came into force in Hungary on 5 July 2016, allowing the police to return to the other side of the border people entering irregularly if intercepted within 8 kilometers from the border fence, the police reported that 5,042 people have been prevented from entering Hungary irregularly out of which 3,056 were prevented from entry by the police upon attempting to cross the border irregularly and 1,986 were intercepted inside Hungary and escorted back to the other side of the border fence.

On 22 July, a group of some 100 male asylum-seekers started a hunger strike and started walking from Belgrade towards the northern border in a “peace march”, demanding to be allowed to enter Hungary. The protesters ended their peaceful hunger strike on 29 July and agreed to the offer of authorities to accommodate them in an asylum centre.

The situation in Belgrade grew challenging, particularly with change in the admissions policy for Krnjača Asylum Centre (AC), effective as of 14 July, not allowing unregistered refugees and migrants to use the centre. As a result, high number of refugees and migrants, over 600 at times, were staying in the city centre with many overnighing in Belgrade parks, under its bridges and in abandoned settlements.

Relocation

In the reporting period, 24 EU Member States and Switzerland pledged an additional 502 places against the 160,000 to be relocated by September 2017, bringing the total number of places pledged to 8,424 as of 08 August 2016, representing only 5% of the targeted 160,000. The applications of 7,137 persons have so far been accepted, which includes receipt of new relocation pledges. Up to 08 August, 3,036 asylum-seekers (only 4.6% of the targeted 63,302) were relocated from Greece to other EU countries. In the reporting period, 84 asylum-seekers were relocated from Italy to Portugal (5),

Luxembourg (20), France (50) and Slovenia (9), bringing to the total to 961 persons relocated from Italy out of the targeted 39,600 (2.4 %) as of 8 August. UNHCR is supporting the intra-European relocation programme by providing advice and counseling support to potential beneficiaries, as well as providing accommodation for relocation candidates.

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS AND IDENTIFIED NEEDS

Protection, Humanitarian Assistance and Technical Support

Greece

Achievements and Impact

- During the reporting period, two new Blue Dots were operationalized in Cherso and Nea Kavala sites, in addition to the ones already active in Schisto, Elliniko I and III, and Kara Tepe (Lesvos). Services include the provision of information and advice, restoring family links, child friendly spaces, dedicated mother and baby/toddler spaces, multi-disciplinary teams for the identification and support of children, especially UASC, legal and psychosocial counseling, services for cases of SGBV and referrals for mental health cases. Actors working at the Blue Dots in both sites of Nea Kavala and Cherso include UNHCR, Hellenic Red Cross, IFRC, Save the Children, ARSIS, IRC, PRAKSIS, as well as volunteer groups such as Drop in the Ocean, Open Cultural Centre and We Are Here.
- UNHCR recently organized a retreat in Athens with the participation of 25 representatives from the General Secretariat for Gender Equality, IRC, IMC, MdM, Lighthouse Relief, OLKE, Greek Transgender Support Association, CRWI-Diotima, Action Aid, OXFAM, MEDIN and government representatives on prevention and response to SGBV. Standard operating procedures on SGBV prevention and response have been developed and are in the process of being finalized and adopted.
- During the pre-registration exercise, services under the Blue Dot concept were made available at the pre-registration hubs by UNHCR and partners, including child friendly spaces, mother and baby areas and identification and referral of people with specific needs, including UASC.
- UNHCR has increased the accommodation capacity in support of the relocation programme for eligible candidates by 15%, bringing the total number of accommodation places to 9,276, most of them (almost 5,000) in apartments.
- To support refugees' self-reliance, UNHCR launched a call for proposals for financial service providers interested in partnering to deliver cash assistance to asylum-seekers and refugees in Greece through prepaid cards. This single platform will allow other agencies to deliver cash assistance on the same card. In the meantime, cash pilots by a few agencies, including Mercy Corps, IRC and CRS among others, have started in both the islands and the mainland. Planned efforts of coordinating and harmonizing the assistance provided are ongoing by the Government, UNHCR and partners through the Cash Working Group. A national information campaign will be developed to inform refugees about available options.
- An information campaign took place on five Aegean Islands (Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Kos and Leros) between 25 July and 5 August. The provision of information focused on asylum and readmission procedures applied in Greece for post 20 March arrivals. The campaign was coordinated by the European Commission in cooperation with the Greek authorities (Asylum Service, Reception and Identification Service, Hellenic Police, Ministry of Migration Policy) and EASO. UNHCR and IOM also participated in the exercise and provided information on asylum and assisted voluntary return respectively.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Tensions and rioting continued to escalate in various sites across the country during the reporting period, raising concerns amongst UNHCR and NGOs who are calling on the Greek authorities to strengthen the security measures to ensure the safety of refugees and migrants, as well as for humanitarian actors working at the sites.
- There is mounting frustration among relocation candidates due to the low number of pledges, which has significantly increased the processing time. This has impacted resources as the planned period for the procedure was initially shorter, and EU's expected implementation rate higher. The number of pledges by the EU Member States is only 4% of the 66,400 target of Greece that should be relocated by September 2017.
- Access to education is hindered in some locations due to the lack of a systematized approach that would prepare asylum-seekers and refugees to enter formal and non-formal education.

The Western Balkans and Hungary

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR, jointly with UNICEF, organized training sessions on working with children exposed to traumatic or stressful events. Participants included field staff based in the two transit centres in the country, Tabanovce and Vinojug. The training focused on collaboration and offered practical tools and information on how to address the behavioral, social and emotional needs of children.
- With UNHCR and UNICEF support, new social workers in the transit centres received on-the-job mentoring. The mentoring was conducted by the Coordinator of the Centre for Social Works (CSW) with activities and follow-up on the Inter-agency trainings on best interest assesment (BIA), standard operating procedures (SOPs), and communication skills.
- Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) CSW introduced a weekly case management meeting in both transit centers for organizations and institutions providing protection and psychological support – for state social workers, and staff from MLSP, La Strada, SOS, UNHCR and UNICEF. The aim of the meetings is to provide a forum addressing cases of persons with specific needs and for ensuring harmonization of activities.
- A new gynecological medical ambulance will be present at the transit centre (TC) in Tabanovce, to provide assistance to women on the site. The Red Cross is responsible for medical referrals and provides direct assistance by ensuring cases receive care at the local hospital while UNHCR provides coverage of medicines on the site, and covers medical expenses for cases treated in hospitals outside the site.
- The Ministry of Interior (Sector for Asylum) issued identification documents to registered asylum-seekers who were accommodated outside TC Vinojug. With these identification documents they will have the right to use the services in the TC and enjoy freedom of movement outside TC for a limited period which is regulated by MOI.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Refugees and migrants in Tabanovce transit centre, expressed the need for clothing and personal items since the Red Cross supply has been out of stock. UNHCR raised this issue with the authorities managing the TC and for the moment non-food items (NFIs) are not available in the Skopje warehouse. UNHCR has informed partners of the identified need, and together are working on finding a solution to needed NFIs for TC Tabanovce.
- In TC Tabanovce, UNHCR has observed gaps in general medical assistance, persons have raised complaints regarding the Ministry of Health's (MoH) ambulance not being available when needed. Recently, the MoH ambulance shifted the operating hours and are present on the site from 07:00 to 19:00. UNHCR addressed the concern to the ambulance staff, and suggested they post the working hours of the Ambulance to inform persons in need of their services accordingly.
- After the authorities introduced reception of asylum-seekers registered in TC Vinojug in the vicinity of the TC, the need for accommodation of asylum-seekers increased. Two containers located next to the Habitat Rub Hall outside TC Vinojug will be made available for accommodation of asylum-seekers, however more are still required.

Serbia

Achievements and Impact

- In follow up to the joint needs assessment by UNHCR and the Serbia Commissariat for Refugees and Migrants (SCRM), sanitary and hygienic conditions at the two border sites near Horgos I and Kelebija border crossings improved with the support of UNHCR, Humanitarian Centre Integration and Tolerance (HCIT) and Save the Children. The installation of four new water taps/sinks at the Horgos site by Medecins Sans Frontieres also contributed to the overall improvement of conditions at both sites.
- The Asylum Info Centre announced at a press conference on 3 August that they would be operating as a new, independent entity under the name "Crisis Response and Policy Centre- CRPC". They have been and will continue providing assistance in Belgrade with counseling, referrals, provision of NFIs, escorting for registration and medical facilities, and liaising with Centre for Social Work for UASC cases.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- With the increased number of refugees and migrants in the country, some facilities such as Krnjaca AC and Subotica RAP were becoming overcrowded. To decongest those facilities, as well as the two makeshift camps outside at the Hungarian border, SCRM, continued transferring asylum-seekers to facilities in the West, where at the end of the reporting period, over 1,200 people were accommodated in the three RAPs there.

- The number of refugees in Belgrade remained high with over 600 observed in the city centre in comparison to some 300 at the beginning of July. The Serbian Red Cross Society, Info Park, Divac Foundation, Refugee Aid Miksaliste, Refugee Aid Serbia, Caritas, DRC, MSF, CRPC, and others provided food, non-food items, medical, counseling and other aid in Belgrade city centre. UNHCR continued promoting coordination among all humanitarian agencies active in the capital, as well as needs-based assistance and replacing the distribution of dry food rations with warm meals that produce less garbage and cannot be re-sold on markets.

Croatia

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR continues carrying out monitoring visits to the reception and detention facilities accommodating persons of concern to assess their situation and the services provided by the implementing partners. Meetings were held during the visits with the management of the centres to address the gaps and identified needs.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Delayed appointment of special guardians for UASC seeking asylum in Croatia has challenged asylum procedures. UNHCR reiterated its call to the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth for expediting appointment of the special guardians as the prerequisite for initiating their asylum procedures.
- Following the reports on disappearance of UASC accommodated in reception facilities across the country, UNHCR, in communication with the Ministry of Youth and Social Policy, advocated for accommodating UASC in one facility ensuring provision of timely protection interventions and rendering adequate services.

Slovenia

Achievements and Impact

- Upon UNHCR raising concerns with the Asylum Home administration regarding multiple cases of SGBV (domestic violence) at the Logatec Asylum Home, the Slovene Police held a workshop on the topic of domestic violence for residents.
- UNHCR held an information session with some of the asylum-seekers who have arrived by sea to Slovenia as stowaways. UNHCR was informed that they were of the belief the ship was taking them to Italy, instead of Slovenia.
- Following a growing number of irregular border crossings from Croatia to Slovenia, UNHCR conducted discussions with and provided protection assistance to the newly-arrived asylum-seekers, known to have been smuggled across the border. They described a well-established smuggling network from Turkey across Bulgaria, Serbia, and Croatia to Slovenia. Slovene media reports that between 26 July and 19 August 2016, 89 persons have irregularly crossed the Croatia-Slovenia border. According to the Slovenian Police, a growing trend of irregular crossings is being observed since May 2016.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The lack of information on asylum cases continues to be a challenge, provoking asylum-seekers to leave accommodation facilities and abandoning their asylum claims in Slovenia, particularly among cases concerning UASC.

Hungary

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR maintains a daily presence in and around Röszke and Tompa transit zones to monitor admission procedures and identify cases with specific needs. UNHCR, alongside partners such as the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, provides information on the national asylum procedure and related rights and obligations to people waiting outside the transit zones and to those admitted in it.
- UNHCR Hungary is coordinating with NGOs and local aid groups in Hungary to complement the assistance currently provided to the people awaiting admission to the transit zones by UNHCR Serbia, its partners, NGOs, the Serbian Red Cross and the SCRM. The Hungarian Office of Immigration and Nationality (OIN) continued to provide daily cold food packages, both inside the transit zones and in the waiting areas, while several Hungarian NGOs contribute by distributing hygiene packages as well as baby food, diapers, and first aid items.
- The sanitation and hygiene situation in the makeshift waiting area in Röszke transit zone improved with the support of humanitarian agencies and local authorities. UNHCR Hungary has been raising awareness among people awaiting admission about the risks associated with garbage and food waste piling up next to the tents in the makeshift camps. UNHCR encouraged the community members to take charge of cleaning the waiting area.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Many people are cooking their own food inside their makeshift tents which are made of blankets and other flammable materials. UNHCR has been raising awareness about fire risks and preventative measures. UNHCR also liaised with a local NGO (Community of Sant'Egidio) which supplied each waiting area with fire extinguishers.
- The conditions in the asylum detention facilities remain challenging which is leading to incidents of tension and distress among detained asylum-seekers. The uncertain length of detention, the poor conditions such as the lack of adequate health care, clothing, entertainment, and communication with OIN case workers are contributing factors to incidents of distress and self-inflicted harm. UNHCR partner, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee lawyers, will follow up with the asylum-seekers and authorities on identified gaps and reported incidents.
- On 8 August, UNHCR visited Kiskunhalas reception facility, which at the time hosted 96 asylum-seekers inclusive of 41 children (capacity 200). The general conditions were satisfactory but many people of concern lack information on asylum procedures and about services available within and outside the facilities. Despite the high ratio of children (42%) there is a shortage of leisure activities and there is no organized enrollment of children to the mainstream school system. UNHCR has shared with the management of the facility its observations and recommendations for improvements.

Working in partnership

In line with the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM), UNHCR supports the Government's' coordination efforts at central and local level in Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Turkey. In Hungary, UNHCR chairs a coordination forum including UN agencies, IGOs, NGO partners and non-state institutions. This includes the support to crisis management teams, the facilitation of general and sectoral coordination meetings. Besides cooperation with Governments, UNHCR also operates closely with the European Commission and relevant EU Agencies, including Frontex and EASO. Full list of partners is available [here](#).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan 2016 (RMRP), co-led by UNHCR and IOM, brings together more than 60 UN agencies and NGOs in response to the refugee and migrant crisis affecting Southern Europe and the Western Balkans. As of 15 August 2016, the RMRP is 58% funded; USD 391 million in earmarked contributions have been received against USD 669.9 million in total requirements.

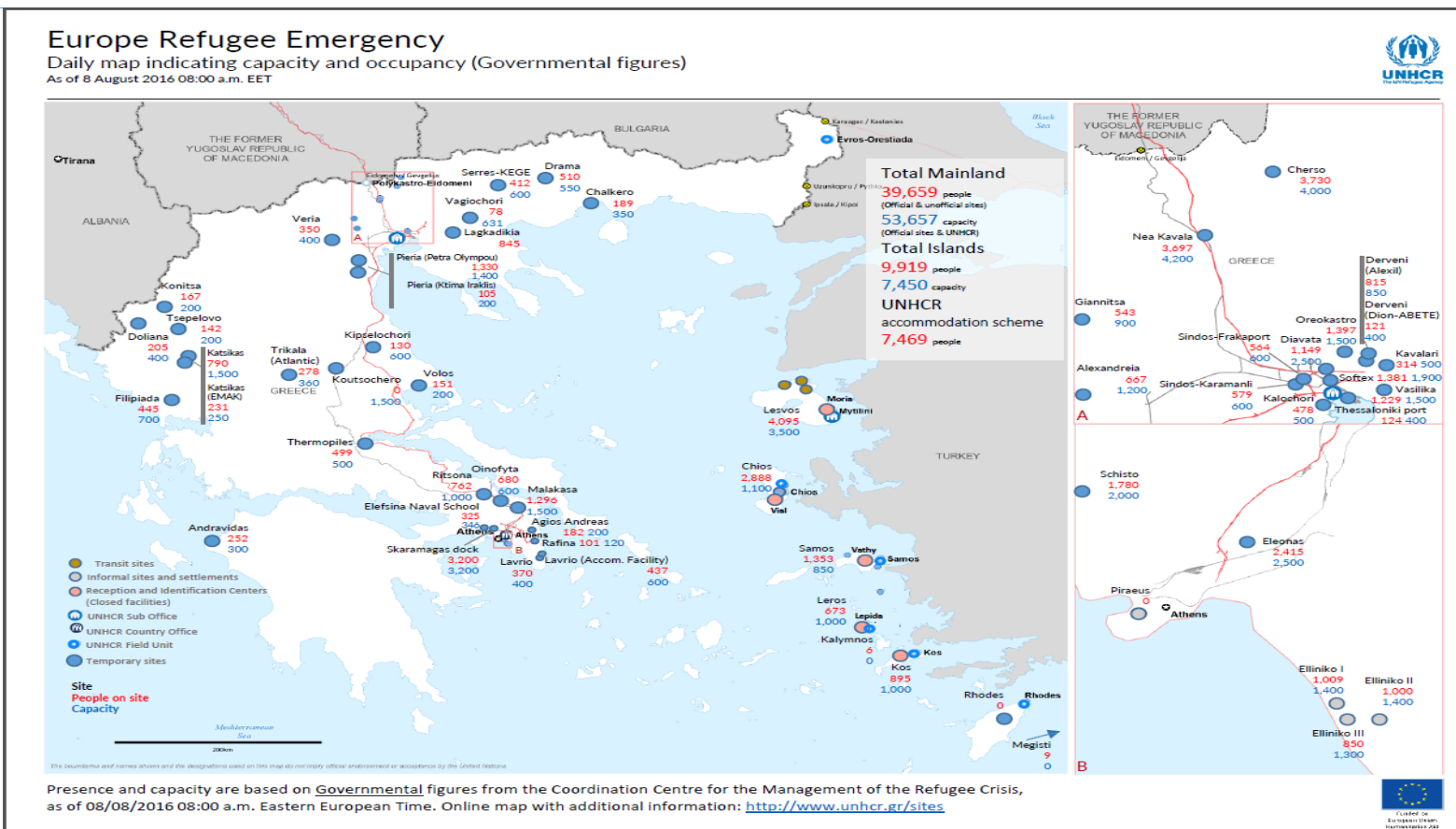
UNHCR is appealing for USD 380.3 million under the framework of the RMRP, against which USD 205.4 million in earmarked contributions has been received (54% funded).

Detailed funding information on the RMRP (inter-agency and UNHCR-specific) is available [here](#).

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to its operations in response to the emergency response in Europe, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unrestricted and broadly earmarked funds.

Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds to UNHCR in 2016: United States of America (181 M) | Sweden (78 M) | Netherlands (46 M) | Norway (40 M) | Australia (31 M) | Private Donors Spain (30 M) | Japan (24 M) | Denmark (24 M) | United Kingdom (23 M) | Canada (16 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | France (14 M) | Germany (13 M) | Private Donors Italy (11 M) | Italy (10 M)

ANNEXES



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Links: UNHCR, <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php> (webportal accessible via Google Chrome or Firefox only).