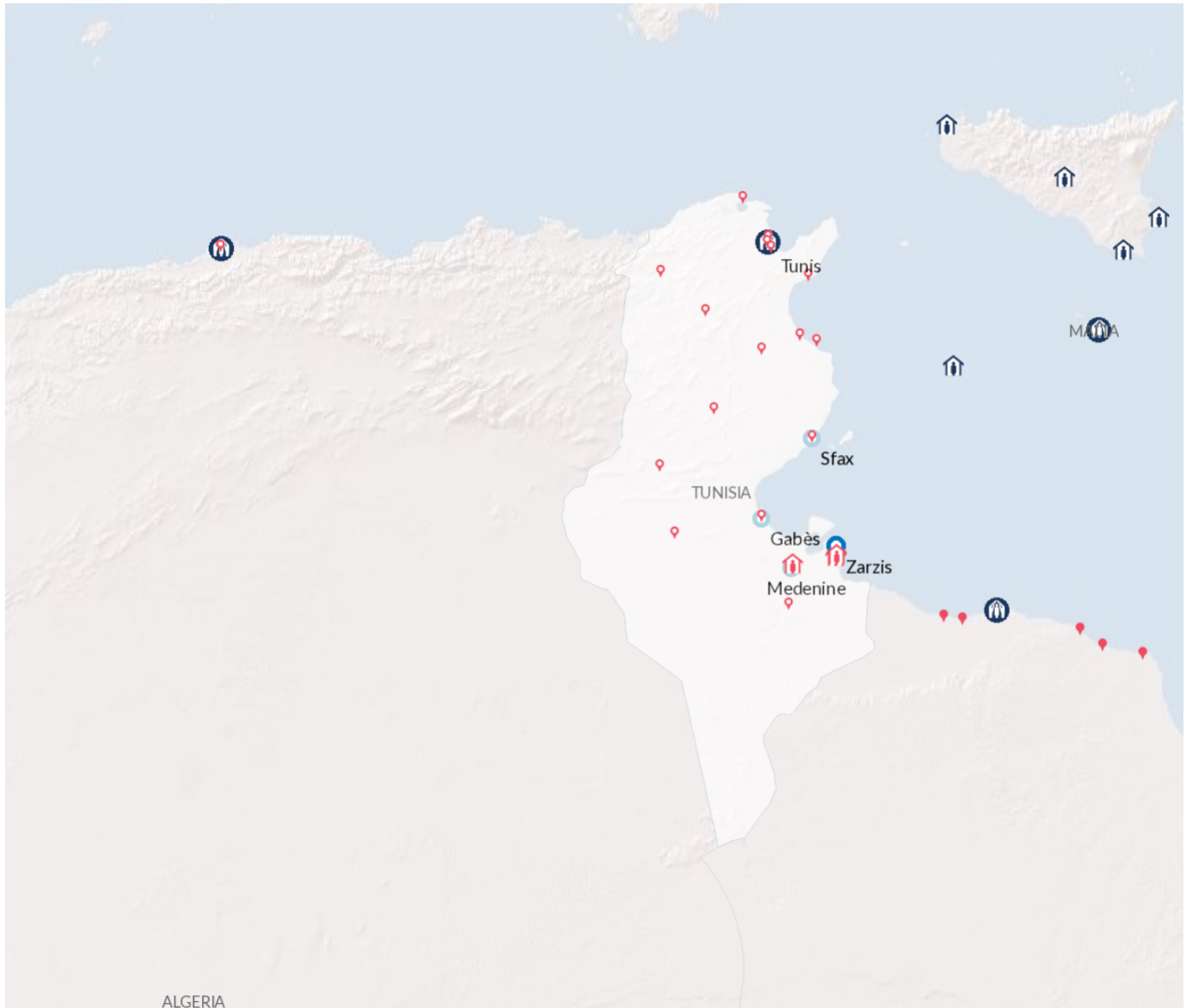


Operation: Tunisia

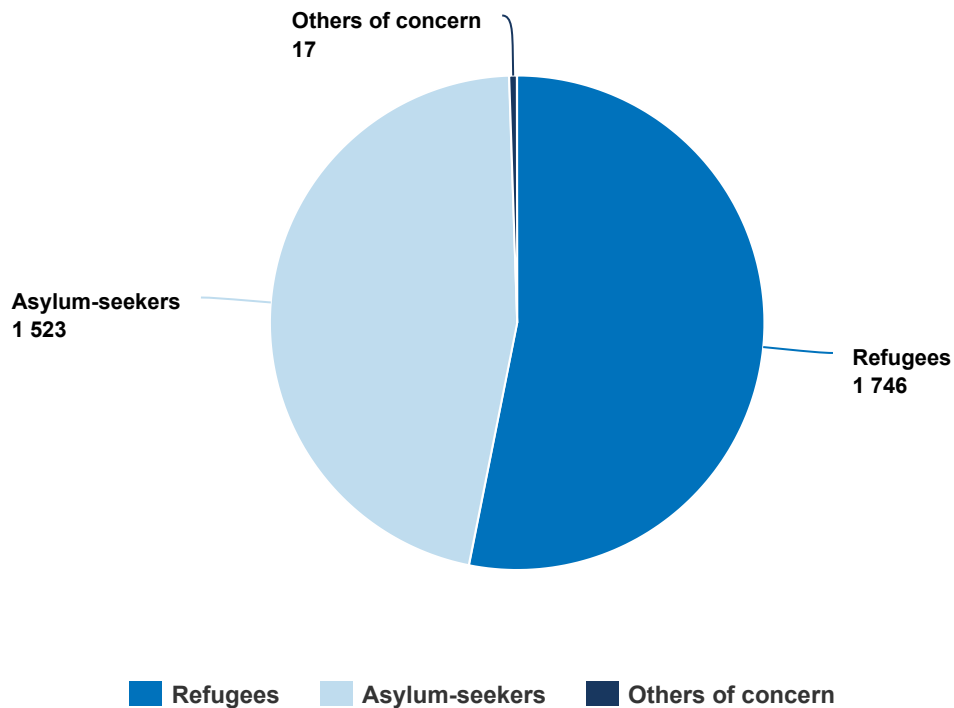


The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

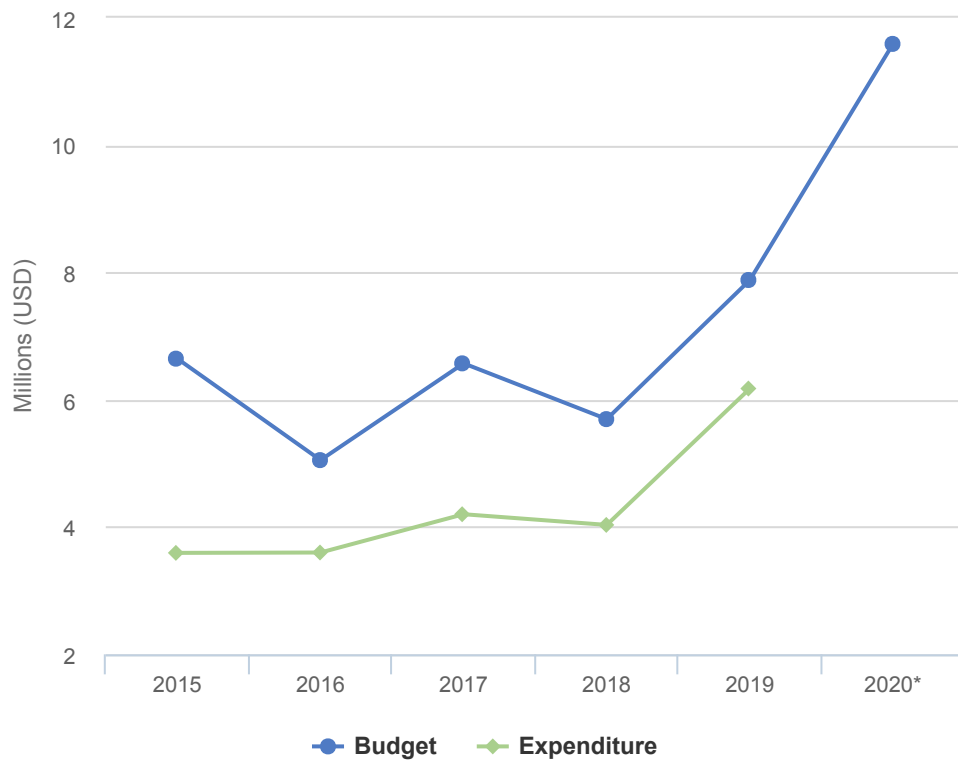
People of Concern

INCREASE IN
147% 2019

2019	3,286
2018	1,330
2017	770



Budgets and Expenditure for Tunisia



Operational context

The protection environment in Tunisia remained generally favorable throughout 2019, despite a sharp increase in new arrivals that challenged both UNHCR's and the Government's processing and reception capacities, particularly in the south. The increase in people seeking asylum was strongly linked to the deteriorating security conditions in Libya. Additional resources were put in place by UNHCR to maintain protection activities such as registration, documentation and refugee status determination. UNHCR provided medical assistance and psychosocial support to people experiencing conflict-related trauma. Livelihood support was prioritized for refugees and asylum-seekers to enhance self-reliance and ensure social and economic inclusion within the community.

UNHCR advocated with the Government of Tunisia for the adoption of the draft asylum law, and provided trainings and capacity building for lawyers, journalists, parliamentarians and municipalities. Due to the declining security situation in Libya, UNHCR and IOM initiated a collaborative contingency planning process with the Government of Tunisia. Towards the end of 2019, preparedness efforts were accelerated through sectoral meetings among relevant United Nations agencies, NGOs and ministries.

Population trends

The number of people of concern to UNHCR in Tunisia increased threefold, with more than 2,000 refugees and asylum-seekers registered over the course of the year. People of concern arrived in Tunisia as part of mixed movements from Libya by crossing overland, being rescued/intercepted at sea, or (less frequently) by plane.

From the beginning of 2019, an increasing trend of arrivals was observed from Libya including nationals from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. Most of the new arrivals were single men between 18 and 59 years old. An estimated 65% of people profiled within mixed movements expressed an intention to seek asylum and were referred to UNHCR, a 25% increase from 2018.

Achievements

- A notable achievement in 2019 was the introduction of the community-based protection model, with a specific focus on case management for extremely vulnerable individuals. Through dedicated trainings by UNHCR partner staff, over 400 people with specific needs benefited from counselling and case management, and nearly 500 received psychosocial support.
- In 2019, reception capacity in southern Tunisia was increased through the establishment of two additional temporary shelters in Zarzis, providing 200 additional beds for vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers. Recreational activities were conducted by partner staff who also provided counselling services and psychosocial support to nearly 300 individuals hosted in the shelters.
- As a result of UNHCR's advocacy, refugees with legal work contracts or who were self-employed were included in the national social security system, thereby formalizing their employment.
- UNHCR's partner, the Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR), launched a legal assistance service involving lawyers and judges trained by UNHCR on international protection standards. The service provided legal advice to 400 refugees and asylum-seekers, including representation in court, with ministries and for other public processes.

Unmet needs

- The operation was funded at 72% by the end of 2019.
- An increase in the number of refugees and asylum-seekers hindered UNHCR's capacity to conduct timely registration and refugee status determination.

- National reception capacities remained overstretched, requiring additional temporary shelter particularly in the north of the country, where an increasing number of vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers struggled to meet their basic needs.
 - As movements to Tunisia increased, further protection monitoring along the borders with Algeria and Libya—as well as in airports—was needed to ensure that those seeking international protection had access to asylum and were properly counselled on their rights.
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