

ITALY

December 2018

Key Figures⁴

23,370

Sea arrivals

3,536

UASC sea arrivals

2,275

Dead and missing

50,674

Asylum applications

93%

Sea arrivals informed about their rights and the asylum procedure (Access team)

867

Referrals of persons with specific needs to appropriate services (Access team)

1,150

Visits to reception centres (Access team)

258

 Joint reception monitoring missions (Reception team)⁶

Overview and developments

In 2018, **23,370 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy by sea**, compared to 119, 369 last year. Monthly sea arrivals decreased further in the second half of the year, with a low of 359 arrivals in December. 56 per cent of new arrivals departed from Libya in 2018, compared to 91 per cent in 2017. Furthermore, 25 per cent crossed from Tunisia, followed by Turkey (12 per cent), Greece (4 per cent), and Algeria (3 per cent). Refugees and migrants reaching Italian shores in 2018 most commonly originate from Tunisia, Eritrea, Iraq, Sudan, Pakistan, Nigeria, Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, and Guinea. **Unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) accounted for 15 per cent of sea arrivals** this year¹.

In December, NGO vessels that rescued refugees and migrants in the Central Mediterranean were prevented from disembarking in the safe port closest to the location of the rescue operation, including Italy. Over 310 persons rescued by the Open Arms vessel on 21 December were only allowed to disembark in Spain on 28 December. Furthermore, on 22 December and 29 December, Sea Watch and Sea Eye rescued 32 and 17 refugees and migrants, respectively. As of 31 December, no safe port had been allocated for the rescued individuals to disembark. UNHCR [urged](#) a rapid solution to the situation appealing to states to urgently offer safe ports and disembarkation to the two NGO vessels.

On 19 December, 103 asylum-seekers and refugees were evacuated from Libya to Italy. Evacuees originate from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and The Democratic Republic of Congo, and include 5 unaccompanied children, 56 adult women, and 31 accompanied children. Most of them endured severe abuse including sexual and gender-based violence in transit countries. UNHCR [praised](#) the Italian Government for its commitment to evacuate refugees and hopes that it will further strengthen safe legal pathways for persons fleeing conflict and persecution.

In 2018, **50,674 new asylum applications** were lodged in Italy, a 61 per cent decrease compared to the same period last year². As of 31 December 2018, **135,858 adult asylum-seekers were accommodated in reception facilities** across the country³, compared to over 183,600 at the end of 2017. On 19 December, the Ministry of the Interior [published](#) the new contract specifications for reception facilities, outlining services to be provided to asylum-seekers. In early December, an 18-year-old Gambian man died in a fire in the informal settlement of San Ferdinando, Calabria, where an estimated 800 persons live in destitute conditions. UNHCR issued a [press statement](#), highlighting difficulties pertaining to integration prospects in Italy, and the need to adequately respond to the reception needs of asylum-seekers and refugees.

Operational update - UNHCR Response⁵

Statelessness. On 6 December, the Civil Society Working Group on Statelessness ([Tavolo Apolidia](#)) [presented](#) its activities during a public event in Rome. The Working Group includes nine civil society organizations focusing on statelessness in Italy, under the coordination of UNHCR. The Working Group met for the first time at the end of 2016, and aims at coordinating advocacy and operational proposals towards better protection for stateless persons and solutions for individual cases in Italy.

Integration. UNHCR, in collaboration with the University of Bologna, [launched](#) the UNI-CO-RE (University Corridors for Refugees) project enabling refugee students currently in Ethiopia to continue their postgraduate studies in Bologna. Five selected students will benefit from a scholarship, administrative and logistical support, and local integration services. The project is supported by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and entails the collaboration of a number of partner organizations.

Partnerships. On 19-20 December, the [final event](#) of the joint UNHCR-INTERSOS PartecipAzione programme took place in Rome. The programme, which was launched in June 2018, aims at promoting refugees' active participation in economic, social and cultural life in Italy, by strengthening the capacity of refugee-led and community-based organizations in five Italian regions (Sicily, Calabria, Lazio, Emilia-Romagna, and Piedmont). The programme has three components: training, project funding and implementation, and networking. Ten refugee-led and community-based organizations received small grants (up to 10,000 euros) to implement their activities on integration, participation, and social cohesion. The final networking event aimed at sharing best practices, promoting mutual collaboration and strengthening networks, and included a simulated press conference with journalists.

¹ For further details and statistics, please refer to UNHCR updates including Sea Arrivals Dashboards and UASC Dashboards, available on the UNHCR data portal at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5205>

² Ministry of Interior, I numeri dell'asilo, <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/statistica/i-numeri-dell-asilo> (last access 21/12/2018)

³ Ministry of Interior, Cruscotto statistico giornaliero, 30 November 2018, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/63102> (last access 21/12/2018)

⁴ Unless otherwise specified, key figures refer to the 1 January – 31 December 2018 period.

⁵ For information on UNHCR activities in Italy, see UNHCR, *What we do in Italy*, available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/65386> (last access 21/09/2018)

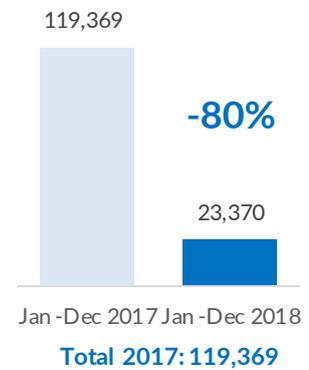
⁶ Visits to reception centres (Access team) are carried out by UNHCR staff autonomously. Joint reception monitoring missions (Reception team) are carried out by UNHCR staff, jointly with Mol representatives and external auditors (Mireco).

UNHCR teams in Italy: deployment by location



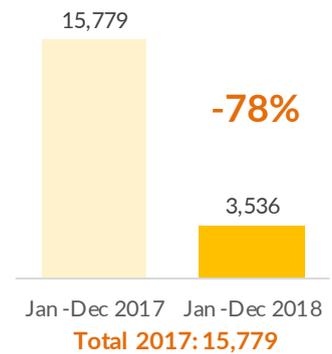
Sea arrivals in Italy

Jan - Dec, 2017-2018



UASC arrivals in Italy

Jan - Dec, 2017-2018



External relations

- 5 December: training for journalists by partner organization Carta di Roma and the Veneto regional journalists' association in Verona
- 6 December: [presentation](#) of the results of the project *Domus – Developing Common Paths for Sustainability and Inclusion*, spearheaded by Fondazione Adecco per le Pari Opportunità and UNHCR to promote job inclusion for refugees.
- 6 December: inauguration of the [lo So\(g\)no](#) photo exhibition, in the context of a project carried out by UNHCR in collaboration with the National Ombudsperson for Children and Adolescents
- 6 December: [Special Night for Syria](#) fundraising concert for Syria in Rome
- 13 December: closing conference of the UNHCR-UNISG project [Food for Inclusion](#) in Pollenzo
- 18 December: participation at the conference "Protezione internazionale e percorsi di integrazione" organised by the Università degli Studi di Milano for International Migrants Day

RSD first time applications

Jan - Dec, 2017-2018

