

Portugal

February 2024

Portugal is undergoing a **migration and asylum reform**, leading to changes in institutional set up and procedures as well as the restructuring of the border control and reception schemes.

The **border procedure**, suspended since COVID-19, was **resumed** in October 2023, which stretched the capacity of the airport detention centers, in a context of increasing arrivals.

UNHCR advocates for upholding protection standards in **reception and asylum procedures** and reinforcing **early identification and referral** of asylum-seekers with specific needs.

UNHCR POPULATION STATISTICS (as of mid-2023)*

Refugees	59,311
Asylum-seekers	896
Stateless people	24

Top three countries of origin*

Refugees	Asylum-seekers
Ukraine 48,577	Afghanistan 189
Nigeria 2,297	Colombia 127
Morocco 915	Angola 57

*UNHCR mid-2023 Trends and UNHCR [data finder](#)

Socio-economic inclusion of refugees in Portugal

Inclusion priorities of the Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum

The recently established Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA) announced that family reunification, language training, dignified employment and speedy recognition of qualifications and skills will be the strategic priorities at the core of its inclusion strategy in the coming years.

Municipality Toolkit Workshop

In December 2023, UNHCR organized an online inclusion workshop for Municipalities in which participants were familiarized with the **Municipalities Toolkit** and had the opportunity to exchange on good practices and challenges in refugee inclusion.

HIGHLIGHTS

New Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum

The Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA) was established on 29 October 2023 after the abolition of the Immigration and Borders Service (SEF) as well as the High Commission for Migration (ACM). The new agency is responsible for the issuance of residence permits, reception and integration of refugees and migrants.

Capacity Building to Emerging Actors

UNHCR is working with the authorities to strengthen their capacity in the field of international protection by providing training to AIMA's asylum unit as well as to police entities that recently took over border control functions.



Tales of hope in Portugal

When refugees are welcomed, with strategic and focused initiatives, everyone benefits – including both the refugees, and their host communities. Click [here](#) and take a voyage through Portugal to discover three distinct refugee stories and delve into the various ways they have acclimated to their new lives in the country.

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Key Priorities

- **Asylum procedures:** Through its partner, the Portuguese Refugee Council, UNHCR works to ensure asylum-seekers' and refugees' access to free legal assistance and facilitates access to legal aid at the judicial appeal stage of the asylum procedure.
- **Protection:** In cooperation with national asylum and reception institutions, UNHCR works to strengthen identification and referral mechanisms for asylum-seekers with specific needs within the asylum procedure. UNHCR also provides technical advice and training to the government and service providers in order to reinforce procedures, day-to-day care, and the inclusion of children in the community.
- **Resettlement and complementary pathways:** UNHCR provides technical support and capacity-building for coordinating selection processes for resettlement, providing trainings to relevant authorities, reception entities and other local actors. UNHCR also promotes complementary pathways and the community sponsorship programme among relevant stakeholders.
- **Community empowerment and self-reliance:** In collaboration with refugee-led organizations, UNHCR advocates for community-based and participatory approaches with the government and NGOs in Portugal. These efforts aim to enhance engagement with forcibly displaced people in decision-making and policy processes.
- **Global Refugee Forum (GRF):** In 2023, governmental and civil society stakeholders in Portugal submitted numerous pledges in several focus areas. Commitments include improved language training, simplified family reunification procedures, increased resettlement quota, promotion of inclusion through sports, increased mechanisms for participation and consultation of non-

governmental stakeholders, promotion of early labour inclusion, community sponsorship and education complementary pathways.

Working with Partners

- **The Government of Portugal** is UNHCR's key partner in working towards the protection and inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR collaborates with a wide range of state authorities including the Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA), the Secretary of State for Equality and Migration, the Social Security Institute, the Police as well as the National Republican Guard. Other key actors include the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ombudsperson's Office, the Civil Registry Office, and municipalities.
- **Non-Governmental partners** and counterparts include UN agencies, NGOs and refugee-led organizations. UNHCR also coordinates with the National Partner Portugal for UNHCR (Portugal com ACNUR).

Statelessness

- Portugal has acceded to both the 1954 and 1961 UN Conventions on Statelessness. In August 2023, UNHCR advocacy efforts led Portugal to adopt legal changes recognizing the stateless status and prescribing an obligation to establish a statelessness determination procedure, in line with the Government's pledge at the GRF in 2019.

UNHCR Presence in Portugal

Personnel:

- 1 National Staff
- 1 National Affiliate Workforce
- 1 International Affiliate Workforce

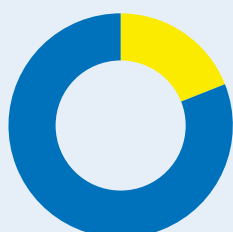
Financial information* (31 January 2024)

*Information relates to the Representation in Austria and to the European Institutions in Strasbourg, the Office for Switzerland and Liechtenstein, the Liaison Office in Vienna and the presence in Portugal

Financial requirements for 2024

\$ 5.4 M

**Funding gap 81%
\$ 4.4 M**



**Funded 19%
\$ 1 M**

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UNHCR is also grateful for the generous contributions from the private sector and individuals.