MALTA Factsheet

Overview

Between 1 January and 31 July 2021, there were 408 sea arrivals to Malta. This is a 79% decrease compared to the same period last year (1,966 sea arrivals to Malta from January to July 2020).

Of the 408 persons that arrived in Malta, 65 landed on Malta spontaneously in February. The AFM rescued 14 persons in April, 68 persons in May, 97 persons in June, and 164 people in July. There were no arrivals in January or March 2021.

The UNHCR team attends and monitors disembarkations, providing interpretation support to the authorities and giving initial information on reception and asylum procedures to all new arrivals.

Monthly Sea Arrivals

Jan 2019 - Jul 2021

Age and Gender Demographics

Between 1 January and 31 July, most sea arrivals to Malta were adult men (64%), followed by unaccompanied and separated children (30%), adult women (3%) and accompanied children (3%).

There have been 122 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC)* arrivals in 2021.

*Please note that this data is based on each individual’s declared age on arrival, before any age assessment procedures have taken place.
Sea Arrivals - Top 4 Nationalities
January - July 2021

- Sudan: 20%
- Eritrea: 20%
- Syria: 18%
- Egypt: 10%
- Others: 32%

Demographics - Countries of origin
From January to July 2021, 83 persons, or 20% of sea arrivals originated from Sudan, with the same number arriving from Eritrea (20%), 72 persons from Syria (18%), and 41 from Egypt (10%), among other countries of origin.

UNHCR monitoring and activities
UNHCR visits open and closed centres to provide information on the asylum system, Dublin regulation, rights and obligations, and to refer persons of concern to appropriate services. UNHCR conducts child protection activities, detention monitoring and, through its implementing partners, provides legal aid and psycho-social support in centres.

Due to measures to combat COVID-19, since March 2020 UNHCR has strengthened its digital communications to provide information to persons of concern online and through Whatsapp. UNHCR and partner organisations have dedicated telephone helplines for refugees and asylum-seekers.

Asylum Applications and Decisions
January - June 2021
In recent years the refugee population has been mainly composed of Libyan, Syrian and Somali refugees. Currently the rate of international protection (Refugee or Subsidiary Protection status) is 6% of total decisions.

There was a high number of ‘Closed’ cases, referring to applications that resulted in an administrative closure, Dublin closure, or applications that are explicitly withdrawn, implicitly withdrawn or inadmissible.

First Instance Asylum Applications - Decision Rates
January - June 2021

- Rejection: 310 (19%)
- Recognition: 93 (6%)
- Refugee Status: 14 (1%)
- Subsidiary Protection: 78 (5%)
- Temporary Humanitarian Protection: 1 (0%)

TOTAL DECISIONS: 1645

First-time Asylum Applicants
Top 5 Nationalities
January - June 2021

- Sudan: 18%
- Somalia: 13%
- Syria: 11%
- Eritrea: 10%
- Bangladesh: 5%

TOTAL APPLICATIONS: 685

International Protection Rates
Refugee Status and Subsidiary Protection
Top 6 nationalities: Jan - Jun 2021

- Libya: 39%; 36%
- Syria: 38%; 35%
- Sudan: 5%; 5
- Eritrea: 4%; 4
- Palestine: 4%; 4
- Others: 9%; 8

While every effort has been made to ensure that all statistical information is accurately presented, for official statistics, please refer to the original sources. These include the Ministry for Home Affairs, Immigration Police, and the International Protection Agency. Some numbers may be rounded off.