Ukraine Refugee Situation

19 April 2022

The war in Ukraine has triggered one of the largest refugee crises on record, with over 5 million people fleeing the country within 8 weeks. Some 7.1 million people in Europe. The situation remains have been displaced internally.

While millions of refugees remain in the countries neighbouring Ukraine, an estimated 2.1 million have continued to other countries highly dynamic.

Local, national and regional partners have rapidly mobilized assistance in support of host government efforts to address the most urgent needs of those fleeing Ukraine.



5,034,439

Refugees have fled Ukraine to neighboring countries since 24 February (as of 19 April)

90%

Of refugees estimated to be women and children

2.1 million

Refugees estimated to have moved to non-neighbouring countries in Europe (as of 19 April)

215,814

Third-country nationals among those fleeing to Moldova, Poland and Slovakia (as of 14 April)

7.7 million

People internally displaced within Ukraine (as of 17 April)

Partners supporting the Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP)

See the Operational Data Portal for the Ukraine Refugee Situation for more details.

Operational Context

Overview

After eight years of armed conflict in eastern Ukraine that had left millions of people in need of humanitarian assistance, the Russian Federation launched a military offensive in Ukraine on 24 February. The subsequent war has triggered one of **the fastest-growing refugee crises since World War II, with more than 5 million people having fled Ukraine into neighbouring countries**. Some 2.1 million people are estimated to have moved on to other countries in the Europe region. Around 90% of the refugee population are women and children.

Governments in neighbouring countries and beyond have welcomed refugees by keeping borders open and with support of local organizations, individuals and humanitarian partners have rapidly mobilized assistance and reception capacity, providing refugees with food, relief items, accommodation, transportation and access to other basic services and support. As the response evolved, partners have, *inter alia*, established protection mechanisms to strengthen the identification and provision of support to the most vulnerable refugees, strengthened communication campaigns to ensure refugees have access to critical information, provided mental health and psychosocial support, worked to identify longer-term reception and accommodation solutions, rolled out cash assistance programmes to support refugees and hosting communities, initiated immunization campaigns to prevent disease outbreaks, and facilitated transfers of refugees to reduce pressure on neighbouring countries as part of regional solidarity efforts

To support these ongoing, government-led response efforts, **inter-agency partners** rapidly scaled up capacity in neighbouring countries, deploying additional staff and resources to bolster existing operations and establishing new offices in locations where there was no operational footprint. New humanitarian hubs and warehouses have been established in strategic locations in the region to support the humanitarian response, including inside Ukraine.

Partnership and Coordination

Coordination structures have been established at regional and country level, in line with the Refugee Coordination Model, in order to support the governments' lead role in the response. A Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) has been developed and is currently under revision; over 140 organizations will contribute for a ten-month period through the end of the year.

Regional Humanitarian Needs and Priorities

The inter-agency response aims to assist government-led efforts by providing technical support to ensure that every refugee has access to safety and international protection, carrying out and expanding protection monitoring and service provision, strengthening reception and accommodation capacity, and ensuring that basic and urgent needs are being met, as well as facilitating socio-economic inclusion and the search for solutions for refugees.

Given that the vast majority of refugees are women and children and that the pace of arrivals in many countries required rapid processing at border entry points, partners have focused on implementing systems to identify and respond to the distinct needs of the most vulnerable persons, including unaccompanied and separated children, older persons, single women and female-headed households, among others, and to counter protection risks including for sexual exploitation and abuse, trafficking and gender-based violence. Thousands of third-country nationals have also fled the war alongside Ukrainian nationals, including some in need of international protection or at risk of statelessness.

Access to information and legal counselling on different pathways to durable legal status, including temporary protection in the European Union, and on how to access humanitarian assistance and public services has emerged as a gap across the region, varying across different locations and countries. In parallel, there is a significant need for translation and interpretation support to facilitate access to protection, health and other essential services.

Due to the unprecedented number of arrivals received in such a short period of time, there are immense pressures on national reception systems in the countries neighbouring Ukraine. Inter-agency assistance is focused on ensuring that public services are well supported and gender- and protection-sensitive, and that refugees continue to have their basic needs met, including for accommodation and transportation, education, health, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene. Local communities, civil society organizations and volunteers, on whom service delivery has heavily relied, require support and capacity-building, including to ensure that volunteerism is conducted in an ethical manner with adequate registration and vetting systems in place. Partners are also working to facilitate an enabling environment for the short and longer-term socio-economic inclusion of refugees, coupled with support to hosting communities.

Humanitarian Response



REGIONAL

UNHCR and UNICEF in collaboration with other partners are jointly rolling out Blue Dot hubs in at least six countries—Czech Republic, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. Over 30 Blue Dot hubs will be established, 12 of which are already operational. The Blue Dots are one-stop shops and safe spaces that provide critical information and a minimum set of protection services for children, families and others with specific needs, in support of existing services and government efforts and allow partners to identify and help persons at-risk. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) is also being integrated into Blue Dot services in coordination with WHO.

Partners are providing integrated protection advice and services and disseminating information materials on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), trafficking, gender-based violence (GBV) and other protection risks, at key locations where refugees transit and stay, including border areas, train stations and reception centres. UNHCR has HELP webpages for Poland, Romania, Moldova, Hungary and Slovakia with access to key information for arrivals.

HUNGARY

- UNHCR, UNICEF and partners are preparing to launch Blue Dot hubs with several locations identified. UNHCR maintains daily presence at Zahony train station and is already piloting components of the Blue Dot initiative at this location.
- From 1 March-1 April, Menedék provided assistance, including MHPSS support and information on temporary protection and related entitlements, to 975 refugees, including 472 children, in Budapest and at the border region. Menedék also supported early integration services, including Hungarian language classes and programmes for children, while mobile teams undertook individual case management for refugees hosted in shelters, providing social counselling and advice on employment, education, and access to health services.
- UNHCR is working with the Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC) to ensure access to legal counselling and representation, as well as community empowerment and sensitization on temporary protection, at border points and other key locations where refugees are staying. From 21 March to 1 April, HHC assisted 434 people, including 250 children, with legal information and assistance, while providing training and capacity-building for humanitarian partners and volunteers.

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

 In support of Moldovan and Romanian authorities, IOM and UNHCR in partnership with ACTED are operating regular fast-track bus transfers for refugees to transit Moldova to reduce pressure in Moldovan border areas. Some 8,700 refugees were supported to transit from Palanca, Moldova, to Husi, Romania, between 1 March and 18 April.

- Moldova is organizing free air and land transportation directly from
 Moldova to European countries under the European Union Solidarity
 Platform. To date, more than 910 people have been supported to
 transfer to Austria, Germany, Latvia and Lithuania. UNHCR assists with identifying
 vulnerable persons interested and willing to travel, UNICEF supports technical teams
 to conduct best interest assessments of children, and IOM assists with medical
 screenings and other travel arrangements.
- UNICEF and UNHCR, in collaboration with authorities and partners including Copil Comunitate Familie (CCF), Terre des Hommes and Partnerships for Every Child, continue to operate five Blue Dots, including one each at the Otaci and Palanca border crossing points with Ukraine, at the Leuseni and Sculeni border points with Romania, and at the Moldexpo reception centre in Chisinau. Over 5,000 children and caregivers have been supported so far at the Blue Dot hubs.
- Law Center of Advocates, ACTED, and INTERSOS are stationed at border crossing points and refugee accommodation centres to provide protection monitoring, vulnerability screenings, and counselling, as well as transportation.
- UNICEF has full-time Child Protection specialists at the Otaci and Palanca border crossing points to improve child protection mechanisms and support authorities.
- IOM has distributed nearly 70,000 leaflets with information on trafficking prevention at border points, transit locations and through authorities.
- UN Women in partnership with the National Coalition 'Life Without Violence' are working on an information campaign on the prevention of violence against women, trafficking and PSEA for women refugees and service providers.
- UNFPA has distributed 8,000 dignity kits to help refugee women and girls maintain proper hygiene after being displaced, while UN Women, UNFPA, and Handicap International are providing assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, to refugees in need.

8,000 dignity kits distributed to refugee women in Moldova

8,700 people

supported on

fast-track

- UNFPA provides capacity-building for health care personnel to apply the Protocol on Clinical Management of Rape in humanitarian situations. Four online workshops are being organized in partnership with the Ministry of Health.
- Members of the GBV Sub-Working Group trained 126 frontline responders on GBV and trafficking prevention, including staff of government authorities, NGOs, UN agencies and volunteers.

POLAND

■ Two Blue Dot hubs are operational in Krakow and Warsaw, each co-located with UNHCR's enrolment site for multipurpose cash assistance, while a Light Blue Dot—which offers the most essential services in key border and transit areas—has been established at the Medyka border crossing point. A fourth Blue Dot hub in Przemyśl at the Tesco Reception Centre, one of Poland's largest reception centres,

- will begin operating on 20 April. UNHCR and UNICEF continue to jointly identify locations, partners and resources for further roll out of Blue Dots.
- UNICEF is working in partnership with the city of Warsaw to reach 15,000 children and 5,500 parents and caregivers with MHPSS, parental/caregiver support, and specialized services to families at risk of separation.
- The PSEA Network has developed a rapid risk assessment tool to map risks and capacities to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). The network is in the process of mapping existing reporting pathways to identify available SEA reporting channels. IOM and UNHCR are developing and delivering trainings on PSEA including for induction of volunteers. Translated information materials on PSEA have been disseminated widely, including at border crossings, reception centres, Blue Dot and cash enrolment points, and online.
- UNICEF has trained civil society partners on PSEA and developed a training package and materials in Polish for frontline staff, including modules on humanitarian and child protection principles and issues such as unaccompanied and separated children, GBV, MHPSS, and PSEA, including codes of conduct and reporting obligations.
- UNHCR has developed and circulated print and digital information materials about the HELP website, anti-fraud and exploitation messages, onward movement, access to international protection in Poland, PSEA, and information on legal stay and resources in Poland. Over 50,000 leaflets have been distributed at border crossing points and reception centres. Materials have also been circulated via social media.
- Banners developed jointly by IOM and UNHCR in Ukrainian and English are posted at entry points into Poland with anti-trafficking messages to raise awareness of immediate risks for self-protection.



IOM and UNHCR-supported buses transferring refugees from Palanca, Moldova, to Huşi, Romania. Photo: IOM.

ROMANIA

- UNICEF and UNHCR have established three Blue Dots in Romania, at border crossing points in Sighet, Siret, and Isaccea.
- UNHCR and its partner the Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) continue to support information and counselling services for refugees, providing 6,053 people with in-person counselling at the eight border crossing points and 7,502 people with information and counselling over the phone as of 18 April.
- Authorities, NGOs, IOM and UNHCR collaborated with Code for Romania to create and continuously update the dopomoha.ro platform to provide information on access to territory, asylum procedures and existing services in Ukrainian, Russian, English and Romanian. Two additional platforms have also been created through this collaboration: Sprijin de Urgenţă, an integrated resource management system for civil society, legal entities and individuals to support the response; and Un Acoperis, to identify accommodation solutions for refugees. Both platforms are managed by the Department for Emergency Situations and centred on improving protection and preventing risks of human trafficking.
- IOM collaborates with the National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons and NGOs from the ProTECT Platform to create, produce and disseminate anti-trafficking information materials at border crossings. IOM also supports information and counselling, referrals, and access to assistance through its call centre.
- IOM maintains constant communication with diplomatic missions and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to assist third-country nationals fleeing Ukraine to Romania. More than 60 requests of assistance were received from third-country nationals, and 40 persons were assisted in returning to their home countries.

SLOVAKIA

- On 4 April, UNICEF commenced training of 287 border guard police and NGO partners on anti-trafficking, identification, and referral of vulnerable children and mothers.
- IOM provided counter-trafficking training on 1 April to 18 partners involved in related awareness raising activities at the Vysne Nemecke BCP. IOM has also provided legal assistance, referrals and information to 1,084 beneficiaries through its Migration Information Centre.



REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Since the launching on 17 March, over 20,000 refugees have been enrolled in UNHCR's multipurpose cash assistance programme (MPCA) for refugees in partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Caritas Moldova and Diakonia. The programme aims to reach **46,300 people** enrolled for UNHCR MPCA in Moldova, Poland & Romania

some 150,000 refugees in the coming months with one-off and monthly grants.

- In parallel, WFP is providing one-off cash assistance to households hosting refugees, in collaboration with the authorities, UNHCR, UNICEF and other partners; as of 12 April, 604 families had received assistance.
- IOM provided MPCA vouchers, which can be redeemed at selected supermarkets throughout the country, to 1,089 refugee and 15 third-country national households across six districts of Moldova between 13 March and 10 April. During voucher distribution, IOM also provides information leaflets on protection risks and resources.

POLAND

- As of 18 April, nearly 25,200 persons have been enrolled in UNHCR's emergency MPCA programme for refugees. The programme launched as a pilot on 11 March in Warsaw, and additional enrolment centres have opened since in Krakow and Warsaw as the programme continues to expand to additional cities. The programme, which aims to reach 120,000 households overall, uses a community-based approach to identify vulnerable refugees and serves as an entry point to other protection services; enrolment sites are co-located with Blue Dot hubs.
- Partners of the Cash Working Group, co-led by UNHCR and Polish Humanitarian Action, have agreed on standard transfer values based on household size to cover basic needs, aligned with Poland's basic subsistence amount, as well as recommended eligibility criteria, for MPCA.



Ten-year-old Eugenia, who uses a wheelchair, arrives at Rzeszow train station in Poland after having fled Kharkiv, Ukraine, with her mother, grandmother and younger sister. Photo: UNHCR.

ROMANIA

• UNHCR launched the MPCA pilot programme in Bucharest on 4 April, enrolling some 1,100 persons as of 18 April. UNHCR is advocating with the Government to ensure enrolment in the MPCA programme is harmonized with issuance of temporary protection documentation, thereby establishing a one-stop shop synergy between these two main protection mechanisms. UNHCR aims to reach 81,000 people with multipurpose cash assistance in the coming months.

SLOVAKIA

The Cash Working Group, co-chaired by UNHCR and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, convenes regularly with consensus recently reached on de-duplication of data sets from different agencies' systems as partners have started to roll out cash assistance.



REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

- With UNICEF's technical support, three child-friendly spaces and three day-camps have been set up in Chisinau addressing socio-emotional learning and recreational needs of refugee children and adolescents
- UNICEF has commenced a national training of trainers (ToT) for teachers on dealing with individual needs of refugee children, preventing bullying and violence, and fostering tolerance and promoting social cohesion and volunteerism among adolescents. The 30 teachers trained will then train 900 school managers and teachers in the coming weeks.
- Plan International provided the Municipality of Chisinau with 500 school bags for distribution to refugee children enrolled in primary and secondary school.

ToT for 30 teachers in Moldova set to reach 900 education staff

UNDP is supporting exams for refugees to validate professional competencies obtained abroad in order to apply for relevant jobs in Moldova, while UNFPA is working with a network of youth centres and civil society organizations to establish non-formal education activities for youth refugees.

POLAND

UNICEF launched a Play and Parenting Support Hub at the PESEL registration site in the National Stadium in Warsaw, offering spaces for early childhood stimulation, learning support and non-formal education, caregiver and parenting support; five animators from Ukraine have been trained.

ROMANIA

UNICEF provided school-in-a-box, backpacks, and early childhood development kits to children at the 'Ostrivets' primary school, which offers classes to about 270 refugee children. UNICEF also provided recreation and early childhood development kits for the Blue Dot in Isaccea.



REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

- The Government of Moldova has established an Emergency Medical Team (EMT) Coordination Cell to coordinate 17 international teams, including WHO EMTs deployed to support primary health care for refugees as directed by the health authorities, as well as MHPSS for refugees and vulnerable populations. Six EMTs were sent to Manej, Palanca, Tudora, Ivancea, Peresecina, and Briceni. Three other EMTs assess refugee health needs at entry points.
- WHO supported the Government to develop an informational flyer on public health advice and the healthcare system in Moldova and services available for refugees. Over 90,000 flyers were distributed in Ukrainian, Russian, and English. WHO has also shipped EUR 800,000 in critical medical supplies to Moldova.

Moldova EMT
Coordination Cell
overseeing 17
international teams

- UNICEF distributed medical kits in Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs) benefitting some 5,000 people, as well as medicine and antibiotics for some 9,000 children. UNICEF has also procured medical equipment for ten regional perinatal centres and supported the Ministry of Health to strengthen the capacity of 400 primary health care workers to vaccinate children, including refugee children.
- UNICEF launched a Mother and Child room at the Palanca border guard station, and a Mother Baby Corner at the Moldexpo RAC to provide a private space for mothers with young children. Additionally, over 10,000 fliers promoting health and nutrition for mother and child were distributed.

ROMANIA

- CARE organized online psychological first aid trainings for more than 300 participants, including volunteers and medical professionals. WHO is also preparing Mental Health First Aid training for health care workers as part of wider MHPSS interventions.
- WHO is providing technical support to the Ministry of Health and partners in the country, such as diagnostic and treatment forecasting tools, and procuring medical devices and consumables for the Sightu Marmatiei hospital, laboratory supplies to enhance poliovirus surveillance, and doses of diphtheria antitoxin.
- IOM has partnered with Synevo to provide a series of free laboratory tests as well as COVID-19 testing for those fleeing Ukraine.



RECEPTION AND BASIC NEEDS

HUNGARY

Between 26 March and 5 April, UNHCR partner Next Step provided over 160 individuals with basic needs assistance including distributing warm meals, core relief items, and MHPSS support. Social counselling was provided on visa and residency procedures as well as advice on accessing accommodation, education, and employment.

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

- The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, in collaboration with UNHCR and partners ACTED and REACH Initiative, has established a data collection process to capture data on refugee accommodation centres (RAC), hosting capacity and needs.
- WFP and partners have provided more than 97,900 hot meals to an average of 2,110 people three times daily in 83 reception centres across 33 localities. Other needs at RACs are being met via humanitarian partners, supporting the ongoing efforts of the Government, volunteers and private citizens. Hygiene kits and other relief commodities have been distributed by CRS, International Medical Corps, UNHCR, UNICEF and World Vision.

97,900 hot meals provided to refugees in reception centres in Moldova

- In total, UNHCR and partners have provided infrastructure and material assistance to 95 RACs; supplies distributed to the country's largest RAC in the Moldexpo facility include blankets, baby kits and respiratory, benefitting some 4,500 persons. UNHCR has also supported facilities at transit hotspots, including border crossing points and train stations, by installing heaters, waiting areas, and toilets and other amenities.
- ILO has assisted the trade unions in providing refugees with accommodation, food, medical, transportation, and information services. The unions have also allocated some of their properties into centres for refugees, and ILO has funded 2,500 days/capacity of lodging and meals for transiting refugees.
- At the direct request of the Ministry of Labour, ILO has also distributed 1,700 meals to an RAC in Chisinau.

POLAND

- Partners are assessing additional accommodation solutions to host refugees, particularly in larger cities. Habitat for Humanity is creating a database of rental units and developing a social rental program in cooperation with the municipality of Warsaw, for longer-term solutions. Our Choice Foundation also runs an accommodation system to match refugees with available housing.
- Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) has opened a transit site at the Warsaw East Railway Station to provide short-stay accommodation and basic assistance, managed by The Polish Center of International Aid (PCPM), local authorities and volunteers.

 UNHCR has distributed some 1,000 high thermal blankets at border points in Poland and is preparing to supply relief items to identified reception centres in main cities including Krakow and Warsaw.

ROMANIA

- CARE and SERA Romania provided relief commodities, including items for infants, heaters, hygiene supplies, for distribution in the collective centre in Isaccea. The NGOs also provided furniture and services to rehabilitate the Suceava collective centre.
- IOM has partnered with Edenred Romania to provide social vouchers to Ukrainians fleeing the conflict to cover basic needs, while UNICEF has procured hygiene supplies, children's clothing and blankets for distribution to those in need.
- The Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works pre-positioned 202 newly built and unfurnished social housing units for the accommodation of Ukrainian refugees across the country. UNHCR successfully advocated with IKEA to furnish all housing units.

SLOVAKIA

The Basic Needs Sector is mapping all accommodation sites and working on rolling out a systematized Site Monitoring Tool with the Government.



Donations for Şerban Vodă Temporary Emergency Shelter in Bucharest. Photo: IOM



LIVELIHOODS AND INCLUSION

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

UNDP is cooperating with local communities and hometown associations (HTAs) engaged in national efforts to support Ukrainian refugees. Over 40 HTAs are part of the "My locality for peace" group and have facilitated diaspora contributions of over USD 55,000 to benefit more than 7,000 refugees accommodated in these localities.



A mother and her two daughters arrive in Poland at the Medyka crossing. Photo: UNHCR/Maciej Moskwa



REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

- ACTED, WFP and UNHCR are establishing a virtual platform to centralize planning and tracking of government and partner aid deliveries. The platform will also facilitate mapping of various locations for assistance and delivery. WFP and UNHCR have both established warehouses near Chişinău. Plan International has established a warehouse in Stefan Voda.
- WFP and partners continue to support the logistics needs of humanitarian partners in Moldova. As many deliveries are to small villages or remote locations, WFP has increased its fleet and deployed lighter vehicles better suited to the roads.

POLAND

 UNHCR established a warehouse for humanitarian partners in Rzeszow, near the Ukraine border. As of 18 April, more than 110 trucks have travelled from Rzeszow to Ukraine to dispatch hundreds of thousands of core relief items and donations from the private sector, including high thermal blankets, kitchen sets, solar lamps, winter jackets, sleeping bags, mattresses, towels, and clothes, as well as generators and power heaters to support growing needs in Ukraine.

Working in partnership

- UNHCR has activated the Refugee Coordination Model, with Refugee Coordination Forums (RCFs) in place in Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia in support of government-led efforts. RCFs focus on intersectoral issues, with other thematic and sectoral forums established depending on the needs of the respective contexts, as outlined below.
- At the Regional level, a regional RCF has been established, as well as regional working groups (Cash, Protection, and Socioeconomic Inclusion), a Gender Task Force and an Information Management and Analysis Cell. A Child Protection Sub-Working Group is also slated to launch soon. Additional mechanisms will be mobilized as the situation and coordination needs evolve.
- In Hungary, in addition to the RCF, four working groups (Basic Needs, Cash, Health, and Refugee Protection, which includes GBV); one sub-working group (Child Protection); and two cross-cutting task forces (MHPSS and PSEA).
- In the Republic of Moldova, in support of the Government's Single Emergency Management Center, inter-agency partners have established an RCF; eight working groups (Protection, Education, Accommodation and Transportation, Cash, Health and Nutrition, Logistics and Supply, Information Management, and Livelihood and Inclusion); two sub-working groups under protection (Child Protection and Genderbased Violence); a PSEA Network; and a Gender Task Force.
- In Poland, in addition to the RCF, the refugee coordination architecture comprises five sectors (Basic Needs, Education, Protection, Health, and Logistics), six working groups (Accountability to Affected Populations, Cash, Counter-trafficking, Information Management, MHPSS and Third-Country Nationals), two sub-working groups under Protection and Health (Child Protection and GBV), a PSEA Network, and a national NGO Forum.
- In Romania, inter-agency partners have established an RCF; six working groups (Basic Needs, Cash, Information Management, Logistics, Health and Protection); two subworking groups (Child Protection and GBV); and a PSEA Network.
- In Slovakia, a response-wide RCF is in place in addition to an RCF for the East, and six working groups and sub-working groups (Cash, Child Protection, Health, Information Management, MHPSS, Protection and Inclusion) as well as a PSEA Network. A Humanitarian and Development Donor Group also meets regularly.