



# Hungary

June – September 2022

Hungary continues to have an overall open border policy for entry of Ukrainians and is both a transit and destination country. While applications for Temporary Protection continue, there is a noticeable slowdown in numbers of applicants, with around 29,000 Temporary Protection applications submitted by the end of August 2022.

The Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) facilitated by UNHCR is in place in Hungary alongside several Working Groups and Task Forces on key areas such as Protection, Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS) and Basic Needs. Hungary is also part of the Regional Refugee Response Plan, with 22 partners.

Working Groups and partners continue to identify key gaps and concerns related to the Ukraine response, notably access to accommodation, enrolment in education, and additional needs for winter. After over six months of conflict, savings have been depleted and with high inflation and energy prices in Hungary costs are increasing.

## KEY FIGURES\*

**7 M**

Refugees who have fled Ukraine since 24 February (as of 31 August)

**2.5 M**

Total border crossings into Hungary (as of 31 August)

**29,000**

Temporary Protection applications have been submitted

**69%**

Of refugees are women and children

**18,401**

Individuals supported in accessing protection and documentation\*

## REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN (RRP) FOR THE UKRAINE SITUATION\*\*

**USD 1.85 B**

Overall financial requirements

**1.31 B**

Funding received

**71%**

Percent funded

**USD 105 M**

Financial requirements for the Hungary response

**22**

Partners involved in the Hungary response

\*See the [Operational Data Portal for the Ukraine Refugee Situation](#) and the [Hungary portal page](#) for more details on refugee population figures and information resources. \*\*See the [Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan](#) for a breakdown of sectoral response priorities and requirements and the [Refugee Funding Tracker](#) for RRP funding information.

This report was produced by UNHCR in collaboration with inter-agency partners.



Ukrainian refugees receiving Hungarian Language Classes through Hungarian Baptist Aid in Budapest  
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### Operational context

29,000 Ukrainians have applied for Temporary Protection in Hungary, with 25,000 granted status by the end of August 2022. While border crossing numbers into Hungary have been high at over 2 million since the start of the conflict in February 2022, these include pendular or onward movements, with weekly numbers slowing steadily since May 2022. Similar to border crossings, applications for Temporary Protection have also gradually slowed down.<sup>1</sup> While a large number of displaced individuals have moved onwards to other EU countries, it is likely that those registering for Temporary Protection in Hungary only represent a proportion of those present in the country, as Ukrainian refugees may enter and reside in Hungary via a diverse set of legal mechanisms. It is expected that refugee flows into Hungary will continue due to the ongoing conflict inside Ukraine, with an increased number of new arrivals in case of any significant escalation. In addition, possible displacements into Hungary tied to the winter season and related inadequate shelter and fuel shortages, particularly in the Ukrainian Transcarpathia region bordering Hungary, are anticipated, creating more pressure on service providers, accommodation capacities and education services.

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<sup>1</sup> source: *The Hungarian National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing*

## Achievements

- The coordination structure in Hungary has been set up and continues to function, with a focus on basic needs and protection, including child protection and gender-based violence, mental health and psychosocial support, education, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. Combined these bring together over 70 civil society, non – governmental, UN agencies, refugee led organizations, movements and organizations. Help points, blue dot hubs (the “Blue Dot Hubs” are one-stop safe spaces equipped to provide information, counselling, mental health and psychosocial support, legal aid and protection services for refugees), and information and community centres have been created with innovative communication channels, such as Telegram, Chatbot, and QR Self-Service Feedback.
- An interagency country wide Gender Based Violence and Mental Health Psycho Social Support (MHPSS) referral pathway were finalized, while others are underway. Community-led summer camp activities were delivered in Budapest, and other parts of the country, with staff and volunteers capacitated on child-focused safeguarding procedures. Mental health and psychosocial support services are being coordinated with necessary information exchange service providers, including best practices and identification of service gaps across the country. Faith-based organizations and NGOs were central from the outset of the response in channeling donations and support from the Hungarian community towards refugees, in the form of food, hygiene kits, clothing, products for babies, and accommodation, both to refugees transiting through the country as well as those remaining for more extended stays. Finally, refugee-led organizations, were able to reach out successfully to the refugee community in Hungary, collecting and referring needs.
- The recalibration process for the 2022 Hungary Refugee Response Plan was launched in August within the Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) framework. The key strategic elements of the recalibration were collected from partners through the already established working groups<sup>2</sup> based on discussions held over two months. The amendments take into consideration the needs related to the winter season, such winter Non-Food Items (NFIs), cash and voucher programs, short- and long-term accommodation, winter repair/insulation/infrastructure improvement of collective shelters and private accommodations, and procurement/distribution capacities. Access to education for refugee children and adolescents in the national system and the implications of key EU and national directives on school enrollment and related challenges were also included. Refugee communities were engaged in the process, through Focus Group Discussions organized by RCF partners to better understand needs around access to protection, winter, and basic needs. The UNHCR coordination unit also launched the *ActivityInfo* tool to systematically collect data on the activities of partners based on a set of indicators agreed at the Working Groups level as part of the RRP monitoring framework. 24 focal points of 17 organizations were trained on data collection tool and the first round of data was collected in August and reflected in this update.

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<sup>2</sup> The RCF, the Basic Needs Working Group (BNWG), the Protection Working Group (PWG), the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), the Child Protection Sector Working Group (CPSWG), the Mental Health Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS) and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Task Forces



## PROTECTION

### Achievements and Impact

- The Protection Working Group (PWG) met regularly during the reporting period, allowing knowledge exchange, and sharing of good practices and developments. The meetings also allowed enhanced networking and coordination among the various organizations that provide legal assistance, including legal aid and representation, counseling, information provision, and para-legal work, with a view to improving access to rights and services.
- Members of the PWG delivered joint training for at least 100 service providers on legal frameworks and Temporary Protection in Budapest Helps! community center and at key border points.
- Nearly 60 participants were reached with capacity building activities on GBV, targeting non-specialized front line workers and volunteers from various organizations, including refugee-led community-based organizations. The outreach also included dissemination of the “Do’s and Don’ts Tip Sheet” for volunteers and frontline responders, to ensure GBV disclosures are being handled safely and the “Do No Harm Principle” is respected.
- To ensure effective referrals of GBV survivors, Women Led Organizations specialized in GBV response provided a presentation on their activities to Working Group members, which increased avenues for referrals across the members receiving cases.
- Service mapping and referral pathways were initiated within Child Protection partners, which are being further refined, as services and needs are changing. Agencies are providing case management, PSS to children of different age categories. To enhance referrals between the agencies, regular participants as well as new agencies were invited to present their portfolios and how they are receiving referrals, while training on the national Child Protection system was provided by Hungarian partners.



*Hungarian Inter Church Aid staff provide assistance in their support centre for Ukrainian refugees © Hungarian Inter Church Aid*

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Supporting timely and person-centred access to protection, safety, and other forms of assistance or inclusion services, including through quality, accessible information, remains a priority. This applies both to people staying in Hungary or people moving onward to other countries.
- There is a need to advocate for timely registration and to support national authorities to implement comprehensive and systematic procedures to register arrivals and identify persons with specific needs as soon as possible after arrival, and work with EU institutions on regional initiatives aimed at



strengthening the same. Within this process, there is a need of screening for vulnerabilities and specific needs, to then provide a tailored approach for vulnerable groups.

- Key gaps in identifying and responding to trafficking remain – this includes reducing the risks of trafficking in persons by addressing the risk factors of trafficking across sectors, including by ensuring timely access to quality information, safe accommodation, legal employment; ensuring safe and unconditional access to quality multi-sectoral response and protection for victims of trafficking, by strengthening existing systems at national level; raising awareness about the risk of trafficking, including on the risk of labour exploitation, among the refugee population.
- Overall, services are focused on Budapest - there is a need to conduct service mapping and update the referral pathway accordingly focusing on mapping of safe entry points where survivors can be referred to services beyond the capital.



## EDUCATION

### Achievements and Impact

- Due to the high need of coordination on Education, a separate Education Working Group was established which is co-chaired between UNICEF and UNHCR, with bi-monthly meetings.
- During the reporting period, many agencies focused on supporting children with the enrolment into the national public school system.



- Until the end of August 2022, over 3,000 children were reached through summer camp activities and other non-formal education initiatives across the country by partners of the Education Sub-Working Group.

#### **Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps**

- School enrolment and school participation is very challenging. School enrolment is compulsory in Hungary, however despite Government support efforts, language remains a key barrier along with school capacity to take additional students. Educational support programmes and language courses are mainly focused in Budapest with limited capacities to implement projects in other counties.
- There is a lack of catch-up classes for dual national children who might not have attended school systematically in Ukraine, and a need for sessions targeting parents of children that did not attend school to better understand needs and encourage enrollment.

#### **Mental Health Psycho Social Support (MHPSS)**

##### **Achievements and Impact**

- The MHPSS Task Force Co-Chairs and members identified and defined seven key MHPSS activities to be reported on under the Refugee Response Plan: awareness raising, PSS, basic counseling, specialized MHPSS, referrals, trainings, and assessment were selected to see the MHPSS response aligned with IASC standards.
- Until the end of August MHPSS partners conducted over 21,000 counselling sessions with refugees in Hungary in several locations across the country, mostly in Zahony and in Budapest. In addition to individual counselling, partners organized group counselling sessions and referred to specialized MHPSS services the most serious cases in need of support.
- Two Rapid MHPSS Service Mappings were conducted by the MHPSS WG among partners. According to the findings, the most common activities provided in the field are psychological first aid, awareness raising sessions on MHPSS, basic counselling, strengthening family support and referrals. Ukrainian refugees, children, MHPSS Professional/staff, 3rd country nationals, and elderly people are the most common target populations that MHPSS actors are providing the services in the field.

##### **Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps**

- Based on the findings of the two Rapid MHPSS Service Mapping, the main gap is lack of a long term and sustainable MHPSS strategy to respond to the needs of people coming from Ukraine. In addition, lack of funding for MHPSS projects and difficulties in finding experienced and specialized MHPSS staff such as psychiatrists, clinical psychologist, social workers also pose a challenge.
- Language barrier is one of the main challenges for service provision and coordination. NGOs have limited capacity for interpreters, and it is difficult to meet the needs of the refugees.



### Achievements and Impact

- Over 110 accommodation sites – including collective sites, worker’s hostels, NGO, or church-run centers – were visited by partners where approximately 3,300 people are accommodated.
- As of August, over 42.000 refugees have been provided with emergency basic items, mainly in transit/entry points, collective sites and rented accommodations in Budapest by 16 partners; the items provided included hygiene kits and other essential items.
- In August 2022 through the BNWG, organizations running a humanitarian centre or hub in Budapest were gathered to map and coordinate interventions. The map shows the location of the organizations, the services available, and the contact details and serves as a basis for improved referral.
- As part of winterization planning, 14 organizations were consulted to understand the current distribution capacity and winterization plans. Assistance for winter mainly focuses on the distribution of warm clothes, food (hot meals and food items), other non-food items. Winter needs of refugees have been discussed in the BNWGs and with refugees, through consultations in several locations across Hungary. Combined, partners reported distribution capacities of up to 5,000 people. Further mapping exercises are planned for the month of October to support winter response and contingency preparedness
- As part of winter planning, a set of Focus Group Discussions were organized by UNHCR with refugees. Of around 60 respondents, all interviewed respondents answered that they do not plan to go to third countries or to return to Ukraine until the situation in their cities of residence is stabilized. Of those interviewed, 13 lived in rented accommodation. Several families who rent noted that as they had run out of savings, they would have to seek a space in a communal shelter in the coming weeks. Furthermore, many refugees who rented noted that they did not know how much longer they would be able to pay the rent as they were running out of money. Families living with family/relatives in their accommodation noted that host families are experiencing financial difficulties as they have accommodated refugees and may soon face the issue of finding other accommodation.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Major gaps identified at the accommodation sites include lack of long-term accommodation and accommodation that is suitable for winter (insulated, has proper heating system); frequent problems with the lack of privacy or over-crowdedness; absence of protection services and adequate information provision; insufficient food provision or bad quality food, and the need for more humanitarian assistance and social counselling.
- Main risks and concerns with regard to the housing of refugees include existing uncertainty about continued state subsidy for officially designated shelters and sharply rising rental and utility costs are expected to put significant strain on existing solutions.



## Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

### Achievements and Impact

- The established Interagency PSEA Task Force provides a platform for knowledge and experience sharing among participating organizations. The formalization of a joint Action Plan, standards on complaint and reporting mechanisms and support on the development of internal safeguarding protocols were among the issues addressed by members.
- The PSEA Network strengthened the awareness on PSEA and capacity of NGOs and UN agency staff, and through joint work PSEA Network at least 130 staff were trained by UNHCR across the country.
- Community engagement was likewise prioritized, with PSEA visibility and information material targeting PoC and aid providers (posters, flyers, Stay Safe campaign messaging) disseminated by partners and made available at key locations.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Sexual exploitation and abuse remain key concerns, within all humanitarian response. The combination of the refugee population demographic characteristics (large presence of single caregivers, families with one or more persons with specific needs, family separation) and large numbers of newly recruited staff or volunteers involved in the response create additional risk factors. Furthermore, refugees' depleting financial resources and livelihoods ahead of a difficult winter exacerbate individual vulnerabilities and risks linked to trafficking, abuse and exploitation.
- Reliable participation of key actors in interagency coordination efforts remains critical to ensure that collective effort to eradicate SEA is steadily upheld. The established PSEA TF focuses on supporting organizations to establish or beef up technical internal capacities and systems, as well as on establishing Inter Agency Community Based Complaints Mechanisms for PSEA.

## Working in partnership

The Refugee Response Plan highlights the needs of 22 partners working in Hungary: Faith Based Organization (FBO) - Caritas Hungarica, FBO - Evangélikus Diakónia, FBO - Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship (MET) and Oltalom Charity Society (OKE), FBO - Hungarian Interchurch Aid, FBO - Hungarian Reformed Church Aid, FBO -Hungarian Baptist Aid, INGO - Cesvi – Participatory Foundation and NGO, INGO - Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), INGO - Trauma Center, NGO - Budapest Methodological Social Center (BMSZKI), NGO - Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta, NGO - Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, NGO - Migration Aid, RC - Hungarian Red Cross, UN-FAO, UN-IOM, UN-UNESCO, UN-UNFPA, UN-UNHCR, UN-UNICEF, UN-WFP, UN-WHO.

In addition, the Refugee Coordination Forum includes over 70 civil society organizations, national and international NGOs, refugee-led organizations, Red Cross societies, UN Agencies, charities other faith-based organizations, private companies, donors, Municipalities, all directly engaged in the response.

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**LINKS:** [REGIONAL DATA PORTAL](#) – [HUNGARY PORTAL](#) – [UKRAINE SITUATION RRP](#) – [REFUGEE FUNDING TRACKER](#)