

Poland

01 January 2023

Over **1.5 million refugees** from Ukraine have registered in Poland for Temporary Protection. Some registrations were deactivated subsequently, as their holders left Poland for more than 30 days, bringing the number of active PESEL registrations by the end of December to 956,397, according to GoP data ([LINK](#)).

UNHCR is supporting government-led efforts through a multisectoral response focusing on **ensuring access to asylum and protection, assisting the most vulnerable refugees, and facilitating socio-economic inclusion.**

UNHCR and partners are at **border crossing points and in refugee-hosting areas** to provide information on rights and services, to identify and support vulnerable refugees, to reinforce the reception capacities and support longer-term solutions.

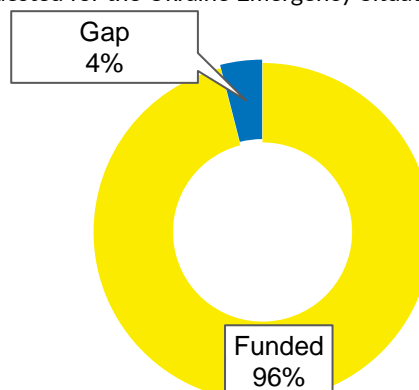
KEY FIGURES

- **42,151** refugees received protection support and information at **05** UNHCR-UNICEF Blue Dots and **06** Community Centres.
- **300,531** vulnerable refugees enrolled in UNHCR's targeted cash assistance programme since its start in 2022. (283,515 refugees assisted in the first phase of cash assistance, from March to September 2022 and 17,016 in the highly targeted programme).
- **42,787** protection monitoring and profiling interviews conducted with refugees.
- **1,169,574** core relief items (CRIs) were delivered to authorities and partners.

FUNDING (AS OF 27 DECEMBER 2022, FOR 2022 PROGRAMMES)

US\$ 211.2 M

requested for the Ukraine Emergency Situation for Poland



STAFFING & OFFICES

133 international and national staff
05 offices (02 in Warsaw, 01 Krakow, 01 Rzeszow and 01 Lublin).

Overview

Since the start of the military offensive in Ukraine, Poland transformed within weeks from a country hosting relatively few refugees into one of the main refugee-hosting countries in the world.

Refugee arrivals are expected to continue as the situation remains uncertain in Ukraine, with large scale displacement and destruction, as well as harsh winter conditions. Some refugees have moved on in Europe and elsewhere, but large numbers of refugees from Ukraine remain in Poland.

UNHCR has boosted its presence and response to provide targeted protection services, cash assistance and other types of support in line with the Government-led efforts.



Job Fair in Krakow. ©UNHCR/Agata Goli.

Main Activities

In close collaboration with government and local authorities, United Nations agencies, partners, and civil society organisations, UNHCR undertakes the following activities:



Protection

UNHCR supports the efforts of the Government and local authorities to provide essential services and assistance to refugees from Ukraine and elsewhere. UNHCR provides a wide spectrum of protection activities and services, with particular attention paid to persons with specific needs. These include, among others:

- **Advocacy:** UNHCR coordinates its response with the authorities and advocates for equal access of all refugees to asylum procedures and their inclusion (particularly those with specific needs) in Poland's national social protection system.
- **Access to reliable, timely and comprehensive information,** including on available services and how to receive support.
- **Child Protection activities:** including child-friendly spaces, psycho-social support and specialised services for children at risk and those with specific needs.
- **Legal counselling and assistance:** through a network of legal partners in major cities in Poland, to assist with access to temporary protection, access to employment and social integration, social and financial benefits, residency and documentation, and legalisation of stay, among others.
- **Mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS):** In group or individual activities, including counselling, recreational activities and referrals to specialised services.
- **Protection monitoring and profiling:** UNHCR is strengthening outreach and active identification of persons with specific needs through a network of over 30 protection monitors across Poland's main cities. As of 1 January, UNHCR and partner (REACH) conducted **42,787** protection monitoring and profiling interviews in 13 Voivodeships (Dolnoslaskie, Wielkopolskie, Malopolskie, Lubelskie, Mazowieckie, Podkarpackie, Pomorskie, Podlaskie, Opolskie, Lubuskie, Lodzkie, Slaskie and Zachodniopomorskie).
- **Community-based protection activities:** Mainly provided through the five **UNHCR-UNICEF Blue Dots** and six **UNHCR Community Centres**. Those serve as one-stop shops providing a variety of targeted protection activities and enhancing the concept of community participation. They are also a space for community-driven initiatives, with a focus on activities promoting social cohesion. Both Blue Dots and Community Centres are located in areas with a high concentration of refugees, ensuring appropriate outreach to the refugee community. In addition, there are **six mobile outreach teams** (connected to the community centres) to reach refugees with specific needs and in remote areas. As of 01 January 2023, **42,151** refugees benefitted from protection services offered at the Blue Dots and Community Centres and **6,015** referrals were carried out to appropriate services.



Socio-Economic Inclusion

UNHCR plays a catalyst role, supporting the socio-economic inclusion of refugees by connecting them to job opportunities, enhancing their self-reliance. In 2022, UNHCR held coordination meetings with authorities, stakeholders and potential employers, and carried out competency analysis for refugees from Ukraine who seek jobs in Poland. For instance, **UNHCR, in coordination with local authorities and partners, co-organised three job fairs** in Warsaw, Krakow and Lublin. Over 150 companies and NGOs participated in the job fairs and were attended by **2,000** job seekers. The Press Release can be accessed [HERE](#). Also, **UNHCR supported refugee initiatives to enhance their self-reliance** through organizing Christmas markets during the month of December in Krakow, Lublin and Rzeszow, where refugees had the chance to present and sell their handmade products.



Information and Communication with Refugee Community

To address critical gaps in information, UNHCR disseminates accurate information to refugees. This is done through the **Poland page on the UNHCR HELP website** (set up quickly at the onset of the emergency and available in English, Polish and Ukrainian and received **5,807,410** page views and **2,707,495** visits as of 01 January), **leaflets and posters** with reliable and accurate information on available services distributed at border points, in reception centres and urban areas, as well as on **social media platforms** (Facebook and Twitter). In addition, a **UNHCR counselling line** addresses questions on protection and other forms of assistance, operating in four languages (English, Polish, Ukrainian and Russian). As of 01 January, **30,000** calls were received.



Cash Assistance

Cash assistance is one of the most efficient and effective ways to support people forced to flee as it respects their dignity of choice, allowing them to decide on what they need most to support their families. Since the start of the cash assistance programme in 2022, over **300,000 refugees** have been enrolled, including in the multi-purpose cash assistance (provided to help refugees meet their urgent needs until they could access state support or work), and the highly targeted cash assistance programme (provided to some of the most vulnerable refugees who met the vulnerability criteria).



Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Anti-Trafficking

UNHCR co-leads the PSEA Network with Plan International. One of its objectives is to mainstream PSEA in all humanitarian activities provided to refugees. **UNHCR conducts awareness-raising sessions on PSEA and anti-trafficking** with refugees, partners and government officials **through training and disseminating information, education and communication materials in English, Ukrainian, and Polish.**

As of 01 January, a total of **769** humanitarian workers and staff members from UNHCR, partners and authorities benefitted from training sessions on PSEA.



Accommodation

In coordination with local authorities, UNHCR partners CORE and PCPM finalised the thermal upgrades and minor repairs for **12 shelters** in the Podkarpackie and Lubelskie regions (border areas with Ukraine in the southeast of Poland), with an accommodation capacity of **2,076 individuals**, that can be used as shelters to host refugees from Ukraine and provide them with protection from the elements during the harsh winter conditions. In addition, UNHCR is coordinating, through the Shelter Working Group and utilizing the sector referral mechanism, the requests for emergency short to medium-term accommodation.



Supplies

UNHCR supports the Government of Poland and local authorities with emergency supplies to strengthen reception capacities and respond to the refugees' urgent needs. **As of 1 January, 1,169,574 essential and core relief items such as face masks, winter jackets, winter clothes, mattresses, bed linen, blankets, hygiene kits and towels have been dispatched and delivered, mostly to regionals and local authorities.**



Working with partners

UNHCR works with 12 international and national partners to respond to the most pressing needs of refugees in Poland. These include ACTED/REACH, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Halina Nieć Legal Aid Centre, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), International Medical Corps (IMC), Première Urgence Internationale (PUI), the Polish Centre for International Aid (PCPM) and the Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej (Association for Legal Intervention, SIP), CORE, PRO FIL, Centrum Praw Kobiet (CPK), and Centrum Wolontariatu (House of Hope). Jointly, UNHCR and these partners are working with a number of grassroots local organisations.

UNHCR leads the refugee coordination structure in Poland in support of the Government-led response. The thematic sectors include Protection (covering also Child Protection, Gender-based Violence and Counter-trafficking and Third-Country Nationals), Health, Education and Socio-Economic Inclusion. In addition, there are four working groups on Basic Needs, Cash, Information Management and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP). The coordination structure aims at complementing, supporting and strengthening the national response to the refugee crisis in Poland. Updated information on coordination and response is available on the [UNHCR Poland Data Portal](#), including through dedicated pages for each Sector/Working Group.

Donors

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.



And to organisations and private sector partners from:



For more information:

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LINKS

[Ukraine Emergency Situation Page](#) - [Data Portal Poland](#) - [Facebook](#) - [Twitter](#)