

# Poland

01 May 2023

Nearly **1.6 million refugees** from Ukraine have registered in Poland for Temporary Protection. Some registrations were deactivated, often as their holders left Poland for more than 30 days, bringing the number of active PESEL registrations to **994,032**, according to GoP data ([LINK](#)).

UNHCR coordinates the response of **83 organizations** in Poland under the Regional Refugee Response Plan. More than half of them are Polish civil society organizations.

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.**

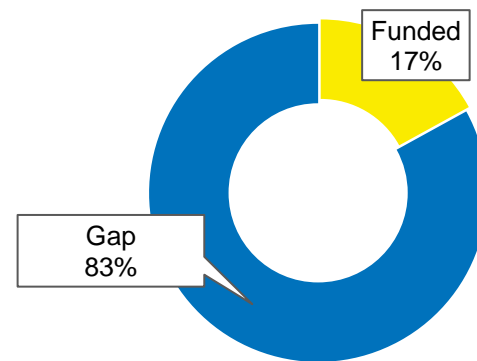
## KEY FIGURES

- **11,461** refugees received protection support and information at **05** UNHCR-UNICEF Blue Dots and **07** Community Centres in 2023.
- **13,921** vulnerable refugees received targeted cash assistance in 2023.
- **12,156** protection monitoring and profiling interviews were conducted in 2023.
- **62,383** core relief items (CRIs) were delivered in 2023.

## FUNDING (AS OF 27 APRIL 2023)

# US\$ 102.9 M

requested for the Ukraine Emergency Situation for Poland



## STAFFING & OFFICES

**132** international and national staff  
**5** offices (2 in Warsaw, 1 Krakow, 1 Rzeszow and 1 Lublin).

## Overview

Since 2022, due to the war in Ukraine, Poland has transformed from a country hosting relatively few refugees into one of the world's main refugee-hosting countries.

Refugee arrivals reduced in 2023 but were expected to continue as the situation in Ukraine remains volatile, with widespread displacement and destruction. Some refugees have moved on in Europe and elsewhere, but large numbers of refugees from Ukraine remain in Poland. UNHCR has strategically positioned itself, boosting its presence and response to meet humanitarian needs on the ground, while also leading the coordination of national and international partners within the Regional Refugee Response Plan framework, in line with the Government-led efforts.



UNHCR at the Job Fair in Siedlce, Masovian Voivodeship. 21 April 2023. ©UNHCR/Rafał Kostrzynski.

## Main Activities



### Coordination: Working Together

UNHCR is playing a central role in shaping a comprehensive and coordinated response by closely collaborating with the Government, local authorities, national and international NGOs, grassroots organizations and United Nations sister agencies. Using the Refugee Coordination Model, UNHCR leads the coordination efforts of 83 partners (63% are national and local organisations) to implement the **2023 Ukraine Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP)**, which seeks to secure **\$709.4 M**, through five sectors (Protection, Health, Education, Economic Inclusion, Shelter/Housing/Accommodation) and four main working groups (Information Management, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)/Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), Basic Needs and Cash Based intervention), demonstrating UNHCR's catalytic role in mobilizing and leveraging resources. UNHCR co-organised regular coordination meetings at central and regional level in the Masovian, Malopolska, Podkarpackie and Lubelskie Voivodeships (administrative regions), within the framework of the RRP.



### Protection and Advocacy: Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities

UNHCR is at the forefront of advocating for refugees' rights, striving for equal access to asylum procedures and inclusion in Poland's national social protection system. UNHCR's advocacy work is key in ensuring that the protection and rights of refugees are upheld, and their specific needs are addressed. Key protection activities include:

- **Legal counselling and assistance** are provided to refugees through a network of legal partners in major cities 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. As of 01 May, more than **6,270 refugees** received legal aid in 2023.
- **Mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS)** is provided in group or individual activities, including counselling, recreational activities, and referrals to specialised services. As of 01 May, some **569 refugees** benefited from MHPSS services.
- **Child Protection activities** are provided through child-friendly spaces, psycho-social support and specialised services for children at risk and those with specific needs. As of 01 May, some **1,248 refugee children** benefited from child protection services.
- **Protection monitoring and profiling** enhances evidence-based protection interventions through the documentation of needs, intentions and protection considerations. It also strengthens the active identification of persons with specific needs and facilitates the timely interventions. This is done through a network of over 40 protection monitors based in Poland's main cities. As of 1 May, UNHCR and partners conducted **12,156** 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** are mainly provided through the **five UNHCR-UNICEF Blue Dots and seven UNHCR Community Centres**. They 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. In addition, there are **several mobile outreach teams** (connected to the community centres and UNHCR Field and Sub Offices) to reach refugees with specific needs and in remote areas. As of 01 May 2023, **11,673 refugees** benefitted from protection services offered at the Blue Dots and Community Centres.



### Education and Health: Building Foundations for the Future

Recognizing the importance of education and health in providing a foundation for refugees' future, UNHCR Poland works to ensure refugees have access to these vital services. Through its strategic coordination role, UNHCR, together with the RRP partners, advocates for the inclusion of refugee children in local education systems, through the Education Working Group (led by UNICEF), while also ensuring refugees have access to health services through the Health, Emergency Medical Team and Nutrition Sector. Furthermore, through the MHPSS Technical Working Group, UNHCR leads efforts together with WHO to ensure access to specialised Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services and to strengthen the actors' response.



### Economic Inclusion: Providing access to opportunities and promoting self-reliance.

UNHCR supports government initiatives to enhance refugees' access to employment, thus **fostering their socio-economic inclusion**. In addition to coordinating inclusion activities and linking different initiatives, UNHCR connects refugees to potential employers, **supporting their journey towards economic stability and self-reliance**. In 2023, **UNHCR has participated in and supported organising job fairs in seven voivodeships**. These job fairs were attended by **more than 5,200 job seekers, both refugees and members of the host community**.



### Information Dissemination and Communication: Bridging Information Gaps

UNHCR actively addresses critical information gaps by providing refugees with accurate and timely information. This is achieved through various platforms, including the **UNHCR HELP website** (available in English, Polish and Ukrainian and received 224,432 page views and 130,523 visits as of 01 May), **leaflets, posters, and social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter)**. The **Regional Contact Centre (RCC)** enhances the communication with communities, providing a direct line for refugees to obtain information and access specialised services through a referral system. The RCC is a toll-free mechanism (800 012 948) and allows to report cases of misconduct and fraud. As of 01 May, **13,851 calls** were received, 94% of them were about the cash programme, followed by legal assistance, medical aid, and accommodation.



### Cash Assistance: Empowering Dignity of Choice

**UNHCR advocates for refugees' basic rights, empowering them with the dignity of choice. Cash assistance is one of the most efficient and effective ways to support people forced to flee**, allowing them to decide on what they need most to support their families' basic needs. As of 01 May, **13,921 vulnerable refugees** have received cash assistance under the highly targeted UNHCR cash programme since the beginning of the year. In 2022, 290,000 refugees were supported with cash assistance.



### Supplies: Meeting Immediate Needs

UNHCR supports the Government of Poland and local authorities with emergency supplies to strengthen reception capacities and preparedness while responding to refugees' urgent needs. As of 1 May and since the beginning of the year, **62,383** essential and core relief items such as face masks, clothes, mattresses, bed linen, blankets, hygiene kits and towels have been distributed or provided to regional and local authorities and partners.

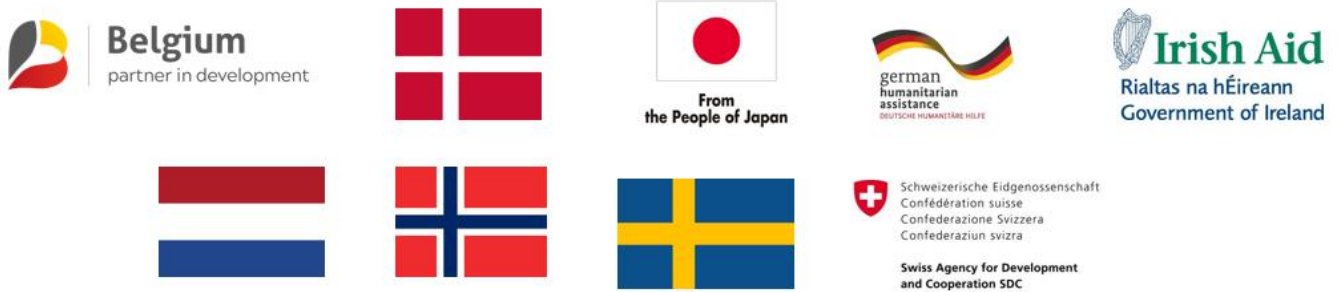


## Partnerships and Collaboration: Enhancing Capacity through Cooperation

**UNHCR engages in strategic partnerships, working with nine international and national partners**, each of them contributing with unique capabilities and resources, to respond to the most pressing needs of refugees in Poland. These include the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Halina Nieć Legal Aid Centre, the Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej (Association for Legal Intervention, SIP), CORE, Centrum Praw Kobiet (Centre for Women's Rights, CPK), the Polish Red Cross (PRC), Caritas, Fundacja Dajemy Dzieciom Siłę (Empowering Children Foundation, FDDS), and Habitat for Humanity. Jointly, UNHCR and these partners are working with a number of local grassroots organisations.

## Donors

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation in 2023 as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.



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