The Refugee Coordination Forum expanded partnerships with key government departments and civil society actors, including Roma-led groups and organizations supporting persons with disabilities. Donors and funding organizations were also engaged in exploring funding opportunities for the Refugee Response Plan. These collaborative efforts aim to enhance the overall humanitarian response to the needs and protection risks faced by vulnerable refugee groups.

World Refugee Day was commemorated in Budapest on 22nd June with a music and dance event at the House of Music; there were over 250 guests, including government, UN agencies, embassies, and partners. Refugee artists performed, and a family event by the Refugee-Led Organization Unity took place. The events aimed at celebrating the resilience of refugees and raising awareness among the host community of the positive contribution refugee bring.

As the school year 2023/2024 approaches, partners shifted their focus to Back-to-school and school enrolment as the current priorities within the RRP. The emphasis is on providing tailored support, inclusive practices, informal education, and psychosocial assistance to promote academic success and well-being for refugee children. Collaborating with various actors across sectors, partners aim to ensure the availability of necessary resources and services to support refugee students in Hungary.

### KEY FIGURES*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>36,914</th>
<th>84%</th>
<th>45,642</th>
<th>29,774</th>
<th>10,844</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugees registered for Temporary Protection in Hungary (as of May 2023, NDGAP) **</td>
<td>Of the refugee population from Ukraine are women and children (Protection Monitoring, May 2023, UNHCR)</td>
<td>Individuals assisted with basic needs (RRP partner reporting)</td>
<td>Individuals supported with protection services (RRP partner reporting)</td>
<td>Individuals received cash assistance (RRP partner reporting)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2023 REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN ***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USD 1.69 B</th>
<th>25%</th>
<th>USD 62,7 M</th>
<th>26%</th>
<th>37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall financial requirements</td>
<td>Overall percent funded</td>
<td>Hungary financial requirements</td>
<td>Hungary percent funded</td>
<td>Partners involved in the Hungary response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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. ** In addition, 16,006 residence permits were granted to Ukrainian nationals since February 2022 (as of February 2023, source: National Directorate General for Aliens Policing). *** 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.
Operational context

Since the escalation of hostilities in Ukraine in February 2022, nearly 37,000 people have applied for Temporary Protection status in Hungary. Additionally, approximately 16,000 individuals are registered in the country under various statuses, including residence permits and tolerated status. The high volume of border crossings, totalling over 2.9 million from Ukraine to Hungary by June 2023, reflects the significant early outflow of refugees but also the ongoing and expected growth in pendular movements between the two countries, especially during the closure of schools and the summer season. With the stabilization of the population under Temporary Protection, refugees now face increasing vulnerabilities due to prolonged displacement, while newly arriving individuals have experienced the impact of sustained armed conflict and depleted financial resources before flight.

A new government commissioner was appointed in May 2023 to support the coordination of refugee assistance in Hungary; the commissioner will coordinate government actions, propose response and assistance measures, and raise awareness through a communication campaign. Additionally, the Government extended the state of danger until November 25, maintaining the validity of emergency decrees. Furthermore, in June changes were made to subsidy rules for accommodation providers hosting refugees from Ukraine, specifying rates and duration based on Temporary Protection (TP) registration. Exceptions exist for certain vulnerable groups. Free public transportation to/in Budapest was also extended until the end of the year.

In the second quarter, the RCF has actively sought to expand partnerships and coordination with relevant government departments, civil society organizations, including Roma-led groups, and organizations of persons with disabilities in Hungary. These collaborative efforts aim to foster a comprehensive and inclusive approach to address the needs and protection risks of vulnerable refugee groups within the humanitarian response. Additionally, the Working Groups engaged in their coordination mechanisms with technical government bodies, such as the Ministry of Interior, National Directorate General for Aliens Policing (NDGAP), Ombudsman, Ministry of Justice, and the Departments of Education, Department of Disability Inclusion, and State Secretary for Roma Inclusion to ensure effective collaboration in the humanitarian response.

Strengthening the inclusion of vulnerable groups of refugees in the response.

The RCF has intensified interagency efforts to promote the inclusion of Roma refugees and refugees with disabilities by convening dedicated meetings with stakeholders, including government, UN, NGOs, and civil society. These collaborative efforts aim to comprehensively address the challenges faced by vulnerable refugee groups and ensure their specific needs are met within the humanitarian response.

In May, the RCF partnered with Romaversitas to create a Recommendation Note aimed at enhancing the inclusion of Romani refugees. The Note on Romani Refugees Inclusion was developed through extensive consultations and covered vital areas like protection, education, livelihood, and health. It emphasizes the need for comprehensive strategies and strong partnerships among service providers, Roma-led organizations, and government agencies for successful implementation.

In June, the RCF prioritized enhancing the protection and inclusion of refugees with disabilities. Guided by the Ministry of Interior’s Department of Inclusion, RCF partners collaborated to understand their needs, strengthen connections with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, and improve coordination. This resulted in a completed RCF Note on Disability Inclusion for RRP partners, outlining crucial recommendations for service accessibility and more.

@UNHCR. The Afro Dance Budapest Band at the commemoration of the World Refugees Day in Budapest, House of Music.

@UNHCR. Well known Ukrainian folk fusion band Troye Zillia provide the headline act at World Refugee Day 2023 at Budapest’s House of Music.
Sectoral Achievements

Protection, including Gender-Based Violence

Achievements and Impact

- RRP partners offered holistic protection support to over 29,700 refugees since the beginning of the year. Over 4,000 refugees with specific needs received targeted interventions, nearly 2,300 benefited from integrated case management, and over 300 obtained legal assistance. Additionally, 1,000 at-risk adult refugees were referred to specialized services, and nearly 7,000 adults received focused psychosocial support and specialized mental health services. These protection services were extended across the country, including at border crossings, in Budapest, and in various cities and counties like Gyor, Debrecen, Pest, Borsod-Abauj-Zemplen, Vas, and Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg.
- The focus on providing updated protection information to refugees remained consistent, benefiting nearly 22,000 individuals seeking Temporary Protection (TP). This included guidance on TP-related rights and available services, particularly in Budapest and border crossing points. Additionally, over 1,600 refugees received counselling on accessing TP and related rights, ensuring they are well informed and empowered to navigate the system effectively.
- The Protection Working Group (PWG) provided comprehensive technical guidance on non-discrimination, Gender Based Violence (GBV), and Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) prevention and response to its members, focusing on THB for labour exploitation. Additionally, case management training enhanced GBV and non-GBV actors’ capacity to address such cases effectively.
- GBV referral pathways were operational. A comprehensive updating initiative on a rolling basis aimed to reflect changes in ongoing service provisions and new providers entering the response.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In private accommodation settings, remote areas, and marginalized communities, timely and safe assistance for survivors of GBV is often lacking. Non-GBV actors currently have no tried and tested tool to provide safe basic support and information to survivors of GBV in line with global standards; to tackle the issue, a IASC GBV pocket guide will be rolled out this year.
- Survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Hungary often face unmet needs due to challenges accessing national support systems for refugees. To address this, RRP partners will prioritize collaboration and advocacy to enhance GBV national systems and complementary partner assistance in alignment with e.g. GBV IASC guidelines. Refugees encounter further challenges due to legal barriers that hinder access to national services, particularly in areas like housing and financial support. The situation becomes even more complex when survivors have additional vulnerabilities, such as medical or mental health conditions, or substance abuse issues.
- Safety when browsing online and using social networks is a serious GBV and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)-related concern in the Ukrainian refugee community, especially among women and children, requiring more information raising. Protection reporting collected by UNHCR and other partners highlights that 85% of refugee respondents prefer social media and websites as information channels.
Child Protection
Achievements and Impact

- RRP partners provided extensive support to over 6,200 refugee children through safe spaces, hubs, and Blue Dots across the country and at border crossings. Over 2,100 children were supported through specialized child protection services, over 2,100 children were targeted with community-based child protection services, and nearly 500 children with recreational child protection services.
- Over 4,700 refugee children were provided with focused Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS) support, signalling the persistent need for MHPSS services, and accompanied targeting of minors and youth.
- RRP partners also trained over 1,500 humanitarian staff on child protection and children’s rights.
- In May, the Child Protection Sub-Working Group collaborated with the Education Sub-Working Group to organize a half-day working group session where the Ministry of Interior presented procedures and support for children with developmental delays and special needs. Additionally, the Ombudsman’s Office and local Child Welfare offices presented available services and identified gaps and challenges in existing systems.
- To enhance refugee inclusion, the working group compiled Q&As on services and pathways for children with developmental delays and disabilities approved by the Ministry of Interior, now available in ENG.
- Furthermore, the group released referral pathways for Unaccompanied and Separated Children (ENG, UKR, HUN) and children at risk of trafficking (ENG, HUN, UKR), aiming to offer clear guidance for accessing support and protection services within the Hungarian refugee response.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Reports from partners and service providers suggest children continue to struggle to access and benefit from national child protection services due to language barriers, and legal provisions excluding TP-holding children from accessing relevant child protection services coupled with insufficient human capacities of statutory child protection actors.
- More support should be considered for unaccompanied and separated children who do not require placement into a childcare facility.
- Vulnerable Romani refugee children face additional obstacles due to discrimination, impacting their social inclusion.
Education

Achievements and Impact

- As per government data, in June 2023, Hungary had 4,856 Ukrainian students enrolled in schools, with 1,164 in kindergarten and 3,692 in primary and secondary schools.
- The Education Sub-Working Group (ESWG) expanded its engagement to include 50 local and international NGOs, government bodies, and donors, with the Ministry of Interior actively participating. The NGO Ukrainian Education Center became co-chair of the ESWG in May.
- RRP education partners played a strong role by organizing non-formal catch-up classes for more than 10,000 refugee children, aiming to ease school attendance and provide foundational skills.
- In preparation for the upcoming school year, in June the ESWG and RCF released advocacy documents with key areas for refugee children’s participation in Hungarian schools and cross-sectoral recommendations to enhance access to education for refugee children. The Education SWG also prepared the “Back to School” campaign (ENG, UKR, HUN), to inform parents about enrollment procedures. The campaign runs until September 1.
- Examples of activities by partners: Terre des Hommes implemented after-school catch-up education activities, resulting in significant progress in reading and writing skills for participating children and, in collaboration with the Global Human Dignity Foundation, facilitated personalized skill development in collective shelters. The Jesuit Refugee Service addressed the language barrier, providing Hungarian language lessons and free-time activities for over 300 refugee students in 9 schools.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The completion of the 2022/23 school year highlighted challenges in enrolling refugee children in Hungary, including hesitancy by parents regarding enrolment, bullying, language barriers, and financial constraints. Online education systems for Ukrainian refugees deter enrolment in Hungarian schools and balancing both curricula can overwhelm students. Capacity issues, infrastructure limitations, teacher availability, budget constraints, and limited mental health support add complexity. Also, placing refugee children in appropriate grades is difficult due to curriculum disparities and language barriers. The high mobility of refugees further complicates planning for summer camps and extracurricular activities, as families’ moves during the summer period or changing accommodation lead to shifting participation.

Health and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- RRP partners in Hungary have assisted nearly 4,600 refugees in accessing medical care, including healthcare facilities, doctors, nurses, and medication.
- Examples of intervention by partners: the World Health Organization (WHO) provided grants to four hospitals in Budapest and across the country, ensuring specialized medical assistance for refugees and their integration into the national healthcare system. Initiatives by EMMA and PATENT safeguarded the health and rights of refugee women, including those from the Roma community, providing reproductive health services. UNICEF’s partnership with the Municipality of Debrecen supported health services and proper nutrition through mobile units in refugee accommodation centres and vulnerable Roma communities.
Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- As the crisis and displacement of refugees continue, a significant challenge lies in transitioning from emergency healthcare to providing long-term and specialized medical services for refugees. This includes addressing critical health needs such as cancer treatment, chronic illnesses, and other non-communicable diseases, as well as ensuring access to continuous and comprehensive healthcare. Integrating refugees into the national health system becomes vital to ensure their well-being and effective management of their healthcare needs.

Basic Needs

Achievements and Impact

- 34,500 refugees were provided with in-kind food assistance, such as food parcels and groceries, mainly in Budapest and Bereg counties, by the 11 partners reporting; an additional 9,100 refugees were provided with prepared meals mainly in Budapest.
- Over 32,000 refugees were provided with non-food items, including hygiene kits (27%), clothing (27%), blankets (20%), and kitchen sets (including furniture and home appliances; 16%). 3,500 refugees were provided with short-term accommodation (under 1 month), mostly in Budapest and at the border.
- A total of 10,800 refugees were provided with cash and voucher assistance to meet their basic needs, while over 5,700 refugees received multi-purpose cash assistance, allowing them to address various family needs, such as food, non-food items, education, transportation, medical costs, and rental subsidies.
- Examples of activities by partners: in June, UNICEF in collaboration with the Municipality of Budapest launched a Cash Transfer program for households with children or pregnant women residing in Budapest. JRS Hungary aided 935 Ukrainian refugees through their social aid scheme, covering medical expenses, food, hygiene items, housing, and education-related costs. IFRC's with the Hungarian Red Cross provided multi-purpose cash assistance for almost 5,000 individuals. The Post-Distribution Monitoring showed successful use of the funds, with recipients using them for housing (32%), food (19%), and healthcare (15%), achieving the program's goals and receiving high satisfaction rates. UNHCR in partnership with Baptist Aid provided cash assistance for basic needs to over 500 vulnerable refugee families, including single parents, pregnant women, and persons with disabilities.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The shortage of suitable accommodation poses a major challenge in providing safe and stable living conditions for refugees in Hungary, affecting their well-being and integration prospects.
- The lack of comprehensive baseline data of TP holders and Ukrainian refugees with other statuses hinders effective programming, making it difficult to tailor interventions to meet specific refugee needs.
- Implementing cash-based interventions faced challenges in reaching certain beneficiaries due to issues with phone numbers and email addresses, as some had relocated, making disbursement less efficient. Accurate and up-to-date data is crucial for informed decision-making and targeted responses to support the refugee community effectively across different sectors.

Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion

Achievements and Impact

- Nearly 5,300 refugees secured mid to long-term accommodations, divided equally between collective and private options. Additionally, 1,530 households received counseling on accommodations in Hungary. Over 6,100 refugees received professional training, primarily in Budapest, with 256 receiving employment counseling. Additionally, 335 children were enrolled in childcare and kindergarten, facilitating parents' daytime work.
Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Refugees encounter considerable obstacles in securing livelihoods and employment due to the prevailing economic conditions in the country affecting the job market, as well as language and childcare barriers. Additionally, the lack of affordable housing and stable job opportunities further compounds the challenges they face. To tackle this issue, temporary assistance is crucial until refugee families can achieve self-sufficiency. This involves implementing long-term programs for households, alongside individualized case management plans focused on livelihood development. Measures such as skill-building programs, vocational training, entrepreneurship support, language courses and job placement initiatives are vital to empower refugees and foster their economic independence.

Cross-Cutting Priorities

Accountability to Affected Populations

- RRP partners have created opportunities for feedback and complaints to ensure that the voices and needs of refugees are considered. Language remains a major barrier for refugees accessing basic services in Hungary, and financial support is needed to complement limited subsidies. Finding accommodation and jobs also presents significant challenges, with landlords often refusing to rent to unemployed refugees. On social media, refugees have raised concerns about accommodation, mental health support, financial assistance, and access to medicine, emphasizing the impact of language barriers and staff failing to recognize their specific needs.

- Among the most frequently asked questions UNHCR captured through its national helpline and other feedback and complaint channels, people were particularly interested in financial support, specifically cash assistance, and access to free housing options. Additionally, there was significant interest in matters related to Temporary Protection Status in Hungary, such as the application process, extensions, and refusals. Moreover, refugees sought information on the necessary documents required for Third Country Nationals (TCNs) to cross the Ukrainian-Hungarian border. These statistics demonstrate the importance of providing comprehensive and accessible information to meet the specific needs of refugees seeking assistance and support, including temporary protection status.

- Terres des Hommes Complaint Feedback Response Mechanism (CFRM) was fully operational, providing children and adults with multiple channels to share feedback and raise complaints. To prioritize children's voices, dedicated psychologists and social workers were available to ensure their information is received. Feedback boxes were strategically placed in shelters, allowing beneficiaries to share non-sensitive concerns and raise any issues. Empowering children to express their views and creating a safe and supportive environment where their voices are valued and respected are essential elements of TDH's approach.

- As part of the commitment to advancing AAP, UNHCR undertook steps to progress on meaningful engagement and participation from organizations led by displaced persons through the mapping aiming at gaining a better understanding of the roles and locations of refugee-led organisations. The insights obtained from this exercise will be shared with RCF actors to ensure their full access to the information, which will also be linked to interactive service maps. Several organizations, including UNHCR, Nextstep, Romaversitas and United Way partnered with refugee-led and community-based organizations to implement small-scale community projects addressing a range of priority needs including for marginalized communities such as Romani refugees. Capacity-building events focused on financial and project management, safeguarding, and child protection.
Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

- The Interagency PSEA Task Force continued to support the capacity strengthening of partners on PSEA policies and procedures. Two technical discussions were convened around PSEA and safe recruitment practices and SEA investigations and brought together expert speakers on the subject matters. As part of the continuous and needed partners’ capacity building, another 443 personnel of organizations involved in the response were trained, either in person or online, on PSEA standards and obligations.
- The Task Force also maintained its focus on how to reinforce community mobilization and awareness around sexual misconduct: a smaller task group developed a series of joint key messages targeting community members, humanitarian staff, and humanitarian organizations’ management which are now being fine-tuned and translated into several languages.
- UN agencies continued to roll out the Common UN PSEA Assessment Tool, extending technical support to their partners to develop or adapt their internal policies and procedures to meet the full capacity threshold required to partner with UN. Many UN partners in Hungary have already reached full or almost full capacity.
- Availability and accessibility of safe, confidential, and transparent complaint and feedback mechanisms remain an issue across the board, in addition to the comprehensive adoption of survivor-centered approaches to ensure assistance to victims. Challenges are also encountered by partners regarding establishing adequate SEA investigative capacity – few partners have started to explore possible arrangements with external experts. Discussions around pre-employment vetting also require good analysis of possibilities and limitations stemming from data protection legal provisions – the PSEA Task Force also collaborated with a legal firm to conduct a legal assessment of HR vetting in Hungary.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

- With 13 partners reporting, over 10,700 MHPSS consultations were provided in the first half of 2023, targeting both adult refugees and children. 4,500 refugees were reached with community-based psychosocial activities, such as support groups, art and creative expression, cultural and recreational activities, peer support networks, community celebrations and gatherings, community awareness campaigns and other community-led initiatives. Additionally, more than 6,000 refugees participated in awareness-raising sessions, mostly online or remotely, to highlight the significance of MHPSS assistance and the available services.
- The MHPSS task force, after discussions with key stakeholders, including Cordelia, Heim Pal Children Hospital, IFRC, IOM, St John Hospital, Trauma Center, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO and the State Secretary of Health, has agreed with technical experts appointed by the State Secretary of Health, to prioritize integrating MHPSS services into primary health care. This effort is part of the EU recovery and resilience plan and aims to ensure comprehensive and accessible mental health and psychosocial support for all refugees.
- Partners have reported increased demand for psychosocial support among humanitarian staff, particularly those assisting Ukrainian refugees. This rise can be attributed to heavy workloads and exhaustion faced by professionals such as social workers and therapists amidst waning financial support to the response. Addressing the needs of these NGOs requires strategies to alleviate the burden on professionals and provide sustainable support and resources.
- Additionally, observations from partners indicate that the psychosocial well-being of refugee children and their caretakers continues to be significantly affected by the ongoing war and displacement. Therefore, it is crucial to
prioritize essential support, including psychological assistance, to address the specific needs arising from the war and displacement, as recognized by MHPSS partners.

- Examples of partners intervention: Pszi Pont aimed to create a welcoming school environment for Ukrainian children through support to school psychologists. They provided regular group supervision sessions, published a methodology handbook, and offered pro bono mental health support. Another handbook focusing on cultural differences between Hungary and Ukraine was also released.

**Working in partnership**

Funding for the RRP is crucial to ensure the successful implementation of its activities. To secure adequate resources, the RCF has actively expanded efforts to include donors and explore funding opportunities. Initiatives such as presenting AMIF funding with the MOI in April, providing a note on local funding opportunities, responding to UN calls, exploring the Carpathian Foundations’ call, and engaging with the Visegrad Fund have been instrumental in expanding funding options of partners. By collaborating with various donors, the RCF aims to strengthen the overall humanitarian response, address the specific needs of vulnerable refugee groups, and ensure a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to assisting refugees in Hungary.


30 different organizations have contributed to the reporting for Quarter 1 and 2: American International School of Budapest | Budapest Methodological Social Center | Cordelia Foundation for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims | Dévai Fogadó | From Street to Homes Association (ULE) | Foundation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church | Hungarian Baptist Aid | Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta | Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship | Oltalom Charity Society | Hungarian Helsinki Committee | Hungarian Interchurch Aid | Hungarian Reformed Church Aid | Hungarian Red Cross | International Organization for Migration | International Rescue Committee | Jesuit Refugee Service | Litera Association | Menedék Hungarian Association for Migrants | Migration Aid | Next Step Hungary Association | Pszi Pont | Romaversitas Foundation | SOS Children's Villages | Terre des hommes Foundation – Tdh | Trauma Center | United Nations Children's Fund | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees | United Way Hungary | Unity | Vamos Foundation.

In addition, the following organizations reported activities for refugees in Q1 and 2 (even if initially not part of the RRP appeal): Adventist Development and Relief Agency | Budapest Municipality | EMMA Association | IFRC | NestingPlay.

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**LINKS:** Regional data portal – Hungary Portal – Ukraine Situation RRP – Refugee Funding Tracker