

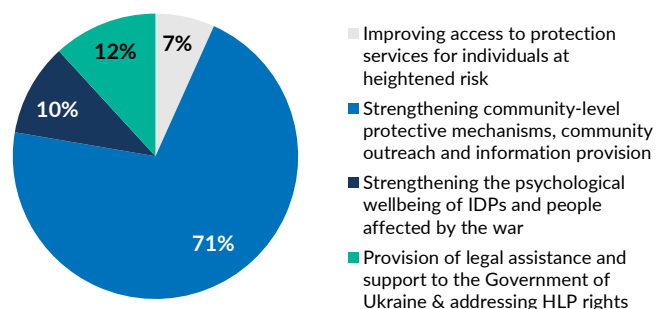
UNHCR's Protection Response

- The protection response by UNHCR and our partners provides tailored support to those most in need, aims to strengthen inclusive national systems and services, and encourages the participation of internally displaced people (IDPs) and returnees in decisions that affect them.
- Our protection response complements, reinforces and strengthens the capacity of national protection services to serve the growing population in need, in line with the Memoranda of Understanding with Ministries and Oblast authorities.
- In implementing our protection response, we work directly with communities, including our network of some 450 community-based organizations, and predominantly local NGO partners. In 2024, UNHCR works with 20 partners, of which 16 are national organizations.



- From January to April 2024, UNHCR's protection response has reached **264,416 people** on average supporting some 66,000 people each month with protection interventions.
- Of the 264,416 people reached with protection support, **76 per cent are females**. 30 per cent or nearly 80,000 are older people above the age of 60 years, while some 11 per cent are minors. Over 24,000 people supported are living with a disability.
- In addition, UNHCR and partners promoted legal and policy developments through **over 70 advocacy and judicial interventions** aimed at improving access to rights for forcibly displaced, stateless and other war-affected people.
- 42 per cent** of those supported live in six Oblasts, including Dnipropetrovska, Odeska, Kharkivska, Kyivska, Sumska and Mykolaivska.

Protection response overview
January - April 2024



UNHCR'S PROTECTION PRIORITIES IN 2024

For 2024, the focus of UNHCR's protection response is:

- Provision of legal aid to people and capacity support to national systems** to enable IDPs, war-affected people, returnees and others without documentation to exercise their rights by ensuring access to documentation.
- Restoring housing, land and property (HLP) rights** through improved access to compensation for damaged or destroyed properties and protecting IDPs from eviction from where they found accommodation.
- Improving access to protection services for individuals at heightened risk** of neglect, abuse and violence, including children, survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), older people, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ persons and others at risk of being left behind, such as the Roma community.
- Supporting the psychological recovery and wellbeing of IDPs and other people affected by the war** to strengthen their ability to rebuild their lives and contribute to the development of their communities.
- Strengthening community-based protective mechanisms, community outreach and information provision** to support the direct engagement and participation of IDPs and enhance access to services and accountability to affected populations.
- Promoting inclusive and human rights-based laws, policies and procedures** in protection, housing and durable solutions areas through evidence-based advocacy and technical advice.

UNHCR's protection response is further integrated with its emergency shelter/housing, camp management and camp coordination (CCCM), and cash response and helps catalyse durable solutions.

UNHCR also works with the State Migration Service to strengthen efforts that enhance asylum and statelessness determination procedures and to prevent, reduce and address statelessness. UNHCR further engages with the UN system in Ukraine to ensure sustainable development for all in-country, advocating for the inclusion of refugees, asylum-seekers and those at risk of statelessness in the UN's cooperation framework, drawing on the commitments to operationalize the Global Compact for Refugees.

UNHCR together with Right to Protection (R2P) coordinates the Protection Cluster in Ukraine with some 135 partners collaborating to deliver a collective protection response. UNHCR is an active member of the Cluster and contributes with this programme to the collective response.

RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS: JANUARY-APRIL 2024

<p>Over the first four months of 2024, UNHCR with partners provided legal assistance to over 33,000 individuals. IDPs, returnees and other war-affected people sought legal advice on HLP rights, social benefits, including pensions, and personal documentation.</p>	<p>In April, UNHCR, jointly with IOM and NRC, facilitated a Protection Case Management training for 25 participants of 11 organizations to build the capacity of caseworkers providing protection assistance to forcibly displaced and other war-affected persons in Ukraine.</p>
<p>UNHCR and its partners contributed to enhance the legal framework on the IDP Subsistence Allowance. Inputs to the law amendments were incorporated into Resolution #331, passed on 22 March 2024. As a result, families with a child under 3 years or with a child under 6 years requiring care, students under 23 years, and families with a member suffering from severe diseases became eligible for an additional six months of IDP subsistence allowance.</p>	<p>In line with the Government's roadmap on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) during and after the war, UNHCR and partners deploy scalable psychosocial support. This year, UNHCR's partners have provided mentoring and coaching to 15 Ukrainian psychologists to become certified trainers of Problem Management Plus (PM+), with the certification of an additional 80 psychologists foreseen for 2024.</p>
<p>UNHCR and partners opened two Roma Hubs in February and April, one in Mukachevo city and one in Berehovo city Zakarpatska oblast, in alignment with the Government Action Plan implementing the National Roma Strategy by 2030. The hubs were refurbished and equipped to work as multi-functional spaces for Roma communities. Activities include Ukrainian language classes, literacy and vocational training, child education, and rights awareness. UNHCR partners also provide legal assistance and psychosocial support.</p>	<p>UNHCR and its partners reached more than 6,000 people through GBV awareness raising campaigns and events, such as International Women Day with 450 people participating in a forum on empowering women-led organizations through supporting their access to fundraising opportunities.</p>
<p>UNHCR and partners' advocacy resulted in improved access to state social benefits for people holding complementary protection status after respective amendments to Resolution #250 regulating state social assistance for families with many children. UNHCR's local partner, Rokada, has already been able to apply the new provisions and assist a Syrian family with four children to register for this state social support. The family is now receiving this support.</p>	<p>To promote the well-being, development and resiliency of children, UNHCR and its partners support children and caregivers through structured and guided community-based recreational and psychosocial support activities giving children opportunities to play, socialize, learn new skills, and promote self-expression. So far in 2024, over 17,000 war-affected and displaced children (55% girls; 45% boys) participated in UNHCR-supported community-based child protection activities.</p>

My story: Restoring housing, land and property rights

Serhii and his older mother are internally displaced. Prior, they lived in the town of Zolote, Luhanska oblast, in an apartment owned by Serhii, which was destroyed during the war. To obtain compensation for destroyed housing, Serhii required an ownership title that is registered in the State Registry of Property Rights (SRPR) established in 2013. Even though Serhii took his original ownership title document with him when he was forced to flee, he was confronted with challenges as the document was issued prior to 2013 and not included in the SRPR. His initial registration attempt failed as the document's validity could not be confirmed due to the war's impact on archives and other sources of information. UNHCR's local NGO partner, the Tenth of April, assisted Serhii to confirm his ownership through a court intervention. Following the favourable Court decision, Serhii's property rights were registered in the SRPR. This will help Serhii obtain compensation for his destroyed home.

IN FOCUS: OUR WORK WITH IDP COUNCILS

UNHCR and its local NGO partners, most notably Stabilization Support Services (SSS), were key advocates in developing [Resolution #812](#) introducing IDP Councils. Before Russia's full-scale invasion, these Councils existed primarily in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. These consultative bodies, composed of local authorities, IDPs and civil society representatives, exist at oblast and local levels to serve as a link between IDPs and local authorities to ensure that [IDPs can actively participate in public decision-making](#). These councils are tasked with developing recommendations to ensure that IDPs are included in local programming and that programmes supporting durable solutions, particularly on housing and livelihood opportunities, are adopted. The Resolution received strong support from the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories. As of April 2024, around [1,000 IDP councils](#) have been established across Ukraine.

- UNHCR with its partners have so far supported the establishment of and provided capacity development for over 100 IDP councils in Ukraine.
- Good practices of interventions made by IDP councils are documented by UNHCR and partners, compiled and disseminated through the Protection Cluster. As this can help other such councils to adopt similar good practices, they are also used for peer-exchanges.
- UNHCR and partners create links between such IDP councils and community-based organizations as well as other areas of UNHCR's work, such as legal aid, as needed.
- In 2023, jointly with the Ministry of Reintegration, UNHCR and its partners organized a national forum of IDP councils bringing together over 200 such councils with the aim to further strengthen this model for enhanced participation in public affairs. A follow up forum is planned for November 2024.



Anna, 32, fled her home in Lysychansk in the Luhansk region together with her son shortly after the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

In Dnipro city where she now lives, she is a member of the IDP Council and tries to focus on sustainable solutions while addressing immediate humanitarian needs of displaced and war-affected people. She also draws on her experience supporting IDPs fleeing the east of Ukraine since 2014.

“For me, this is a great platform for all stakeholders to get together and discuss problems, share our experiences, listen to each other, and find appropriate solutions to support IDPs on their way to normality.”

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In 2024, an [independent review of the humanitarian response to internal displacement](#) identified the IDP councils in Ukraine as a good practice example for greater IDP participation and agency. Jointly with UNHCR Headquarters, efforts are ongoing to share this good practice more widely. Most recently, in April 2024, a member of an IDP council participated in the Global Conference on Internally Displaced People in Washington D.C. to share experience with others.

PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS MONITORING

UNHCR and its partners' protection and solutions monitoring activity is three-fold:

1. **Monitoring of the protection situation** of IDPs, returnees and other war-affected people in Ukraine as part of a Protection Cluster-led country-wide initiative.
2. **Border monitoring** at 30 international border crossing points between Ukraine and Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova. The border monitoring teams provide information, legal assistance, protection counselling and social support to people leaving Ukraine to seek protection as well as to those returning to Ukraine.
3. **Monitoring of intentions and perspectives of refugees from Ukraine, refugee returnees and IDPs** twice a year to inform people-centered planning and support to returnees as they pursue a durable solution.

The monitoring outcomes inform UNHCR's planning and programme and help identify those most in need. The outcomes are also shared through relevant coordination platforms to inform the wider humanitarian and recovery response.

KEY MONITORING FINDINGS

Round 14 of the Protection Cluster-led **protection monitoring** (February, March 2024) reports that the destruction of civilian property and public infrastructure followed by the contamination with explosive hazards remain key safety and security concerns. Freedom of movement is inhibited by the lack of resources and the cost of transportation, which can hinder both, attempts to seek safety as well as voluntary return. Lack of documentation remains a main obstacle to access formal employment, governmental social benefits, assistance and services, while lack of information about legal processes is reported as a key barrier for people to restore their housing, land and property rights. In addition, specific needs and barriers accessing assistance and services are identified for children, survivors of GBV, older persons and persons with disabilities.

The **border monitoring** revealed that in the first quarter of the year, more people left Ukraine with net outflows of 76,000 (January), 35,000 (February) and 3,000 (March) people, while in April, more people returned to Ukraine with a net inflow of 65,000 people reported. This is likely due to Easter-related family visits. Yet, the number of people departing Ukraine in April remained almost as high as in March. The deterioration of the security situation is the dominant reason for leaving the country according to 98 per cent of respondents, a stark increase compared to the same reporting period in 2023 (33 per cent) when the absence of basic services for electricity, water and heating was a more prevalent reason for leaving the country (37 per cent) compared to 2024 (1 per cent). Forced conscription as a reason to leave the country stood at less than one per cent in 2023 and has risen to 1.4 per cent in the first four months of the year, with preliminary May data indicating a further rise to over 4 per cent. The main reasons for returning to Ukraine include family reunification or family care responsibilities, wanting to check on property left behind as well as difficulties in accessing health care in host countries. The vast majority, some 84 per cent of respondents, intend to stay for four weeks or less in Ukraine, indicating a decrease in people with more permanent return intentions compared to 2023.

The fifth **intention survey** (January/February 2024) notes that a relatively high percentage of 73 per cent of IDPs interviewed plan or hope to return one day. This expression of intent is an important direction for the humanitarian response in Ukraine emphasizing the need to attend to the immediate needs while catalyzing durable solutions. Yet, confirming the trends observed in the border monitoring, the survey notes a decrease of 12 per cent of those planning or hoping to return compared to a year ago.

DONORS:

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by our top government donors and for the generous contributions from individuals and the private sector, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with softly earmarked and unearmarked funds.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Visit Ukraine's **Operational Data Portal** for more information products [here](#).
- Visit UNHCR Ukraine's Website [here](#).

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Contact **UNHCR's Hotline 0-800-307-711** for feedback and advice on assistance and services.