



# Latvia

## Mid-year report of activities and achievements in 2024

Since 24 February 2022, 59,000 refugees from Ukraine have been cumulatively registered for temporary protection (TP) in Latvia. As of July 2024, 45,600 remained actively registered with TP status. From the onset of the war in Ukraine, Latvia indicated its readiness to receive and support Ukrainians fleeing their country. The Ukraine refugee situation resulted in Latvia facing the largest influx of refugees in its history.

The Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for Latvia aims to support the efforts of the national authorities in addressing the needs of refugees from Ukraine, with a focus on the most vulnerable. The plan is coordinated by UNHCR and brings together seventeen humanitarian organizations in Latvia. The RRP outlines the multi-partner and multi-sector response strategy and financial requirements of the partners helping refugees from Ukraine.

This mid-year report provides an overview of RRP partner activities in the first half of 2024. The RRP, which provides all actors with a common plan and appeal, aims to address the needs of 45,600 Ukrainians with temporary protection status in Latvia. While funding constraints did not allow all partners to fully implement their plans, at mid-year, some 13,324 individuals had received humanitarian assistance through UNHCR and its partners.

### KEY FIGURES



Current #ppl

Registrations

Latest update: 19 Jul 2024



# 45.6K

Current refugees with temporary protection



### FUNDING: REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN 2024



**\$ 9.7 million**  
REQUIRED (US\$)



**\$ 8.0 million (Gap)**  
Needed

**\$ 1.6 million (17.0%)**  
Received



### Individuals reached by Sector

Basic Needs **9,996**

Protection **2,145**

Livelihoods & Inclusion **943**

Health & Nutrition **190**

Education **50**

### REFUGEE POPULATION & REACH (29.3%)



(%) People reached

# Population

**45.6K**

**13,324**  
29.3%

**32,226**  
70.7%

For further information please see the [Operational Data Portal for the Ukraine Refugee Situation](#) for more details on refugee population figures and information resources. | See also 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.

## Regional Refugee Response

Since 24 February 2022, more than 6 million people from Ukraine have sought refuge across Europe. Through the **2024 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP)**, 313 partners in Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania and Slovakia work towards ensuring refugees have effective access to legal status, protection and rights in their host countries and that refugees with specific needs and vulnerabilities have access to targeted support and assistance. The plan also aims at strengthening refugees' socio-economic inclusion in their host communities and increasing their self-reliance, while at the same time reinforcing social cohesion between refugees and their hosts. In support of the government-led responses across the region, **UNHCR** leads and coordinates the implementation of the inter-agency RRP in line with the Refugee Coordination Model, collaborating and consulting with authorities, aid agencies, civil society, and with affected populations.

## Refugee Response Plan in Latvia

By mid-year 2024, Latvia had cumulatively received around 59,000 applications for temporary protection by Ukrainian citizens. Temporary protection enables refugees to access healthcare, education and the labour market. Starting from 1 January 2023, residents of Ukraine who apply for temporary protection status in the Republic of Latvia are issued a temporary residence permit valid for two years.

In Latvia, the response was led by the Government of Latvia. To complement this government-led response, the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) partners convened a forum to coordinate and advance RRP objectives. Chaired by **UNHCR**, the coordination body includes representatives of relevant state authorities such as the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, the Society of Integration Foundation and the Ministry of Education. Through the inter-agency coordination platform, four UN agencies and thirteen NGOs engaged on their funding situation and its impact on programming. In addition, UNHCR's implementing partner **Gribu Palīdzēt Bēgļiem (GPB)** chairs weekly coordination meetings with a wide range of NGOs supporting refugees in Latvia.

The 2024 RRP requires US\$9.7 million for activities in Latvia, of which only 17 per cent or US\$1.6 million are funded as of mid-year 2024. Consequently, there remains a gap of US\$8 million and several appealing partners have not yet obtained any funding for their activities. The sectors most affected are basic needs and education.

Increased support from partners and donors is urgently needed to address critical funding gaps in the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for Latvia. Enhanced financial resources are crucial for expanding efforts in key areas such as employment opportunities, comprehensive mental health support, and medical services. There is also a pressing need for additional funds to support educational services and long-term integration initiatives, including language and cultural orientation courses. Addressing these resource constraints and improving coordination among stakeholders will be essential for fostering refugee self-reliance and social inclusion, and for ensuring the continued success of the RRP's initiatives.

In April 2024 RRP partners in Latvia contributed to the design of the 2024 Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS), formerly known as MSNA (Multi-Sector Needs Assessment). The survey was conducted in May-July and collected a range of information from 600 refugee households around their situation in Latvia (accommodation, education, access to services) and outstanding needs. This information will form the basis of planning and consultation activities with RRP partners in August and September which will in turn inform the development of the 2025 RRP to be developed in the second half of 2024.

## Partners' response to the Ukraine refugee situation

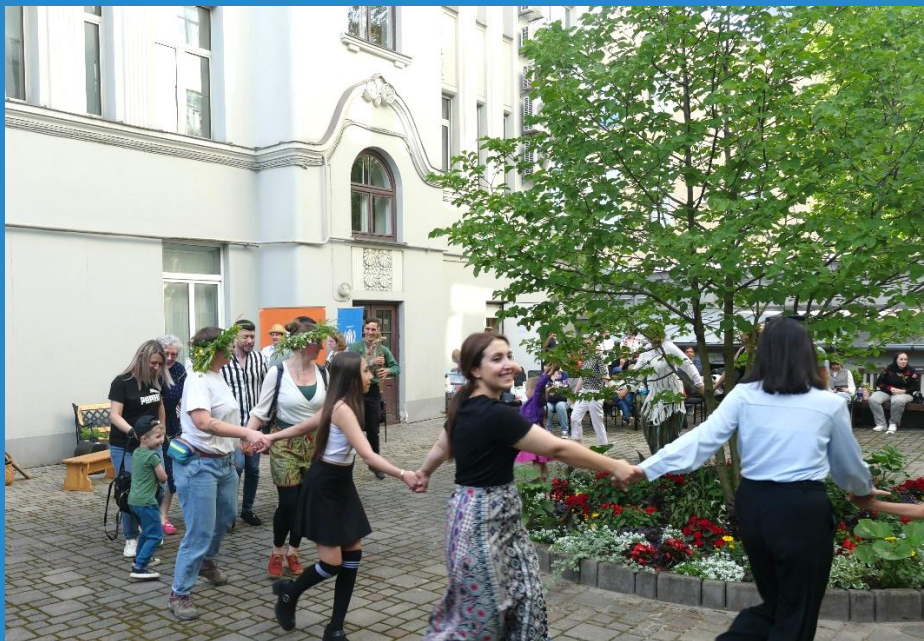
### Addressing Immediate Needs Upon Arrival

Where needed, partners delivered targeted basic needs assistance to refugees from Ukraine either travelling to onward destinations or planning to remain in Latvia. Despite the growing needs due to rising prices and

housing shortages, the basic needs sector remains severely underfunded. The primary focus has been on the most vulnerable refugees, helping them meet basic needs during the gap between their arrival and enrolment in Latvia's social protection system.

By mid-year 2024, partners had reached 9,996 individuals with basic needs services, including food, temporary accommodation, cash assistance and transportation support. **Caritas** ran its humanitarian aid centre providing basic goods, including food items, to 8,365 Ukrainians by mid-year 2024. **The International Organization for Migration (IOM)** provided transportation assistance to Ukrainians crossing into Latvia from Russia who had no means to continue their journey into the EU. IOM also offered temporary accommodation for the most vulnerable transit refugees near the Russian and Belarusian borders. They covered the costs of WASH services at the border crossing point with Russia. Additionally, IOM provided Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance to vulnerable Ukrainian refugees in Latvia who were not covered by other actors. By mid-year 2024, IOM had reached 770 Ukrainian refugees with basic needs services.

### Spotlight



[Photo credit : UNHCR]

**World Refugee Day** celebration in Riga was held on 18 June, organized by **Shelter Safe House**. The event's theme, "Feel Good in Latvia", aimed to create a welcoming and safe environment for refugees, helping them feel comfortable and free in their new home. Participants, both newcomers and residents of Latvia, engaged in a quiz about the stereotypical "average Latvian". The event featured workshops such as wreath weaving, bracelet making, and creating a large communal painting. Attendees enjoyed delicious snacks and collaborated in making a large pot of soup together. The evening concluded with a lively performance by the dance group "Rīgas Danči," allowing everyone to enjoy dances and games in the spirit of the upcoming solstice.

## Protection Services

Ensuring the protection and well-being of refugees is critical for addressing their immediate and long-term needs, facilitating their integration, and promoting their self-reliance. By mid-year 2024, **UNHCR partners** had reached a total of 2,145 individuals with protection assistance, focusing on providing comprehensive support to address the critical needs of Ukrainian refugees. This included legal counselling, consultations on local procedures and practices and emotional support services.

**IOM** played a key role in providing support by offering consultations on safe transport routes, risks and necessary assistance for 468 Ukrainians and third-country nationals (TCNs) transiting through Latvia who opted not to apply for international or temporary protection. IOM also provided critical information about services in destination countries, rights in Latvia, and potential risks, including phone consultations to deliver essential details about services available in border areas and other Latvian cities.

**GPB** supported Ukrainian refugees in their integration and inclusion efforts through counselling, guidance, referrals, and information provision, reaching a total of 89 individuals. This support aimed to assist refugees in navigating their integration process and accessing necessary resources.

**Shelter Safe House** delivered 295 consultations to 251 clients, focusing on legal assistance. These consultations addressed a range of topics including migration, employment opportunities, and family reunification. Ukrainian refugees displaced by the ongoing conflict, sought advice on work-related and social issues. Additionally, Shelter Safe House prepared five legal claims on various matters for court submission.

**The Latvian Centre for Human Rights (LCHR)** provided legal counselling to asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, while also engaging in capacity-building activities across Latvia. By mid-year, the Centre had supported 37 individuals through these initiatives.

**UNHCR** protection monitoring activities continued throughout 2024, in partnership with implementing partner **GPB**, to expand knowledge about the situation of Ukrainian refugees in Latvia, including the protection of refugee children. Partners conducted regular visits to border crossing points, registration, reception, and accommodation sites, and engaged with refugees to understand their situations, protection needs, and intentions. This ongoing monitoring ensured that refugees had access to their rights and services and facilitated their effective inclusion and integration into Latvian society.

**GPB** conducted a total of 27 protection monitoring visits to borders, detention centres, and accommodation facilities, including 14 visits specifically to detention centres where activities were carried out with detained individuals. These visits are essential in ensuring humane treatment and access to rights.

In terms of community outreach, **Shelter Safe House** engaged directly with 280 individuals through public event celebrations in Latvia and reached an additional 48 individuals from host communities to foster social cohesion between refugees and the local population. **GPB** also contributed to community outreach efforts, reaching 70 individuals.

Additionally, **GPB's** advocacy and communication interventions reached 142 individuals, further supporting protection and integration efforts through targeted advocacy and awareness-raising activities.

## Child Protection

Children are among the most vulnerable members of any displaced population, making targeted protection and support crucial to their well-being. By mid-year 2024, **the Latvian Scout and Guide Central Organization** had reached 51 children and youth from Ukraine through its 'Scout house' initiative. This safe space provided by the organization offers invaluable opportunities for children and youth to forge new friendships, develop new skills, and build a supportive community. The 'Scout house' facilitated a range of educational activities, including language classes in Latvian and English, outdoor activities, mindfulness exercises like crafts and yoga, and other life skills training. These activities were designed to support both refugee and local children and youth.

In addition to directly supporting children, the organization focused on training volunteers, including scout and guide leaders, alumni, and scout parents. This training covered essential skills in crisis management, first aid, handling human flows, personal care, and communication. Furthermore, the Latvian Scout and Guide Central Organization actively worked to raise awareness about the rights of children and youth in the broader context of refugee issues through various external relations efforts.



## Cross-Cutting Priorities

### Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

Recognizing the critical need for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), several initiatives have been undertaken to address the complex needs of refugees from Ukraine in Latvia.

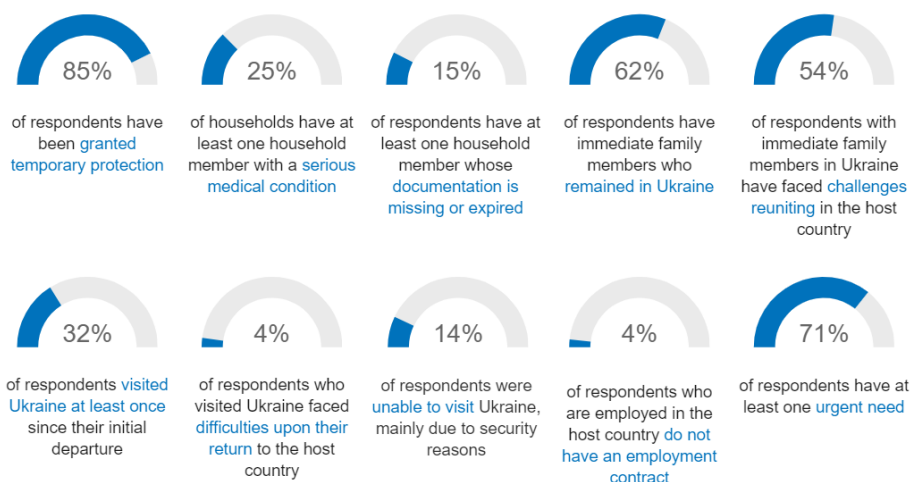
By mid-year 2024, **Shelter Safe House** had provided psycho-social support to 105 individuals through its "Safe House" project. This initiative aimed to achieve several key goals: delivering psycho-emotional support for war refugees, training specialists to address human trafficking risks, re-traumatization, and volunteer burnout, and educating the local community about refugee integration needs. The project also focused on preparing educational materials for both specialists and children, including a psychological e-course for professionals working with refugee children and school bags with printed materials to assist Ukrainian children in learning Latvian.

On 3 June 2024, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** held a conference in Riga, Latvia, titled 'Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in the Time of Crisis'. The event brought together officials from the Ministry of Health, representatives from relevant ministries and institutions, NGOs, UN agencies, civil society organizations engaged in MHPSS, as well as refugee community members and representatives from medical institutions and universities. The conference successfully engaged 55 participants.

The association **TEV** also made vital contributions by providing psychological and emotional assistance to Ukrainian civilians and soldiers undergoing rehabilitation in Latvia, including those who had been held captive by Russian forces. Additionally, TEV supported children with disabilities, including those with autism spectrum disorders, funding various treatments and activities such as ABA therapy, speech therapy consultations, massages, sand therapy, and other interventions. By mid-year 2024, TEV had assisted 30 individuals.

### Protection Monitoring

To strengthen and promote an evidence-based protection response, **UNHCR** and its partners in Latvia have been implementing a Protection Profiling and Monitoring exercise to regularly collect and analyse data about the profiles, protection risks and needs of refugees from Ukraine and monitor changes over time. In October 2023, a revised questionnaire was rolled out. Between October 2023 and March 2024 some 459 refugees from Ukraine (representing 1,083 household members) were interviewed. Below is a snapshot of key findings. For more detailed information please visit the [Protection Profiling and Monitoring dashboard](#).



### Socio-Economic Insights Survey

To support an evidence-based response for the upcoming Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for 2025-2026, the **UNHCR Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS)** is being conducted in 11 countries, including Latvia. This exercise covers 8,800 households (19,300 individuals) and involves a harmonized data analysis

plan and questionnaire, incorporating the UNHCR and WFP Joint Analysis Framework and the UNHCR Protection Monitoring and Results Monitoring Survey. To date, 600 interviews have been completed in Latvia, with a detailed report expected in October 2024.

In April 2024, **UNHCR** held consultations with local partners in Latvia—including government representatives, NGOs, INGOs and refugee-led organizations—to localize the survey. This resulted in over 10 additional questions being added to the final version to better address local contexts.

## Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion

The livelihoods sector remains underfunded, with only 18 per cent of the required funding secured to date by RRP partners. Despite this, efforts have been made to support socio-economic inclusion, reaching 943 individuals through various activities such as community-engagement events and providing financial assistance to refugee pupils and students. In 2024, nearly 60 per cent of working-age Ukrainian refugees in Latvia are employed, with 49 per cent working within the host country and 23 per cent remaining unemployed, according to the UNHCR Protection Profiling and Monitoring exercise. Language barriers are identified by 48 per cent of Ukrainians as a major obstacle to securing employment.

In terms of community integration, **Caritas** played a pivotal role by organizing activities designed to boost social cohesion among Ukrainian refugees in Latvia. Their initiatives, which include creative activities for families, a language club, emotional support groups, and events to familiarize refugees with Latvian culture, have reached 861 individuals.

Additionally, **IOM** provided financial assistance to refugee pupils and students from Ukraine, covering costs related to schooling and study, such as housing and travel, not addressed by other actors. By mid-year 2024, IOM's support had reached 854 individuals, helping to alleviate some of the financial burdens associated with education.

## Education

The education sector faces significant challenges due to underfunding, with only 7 per cent of the required funds secured by RRP partners for planned activities in 2024. As of mid-year, Latvian authorities report that 3,327 Ukrainian refugee children are enrolled in the national education system, including preschools and schools. The UNHCR Protection Profiling and Monitoring exercise reveals that 29 per cent of households with school-aged children have at least one child not registered for education in the host country.

In support of refugee education, **IOM** provided learning process assistants for refugee pupils not covered by state and municipal funding. This support includes assistance with understanding various school subjects in Latvian and improving Latvian language skills, reaching 50 individuals.

**Shelter Safe House**, starting in July 2024, has been offering comprehensive Latvian language courses for Ukrainian refugees, totalling 150 hours. Currently, 30 Ukrainians are enrolled in these language courses. Additionally, under the project "Women's Power!" funded by the Riga City Council, Latvian conversational language courses were conducted in the spring of 2024, benefitting over 10 Ukrainian women who enhanced their Latvian language proficiency.

As part of the "EDGE UP" project, implemented by **Shelter Safe House** in collaboration with Estonian NGO partner **Estonian Refugee Council (ERC)**, 11 Ukrainian women participated in a 40-hour training programme titled "Integration into the Latvian Labour Market". This programme aimed to facilitate the integration of Ukrainian refugees into the Latvian workforce. Participants gained valuable knowledge about labour legislation and improved their skills in preparing CVs and motivation letters, among other topics.

## RRP and extended partnerships in Latvia



**Gribu palīdzēt bēgļiem (I Want to Help Refugees).** GPB is a registered association that aims to give practical, immediate, and voluntary help in integrating economically, socially, and culturally, based on the identified needs of refugees, asylum-seekers and individuals with alternative status.



**The International Organization for Migration (IOM).** The leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration that benefits migrants and society. In Latvia, activities include assistance with basic needs (transport, cash assistance, shelter, WASH), protection services.



**Biedrība 'Patvērums Drošā māja' (Society 'Shelter Safe House').** The non-governmental society SSH was established on 6 August 2007 with the aim of developing support services to (1) victims of human trafficking, (2) legal migrants, including asylum-seekers, refugees and persons granted subsidiary protection status.



**Association "TEV"** is a charity organization that provides humanitarian support to Ukraine, its civilians, army personnel, medics, as well as refugees from the Ukrainian war in Latvia, including soldiers undergoing rehabilitation in Latvia.



**The Latvian Scout and Guide Central Organization.** LSGCO educates and develops children and young people with the help of various non-formal education methods. The LSGCO has more than 20 units (in Latvia and abroad) and more than 800 members.



**Latvian Centre for Human Rights (LCHR).** LCHR is an independent non-governmental organization established in 1993 working with issues concerning integration, discrimination, hate crimes, asylum, migration and fundamental rights issues, as well as human rights in closed institutions.



**Caritas Latvia.** Caritas Latvia's mission is to help marginalized people, by fostering their human dignity through works of mercy and projects that improve their socioeconomic, psychological, and spiritual situation.



**Common Ground.** Common Ground runs a social initiative centre in Riga for persons forced to abandon their homes due to the war in Ukraine and those who want to support them. Common Ground is a space to create all the necessary conditions to communicate, to receive and share human warmth, support and cooperation.



**Association 'Marta Centre'.** MARTA works to support women and children that suffer from violence, or who are victim of trafficking and gender discrimination. MARTA provides rehabilitation, engages in advocacy, educating specialists and developing prevention programmes.



**The World Health Organization (WHO)** is a United Nations agency mandated to advance the global health agenda.



**Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS.** PROVIDUS has been Latvia's leading public policy think tank since 2002 with a mission to promote evidence-based policy and open society values.



**Crisis and Counselling Centre 'Skalbes'.** Skalbes provides professional help, support and information to people in crisis.



**Young Folks LV.** Young Folks LV is a non-profit youth organization that provides a safe and supportive environment in which youths discover and develop the cognitive and creative skills. They promote informal learning and meaningful communication, creating a welcoming, inspiring environment, and a friendly community.



**Organization 'Tavi draugi' ('Your friends').** Tavi Draugi has been providing coordinated humanitarian aid to Ukrainian civilians in Latvia and Ukraine by organizing and coordinating the voluntary involvement of Latvian people, organizations and businesses in providing help.



**Creative Ideas** is an NGO from Latvia specialized in education, society integration, culture and rural development.



**UNESCO** is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It contributes to peace and security by promoting international cooperation in education, sciences, culture, communication and information. UNESCO promotes knowledge sharing and the free flow of ideas to accelerate mutual understanding and a more perfect knowledge of each other's lives.

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## LINKS

[Regional data portal – Ukraine Situation RRP – Refugee Funding Tracker](#)