



UKRAINE SITUATION
**UNHCR's 2026 plans and
financial requirements**

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Cover photo: Ukraine – Serhii Zelenyi was evacuated to a transit centre in Pavlohrad on 20 February 2025 from the heavily bombarded city of Pokrovsk in Ukraine's Donetsk region. © UNHCR/Nikola Ivanovski

January 2026

OVERVIEW

2026 FUNDING NEEDS



\$614 million

Total financial requirements



\$470 million

To fund humanitarian needs within Ukraine



\$144 million

To fund the refugee response in host countries

Four years since the Russian Federation launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, humanitarian and protection needs remain acute both inside Ukraine and among Ukrainian refugees across Europe. In 2025, intensified hostilities, including increased aerial attacks and strikes on critical infrastructure, caused significant civilian casualties and new displacement – trends that will continue to shape requirements both inside and outside Ukraine in 2026. The UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission's December 2025 report found that 2025 was the deadliest for civilians in Ukraine since 2022. 2,514 civilians were killed and 12,142 injured in war-related violence in 2025, a 31% rise in the number of victims from 2024. By December 2025, 5.86 million refugees from Ukraine were recorded globally, including some 5.3 million in Europe, while 3.7 million people remained internally displaced inside Ukraine.

In Ukraine, the 2026 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) estimates that over 10.8 million people will require humanitarian assistance and protection in 2026, with many people having been displaced multiple times and their vulnerability compounding as the war persists. By September 2025, it is estimated that over 1.4 million refugees from Ukraine had returned to their places of origin and remained in Ukraine for at least three months, including more than 0.3 million who have returned to an area different from their former homes. An estimated 2.5 million displaced families in Ukraine continue to lack access to adequate shelter. At the same time, widespread strikes on energy infrastructure during the winter of 2025/26 have left millions of people without reliable heating, water, or electricity amid sub-zero temperatures. In hosting countries, some refugees continue to face obstacles in accessing housing, decent work, health care, education and social protection, while vulnerabilities continue to deepen over time as the full-scale war continues.

In Ukraine, UNHCR will remain actively engaged within the inter-agency response framework to support the Government of Ukraine and local authorities in addressing urgent humanitarian needs. UNHCR will deliver life-saving assistance and protection services while simultaneously promoting recovery for war-affected populations and communities and facilitating durable solutions for displaced persons. In countries hosting refugees from Ukraine, and in accordance with the Refugee Coordination Model, **UNHCR will support host States through the 2025–2026 Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP).** Working alongside approximately 200 partners across ten countries¹, UNHCR will strengthen protection, promote socioeconomic inclusion, and enhance access to essential services for refugees from Ukraine, while delivering targeted assistance to the most vulnerable individuals.

DISPLACED PEOPLE TO BE ASSISTED

Country	People to be assisted	Country	People to be assisted
Ukraine	2,100,000*	Latvia	2,700
Belarus	2,000	Lithuania	4,200
Bulgaria	21,250	Poland	124,000
Estonia	3,500	Republic of Moldova	72,000
Georgia	2,450	Romania	70,000
Hungary	18,400	Slovakia	113,000

* People may receive multiple forms of assistance and services. The figure of 2.1 M also includes internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected people.

¹ The Ukraine Situation Regional Response Plan (RRP) for 2026 encompasses the following countries: Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. It is important to note that while Czechia was only part of the RRP through 2025.

PLANNED ASSISTANCE



2.1 million

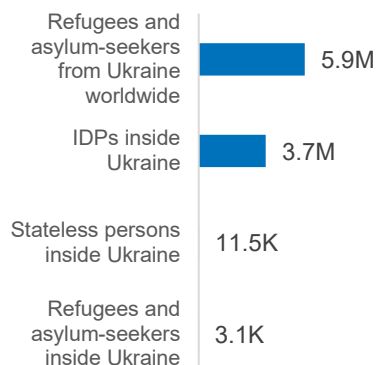
Multi-sectoral services to people in Ukraine



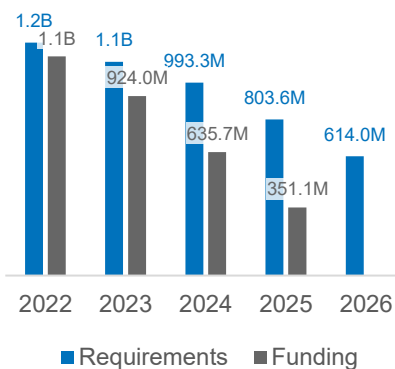
482,020

Refugees from Ukraine in hosting countries

POPULATION PLANNING FIGURES RELEVANT TO THE SITUATION AS OF END-2025



FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDING 2022-2025



FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

UNHCR is appealing for USD 614 Million in 2026 to support the needs of war-affected populations in Ukraine and refugees who have fled Ukraine to other countries in the Europe region.

2026 APPROVED BUDGET (IN USD)*

	Attaining favourable protection environments	Realizing basic rights in safe environments	Empowering communities and achieving gender equality	Securing Solutions	Total
UKRAINE	60,672,955	261,455,077	-	147,871,968	470,000,000
Belarus	997,920	-	-	-	997,920
Bulgaria	6,210,149	-	-	2,923,866	9,134,015
Estonia	655,959	-	-	367,465	1,023,424
Hungary	5,190,235	-	1,185,750	-	6,375,985
Latvia	787,151	-	-	440,958	1,228,109
Lithuania	983,939	-	-	551,198	1,535,137
Moldova	55,110,218	-	8,889,782	-	64,000,000
Romania	15,130,330	-	6,631,670	-	21,762,000
Poland	15,166,990	-	3,257,096	-	18,424,086
Slovakia	1,796,780	-	3,872,282	-	5,669,062
Regional	8,880,558	-	2,247,921	371,784	11,500,262
Non-RRP Response	287,265	-	2,062,735	-	2,350,000
SUB-TOTAL UNHCR REFUGEE RESPONSE	111,197,494	-	28,147,236	4,655,271	144,000,000
GRAND TOTAL	171,870,449	261,455,077	28,147,236	152,527,239	614,000,000

*The UNHCR Ukraine situation financial requirements of USD 614 million are part of the UNHCR ExCom approved budget and reflected in the UNHCR Global Appeal (see Global Focus). This includes USD 470 million for UNHCR's operation inside Ukraine, and USD 144 million for the response to support refugees from Ukraine in host countries. UNHCR's refugee response requirements are reflected in the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) (i.e USD 141.6 million); additionally, UNHCR requires some USD 2.35 million for its response in Georgia, where there are still substantial needs linked to refugees from Ukraine.

UKRAINE RESPONSE



2.1 million

Internally displaced, returnees, and war-affected people who have remained provided with multi-sectoral services



\$470 million

Total financial requirements



12 partners

of which 11 are local

KEY TARGETS



955,000

people supported with protection services



652,000

people supported with cash assistance



325,000

people supported with emergency shelter material, home repairs and housing solutions



178,000

people supported with core relief items

OVERVIEW OF THE PROTECTION RISKS AND HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Four years since the escalation of the war and Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the protection and humanitarian needs of people in Ukraine remain acute. The 2026 HNRP estimates that 10.8 million people will require humanitarian assistance and protection in 2026. Around 3.7 million people remain internally displaced, with 73 per cent in displacement for more than two years, according to the HNRP. Shifts in the frontline continue to trigger new displacement, with more than 150,000 people evacuated from frontline areas between June and December 2025 with support from the Government or humanitarian actors, and many more fleeing on their own.

Civilian casualties have risen sharply. According to the [UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine](#), civilian casualties from January to November 2025 were 26 per cent higher than the same period in 2024, and 70 per cent higher than in 2023. Protection concerns remain widespread both in frontline areas and in regions hosting IDPs. The latest [Protection Analysis Update](#) highlights the effects of the war on the cross-section of Ukrainian society, including women, men, children and minority communities including the Roma community and LGBTIQ+ people. Meanwhile, the [Fourth Rapid Damage Needs Assessment \(RDNA4\)](#) underscores the depth of destruction as well as the reconstruction challenges that lie ahead, with more than 2.5 million homes damaged or destroyed, with more being hit almost every day. Winter and sub-zero temperatures exacerbate these challenges, with widespread and repeated strikes on energy infrastructure leaving millions without reliable heating, water or electricity.

The most critical humanitarian needs are largely concentrated along the war's frontlines in the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine, as well as in the northern border regions, where constant shelling and heavily damaged infrastructure is severely restricting access to basic services and leading to new displacement. Older people and people with disabilities are often among the last to leave frontline areas, lacking access to social services and family or community support. However, threats and needs are present across all regions, as civilians remain vulnerable to repeated missile and drone strikes. People in protracted displacement across the country are struggling to recover, find affordable housing, employment and start new lives. Amid the ongoing violence, people are simultaneously striving to return and require support to recover and rebuild their lives.

PROTECTION RISKS AND NEEDS – HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE UKRAINE PROTECTION SURVEY

The [Ukraine Protection Survey](#) provides country-wide analysis on people's access to rights and services with a focus on internally displaced people, returnees and others directly affected by the war. It aims to inform actions by the Government of Ukraine, as well as humanitarian and recovery stakeholders. Based on the comparative analysis of rounds 1 (June 2025) and 2 (November 2025) of the Protection Survey, the following key protection issues highlight where risks have increased and where difficulties persist or have worsened.

Safety and security



53% of respondents do not feel safe due to the war in general, air strikes specifically, the temporary occupation of parts of Ukraine's territory, fear of poverty and not living in one's own home. Of those, 29% experience a high negative impact of the security situation on their day-to-day life, with over one quarter in a precarious or stressed coping situation. These levels are further elevated among those with specific needs. Older people without social support and single-headed households are notably at greatest risk. In conclusion, regular deadly attacks and airstrikes continue to occur far away from the frontlines, with long-range strikes using missiles and loitering munitions targeting civilians and infrastructure in Central and Western parts of Ukraine, **demonstrating that no area in Ukraine is currently to be considered safe.**

Evacuations from frontline communities



24% of respondents live in the '30km belt' along the frontline. **40% intend to leave their homes should the security situation deteriorate, 34% are undecided and 19% do not intend to leave their homes.** Those with no intention to evacuate are mainly of older age, exhibit higher levels of specific needs and vulnerability, and typically live alone. Of the 74% of respondents with an evacuation intention or who are undecided, the majority, nearly 85%, will be able to evacuate, either on their own or with the support of family or neighbours, while 15% will not, suggesting that evacuation mechanisms risk failing where vulnerability is highest, which points to a need for earlier engagement, tailored assistance, and integrated pathways into state support.

Mental health and psychosocial safety



42% of respondents report mental health and psychosocial safety concerns (MHPSS concerns). Among respondents with specific needs, MHPSS concerns are 11% higher. They are particularly high among respondents with chronic illnesses (58%), older persons at risk (58% - mainly older persons without social support structures or with care dependencies) and especially for single-headed households (68%). 28% of those reporting an MHPSS concern experience a high negative impact on their lives as they are reaching their resiliency limits.

Freedom of movement



Over 18% of respondents face limitations to their freedom of movement, with respondents with specific needs exhibiting higher barriers (24%). Constraints are particularly significant for older persons at risk and single-headed households (both 31%), those with a chronic illness (27%) or a disability (24%). The main reported obstacles to freedom of movement are related to either (a) security, (b) the lack of accessibility of public infrastructure and transport, including affordability challenges, and to limitations to the ability to move, notably due to lack of needed assistive devices, or (c) documentation challenges. This can directly limit access to services, livelihoods, participation in local life and ability to evacuate when needed.

Housing, Land and Property rights



Housing, land and property (HLP) concerns identified include **documentation challenges**, with 15% of respondents not having sufficient documentation (e.g. to prove ownership) or certainty about it, **inaccessibility of homes due to occupation** (8%) and **damage and destruction of homes**, with 26% reporting that their home has been fully destroyed. Notably, nearly **50% face documentation and awareness barriers in accessing compensation**. Overall, IDPs face distinctly higher risks and exhibit greater housing-related vulnerabilities, with incomplete documentation and poor awareness of compensation procedures creating barriers to restoring housing rights, pursuing durable solutions, and risking long-term displacement.

Access to social protection



Reliance on state social assistance and pensions payments is high at 71% of respondents, while 13% of respondents rely on social services of the State. Reliance on state social assistance and services is further elevated for IDPs, older persons as well as persons with specific needs. Yet **13% face barriers to accessing the social protection system**, with such barriers elevated for IDPs and those with specific needs, notably those with the greatest reliance on the state social protection system.

Social integration



The majority of IDPs (77%) and returnees (83%) reportedly do not face particular social integration barriers. Key informants identified housing and employment as two main integration challenges for IDPs and emphasized the **importance of social connections in the community in which IDPs arrive to and live in**. Several key informants noted the importance of people's proactive role in their own social integration and the relevance of community-based protection mechanisms, such as IDP councils, for social integration and cohesion.

Access to the justice system



Nearly two thirds of respondents can either comfortably navigate the justice system or are confident they will be able to figure it out if needed. **38% of respondents need help, are unsure they can navigate the justice system or feel entirely helpless, constraining their access to justice.** Limited ability to navigate the justice system risks undermining access to documentation, housing rights, compensation and legal remedies.

UNHCR'S RESPONSE STRATEGY IN UKRAINE

In 2026, UNHCR will continue to provide immediate protection and assistance to war-affected people while supporting early recovery and durable solutions for displaced people, returnees, and war-affected people who remain in their homes. UNHCR's response will continue to focus on strengthening and complementing national systems and services, maintaining strong partnerships with local and regional authorities, and supporting local and national civil society, including national NGO partners as well as a growing network of community-based organizations. Sustainability and 'solutions from the start' will remain at the forefront of UNHCR's humanitarian response and early recovery efforts.

UNHCR will support and complement the Ukrainian authorities' response by providing **critical protection services, emergency shelter and housing support, and cash assistance** within the framework of the inter-agency humanitarian response outlined in the 2026 HNRP. As part of efforts to advance the Humanitarian Reset, the 2026 HNRP adopted an issue-based approach. This is framed around four strategic priorities (SPs) for which UNHCR will either lead the operational response or play a critical role in it: 1) **multisectoral front-line response**, 2) countrywide support for those **newly displaced and evacuated** from high risk areas, 3) **emergency assistance for those affected by strikes**, and 4) **protection support for vulnerable IDPs and severely vulnerable groups** at the risk of not being covered by social protection networks.

As part of the inter-agency response, **UNHCR will continue to lead the Protection and Shelter/NFI Clusters in 2026**, coordinating the protection, shelter and site coordination and management response by humanitarian partners in Ukraine. In line with the Humanitarian Reset initiative, the CCCM Cluster in Ukraine implemented a phased transition of key responsibilities to the Protection and Shelter/NFI clusters respectively that concluded at the end of

2025. CCCM technical expertise will be retained within the Protection Cluster to ensure continuity of key coordination functions.

In addition, UNHCR is actively engaged in the 2025-2029 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), which will support the Government of Ukraine in its reform, recovery and development priorities, and co-leads, with UNDP, Results Group 4 on Governance. UNHCR also actively engages in the Government's Sectoral Working Group (SWG) on Social Protection, where it co-facilitates the Social Services Task Force and participates in the Nexus Task Force.

Aligned with the Government's reform and recovery priorities and the 2026 HNRP and the 2025-2029 UNSDCF, **UNHCR's strategy in Ukraine is centred on three overarching objectives to ensure sustainable responses to the needs of war-affected, displaced and stateless communities:**



Provide life-saving multisectoral humanitarian assistance and protection to evacuated and newly displaced people as well as to war-affected people in frontline areas and in response to aerial attacks.



Support solutions for IDPs and returnees, especially those with vulnerabilities, and help other war affected people recover through targeted programmes that promote access to rights, dignified accommodation, and access to social services.



Promote inclusive and rights-based laws, policies and procedures in protection, housing and durable solutions areas through evidence-based advocacy and technical advice - leveraging reform processes.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Key areas of UNHCR's response, working predominantly with national partners (11 national partners out of a total of 12) and an extensive network of community-based organizations, will continue to be multisectoral and focus on:

- Provide **legal assistance** to facilitate access to civil documentation, administrative and judicial services, assistance and compensation for damaged or destroyed housing, land or property (HLP)
- Provide **emergency shelter materials** and **support durable housing repairs** with the aim to ensure that the most vulnerable among people affected by the war, whether displaced, remaining at home or having returned from displacement, have access to housing and are protected
- Improve **inclusive access to social protection services** for individuals at heightened risk through direct service provision, social accompaniment and technical and capacity support to the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity and other relevant national service providers
- Strengthen the **psychological recovery and wellbeing** of IDPs and other people affected by the war through psychosocial support
- Strengthen **community-level protective mechanisms**, community outreach and information provision through support to IDP Councils, community-led organizations and outreach facilitators
- Promote inclusive, protection-sensitive and **human rights-based laws, policies and procedures**
- Provide **cash assistance** for persons with specific needs to cope with shocks, restore agency and support resilience, and to support with winter-specific needs
- Contribute to **community-based recovery efforts** to enable dignified and sustainable voluntary returns, and durable solutions for IDPs
- Contribute to the **reform and strengthening of the national asylum system** and procedures to prevent and reduce statelessness

UNHCR Ukraine ‘Nexus in action’ approach: UNHCR’s programmes address immediate needs that cannot be met through national systems overstretched by four years of war, while simultaneously reinforcing national and local capacity, thereby promoting sustainability and national leadership. UNHCR’s overall strategy in Ukraine is grounded in a localized and humanitarian-development nexus approach, relying extensively on Ukraine’s wealth of expertise and knowledge, capacity, and commitment to build back better. As of November 2025, UNHCR has four active Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with Government Ministries, the Pension Fund of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Olena Zelenska Foundation, as well as with 20 regional administrations. UNHCR prioritizes partnerships with local partners, including national NGOs, and supports a growing network of some 550 community-based organizations and local initiative groups. Read more [here](#).

Bringing support and social connection to isolated war-affected people in Ukraine



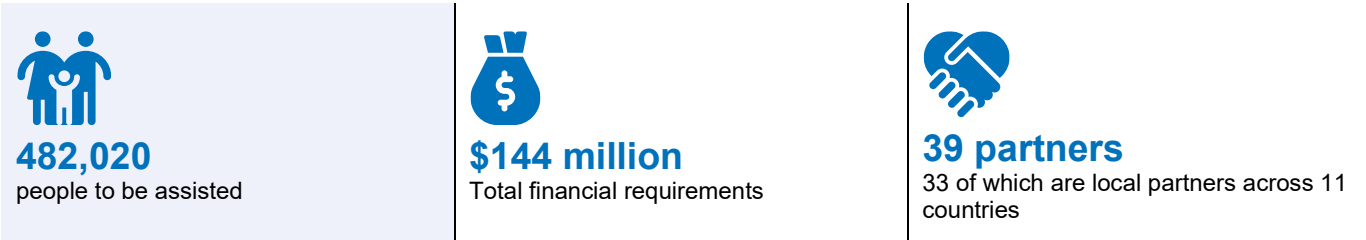
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Lyudmyla, 77, lives in the village of Chervona Dolyna in the Mykolaiv region, and once a week she is visited by a social facilitator through a new community-protection initiative launched by UNHCR and NGO partners. The facilitator visits Lyudmyla to assist with everyday tasks: carrying coal and firewood, picking up medicine, helping with shopping, and simply checking in on her wellbeing.

Social facilitation complements state social services and provides basic, tangible assistance that makes daily life more manageable. The facilitators act like a bridge between vulnerable people and the state social protection system:

The social facilitators are trained volunteers from the same communities ensuring that the most vulnerable people impacted by the war—including older people, persons with disabilities, internally displaced people and returnees living alone—are not isolated or forgotten. Read more [here](#).

REFUGEE RESPONSE



OVERVIEW OF THE PROTECTION RISKS AND NEEDS

An estimated 5.86 million refugees remain displaced outside Ukraine, including 5.3 million across Europe. The refugee population is predominantly composed of women and children, with comparatively fewer men due to restrictions on men of military age leaving Ukraine. Most families are headed by women, often accompanied by school-age children or younger, while many older persons have also fled, particularly those requiring regular medical care or family support. **At the end of 2025, refugees from Ukraine continued to face the compounded effects of prolonged displacement,** family separation, and persistent uncertainty about their future. Having fled war, large-scale destruction, loss of livelihoods, and repeated trauma, many struggle to rebuild their lives in new environments while maintaining vital ties to their communities and loved ones in Ukraine and across the region.

In host countries, national authorities, local communities, NGO partners, and—critically—refugees themselves have collaborated to secure protection, expand access to essential services, strengthen community structures, support refugee-led organizations (RLOs), and promote inclusion. **Despite these efforts significant gaps remain for those most at risk,** including older persons, children, persons with disabilities, and survivors of gender-based violence. Refugees from Ukraine have benefited from rapid access to protection in host countries, including through temporary protection mechanisms. In the European Union, Temporary Protection status has been extended until March 2027, with several other countries implementing similar arrangements—a move welcomed by UNHCR. However, refugees increasingly seek information and advice on transitioning from temporary protection to other forms of legal stay or voluntary return to Ukraine in the longer term.

Four years into the displacement crisis, the majority of working-age refugees report having secured some form of employment. **Nevertheless, underemployment and access to skilled employment remain a significant challenge, limiting their ability to meet basic needs.** Vulnerable households face heightened risks due to barriers in accessing secure housing, social protection benefits, and the labour market. Targeted social assistance schemes for Ukrainian refugees have progressively reduced across the region, while access to mainstream social protection systems in some host countries often remains limited. This situation increases vulnerability to exploitation and abuse and, in some cases, prompts vulnerable groups to return to Ukraine prematurely, despite the ongoing war and overstretched support services.

Many refugees face challenges in accessing clear, impartial information regarding available durable solutions. The majority continue to express a preference for voluntary return to their country of origin once conditions permit safe and sustainable reintegration. Until such conditions are met, UNHCR does not promote returns to Ukraine and stresses that any return must be voluntary and well informed. Facilitating preparation for eventual return or durable solutions in host countries requires ensuring that individuals hold valid identity and travel documents, which are essential for a smooth transition.

KEY TARGETS



In countries covered by the Ukraine Situation Regional Response Plan, UNHCR's ongoing assessments, protection monitoring as well as the UNHCR Social Economic Insight Survey (SEIS) highlight continued and emerging challenges for refugees, particularly as vulnerabilities increase over time.

Family Separation



Family separation remains a key issue within the refugee community, **exacerbating psychological distress and contributing to risks such as GBV and human trafficking**, as well as MPHSS-related risks. Children, particularly those not accompanied by their parents, are among the most vulnerable. With families fragmented, refugees continue to face isolation and heightened risk of exploitation.

Persons with Specific Needs



Households with individuals who have specific needs - such as older persons, persons with disabilities, and those with serious medical conditions – report lower levels of access to various rights, including identity documentation, long-term housing, healthcare, and employment. **There are signs that at-risk households are increasingly taking the decision to return to Ukraine** – although those who did return to Ukraine reporting significant challenges in meeting their basic needs, raising concerns of increased vulnerability, pressure on the already limited infrastructure in Ukraine and possible renewed displacement due to such premature returns.

Gender-based violence (GBV)



Women and children make up the majority of the refugee population, with 63% being women and girls, 33% being children and 20% being males above the age of 18. **This demographic profile raises specific protection concerns, particularly around GBV, trafficking, and exploitation**, which are further aggravated by gaps in access to national systems, dwindling support and assistance, and inadequate housing and employment opportunities. In the host countries, refugee women may suffer from institutional neglect, low awareness of GBV and limited inclusion of refugee women.

Child protection



While enrolment in formal education in host countries continues to increase, **some refugee children remain outside national education systems, heightening their exposure to protection risks**. Children not enrolled in education, including those without parental care, require targeted support to ensure access to and effective inclusion in national child protection systems.

Access to health care



Constraints on accessing health care remain due to overstretched national health system capacities as **refugees report significant barriers to accessing healthcare**, with long waiting times, high direct and indirect costs, and language barriers preventing timely and adequate care.

Access to education



The number of **enrolled children and youth is increasing but too many remain out of school**. According to the EU, an estimated 1.4 million Ukrainian children aged 0-18 have received Temporary Protection status in Europe since the start of the full-scale war in February 2022 with 75% of those were estimated to be enrolled in schools and early childhood education.

Access to employment



Depending on the country, between 36 and 73% of Ukrainian refugees report being employed, but **underemployment prevails, often requiring negative coping mechanisms to help cover basic needs**. While limited local language proficiency affects over 37% of refugees, lack of decent work opportunities, skills mismatches, limited (child-) care options, and non-recognition of skills also persist.

Civil documentation



On civil documentation, 12% of respondents have at least one household member who is missing at least one critical identity document, **with higher numbers of families who originate from areas of Ukraine under temporary occupation reporting this challenge**. Due to this, refugees from Ukraine face a number of challenges including impact on their freedom of movement (32%), ability to access basic services (16%) and work (12%), among other challenges.

Access to social protection



Due to the high number of vulnerable individuals among the Ukrainian refugee population in host countries, 72% have applied for government-provided social protection benefits. However, **16% have reported challenges in accessing social protection assistance** due to language barriers (58%), lack of information (34%) and long waiting periods (28%).

Returning/visiting home



Refugees continue to report challenges around legal status and access to services after returning to their respective host countries from short visits to Ukraine. The ability to return and check conditions in Ukraine maintains links with family members and the wider community and helps refugees take well-informed decisions on return. It is estimated that over 1.4 million refugees from Ukraine had returned to their places of origin and remained in Ukraine for at least three months.

Access to Information



An increasing number of refugees require information on accessing legal status in host countries as well as continued up-to-date information on conditions in their home country to support informed and voluntary decisions on whether to remain in host countries or return to Ukraine. UNHCR and partners work to fill this gap, providing information through digital means (via the “Ukraine is Home” platform and UNHCR’s help pages), a free to contact help line (the Regional Contact Centre) and a network of legal advisors and counsellors.

Families evacuate from eastern Ukraine



Moldova. UNHCR and partners deliver winter relief at the Ungheni Community Centre to support Ukrainian refugees like Oliana, as well as vulnerable members of the local community. © UNHCR/Mark Macdonald

Oliana and her children were forced to flee their home in Mykolaiv, Ukraine, and are now refugees in Moldova.

“Winter is difficult, especially in Moldova, because gas is very expensive here and you need to use a stove, heat with firewood. It’s colder for the children, of course.”

Oliana explained that the items she received from UNHCR will help reduce their expenses. She received winter relief kits (warm bedding), a family hygiene kit and a solar lamp for her family.

The Ungheni Community Centre where Oliana was assisted opened in 2023 with UNHCR’s support and is part of a network of nine community centres across Moldova. The centres promote women and youth empowerment, diversity, and inclusion, and facilitate the socialization and inclusion of refugees.

UNHCR'S RESPONSE STRATEGY IN REFUGEE HOSTING COUNTRIES



Support host countries to ensure that refugees have continued effective access to protection, legal status and rights, including through a coordinated approach beyond Temporary Protection (TP) arrangements, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups and including age, and gender and diversity considerations.



Support host countries in their efforts to include refugees in national systems – economic, social protection, health, education, child protection services – with a particular focus on outreach and inclusion of vulnerable groups and including age, gender and disability considerations.



Strengthen social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between refugee communities and their hosts.



Advance the localization of the response, by supporting national and local civil society, municipalities and other local authorities, coordination structures, experience-sharing and building capacities as well as supporting sustainable programming responses.

In refugee-hosting countries, UNHCR leads and coordinates the 2025–2026 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) in support of national authorities, bringing together around 200 partners across ten countries to complement Government efforts. The RRP focuses on safeguarding access to protection and rights; promoting socio-economic inclusion and self-reliance; and strengthening national systems in sectors such as social protection, health, education and child protection.

With substantially reduced resources anticipated in 2026, UNHCR and partners have undertaken a validation exercise to direct limited funding towards the most urgent life-saving and protection needs, while continuing to invest in longer-term inclusion. This includes targeted protection interventions (such as legal aid, counselling and case management), specialised services for persons with specific needs, GBV prevention and response, child protection, and expanded access to mental health and psychosocial support.

UNHCR's strategy places strong emphasis on localization and accountability to affected populations, working with and through national and local civil society organizations, municipalities and refugee-led and women-led groups, and ensuring that refugees' feedback informs programme design, implementation and monitoring. Across RRP countries, priorities for 2026 include sustaining access to services and rights; supporting socio-economic inclusion through access to decent work and social protection; strengthening community engagement and communication with communities; and scale up emergency response capacity in case of new refugee outflows subject to availability of funding.

MAIN ACTIVITIES







- Strengthen **identification of persons with specific needs** and their referral to specialized services
- Strengthen **community-based protection** among refugees and support their participation in policy making which impacts their rights
- Support host governments through **policy discussions** and the development of coordinated regional approaches to maintain a high standard of refugee protection and access to rights
- Provide **legal advice, counselling, and information** to support refugees' access to legal status, documentation and rights, including through transitions to alternative residency permits, in host countries
- Advocate for protection mechanisms that are responsive to the **specific needs of vulnerable populations**, such as individuals with disabilities, older persons, and survivors of trauma
- Ensure the **full availability and accessibility of comprehensive information on refugees' rights** and continued stay in host countries, as well as information on assistance available in Ukraine, including through the "Ukraine is Home" digital platform. This will enable refugees to make well-informed and truly voluntary decisions on whether to return to Ukraine or remain in host countries

- Implement **protection monitoring** to ensure programming is responsive and adapted to risks and challenges faced by refugees
- Address **barriers to labour market inclusion**, such as language, skills mismatches, and limited childcare options.
- Advocate for **integration of GBV risk mitigation** into national strategies, ensuring that health, protection, and economic empowerment needs are fully addressed
- Provide **child protection** services and referrals, especially for children separated from their families or those without parental care
- Ensure **equitable access to healthcare**, including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)
- Enhance **evidence-base by conducting socio-economic insights surveys** and promoting its progressive inclusion in national statistics
- Promote **enrolment into national education systems**, including early childhood and tertiary education, with Governments
- Promote **cohesion and peaceful coexistence** through education, recreational, cultural and sports activities and inclusive clubs that involve both refugees and the host community in collaboration with local municipalities and civil society organizations (inclusive of community-based, refugee-led, and faith-based organizations)
- Provide **targeted cash for protection** programmes, while supporting the transition from humanitarian cash assistance to inclusion into national social protection systems
- Support Governments in **preparedness for cases of refugee outflow scenarios** that outpace existing capacities

IMPACT OF FUNDING REDUCTION

 Ukraine	UNHCR's 2025 response in Ukraine was 44% funded, with \$243 million received, compared to 57% in 2024 (\$338.5 million). This resulted in 1.14 million services delivered as of November 2025, down from approximately 1.6 million during the same period in 2024.
 Ukraine's Winter Response	As part of the 2025–2026 winter response, by 5 December, cash assistance for winter needs reached 176,000 people, representing a 32% decrease compared to 2024–2025, when 258,300 people received support.
 Bulgaria	Cuts reduced asylum support for 3,000 people and child protection for over 1,000 children, while nearly 2,500 vulnerable individuals lost cash assistance for food, rent, and medical care.
 Hungary	Support for two community centres ended, financial assistance to local GBV service providers was terminated, and livelihoods and housing support for the most vulnerable families was reduced by 50%.
 Moldova	Funding shortfalls led to a 26% reduction in cash transfers, driving negative coping strategies up to 80% and causing the share of households able to meet their basic needs to drop from 45% to 12%. The cash programme was subsequently scaled back to 9,000 vulnerable refugees, down from 16,000.
 Poland	Protection monitoring and intercultural assistance teams were discontinued, services that supported over 14,000 refugees in 2024. An estimated 5,000 refugees, including children, lost access to legal advice, guidance, and support, placing them in an insecure and uncertain situation.
 Romania	There was an overall reduction in 50% of refugees from Ukraine receiving direct assistance in the form of cash, support to collective housing, legal aid, services for survivors of violence against women and children, as well as socio-economic integration.
 Slovakia	The Košice Field Office—closest to four Ukrainian border crossings—closed on 1 September, leaving no capacity for monitoring or counselling on basic services for new arrivals. Cash assistance for the most vulnerable, including GBV survivors, stopped, and livelihoods support was cut by 80%.

REGIONAL CROSS-CUTTING RESPONSE PRIORITIES

Age, Gender and Diversity	Accountability to Affected Population	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
 <p>Depending on age, gender and diversity, refugees experience barriers to having their basic needs met, accessing services or confirming their disability, medical or legal status. Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) considerations inform every aspect of UNHCR's work, ensuring that programming is responsive to the unique needs of all refugees</p>	 <p>Partners will ensure the systematic inclusion of refugees' and affected people's voices at every stage of the programmatic cycle – design, implementation, monitoring, and review, including through close collaboration with the organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people.</p>	 <p>All partners must adhere to the IASC standards of conduct for humanitarian workers, with a focus on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), reporting concerns through established mechanisms, and upholding a victim-centered approach.</p>
Sustainability and Localization	Governmental Ownership	One-Refugee Approach
 <p>Partners will prioritize facilitating the inclusion of refugees in national systems and services as a core element of their plans, rather than establishing parallel mechanisms. This cross-cutting approach focuses on including refugees in existing service provision frameworks, ensuring sustainability and prioritizing local ownership. In all countries, equitable and meaningful collaboration and partnerships with local and national actors will be prioritized.</p>	 <p>From the outset, humanitarian assistance has complemented Government-led efforts, reinforcing rather than replacing State action. As the response transitions from emergency life-saving protection to long-term inclusion in national systems, governments at both central and local levels maintain overall responsibility for coordinating the response.</p>	 <p>In addition to hosting Ukrainian refugees, all participating countries also provide refuge to asylum-seekers and refugees from other countries.</p>

Including refugees in Poland's labour market, Poland



Poland: Irena is 57 years old and came to Poland from Kherson after the rockets started falling on the city. © UNHCR/Anna Liminowicz

Irena is 57 years old and came to Poland from Kherson after the rockets started falling on the city. "Who would want to leave their home? Nobody. Today everything is destroyed there, I have nothing to go back to," she says. In Ukraine, Irena was a nurse for 25 years and took care of children with cancer.

Since November 2023, she has been working in a nursing home for older people in Gdańsk. To boost inclusion of refugees in the labour market, UNHCR is supporting actors who help them find jobs. This is done by small grants awarded to NGOs that work with vulnerable refugees or entrepreneurs whom they help set up their businesses.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FLEXIBLE FUNDING

The situation in Ukraine remains highly volatile with continuous hostilities and large-scale destruction, forcing the population to flee inside the country and abroad on a scale not seen in Europe for decades. In this dynamic operational environment, flexible funding is vital for UNHCR to remain agile and ensure the response is efficient and adaptive in order to provide protection and assistance to the people who need it most – both within Ukraine but also refugees from Ukraine in host countries.

The financial requirements presented here are based on the current context and have been adjusted with the evolving situation. In 2026, the funds raised through the Ukraine Situation Appeal will be used primarily for Ukraine and the countries within the Ukraine Situation's Regional Refugee Response Plan. The funds will also be used to support UNHCR's response to the displacement of people from Ukraine in Georgia, as budgeted within the ExCom Annual Budget.

To all donors, especially those who provide funding that is flexible and not earmarked for a particular use, UNHCR extends its most sincere thanks.

Ukraine: UNHCR and partner Proliska provides supports to Lyzatska Mariia, 72, an evacuee from Kostiantynivka at Pavlohrad transit centre © UNHCR/Nikola Ivanovski

UKRAINE SITUATION

UNHCR's 2026 plans and financial requirements

January 2026

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit [Global Focus](#), UNHCR's main operational reporting portal for donors and other key partners. The site provides an overview of the protection risks that refugees and other populations of concern to UNHCR face across the world, as well as regularly updated information about programmes, operations, financial requirements, funding levels and donor contributions. The situation page for the Ukraine situation can be found [here](#). Furthermore, visit the [Operational Data Portal](#) for up-to-date information on the Ukraine refugee situation.



UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe
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