

HUNGARY

4 May 2022

Since the war began in Ukraine, over **952,400 refugees arrived to Hungary directly from Ukraine or via third countries**, the majority women and children (some 72 per cent), as well as older people and those with disabilities. Many are in need of urgent medical care, including persons with chronic illnesses and those with mental and physical disabilities.

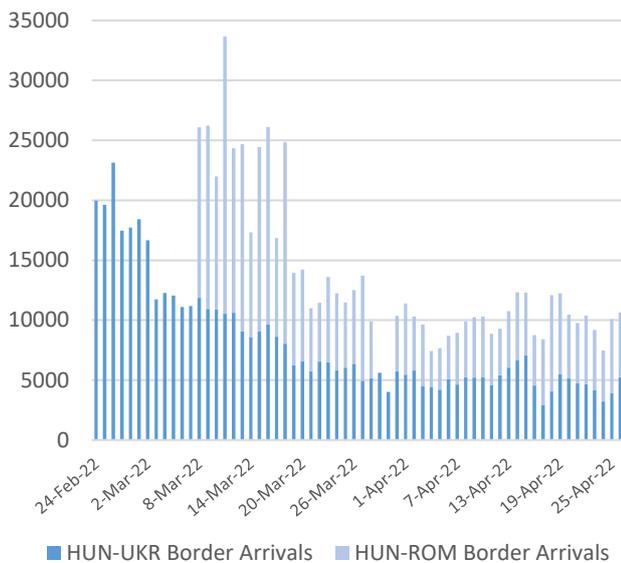
To ensure a favourable protection environment, UNHCR is supporting government-led efforts through a multisectoral response focusing on **protection, reception and accommodation**, and **material assistance** for most vulnerable groups including those with specific needs.

UNHCR and partners are present at border crossing points, help points as well as in urban areas to **provide information on rights and available services, identify vulnerable refugees and refer them to relevant services**, and to **monitor and reinforce reception conditions**, while ensuring basic needs are met.

952,400 total arrivals to Hungary from Ukraine, including those transiting from Romania (as of 3 May 2022)

539,800 arrivals to Hungary directly from Ukraine (as of 3 May 2022)

ARRIVALS TO HUNGARY since 24 Feb 2022



UNHCR is present at border crossing points, help points, reception centres as well as in urban areas where refugees are arriving in Hungary.
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UNHCR PRESENCE IN HUNGARY

STAFF:

- **69** Total staff
 - **47** Staff based in Hungary
 - **22** Staff on emergency deployment / mission

OFFICES:

- **1** UNHCR Representation for Central Europe in Budapest



For more information, see the [Operational Data Portal](#) for the Ukraine Refugee Situation

Operational Context

Since 24 February 2022, Hungary has observed the **rapid influx of refugees arriving** at its border crossing points with Ukraine (over 952,400 individuals as of 3 May). The majority of refugees are **women and children**, as well as **older people**. Many have urgent protection needs and underlying vulnerabilities, including **persons with disabilities**. A high proportion of arrivals are also being recorded at Hungary's border with Romania, where at least 412,600 people from Ukraine have transited. While many move on to other European countries, over 19,672 individuals have applied for temporary protection status in Hungary as of 3 May. To respond to the scale, pace and complexity of the situation, UNHCR has declared Hungary a **Level 3 Emergency**, the highest possible designation.

Government authorities confirmed their ability and started building up necessary capacities to meet the immediate needs of those arriving, including access to **health, education, temporary accommodation**, and **provision of core relief items** along border entry and registration points. Help points have been established by authorities to provide information and assistance to those arriving to Hungary. Shelters and reception centres have been established, where refugees arriving from Ukraine are referred to short-term accommodation in government-run facilities or with volunteer networks. Humanitarian actors and public authorities present at border crossing points and in urban areas are closely coordinating to provide assistance and services, including advice on **temporary housing, transportation, legal and social counselling**, and other services.

While authorities and local communities have taken a welcoming approach to those fleeing hostilities in Ukraine, the high number of arrivals has strained existing capacities, making information provision and identification of vulnerable profiles more challenging in the context of a mass influx situation. Further efforts are needed to reinforce communication and legal counselling to ensure those arriving are fully informed about procedures for applying for temporary protection, as well as the associated rights and services. Additionally, further screening is needed to identify those with **specific vulnerabilities**—notably older people and those with limited mobility or physical impairments—while identification and referral of **unaccompanied and separated children (UASC)** requires closer monitoring.

Protection from sexual abuse and exploitation (PSEA) remains a critical priority, particularly for women at risk. Ensuring that people of concern understand their rights, can access assistance, and can communicate any risks or report instances of sexual abuse and exploitation to humanitarian actors is crucial. Further capacity is needed to prevent the threat of illegal activity along border crossing points, including trafficking and exploitation – particularly given the arriving population is mainly comprising of women and children.



During a recent high-level mission to Hungary, UNHCR Deputy High Commissioner Kelly Clements visited Záhony border crossing point on 21 April 2022, where she met with local authorities, humanitarian partners, volunteers, and refugee families arriving from Ukraine. © UNHCR/Zsolt Balla

Working with Partners

UNHCR's Representation for Central Europe in Budapest covers activities in **the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, and Slovenia**. UNHCR has been present in Hungary since 1989.

UNHCR works in close coordination with Hungarian government counterparts to enable refugees and asylum-seekers to **enjoy essential rights and access basic services**. UNHCR maintains positive collaboration with state entities including local and municipal authorities, UN agencies, NGOs, humanitarian partners, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders to provide assistance to those seeking protection.

As part of the Ukraine Situation response, UNHCR leads and coordinates the implementation of the **Refugee Response Plan (RRP)** in line with the **Refugee Coordination Model (RCM)** and in close collaboration and consultation with relevant government counterparts, and with the support of inter-agency partners and other stakeholders. UNHCR also leads the **Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF)** at country-level in Hungary to ensure harmonized response within existing government structures and among inter-agency partners, NGOs, volunteers and other stakeholders, with associated **working groups** (Protection, Cash, Health and Basic Needs – including Shelter, Food, and Non-Food Items) and two cross-cutting **task forces** (PSEA, MHPSS) to effectively coordinate inter-agency partner's response.

UNHCR works closely with members of the Hungarian Charity Council, notably: **Caritas Hungary, Hungarian Baptist Aid, Hungarian Maltese Charity Service, Hungarian Interchurch Aid, Hungarian Red Cross, and Hungarian Reformed Church Aid**. UNHCR is also in the process of expanding its partnerships in Hungary to ensure availability of comprehensive assistance and services to people seeking protection, including those with specific needs. UNHCR's current implementing partners in Hungary include:

- **Cordelia Foundation** – provides psycho-social counselling and mental health support (MHPSS) for asylum-seekers, refugees and family members who have experienced trauma and distress.
- **Hungarian Helsinki Committee** – offers assistance and legal support to refugees, including those in detention.
- **Menedék** – provides counselling, language courses and social, educational and cultural programs supporting refugees and migrants in Hungary, in addition to job and housing assistance.
- **Next Step** – supports community-building, skills development, and empowerment of refugees in Hungary.



UNHCR launched the first Blue Dot Hub in Záhony near the border with Ukraine in early April. After arriving to Hungary, refugees can approach the Blue Dot to receive information on temporary protection, legal assistance, psychosocial support, and referral to specialized services for those with specific protection needs, in addition to serving as a safe space for women and children. © UNHCR

Main Activities

In the context of the high flow of arrivals into Hungary from Ukraine, **provision of information** remains key to ensuring refugees are able to **access key services, make decisions, and actively participate in the response**. UNHCR and partners are working to ensure those arriving from Ukraine have access to information through preferred channels, feedback mechanisms, community networks, and are able to participate in all stages of the response. To facilitate this, **Blue Dot** locations are being rolled out in Hungary and other countries to strengthen information provision, two-way communication, social and legal counselling, and referrals for people with specific needs, while serving as a safe space for women and children recently arriving from Ukraine. The first Blue Dot was launched in early April in Záhony train station near the border with Ukraine, with further locations to be rolled out in the coming weeks. UNHCR is also expanding **access to internet** to allow refugees and partners to access relevant information, including at the Blue Dot and nearby accommodation centre in Záhony. Using a 'Splash Page' interface, refugees are directed to [UNHCR's Help Page](#) which provides information on temporary protection as well as contact details for relevant authorities and humanitarian partners providing services in Hungary.

UNHCR is identifying **those with vulnerabilities**—including people with specific needs, those with disabilities, and UASC—for **referral to specialized services**. In coordination with local authorities, referral pathways are being developed to ensure that refugees can access necessary services, in accordance with their needs and preferences. **Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)** and prevention of **gender-based violence (GBV)** is being prioritized through reinforced inter-agency networks and PSEA mechanisms and systems, including referrals, at the national level. In this regard, UNHCR is conducting trainings for humanitarian partners and volunteer networks focusing on PSEA and core humanitarian principles, while preparing a Code of Conduct and system for screening and background checks among humanitarian actors present along border areas and reception points. Trainings on **protection monitoring and profiling** were undertaken between 21 – 22 April, including a detailed illustration of UNHCR's protection monitoring tool.

Additionally, UNHCR and partners are working to monitor and reinforce **reception conditions**, including through strengthening reception capacities in Hungary and monitoring of arrivals to ensure access to rights and services on a non-discriminatory basis, including for third-country nationals. UNHCR and partners are supporting authorities in scaling up of accommodation capacity, including for temporary shelter to accommodate those with both immediate and longer-term needs. UNHCR and partner the Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC) are working to expand transportation capacities for persons seeking to travel from accommodation facilities to the offices of the National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing (NDGAP) in order to apply for temporary protection and access relevant services.



(Left): On 30 April, NGO Lexis—a refugee-led organization supported by UNHCR—held a community gathering in Budapest which was attended by more than 120 Ukrainian refugees. The event included an information session on temporary protection and access to rights, preparation of traditional dishes, and various children's activities. The event was an opportunity for refugees to engage with other Ukrainians and migrants residing in Hungary, as well as members of the host community. © UNHCR

(Right): UNHCR prepares a delivery of core relief items to Ukraine from its stockpile near the border in eastern Hungary. © UNHCR

UNHCR is rapidly mobilizing the roll-out of **supply chains** in the region, including procurement of goods and services to support field operations in Hungary, Ukraine, and neighbouring countries. In March 2022, UNHCR launched a warehouse in eastern Hungary to facilitate delivery of Core Relief Items (CRIs) to Ukraine, including 21,312 thermal blankets, 14,800 jerry cans, 2,467 kitchen sets, 2,448 solar lamps and 2,300 plastic sheets. A second warehouse location is being identified in Budapest to provide additional stockpiles for operations in the region.



UNHCR and partners are present at Záhony train station and other border crossing points where refugees from Ukraine are arriving to Hungary, as well as in urban areas.
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Special Thanks to Donors

UNHCR is grateful to the donors of unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions to the Ukraine situation. Unearmarked contributions provide UNHCR with vital flexibility in determining how best to protect and assist persons of concern who are in the greatest need or at the greatest risk.

Donors of USD 10 million or more are (as of 26 April):

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* Financial information relates to the Representation for Central Europe, which covers Belarus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Slovakia and Slovenia.

For more information, please visit the [Global Focus page for the Ukraine Situation](#), [available here](#).

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More Information

For further information, please visit the [Ukraine Situation Operational Data Portal](#)

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