

20 May 2022

## KEY FIGURES

### Over 101,000

refugees from Ukraine enrolled for cash assistance in Poland

**95%** of the refugees enrolled are women (49.5%) and children (48%)

### US\$18.6 million

est. disbursed so far to assist refugees from Ukraine in Poland

**8** enrollment centres in Warsaw (2), Krakow, Poznań, Ostróda, Gdansk, Gdynia, Wrocław and coming soon, Lublin, Bielsko Biale, Bytom, Zgierz.

**Over 1,000** refugees per day can be enrolled



**“We’ll use the cash to buy some crutches and get [my mother] medical care. If there’s any money left, I’ll take her somewhere near water where she can recover. My mother grew up near a river and water is her life.”**

**LARYSA**  
Ukrainian living in a small studio apartment in Poland with her 80-year-old mother, Luba, who has just fled war in Ukraine.



*Refugees from Ukraine – mostly women, children and older people – are enrolled to receive cash assistance from UNHCR at the Praga cash enrollment centre in Warsaw, Poland. © UNHCR Maciej Moskwa, 2022*

## Why cash?

Cash assistance is one of the most efficient and effective ways to support people forced to flee, especially in fast-changing emergencies. Using secure finance technology combined with strict data protection measures, UNHCR provides refugees with cash securely and quickly. Families can purchase goods and services from local businesses – such as rent, food, medical supplies, and clothes – which boosts the economy and helps to integrate them into the community. Most importantly, **cash assistance respects the dignity of choice and independence of people forced to flee**, and give them a sense of normality and ownership, allowing them to decide what they need most to support their family. The programme is designed to serve as a transitional emergency safety net, until refugees can be included in national welfare systems.

## Whom do we help?

In March 2022, UNHCR set up in record-time a cash assistance programme for refugees who fled Ukraine from 24 February onwards. It is designed to initially support 360,000 refugees, prioritising the most vulnerable, such as women-headed households, people with disabilities or health conditions, and other groups.

## What support do refugees get?

Eligible refugees who enrol for the programme receive 700 Polish zloty (some US\$170) per month for at least three months, with an additional 600 Polish zloty for each household member, to a maximum amount per household of 2,500 zloty (approx. US\$600) per month for households of four members or more. The amount provided is aligned to the national safety net, to ensure a smooth transition into national social assistance schemes as soon as conditions allow.

## What is the link between cash assistance and protection?

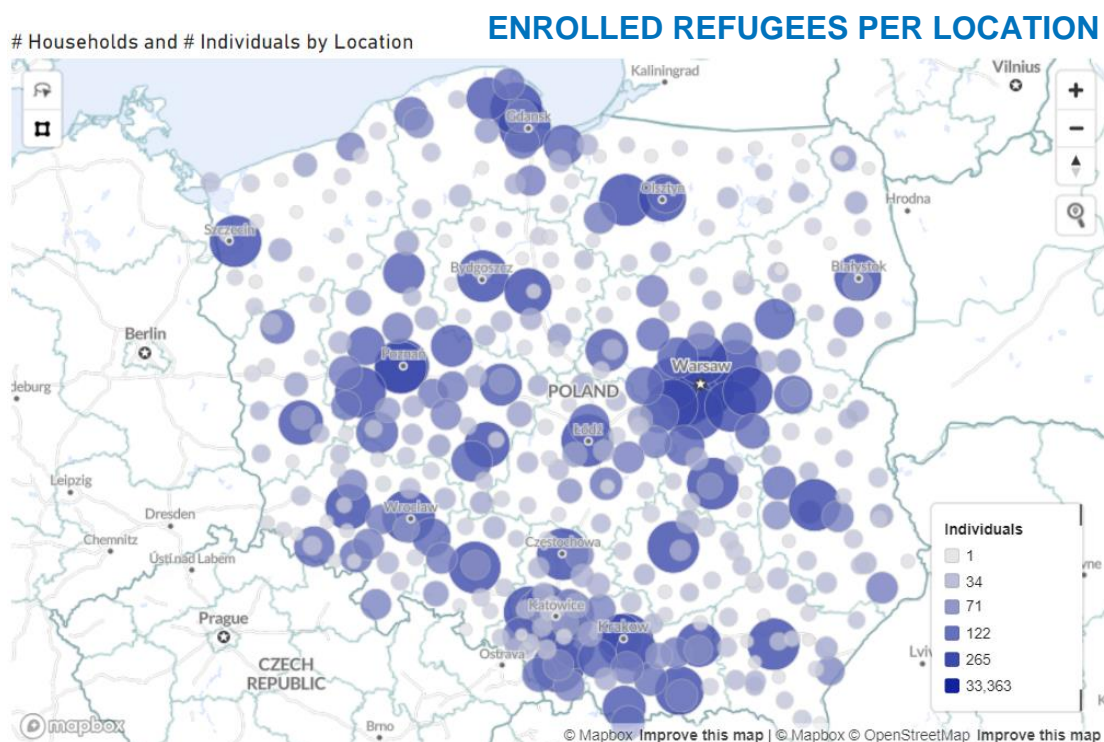
UNHCR's cash programme in Poland is an important opportunity to reach refugees with specific needs and offer them additional support and protection services, like counselling, psychosocial first aid, family tracing and referral to other national services.

## REFUGEES WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

- 20%** enrolled refugees with specific needs
- 12%** single parents
- 3%** women at risk
- 2%** people with disability
- 1%** unaccompanied and separated children

## How does it work?

1. Refugees request an appointment, for instance via [help.unhcr.org/Poland](https://help.unhcr.org/Poland) or through referral from UNHCR protection staff or partner organizations.
2. They receive an appointment by SMS.
3. At a UNHCR-run centre, refugees are asked questions on their family composition, current location of stay, etc. and need to show evidence that they fled Ukraine after 24 February.
4. Fingerprints are scanned, to ensure there is no duplication of assistance.
5. If refugees have specific needs (for instance, older people or separated children) or otherwise in need of support, they are referred for further counselling to the adjacent UNHCR-UNICEF Blue Dot protection hub, where they can access psychosocial aid, safe spaces and other services.
6. Refugees receive via SMS a unique 9-digit code (BLIK number), issued via UNHCR's partner Santander Bank, with which they can withdraw their cash grant from a wide network of ATMs in Poland.



## Who are our partners?

The programme is designed in coordination with the Polish Government and complementary to its efforts to support refugees from Ukraine. NGO partners include the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Polish Centre for International Aid Foundation (PCPM).

Private sector partners include Santander Bank, the financial service provider, and IKEA, which donated furniture for the cash centres and Blue Dot hubs.