

Poland

01 October 2022

Over **1.4 million refugees** from Ukraine have registered in Poland for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes. The **majority are women, children, older people and people with disabilities**.

UNHCR is supporting government-led efforts through a multisectoral response focusing on **ensuring access to asylum and protection, assisting the most vulnerable refugees, and facilitating inclusion**.

UNHCR and partners are at **border crossing points and in refugee-hosting areas** to provide information on rights and services, to identify and support vulnerable refugees, to reinforce the reception capacities and support longer-term solutions.

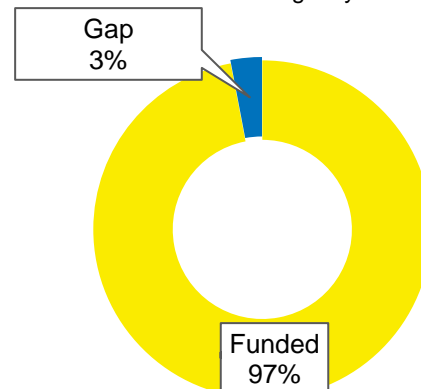
KEY FIGURES

- Over **1.4 million** refugees from Ukraine recorded in Poland.
- 35,215** people received targeted protection assistance and information at UNHCR-UNICEF **6** Blue Dots and **5** Community Centres.
- 291,816** refugees received multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA).
- 15,024** interviews conducted with refugees for protection monitoring and profiling.
- 507,876** essential core relief items (CRIs) were delivered to authorities for further distribution to vulnerable refugees.

FUNDING (AS OF 1 OCTOBER 2022)

US\$ 211.2 M

requested for the Ukraine Emergency Situation for Poland



STAFFING & OFFICES

110 international and national staff

4 offices in Warsaw, Krakow, Rzeszow and Lublin and mobile teams at border crossing points.

Overview

Since the military offensive in Ukraine, Poland transformed within weeks from a country hosting relatively few refugees into one of the main refugee-hosting countries in the world.

Refugee arrivals are expected to continue as the situation remains uncertain in Ukraine, with large scale displacement and destruction, as well as upcoming harsh winter conditions. While some refugees have moved on in Europe and elsewhere, the main receiving European country remains Poland.


UNHCR has boosted its presence and response to provide targeted protection services, cash assistance and other types of support in line with the Government-led efforts.





Art therapy session at the Blue Dot in Warsaw. September 2022. © UNHCR / Rafał Kostrzyński


Main Activities


In close collaboration with government and local authorities, United Nations agencies, partners, and civil society organizations, UNHCR undertakes the following activities:

 **Protection (including in Blue Dots and Community Centres)**
UNHCR supports the effort of the Government and local authorities to provide essential services and assistance to refugees from Ukraine and elsewhere. **Blue Dots are support hubs**, established by UNHCR and UNICEF, **that bring together critical protection services and information** for refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine, with a particular focus on helping those at heightened risk (such as unaccompanied and separated children, people with disabilities, older people, cases of suspected trafficking, survivors of gender-based violence and refugees from minority backgrounds). Building on this concept and to promote community empowerment, UNHCR has also opened **five Community Centres** in Warsaw, Rzeszow, Lublin, Wrocław and Gdynia, where a wide spectrum of targeted protection activities is provided. They ensure access to reliable, timely and comprehensive information, legal counselling and assistance, mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS), child protection, recreational activities and referrals to other and specialized services based on the identified needs. They are also a space for community driven initiatives, with a focus on activities promoting social cohesion that are adapted to each community. Both Blue Dots and Community Centres are located in areas with high concentration of refugees, ensuring appropriate outreach to the refugee community.

 **Information and Communication with Refugee Community**
To address critical gaps in information, UNHCR has quickly set up and regularly updates a Poland page on the UNHCR HELP website, which has become the most visited page on the website, including from within Ukraine (5.5 million page views and 2.5 million visits). The page includes information **in English, Polish and Ukrainian**, and some pages accessible to children. UNHCR has developed and circulates reliable and accurate information about the available services, to refugees at border points, in reception centers and urban areas, in the form of leaflets and posters, and on social media (Facebook and Twitter). A **UNHCR counselling line** was set up to address questions on protection and other forms of assistance, operating in four languages (English, Polish, Ukrainian and Russian).

 **Cash Assistance**
Cash assistance is one of the most efficient and effective ways to support people forced to flee, especially in fast-changing emergencies. Cash assistance respects the dignity of choice of refugees, allowing them to decide what they need most to support their family. UNHCR's multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) programme aimed at covering immediate needs of arrivals before they could access state support or find employment. This large-scale blanket emergency programme concluded on 23 September. The new phase of the cash assistance programme is planned to start in the second half of October, aiming to cover basic needs of very vulnerable refugees, including for their heightened needs during winter. This new phase will run until the end of 2022.

 **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Gender-Based Violence (GBV) / Anti-Trafficking**
UNHCR co-leads the PSEA Network with Plan International. One of its objectives is to mainstream PSEA in all humanitarian activities provided to refugees. **UNHCR conducts awareness-raising sessions on PSEA and anti-trafficking** with refugees, partners and government officials **through training and dissemination of information, education and communication materials** in English, Ukrainian, and Polish languages. UNHCR is working with partners – including community-based organizations – to establish and run complaints and feedback mechanisms to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, including through protection desks and protection monitoring.

 **Supplies**
UNHCR supports the government and local authorities in Poland with emergency supplies to strengthen reception capacities. **As of 1 October, 507,876 essential and core relief items such as bed linen, blankets, hygiene kits, towels and diapers have been dispatched and delivered to the municipalities** (in Białystok, Gdansk, Jaroslaw, Katowice, Kielce, Krakow, Lubaczow, Poznan, Rzeszow, Szczecin, Tarnobrzeg, Warsaw and Wrocław, **and voivodeships** (in Podkarpackie, Swietokrzyskie, Pomorskie, Lubelskie, Malopolskie and Wielkopolskie) for further distribution to refugees, including at reception and accommodation centres.

Working with partners

UNHCR works with 8 international and national partners to respond to the most pressing needs of refugees in Poland. These include ACTED/REACH, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Halina Niec Legal Aid Centre, the Lutheran World Federation, International Medical Corps (IMC), Première Urgence Internationale (PUI), the Polish Centre for International Aid (PCPM) and the Stowarzyszenie interwencji Prawnej (Association for Legal Intervention, SIP). Jointly, UNHCR and these partners are working with a number of grassroots local organizations.

UNHCR leads the overarching refugee coordination structure in Poland, in support of the Government-led response. The thematic sector working groups include Protection (with sub-sector working groups on Child Protection, Gender-based Violence, Counter-trafficking, Third-Country Nationals, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support), Health, Education, Shelter, Basic Needs (including Food Security, Water and Sanitation and Core Relief Items and Livelihoods), and Logistics. In addition, there are transversal working groups on Cash, Information Management, Accountability to Affected Populations and a Network on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

UNHCR, together with 142 partners, has launched a comprehensive **Ukraine Situation: Regional Refugee Response Plan** (recalibrated in October), appealing for US\$1.79 billion in support of the refugee response in the region until the end of December 2022, for a projected population of 8.3 million refugees. The Response Plan chapter for Poland **includes 87 partners (mostly NGOs) for a total budget of more than US\$777 million**. The Response Plan aims to complement, support and strengthen the national response to the refugee crisis in Poland and other refugee-receiving countries neighbouring Ukraine. Updated information on the response is available on the [UNHCR Poland Data Portal](#), including through dedicated pages for each Sector/Working Group.

Donors

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.



And to organizations and private sector partners from:



For more information:

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LINKS

[Ukraine Emergency Situation Page](#) - [Data Portal Poland](#) - [Facebook](#) - [Twitter](#)