HUNGARY

April - May 2023

In April, UNHCR released its 2nd round of Displacement Patterns, Protection Risks and Needs of Refugee from Ukraine – Regional Protection Analysis including findings from Hungary. It offers an analysis of the specific challenges older refugees and those with disabilities face in displacement.

As part of the Refugee Coordination Forum in Hungary, in partnership with Romaversitas, UNHCR developed Recommendations on Roma Inclusion in the Ukraine Refugee Response. The note collected recommendations and lessons learnt on the inclusion of Romani refugees within the Refugee Response Plan.

Since the opening of the UNHCR/IOM Budapest Helps! Community Centre over 5,500 refugees from Ukraine have been provided with access to information, legal assistance and various social services. Most requests for information are for education, accommodation and healthcare.

KEY FIGURES since 24 Feb 2022

52,336 refugees from Ukraine recorded in Hungary

36,315 applications for Temporary Protection in Hungary (30th of April)

16,006 active and renewed residence permits (NDGAP)

120,125 temporary residence certificates were issued (NDGAP)

On 7 May, UNHCR participated in Europe Day organized by the European Commission, commemorating Hungary's accession to the European Union. The Day's theme was employment, so UNHCR prepared a special quiz for visitors on facts regarding the Ukraine refugee situation and population statistics on employment.

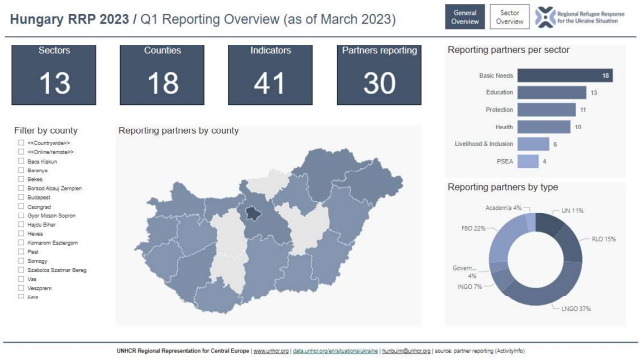
UNHCR PRESENCE IN HUNGARY

STAFF:

- **52** Total staff
- **19** International staff

OFFICES:

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



For more information, see the Operational Data Portal for the Ukraine Refugee Situation

Operational Context

As of the 31st of May, the number of border crossings from Ukraine has totaled 5.4 M, with 2.8 M crossings directly from the Ukraine border and 2.6 M crossings from the Romanian border. While the significant majority move on to other European countries, over 36,315 individuals have applied for Temporary Protection status in Hungary with 32,632 beneficiaries (as of 30 April). In addition, 29,713 residence permits were issued with 16,006 being active and renewed.[1] Many have urgent protection needs and underlying vulnerabilities, including persons with disabilities. Pendular movements between Ukraine and Hungary remain a consistent trend as people return to Ukraine to obtain documents, and check on family members and personal properties.

As the arrival of refugees from Ukraine is placing pressure on the national systems, UNHCR has evolved its response to also focus on strengthening national capacities to support refugee inclusion into national systems and socio-economic self-reliance. The Budapest Helps! Community Center, in coordination with IOM and the Budapest Municipality, is providing inclusion-focused capacity-building, empowerment, and community events for refugee communities, in collaboration with partners and refugee-led organizations, focusing on the most vulnerable.

UNHCR ensures a safe and protective environment for vulnerable refugees and their families, in close cooperation with the Hungarian Government, and equitable access to basic assistance and protection of all refugee women, girls, men, boys and persons with specific needs, including Roma refugees. UNHCR and partners continue to actively support refugees in Hungary to meet their basic needs and access protection and emergency assistance, such as receiving vital access to information, referral to psycho-social support, and assistance finding short and long-term accommodation, and accessing specialized services. “Blue Dot” support centres provide information and assistance to those arriving in Hungary in Zahony, Beregsurany, and Tiszabecs. This year, over 9,659 people have been assisted through the Blue Dots. To date, UNHCR and partners have provided food and non-food items including clothing and food packages to 17,395 refugees. Since April, 1,000 pairs of shoes were received through an in-kind donation from Champion and have been distributed to shelters and partners.

UNHCR and partners continue to provide information and legal counselling to ensure those arriving from Ukraine remain fully informed about procedures for applying for Temporary Protection, as well as the associated rights and services. Additionally, UNHCR is working with local counterpart organizations to improve screening and identification of those with specific vulnerabilities, notably older people and persons with limited mobility or physical impairments, while identification and referral of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) to specialized services continue to be prioritized.

Through the generous donation from Champion, UNHCR was able to distribute nearly 1,000 pairs of shoes to shelters and other organizations supporting both Ukrainian and Roma refugees.

[1] *Number of residence permits since March 01, 2022 (source: NDGAP). UNHCR counts the following in order to only count “active” residence permit holders: new applications made within the last 12 months of the given reporting month (as the permits are valid for 1 year); renewals granted between February 2023 and the given reporting month (as permits granted after Feb 2022 would have expired by then).*

Protection from sexual abuse and exploitation (PSEA) remains a critical priority for those in displacement, particularly for women at risk and within the digital landscapes. Ensuring that people of concern understand their rights, can access assistance, and can communicate any risks or report instances of sexual abuse and exploitation is crucial. Continued engagement is also needed to prevent trafficking and exploitation – particularly given the arriving population is mainly comprised of women and children.

Working with Partners

UNHCR works in close coordination partners to support refugees and asylum-seekers as well as with state entities including local and municipal authorities, UN agencies, NGOs, humanitarian partners, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders providing assistance to those seeking protection.

As part of the Ukraine Situation response, UNHCR leads and coordinates the **Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF)** at country-level in Hungary, bringing together over 70 stakeholders to ensure a harmonized response within national efforts and among inter-agency partners, NGOs, volunteers and other stakeholders, with associated **Working Groups** (Protection – including Child Protection and Education, 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 has 12 partnership agreements with the following organizations: Cordelia Foundation, Hungarian Baptist Aid, Hungarian Charity of the Order of Malta, Hungarian Interchurch Aid Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC), Hungarian Red Cross, Hungarian Reformed Church Aid, Mandak House, Menedék, Next Step, Romaversitas, and ULE Association.

In addition, UNHCR has recently signed grant agreements with nine Refugee-led Organizations (RLOs): Litera Egyesulet, She4She Migrant Women's Association in Hungary, Ukrainian Remény/Nadiya Association, Ukrainian Refugee Education Center at AISB, Vamos Foundation, National Association of Roma Women of the 21st Century, Taléta Nonprofit Kft. (Taléta Interkulturális Központ és Inkubátorház), Ukrainian Association Unity and Laurus Foundation.

UNHCR Response

Protection

- As an outcome of the previous Child Protection Working Group meeting held in March on the Hungarian signalling system for children at risk, a Q&A document was put together by UNHCR on behalf of the Working Group members. The aim was to provide information for organizations working with Ukrainian refugee children on the mandatory reporting requirement and on the practicalities of submitting a `signal`, available in Ukrainian, English and Hungarian. The document has been reviewed and approved by the Ministry of Interior, Child Welfare and Child Protection Departments and shared with the Working Group members, refugee-led organizations, and was uploaded on the Operational Data Portal.

- UNHCR issued the Regional Protection Analysis report, *Displacement Patterns, Protection Risks and Needs of Refugees From Ukraine* based on recent interviews with over 17,700 refugees in countries neighbouring Ukraine, including Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. While the report outlines much progress made by host countries to facilitate refugee inclusion, the analysis highlights the

particular challenges faced by the most vulnerable refugee households – those with at least one individual with a specific need, including older people and those with disabilities. More than one in five families interviewed – 22 per cent – include a member with a specific need such as disabilities or serious medical conditions. These families face much greater difficulty meeting their basic needs, exacerbating the risks they face. Press Release

- Following a change in procedure for third country nationals, effective 20 January 2023, Third Country Nationals (TCNs) without proof that they were residing in Ukraine prior to 24 February 2022 and have no other basis to request entry will not be admitted to Hungary. UNHCR Hungary has prepared information leaflets in English and Ukrainian to be circulated among UNHCR colleagues in Ukraine and also distributed at the border crossing point.

UNHCR

Information about entry from Ukraine to Hungary

The Hungarian authorities decide whether you are allowed to enter Hungary based on assessment of your individual circumstances. It is very important that you have all the available documents demonstrating your eligibility to enter Hungary when you request entry at the border crossing point. Please let the authorities at the border know if you have any humanitarian needs and if you would like to ask for protection.

UNHCR confirms that the information in this document is accurate as of May 2023.

IF YOU ARE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- A) A Ukrainian national
- B) Benefitted from international protection or equivalent national protection in Ukraine before 24 February 2022
- C) Recognized as a stateless person in Ukraine before 24 February 2022
- D) You are a family member of A, B, or C (for example: wife/husband/partner or son/daughter or mother/father, sibling under 18)

You are allowed to enter Hungary, unless a Schengen entry and stay ban was issued against you.

If you have a valid biometric passport, you can stay within the Schengen area for a 90-day period without a visa. During that period, you can apply for temporary protection in Hungary or travel to another Schengen Member State and apply for temporary protection there.

If you do not have a valid biometric passport, the Hungarian border police will verify your identity by checking other documentation available (for example a national passport, birth certificate, residence registration). If you are allowed to enter, you will receive a 30-day renewable temporary residence certificate. It allows you to stay legally and apply for Temporary Protection in Hungary. During the process, the police might take you to Nyírbátor, a city close to the border area, so that the asylum authority (National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing) can register you.

IF YOU ARE:

- E) A non-Ukrainian national fleeing Ukraine

To enter Hungary, you should fulfil the **general entry conditions under the Schengen rules**. This means that you have a valid travel document and a valid Schengen visa (see below), and there was no Schengen entry and stay ban issued against you.

If you have a **residence permit issued by an EU Member State**, you may be eligible to enter Hungary for transit purposes (to reach the territory of that Member State). Before travelling, please consult the authorities of the Member State which issued your residence permit to determine whether it can be used for the purpose of transit travel.

If you were **present in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 with a valid residence permit** and **have not left Ukraine since then**, you can be allowed entry on humanitarian grounds. You can demonstrate your presence in Ukraine with several documents, these include a valid residence permit, marriage certificate, or birth certificate. Please note this list is non-exhaustive; other documents can also be used as proof.

If you do not fall under the categories above, and you believe that your return to Ukraine or your country of origin is dangerous for you - **inform the Hungarian authorities and you can ask for protection**. If the authorities establish that refusing your entry is dangerous, you will be admitted to Hungary, and your case will go to the asylum authority.

Refused entry? What to do next?

You can appeal against the refusal of entry within 30 days to the judicial authority indicated in the police's decision.

Contact UNHCR for information on the free UNHCR refugee helpline +36 80 984 583 (Monday to Friday, 08:00 – 17:00) or email contact_hungary@unhcr.org

For more information on applying for a visa to Hungary visit: https://konzinfo.mfa.gov.hu/en/how-apply-visa

- A three-day training on GBV case management was conducted between the 15th and 17th of May for 20 participants from 10 UNHCR partner organizations. The training aimed at building the capacity of the social workers among civil society partners on GBV case management and integrating case management steps into their social work to ensure efficient and safe support to survivors of GBV.

- Following three years into the "Embassy Procedure," UNHCR published a Press Release on 26 May outlining its position regarding the implications of the procedure on access to territory in Hungary. Since 27 May 2020, nearly all those who wish to apply for asylum in Hungary have been unable to do so. Three years have passed since the introduction of the "embassy procedure," a policy which stipulates that asylum-seekers must go to the Embassy of Hungary in Belgrade, Serbia or Kyiv, Ukraine, to indicate their intent to submit their asylum application in Hungary. In practice, only a handful of people have successfully used this process. The "embassy procedure" was initially introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, while the policy has since been extended five times and is currently in effect until 31 December 2023.

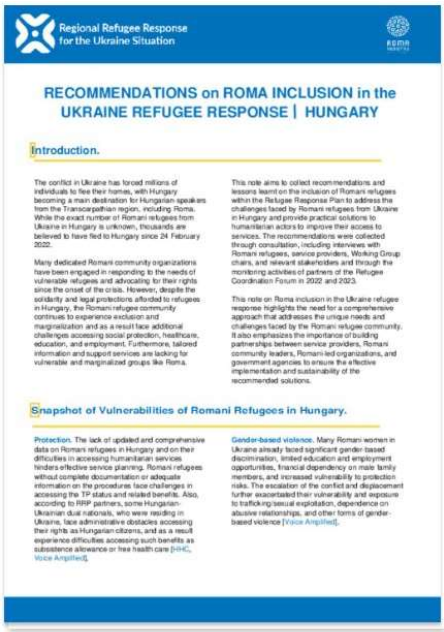
- UNHCR supported 21 Ukrainian children to participate in the UEFA Fan Festival of the Europa League Final on 31 May 2023 in Budapest. The participants were between 8 – 17 years old and joined from different parts of Hungary, where they have been staying after fleeing the war. Among the players were three girls who are professional soccer players Europa League finalists AS Roma and Sevilla FC provided gifts for the children.

Refugee children from Ukraine were able to fulfil their passion for football at the Fan Festival of the Europa League Final in Budapest on the 31st of May 2023.

Inter-agency Coordination

- As a follow-up to the Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) meeting on 5 May that focused on strengthening Roma inclusion in the refugee response in Hungary, the RCF published recommendations to ensure that RCF partners' programming and projects are sensitive to the unique needs, challenges, and aspirations of Romani refugees. The recommendations also aim to contribute to fostering social cohesion, promoting human rights, and advancing the overall well-being of Romani individuals and families.

- The RCF is working to raise awareness and increase understanding of the specific needs and challenges faced by refugees with disabilities in Hungary. This includes working to compile a set of best practices, experiences, success stories, and lessons learned from various organizations and agencies involved in supporting refugees with disabilities. The overarching aim will be to foster networking and collaboration among the members of the Refugee Coordination Forum, government departments and technical organizations to promote inclusion and improve the support provided to refugees with disabilities. A note will be prepared with key lessons learnt and recommendations during the RCF scheduled for June.


Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

RECOMMENDATIONS on ROMA INCLUSION in the UKRAINE REFUGEE RESPONSE | HUNGARY

Introduction.

The conflict in Ukraine has forced millions of individuals to flee their homes, with Hungary becoming a main destination for Hungarian speakers from the Transcarpathian region, including Roma. While the exact number of Romani refugees from Ukraine in Hungary is unknown, thousands are believed to have fled to Hungary since 24 February 2022.

Many dedicated Romani community organizations have been engaged in responding to the needs of vulnerable refugees and advocating for their rights since the onset of the crisis. However, despite the solidarity and legal protections afforded to refugees in Hungary, the Romani refugee community continues to experience exclusion and marginalization and as a result face additional challenges accessing social protection, healthcare, education, and employment. Furthermore, tailored information and support services are lacking for vulnerable and marginalized groups like Roma.

This note aims to collect recommendations and lessons learnt on the inclusion of Romani refugees within the Refugee Response Plan to address the challenges faced by Romani refugees from Ukraine in Hungary and provide practical solutions to humanitarian actors to improve their access to services. The recommendations were collected through consultation, including interviews with Romani refugees, service providers, Working Group chairs, and relevant stakeholders and through the monitoring activities of partners of the Refugee Coordination Forum in 2022 and 2023.

This note on Roma inclusion in the Ukraine refugee response highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses the unique needs and challenges faced by the Romani refugee community. It also emphasizes the importance of building partnerships between service providers, Romani community leaders, Romani-led organizations, and government agencies to ensure the effective implementation and sustainability of the recommended solutions.

Snapshot of Vulnerabilities of Romani Refugees in Hungary.

Protection. The lack of updated and comprehensive data on Romani refugees in Hungary and on their difficulties in accessing humanitarian services hinders effective service planning. Romani refugees without complete documentation or adequate information on the procedures face challenges in accessing the TP status and related benefits. Also, according to RRP partners, some Hungarian-Ukrainian dual nationals, who were residing in Ukraine, face administrative obstacles accessing their rights as Hungarian citizens, and as a result experience difficulties accessing such benefits as subsistence allowance or free health care [HHC, Voice Amplified].

Gender-based violence. Many Romani women in Ukraine already faced significant gender-based discrimination, limited education and employment opportunities, financial dependency on male family members, and increased vulnerability to protection risks. The escalation of the conflict and displacement further exacerbated their vulnerability and exposure to trafficking/sexual exploitation, dependence on abusive relationships, and other forms of gender-based violence [Voice Amplified].

Communication and Provision of Information

- UNHCR's Help Page for Hungary provides refugees with information on Temporary Protection procedures, key contacts and addresses, and referral information for specialized services, including family reunification and legal/social counselling. Links to dedicated information videos in English, Hungarian, Ukrainian and Russian provide general information on Temporary Protection and associated services available in Hungary. Additional communication channels include an SMS line and a dedicated email to respond to queries, and to allow individuals to provide feedback and share any complaints. As of the 31st of May, there have been 136, 748 visits to the website.
- UNHCR established a Telegram Channel that enables one-way communication with Ukranian refugees in Hungary. To date, there are over 2,079 subscribers. The Telegram Channel allows for refugees to access the important update and information in a platform that is widely used by Ukranians. Following routine monitoring, the majority of inquires involve information regarding financial support, education, healthcare services, employment and accomendation.

Special Thanks to Donors

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Links

For further information, please visit the Ukraine Situation Operational Data Portal

UNHCR Central Europe • UNHCR Hungary • UNHCR Hungary Country Website • UNHCR Ukraine Emergency Appeal

Sign up for the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe mailing list to receive regular updates on the Ukraine Situation.