

Poland

January 2024

Nearly one million refugees from Ukraine are currently recorded in Poland, the majority women and children, representing some 2.5 per cent of the total population in Poland.

UNHCR coordinates the response of **organizations under the Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP)'s Poland chapter**, the majority of which are Polish organizations.

UNHCR supports the Government of Poland to ensure **access to territory, provide legal status and documentation and access to rights** to refugees.

UNHCR POPULATION STATISTICS (as of mid-2023)*

Refugees	989,877
Asylum-seekers	3,820
Stateless people	1,425
Others of concern	1,328

Top three countries of origin**

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Ukraine	954,874	Belarus	3,607
Belarus	6,729	Russian Federation	1,173
Russian Federation	2,284	Ukraine	398

*UNHCR 2023 Mid-Year Trends and UNHCR data finder

**As of mid- December 2023

UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION RESPONSE

Support to the most vulnerable refugees: UNHCR is working with partners to protect vulnerable refugees, including many elderly people and children, prevent gender-based violence and communicate with refugees. In 2023, 104,688 refugees visited a community center or Blue Dot (**now fully integrated** into centers managed in cooperation with municipalities and local organisations) to get information (i.e. on legalisation of their stay, education, legal counselling, etc.) or assistance (for instance referral for humanitarian cash assistance, medical services, accommodation, etc.). Many visitors have specific needs: elderly at risk, persons with health concerns, women and girls at risks, etc. Mobile teams are also visiting remote areas and vulnerable refugees.

Livelihoods and economic inclusion: UNHCR supports refugees to achieve self-reliance, for instance co-organizing or participating in 23 job fairs in Poland in 2023. In addition, targeted support is offered to vulnerable refugees to help them access jobs. Some 50 refugees staying in collective shelters enrolled at the end of 2023 in a pilot “employment activation” project, to be scaled up in other locations.

Coordination: In line with the Refugee Coordination Model, UNHCR leads and coordinates the humanitarian response, in collaboration with the Government of Poland. The **coordination architecture** is built on five sectors and four main working groups. UNHCR co-leads the Protection and Economic Inclusion sectors, the Information Management Working Group and the PSEA Working Group. The 2024 Regional Refugee Response Plan for Ukraine will be **released** on 15 January in Geneva; a country launch in Poland will follow.

HIGHLIGHTS

Engaging with grassroots organizations

In 2024, UNHCR is supporting exclusively local partners. This builds on the partnerships established in 2023 with key international and national NGOs, as well as on 28 small scale agreements to support 17 grassroots and refugee-led organisations helping refugees directly across Poland. In addition, two innovation projects are sponsored in Krakow, to pioneer creative solutions supporting refugees.

Targeted cash assistance

In December 2023, UNHCR concluded a major cash support programme. Set up in the early days of the emergency in 2022 as a large blanket programme for newly arrived refugees from Ukraine, UNHCR’s cash programme then transitioned to focus on the most vulnerable refugees. In 2023, UNHCR identified throughout Poland and enrolled 36,858 vulnerable refugees. In total, UNHCR assisted **327,821 refugees** through its cash programme in 2022-23.



Polish couple wins prestigious United Nations award for supporting refugees

Ms. Lena Grochowska and Mr. Władysław Grochowski of Poland have been jointly selected as the UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award’s 2023 regional winners for Europe. They will be honoured for their endeavours in sheltering and supporting refugees in Poland and providing employment opportunities and a safe haven to many in need.

Read the full [story](#); watch the [video](#); listen to M. Grochowski’s moving [speech](#).

Lena Grochowska and Władysław Grochowski (rear centre) with Ukrainian refugees (left to right) Oksana, Valerii and Ludmila. © UNHCR/Tarik Argaz

Key Priorities

UNHCR Poland's key areas of focus includes:

- **Ensuring access to asylum:** In coordination with Polish authorities, UNHCR conducts visits at border crossing points and in border areas, and provides training and equipment to authorities, NGOs, and others. UNHCR also conducts detention monitoring visits and promotes alternatives to detention, while providing legal aid to asylum seekers.
- **Reaching, protecting, and empowering the most vulnerable:** Through a network of seven Community Centres, and country-wide mobile outreach teams, UNHCR and partners provide [protection services](#) such as legal aid, mental health, and psycho-social support (MHPSS), language classes, child-friendly spaces, and group activities. In 2023, 104,688 refugees benefited from services at these various centers. Additionally, mobile teams of 40+ protection monitors interviewed and profiled 25,219 refugees across 13 voivodships in the first nine months of 2023, allowing useful [protection analysis](#). To understand the needs of refugees and identify the biggest gaps, UNHCR and partners conducted a "[multi-sector needs assessment](#)" in 2023, interviewing over 5,600 households throughout the country in July and August 2023. This allows UNHCR to better plan its response, based on data and refugee feedback.
- **Facilitate inclusion, resilience, and solutions for refugees:** UNHCR advocates for refugees' right to work, collaborating with authorities and private sector to analyse the impact and support the inclusion of refugees in the Polish economy. In support of authorities and together with private actors, UNHCR plays a central role connecting refugees with job opportunities and support their socio-economic inclusion, including access to social security benefits (education, health, social services).

Working with Partners

- UNHCR works with the Prime Minister's office, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, the Border

Guards, and the Office for Foreigners, among other central authorities. UNHCR also works closely with local and municipal authorities.

- UNHCR currently partners with ten partners, all Polish: Association for Legal Intervention (SIP), Halina Niec Legal Aid Center, Central Roma Council, Empowering Children Foundation (FDDS), Feminoteka, Habitat for Humanity, Caritas, Polish Migration Forum and four partner NGOs, the Immigrants Support Center (CWI) and Internationaler Bund Polska (IBP).
- **External engagement:** UNHCR advocates for support for forcibly displaced and stateless people, engaging with donors, media, partners, and civil society to amplify refugee voices and promote peaceful coexistence with host communities.

Statelessness

- Poland has not acceded to the 1954 or 1961 UN Conventions on Statelessness and has no statelessness determination procedure in place. UNHCR is engaging Members of Parliament to take on [UNHCR's recommendations](#) made in its 2019 mapping to address gaps identified.

UNHCR Presence in Poland

Staff:

75 National Staff

49 International Staff

Offices:

Country Office in Warsaw

Field Office in Warsaw

Field Office in Lublin

Sub Office in Krakow

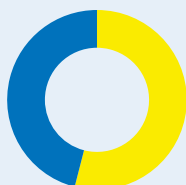
Field Office in Rzeszow

Financial information (15 December 2023)

Financial requirements in 2024:
\$ 85 M

Financial requirements in 2023:
\$ 102.9 M

Funding gap 46%
\$ 47.1M



Funded 54%
\$ 55.8 M

UNHCR is grateful for the support from our top government donors of unearmarked, softly earmarked, and earmarked funding:

Belgium | Canada | Denmark | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Republic of Korea | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America

UNHCR is also grateful for the generous contributions from the private sector and individuals.