



On 18 September, during his visit to Estonia, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, visited the Estonian Refugee Council's office in Tallinn and met with UNHCR NGO partners ERC, Mondo and EHRC. ©ERC

Operational context

Since 24 February 2022, Estonia has received a high number of refugees from Ukraine. From the outset of the war, the Government of Estonia and civil society have responded with steadfast solidarity towards refugees from Ukraine, including by providing access to employment and public services. However, according to a [protection monitoring survey carried out by UNHCR](#), the challenges refugees from Ukraine face include access to documentation, access to work, and access to healthcare.

Since 2023, Estonia has been included in the Ukraine Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP), complementing the government-led response. In 2024, a [new plan was launched](#), coordinated by UNHCR and developed by 14 humanitarian organizations.

Following the increase in refugee and migrant arrivals via Belarus to Lithuania, Latvia and Poland in 2021, Estonia has adopted amendments to the State Border Act which allow for denial of access to the asylum procedure in situations of mass influx.

Working with partners

UNHCR [works closely with partners](#) to provide protection and support to refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people in Estonia and advocate for their inclusion.

KEY FIGURES

- 55,117 applications for temporary protection lodged by refugees from Ukraine since February 2022*
- 281 individuals granted asylum or subsidiary protection in Q2
- 308 asylum applications lodged in Q2
- 62,216 stateless persons

**Renewal of permits is ongoing and may result in changes of figures. The current figure has been determined as 32,867 but is subject to constant fluctuations.*



Mondo



Estonian Human Rights Centre / Eesti Inimõiguste Keskus



Estonian Refugee Council

Highlights of UNHCR's and partners' activities

COUNSELLING SERVICES

- In the third quarter of 2024, UNHCR's partner, the Estonian Human Rights Centre (EHRC), assisted 74 individuals with legal counselling, including 39 people from Ukraine, and 52 persons with quick counselling over phone or email. To date throughout 2024, 267 people have received full counselling sessions, including 144 from Ukraine. UNHCR and partners routinely provide legal counselling and information for asylum-seekers and refugees regarding asylum procedures, access to temporary protection, and access to rights and services to aid their inclusion and integration.

PROTECTION MONITORING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- In the third quarter, UNHCR partner Estonian Refugee Council (ERC) reached a total of 673 individuals through outreach activities, making a 2024 total so far of 1,951, that includes 1,899 Ukrainians. Added to this, Mondo have so far this year reached 103 refugees and 598 members of the host community. ERC identified and referred for services 37 persons from Ukraine with specific needs, making 78 in 2024 so far.
- In 2024 to date, ERC has conducted 54 protection monitoring visits with nine in the third quarter, while EHRC carried out eight in the reporting period, including visits to Tallinn Airport and the Port of Tallinn.
- UNHCR and partners engage in advocacy, capacity-building and specialized services in order to ensure that protection of children is strengthened and services to meet their specific needs are improved. In 2024 so far, UNHCR's partner Mondo has organized training on working with children with trauma for 94 teachers, and provided Estonian language courses for 40 teachers from Ukraine to facilitate their participation in the labour market.

EVENTS

- The High Commissioner (HC) visited Estonia on 18 September. During his mission to Estonia, he met the President of the Republic of Estonia, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of the Interior, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament, the Ambassador of the USA to Estonia, various NGO partners, and refugees. The HC discussed among other things the global refugee crisis, and acknowledged Estonia's exceptional work in receiving, supporting, and integrating refugees from Ukraine. Strong support for UNHCR was reaffirmed.
- UNHCR participated in a meeting with a delegation of the European Commission to discuss the implementation of EU Pact. The aim of the meeting was to identify the needs and challenges surrounding the implementation of the EU Pact from the perspective of NGOs and UN agencies in Estonia. To ensure protection of forcibly displaced persons, UNHCR stressed the importance of four priority areas in Estonia: (i) capacity development to ensure effective implementation of the EU Pact; (ii) fair and fast processing and consideration of expectations in the border procedures; (iii) independent monitoring; (iv) access to legal counselling.

INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION

- In August, UNHCR held consultations with stakeholders in Estonia to discuss current challenges in the response to refugees, as well as the plans for 2025. The consultations included meetings with key government counterparts, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, and Ministry of Culture, as well as other UN Agencies, NGO partners, RRP partners, the diplomatic community, and refugees from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Türkiye, Iran, and Afghanistan.