Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

UKRAINE SITUATION

REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

ROMANIA CHAPTER

January-December 2023

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A word from the Regional Refugee Coordinator

Pascale Moreau
Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Ukraine Situation
UNHCR, Regional Director for Europe

It is difficult to convey the enormity of the destruction and human suffering in Ukraine – and the impact the war is having across the region, where neighbouring countries have, since the outset, welcomed millions of refugees fleeing the violence.

The support offered to those fleeing Ukraine has been nothing short of extraordinary – from governments, civil society, individuals and volunteers, NGOs and local organizations, as well as private sector actors. In the European Union, the swift activation of the Temporary Protection Directive in March 2022 was historic and proved the EU can effectively receive and include refugees. Non-EU countries must also be commended. The Republic of Moldova has, in particular, shown exemplary leadership in extending protection to the refugees on its territory, modeled largely on that provided in EU Member States, despite significant challenges.

With much achieved in 2022, refugees and host communities are counting on our continued solidarity in the year to come. As in Ukraine, our immediate focus in the refugee-hosting countries must be on supporting national efforts to ensure that refugees in Europe have adequate and safe shelter during the difficult winter months ahead. At the same time, knowing that the conflict dynamics inside Ukraine may lead to further outflows, we continue to work with governments to develop contingency plans that will allow us to quickly respond to the urgent needs of new arrivals. This includes, among other things, providing targeted cash assistance, while supporting national and municipal efforts to ensure access to secure, dignified shelter through renovations and winterization of identified facilities. Prolonged stays in collective centres or group housing inevitably create protection risks, particularly for the most vulnerable. We must all redouble efforts to ensure they are safe through prompt identification and referral to appropriate services.

In the medium and long-term, the best way to protect refugees – and harness their potential to contribute – is through their inclusion in national systems. The implementation of the EU's Temporary Protection Directive ensures that refugees can find safety in EU countries in the region and provides a legal basis for refugees to access rights and services. This includes rights that allow refugees to access the labour market and secure decent work. Going forward, addressing the practical, administrative and legal barriers to the enjoyment of rights will be a vital part of supporting their sustainable stay in host countries. It is important to support their swift and effective

inclusion into national systems to promote self-sufficiency and mitigate protection risks that can result if refugees are unable to meet their basic needs.

We are aware of the challenges ahead: the ripple effects of the war are widening, causing economic impacts in refugee-hosting countries and beyond. Fuel shortages and inflation loom large in the coming months. Reception and accommodation capacities are stretched, as are social welfare systems. Notwithstanding these realities, I remain reassured by the solidarity and creativity, political will and hands-on support that host governments, communities and partners have demonstrated over the past ten months – the speed and comprehensiveness of the response to date is a testament to what can be achieved when we work together. I take this opportunity to, once again, highlight the critical role of national and local non-governmental organizations, including refugee-led organizations, as first responders to urgent humanitarian needs since 24 February. They will remain the bedrock of our collective preparations and response, and they need our support to further strengthen their capacities.

I do not underestimate the magnitude of what we are asking when we encourage our partners to stay the course. The situation remains unpredictable, and we must continue to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable refugees, particularly older persons, people with disabilities, and unaccompanied children and adolescents. I trust that together we can find ways to work together to ensure that people forced to flee Ukraine continue to find safety, assistance, and protection until they can safely return home.

Pascale Moreau
Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Ukraine Situation
UNHCR, Regional Director for Europe

At a Glance

Regional Planned Response
(January-December 2023)

4.035 M
targeted refugee population

120 K
targeted host community members

$1.7 B
total financial requirements in USD

243[1]
partners involved

REGION	FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS IN USD	PARTNERS INVOLVED
Bulgaria	43,387,258	18
Czech Republic	81,578,288	4
Estonia	9,135,766	14
Hungary	62,741,799	37
Latvia	11,989,791	14
Lithuania	17,813,459	10
Republic of Moldova	426,961,899	73
Poland	709,399,440	83
Romania	153,603,900	34
Slovakia	80,126,073	28
Regional support	88,757,581	7

[1] This figure represents the total number of partners operating regionally, and counts partners only once even if operating in more than one country. The country chapters provide the absolute number of partners per country.

COUNTRY CHAPTER

ROMANIA

UNHCR/Mihai von Eremia

At a Glance

Romania Planned Response
(January-December 2023)

350,000
targeted refugee population

$153.6 M
total financial requirements in USD

34
partners involved

ROMANIA

Part 1: Current Situation

Situation Overview

Romania has remained an important refugee-receiving country since the escalation of hostilities in Ukraine. Over 2.2 million border crossings, including pendular movements, have been recorded into Romania from Ukraine and Moldova since 24 February. As of the end of December, Romania hosted 106,268 refugees from Ukraine,[2] almost 80 per cent of whom are women and children. Over 101,000 Ukrainians and third-country nationals (TCNs) arriving from Ukraine have been granted status under the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), which provides a framework for their legal stay and access to a wide variety of rights and services in Romania. Under the TPD, Romania continues to provide refugees from Ukraine with access to national systems and services such as education, health, housing, social services as well as access to employment services.

Over 90 per cent of Ukrainian refugees under temporary protection (TP) live in urban and peri-urban areas, primarily in private accommodation within the host communities. Based on the Multi-sector Needs Assessment conducted in October 2022, nearly 70 per cent of respondent refugee households in Romania currently benefit from the 50/20 programme, through which 50 Romanian lei per person per day is provided for accommodation and 20 lei per person per day for food.[3] Around 7,700 refugees live in accommodation centres managed by the Government of Romania.[4]

On 26 July 2022, the Government of Romania launched the National Plan of Measures (NPM) for the Protection and Inclusion of Displaced Persons from Ukraine and Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection in Romania. The NPM represents a progression from the acute emergency to the longer-term protection and inclusion phase of the response. To support the implementation of the NPM, the government has established working groups focusing on protection and inclusion in the areas of health, education, employment, housing, vulnerable persons, children and youth, anti-trafficking and gender-based violence (GBV). RRP Partners are adapting their plans to align with and complement the NPM, while allowing flexibility to respond to emergencies and emerging needs. RRP sector leads and co-leads participate in the governmental working groups, ensuring synergies and communication of policy priorities.

Since the start of the Ukrainian refugee crisis, refugees in Romania have been able to benefit from effective government-led support mechanisms. RRP partners work in support of the refugee

[2] Source: Department for Emergency Situations, General Inspectorate for Border Police, General Inspectorate for Immigration, 04 Dec 2022. See: UNHCR Data Portal, Romania page, https://data.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/234?sv=54&geo=10782
[3] UNHCR–Reach, Romania - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA), key preliminary findings, November 2022.
[4] UNHCR, Operational Data Portal/Romania, Overview on Sites and Locations, accessed 17 November 2022

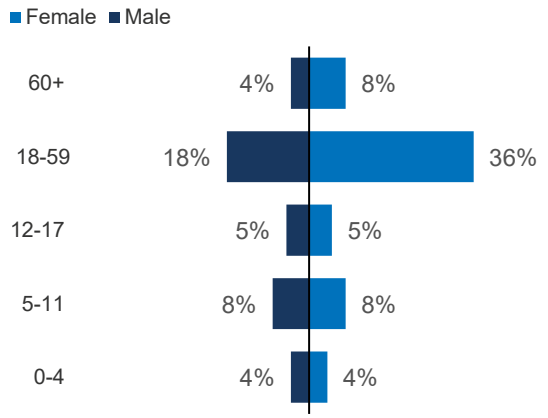
response provided by the Government of Romania, delivering complementary assistance in the areas of protection, GBV, child protection, education, health care, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and the provision of multi-purpose cash, hygiene kits, core relief items and food.

To facilitate refugees' access to response services, one-stop centres, such as Blue Dots and the integrated support hub at RomExpo in Bucharest have been established and provide providing a comprehensive set of services and support, from registration to material items to information and counselling. Mechanisms have also been in place since the early days of the refugee influx to identify and refer vulnerable refugees at the border points, including unaccompanied and separated children, persons with disabilities and persons with serious medical needs, to specialized NGOs and services. RRP partners have successfully launched helplines and information websites and support the government-run information website for refugees in Romania to raise refugees' awareness on their rights and help them navigate the available support services. In parallel, RRP partners provided multi-purpose cash assistance to enable refugees to meet their basic needs.

Population Planning Figures

Romania	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection as of end Dec 2022[5]	Target Population in 2023
Refugee Population	101,733	350,000

Age and gender breakdown[6]



61%

Women and girls

39%

Men and boys

[5] This figure may include multiple registrations of the same individual in two or more EU+ countries; registrations that remain incomplete for various reasons, or registrations of refugees who have moved onward, including beyond Europe.
[6] Based on data from the General Inspectorate of Immigration, Ministry of Interior

Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

The characteristics of the refugee population in 2022, composed of approximately two-thirds women with a high proportion of single-headed households - with husbands and fathers often remaining in Ukraine - are expected to remain similar in 2023. Children comprise roughly one-third of the total number of refugees who have crossed into Romania from Ukraine.[7]

Due to the more protracted nature of the crisis in 2023, it is expected the new arrivals will differ in terms of socio-economic status and vulnerabilities; people with fewer financial means who had previously remained in Ukraine may be forced to leave as the conditions deteriorate, particularly through the winter months and as the conflict progresses, including people with specific needs such as older people, persons with disabilities and unaccompanied and separated children. Economic vulnerabilities are also expected to affect refugees already in Romania as their longer-term displacement depletes financial savings and increases the risk of using negative coping mechanisms.

The protection risks facing new arrivals are high, and include human trafficking, GBV, separation of children from parents and caregivers, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), as well as high levels of psychosocial distress associated with conflict. With children comprising one-third of the total number of refugees who have crossed into Romania from Ukraine, the systematic identification of children at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation remains critical.

Access to national services and social protection systems is granted under the TPD. Despite the generous legal framework, refugees face barriers to access these services due to systemic challenges, largely identified in the NPM, including language barriers and administrative requirements. Only around 14 per cent of school-aged refugee children are registered in official schools;[8] and only approximately 15 per cent of working-age Ukrainian nationals are formally employed in Romania.[9] Approximately 25 per cent of surveyed refugees report barriers in accessing health services, mainly due to lack of information and language barriers, particularly for mental health and sexual and reproductive health care[10]. In 2023, the Ministry of Health and RRP partners will conduct concerted efforts and information campaigns to increase vaccination rates and counter misinformation for COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. Barriers to access to services for GBV survivors are multi-fold, including language and lack of information on specialized services (both in terms of their availability and how to access them). Stigma around reporting GBV and accessing mental health services has also been noted as a challenge.

Concerns remain around the reception and inclusion of TCNs who have fled Ukraine and may not be eligible for temporary protection, such as those who lack a long-term residency permit in Ukraine and stateless persons who did not hold a permanent residency permit or specific statelessness status in Ukraine. RRP partners will continue to work with the EU Agency for Asylum

[7] Source: Government authorities. See: UNHCR, Romania Data Portal, Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation (unhcr.org)
[8] Ministry of Education data, as shared during Government Working Group meeting under the NPM, 10 November 2022.
[9] Ministry of Labor and Social Protection- as quoted in https://www.agerpres.ro/politic/2022/11/11/ministrul-budai-4-850-de-cetateni-ucraineni-s-au-angajat-in-romania-dupa-declansarea-razboiului--1012219, November 2022.
[10] UNHCR–Reach, Romania - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA), key preliminary findings, November 2022.

and the national asylum authorities to ensure similar treatment of TCNs, to promote their inclusion in the social and economic life of Romania.

Refugees from Ukraine have received a generous welcome in Romania, from the State, civil society, and its citizens. However, given the global economic situation, high inflation in Romania of around 15 per cent year-on-year[11] and a projected GDP growth of 1.8 per cent in 2023,[12] the welcoming attitude may gradually wane. While currently less than 10 per cent of Ukrainian refugee households surveyed in the multi-sectoral needs assessment have reported experiencing negative attitudes, such as discrimination or verbal aggression, concerted efforts must be taken to maintain social cohesion and to address concerns of vulnerable host communities in refugee hosting areas.[13]

The dispersed distribution of refugees and lack of data on the exact locations where refugees reside in Romania also presents an overarching challenge to the implementation of targeted activities and programmes.

1Aleksei Vytalyi from Ukraine and his four-year-old nephew are travelling from Palanca in Moldova to Romania © UNHCR/Mihai von Eremia

[11] Romania Inflation Rate - 1991-2021 Historical - November Forecast, October 2022.
[12] Romania, GDP forecast - Economic forecast for Romania (europa.eu)
[13] UNHCR–Reach, Romania - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA), key preliminary findings, November 2022.

Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

In view of the conflict dynamics in Ukraine and the likelihood that refugee outflows will continue into Romania in 2023, RRP partners will maintain their support to the national response, both to new arrivals and implementation of the NPM. The NPM epitomizes an adaptation from acute emergency to a longer-term protection and inclusion approach and is the blueprint for the longer-term protection and inclusion strategy for the RRP in Romania. The response will continue to be delivered on a non-discriminatory basis and with due attention to persons with specific needs, including support for emergency transport, temporary accommodation and housing, immediate food assistance, distribution of core relief items, and information provision on available services.

Contributing to the longer-term protection and inclusion approach, RRP partners work in support of the government and the public institutions in the implementation of the NPM and to promote the sustainable inclusion of refugees into the national systems, from health care and education to protection services and social assistance. To this end, RRP partners will support the following principles of implementation:

- Prioritize support to assistance and service delivery through State institutions.
- Provide targeted and complementary support where the demand in services exceeds availability.
- Support outreach activities to raise awareness and connect people in need to available services, strengthen referrals between service providers and enhance institutional capacity to follow up on referrals.

In practice, to improve access to services, refugees from Ukraine need accurate and up-to-date information on rights and services available to them. RRP partners will work with government institutions to scale up efforts to provide information to refugees from Ukraine on service availability, and on the practicalities to access these. As expressed by refugees, language barriers remain one of the most significant obstacles for inclusion, notably to access medical and psychosocial care, legal counselling, education and the labour market.

To enable refugees' socio-economic inclusion, language and childcare will need to be prioritized. Refugee self-reliance is a core objective, as expressed in the Global Compact on Refugees, and work will be undertaken with government authorities, UN Agencies, NGOs and the private sector to address the acute unemployment or under-employment of refugees in Romania, informed by a market-based approach. With large numbers of children currently not enrolled in national education, RRP partners will employ a multi-pronged approach, aimed at identifying children in need of education according to their age, background and ambitions to enhance enrollment rates and support a more responsive and inclusive education system in Romania.

Many of the barriers to socio-economic and legal inclusion are specified in the NPM. RRP partners will continue to monitor access to national services and promote unhindered access to social protection schemes and public services, while advocating for systematic data collection on refugees' socio-economic situation by national and local government actors. Partners will also continue to include, engage with, and establish partnerships with private sector and development actors.

Meanwhile, people with specific needs, in particular women and children at risk but also older persons and persons with disabilities, remain a priority. Partners will work to support systems to identify at-risk individuals; provide targeted protection assistance, including in preventing and responding to GBV; provide protection responses and psychosocial support to children; and support access to legal and other specialized services. Specific protection interventions for persons with heightened protection risks, such as targeted cash assistance and case management, will be essential, including through the strengthening of national social service systems.

In view of the demographic profile of refugees, an overriding concern is the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse and the trafficking of children and young women. As part of the efforts to support the NPM, RRP partners are increasing their efforts to raise awareness among refugees and the local population and to build the capacity of the authorities to identify trafficking cases. Child protection, prevention of and response to GBV and trafficking and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse remain central pillars of the overall protection response.

Addressing a key protection concern of the Government of Romania, RRP partners aim to scale up efforts to promote social cohesion by addressing misinformation that may cause social tensions, supporting inclusive service provision and promoting targeted social cohesion activities. Increasing participation of host and refugee communities in joint activities, increasing awareness and dissemination of accurate information, and strengthening the engagement of refugees from Ukraine in representative structures is crucial to create opportunities for dialogue and foster further harmony. To cultivate this interaction, the importance of language is fundamental. RRP partners will work to enhance language programmes, in the context of both education and livelihoods programmes to overcome this challenge.

Based on the current state of play, large-scale voluntary, safe and dignified returns to Ukraine are unlikely in the immediate future due to the ongoing hostilities and the challenging socio-economic and critical infrastructure conditions inside Ukraine. Self-organized and spontaneous returns to Ukraine are expected to continue on an individual and voluntary basis. RRP partners will work closely with counterparts inside Ukraine to ensure accurate and timely information is provided about returns and will enhance information dissemination on return conditions, aligned with information from the region, so that spontaneous returnees are able to make a free and informed choice.

The following strategic objectives (SO) will guide the response:

Country Strategic Objectives

SO1: Support the Government of Romania to ensure refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis, including the rights associated with temporary protection or similar legal statuses.

RRP partners will continue to support the Government of Romania and relevant agencies in ensuring that refugees from Ukraine are aware of the benefits of registering for TP, through support in awareness raising and outreach, providing information about legal status and registration procedures.

RRP partners will work with the Government of Romania towards the implementation of the NPM, and support advocacy towards legislative or practical changes to support the inclusion of refugees, particularly in terms of education and learning, including attending formal education, sustained access to social welfare and protection, comprehensive access to health services and decent work opportunities.

RRP partners will work with the Government of Romania to ensure that TCNs, asylum-seekers and refugees from other countries receive similar levels of reception and inclusion, and similar access to humanitarian assistance as required.

SO2: Pave the way toward solutions and expand access to rights, services and economic opportunities to facilitate socio-economic inclusion through a whole-of-society approach and in line with the Global Compact on Refugees, recognizing in particular the critical role played by national and local actors, including government ministries, county and municipal authorities, NGOs and RLOs.

Supporting self-reliance of refugees and socio-economic inclusion, a goal under the Global Compact on Refugees, is a core objective for the RRP in 2023 and underpins the NRP. This will require concerted efforts of a variety of partners, from government and local authorities to UN agencies, the private sector, NGOs and civil society at all levels.

To support these efforts, RRP coordination structures will be strengthened to foster closer harmonisation with government institutions and working groups responsible for implementing the NPM though a "two plans; one response" approach. Support will also be provided to county and municipal authorities to strengthen local coordination and linkages and communication with national structures. This will ensure that national strategies and priorities continue to be adaptable to changing circumstances and the realities at local levels.

RRP partners will monitor and actively advocate for the inclusion of refugees in the social protection programmes of Romania and support the Government of Romania to foster an environment conducive to socio-economic inclusion. The mapping of refugee skills, linking these to the demands in the labour market, enhancing entrepreneurship and financial inclusion, and bridging the gap between refugees and private sector, with the support of the Labour Agency, will be a priority in 2023.

SO3: Ensure that refugees with specific needs continue to have access to targeted support and assistance, while also engaging with and strengthening community-level protective mechanisms.

People with specific needs, in particular women and children at risk, older persons, persons with disabilities and those with mental health and psychosocial needs, continue to be a priority for the RRP. RRP partners will continue to invest in the identification of persons with specific needs, provision of targeted assistance, and referrals to appropriate service providers, ensuring that services and assistance are age-, gender-, and diversity-sensitive. This includes specialized services for women and girls, youth and children, including GBV services, safe spaces and shelters. While assistance and service delivery are prioritized through state institutions, targeted and complementary support where the demand in services exceeds availability will be required. Additionally, cash support programmes will continue to be implemented and adapted to address immediate protection concerns for the most vulnerable, as long as and to the extent that refugees from Ukraine are not included in social assistance programmes in Romania.

Information on available services for refugees will be enhanced, including through support to the government information website, a hotline and the launch of an online services advisor tool. Communication with communities will continue to be strengthened, with civil society hotlines and help desks established around the country. Refugees will be informed about existing complaint and feedback mechanisms through social media, SMS, leaflets, posters and verbally at points of service delivery, accommodation facilities and border crossing points.

SO4: Support social cohesion between refugee and host communities through targeted interventions.

The response in Romania to the refugee arrivals from Ukraine has been characterized by unprecedented solidarity, generosity, and a strong spirit of welcome. Currently less than 10 per cent of refugees from Ukraine have reported experiencing negative attitudes, but this openness and generosity cannot be taken for granted, particularly as displacement becomes more protracted and the resources of volunteers, local civil society and host communities become strained.

RRP partners will continue to work on strengthening capacities and expanding the reach of national and local systems, including child protection systems, to enable effective and meaningful inclusion of refugees. The approach, focused on enhanced service delivery for all, including asylum-seekers and refugees of all nationalities and host communities, increases refugees' social and economic inclusion while addressing host community grievances. RRP programming will adopt a community-based approach, providing services for both refugee and host communities where needed. This way it can help to foster positive relations between refugees and host communities.

Additionally, increasing participation of refugees in host community activities, increasing awareness and dissemination of accurate information, and strengthened engagement of refugees from Ukraine in representative structures remain crucial to foster further harmony. To cultivate this interaction, the importance of language is fundamental. As such, language training will be a key focus to enhance social cohesion and to address barriers refugees may have in accessing social services.

Achievement/Initiative

The Nicolina Centre, Iasi

The “Nicolina Centre for Humanitarian and Social Assistance” is a one-stop centre, coordinated by RRP partner the Federation of Nongovernmental Organizations for Social Services (FONSS). The Nicolina Centre has provided services to over 1,450 refugees from Ukraine and many others from the Iasi community have received psychosocial, administrative, legal, and medical support in the centre. A team of over 50 social workers, psychologists, nurses and community workers, employed by FONSS and member/partner organizations, are available day and night to respond to a variety of needs of refugees through an integrated case-management approach from daily accommodation and meals to specialised psychosocial and therapeutic services, day care, non-formal education for children, rehabilitation, mediation for employment, and distribution of food and non-food items. In addition to refugees from Ukraine, over 1,300 persons with specific needs from the Iasi host community are registered as clients of the social shop, contributing towards an integrated approach and to enhance social cohesion.

Sectoral Responses

PROTECTION

In support of the Romanian Government's responsibility to ensure refugee protection in Romania, a range of civil society actors, local and international NGOs and UN agencies will continue to focus on maintaining a favourable protection environment for all those seeking protection. Protection interventions will seek to benefit asylum-seeker and refugee populations in Romania as well as stateless persons, with advocacy and activities to guarantee that persons in need of international protection have access to Romanian territory, reception, registration and documentation; assistance; and the full enjoyment of their rights. This includes advocacy efforts to support greater inclusion and integration opportunities for asylum-seekers and refugees, including TP holders. The Sector will help to identify and address any barriers to accessing rights, humanitarian assistance and social protection schemes, ensuring timely action when obstacles are identified. In parallel, recognizing that local communities in Romania assisting refugees also need support, partners will continue to develop ways to support host communities, particularly through activities where both refugees and host communities can mutually benefit and strengthen cohesion.

Protection partners will provide complementary support to that provided by the Romanian Government for persons with specific needs and provide technical advice and capacity support at both the national and local levels. Partners will continue to maintain presence at the main arrival points to monitor access to territory and provide accurate information and counselling to arrivals. Strong coordination and consultation around protection monitoring and needs assessments will be ensured with the various stakeholders and other sectors and working groups, including those led by the Romanian Government.

There will be considerable attention to the identification of persons at heightened risk, including vulnerable Roma, older refugees, LGBTIQ+ persons, persons with disabilities, victims of trafficking, those with MHPSS needs and women and children at risk including unaccompanied and separated children, with referrals to specialized and tailored services, including case management, when needed. This will include integrated service hubs, like RomExpo in Bucharest and Blue Dots, but also increased outreach to remote and underserved locations. Information provision will continue to be critical for all persons accessing Romanian territory to assist them in making informed decisions, reduce protection risks and raise awareness on important topics such as GBV, child protection, trafficking and PSEA.

In cooperation with relevant authorities and specialized organizations, partners will strengthen prevention measures, protection mechanisms and prosecution efforts to address all forms of human trafficking of high-risk populations in sectors such as hospitality, construction, and agriculture. Capacity building events and trainings, including for prosecution offices and forensic psychologists, will be provided to relevant stakeholders to improve the proactive identification of victims of trafficking, referrals, assistance to victims and prosecution to facilitate responsible and survivor-centred investigation procedures that do not retraumatize the victims, with a particular focus on children. These efforts will be coupled with a communication campaign on risks of

trafficking within the labour market and during recruitment. Support will also continue for existing emergency numbers and helplines to be available in multiple languages. Additionally, a vetting system to assess accommodation, transportation, volunteers and employers will be developed to mitigate potential risks of exploitation and abuse. This will include safeguarding policies for private and public housing.

Tensions with the host communities may arise due to perceived differential treatment towards refugees or strained resources. Aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees, protection partners will aim to respond through the development and implementation of activities and events to foster social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between communities. Partners will actively advocate for and seek solutions for refugees, cultivating opportunities for self-reliance and socio-economic inclusion with additional support and the enhancement of synergies with other sectors and the Romanian Government.

Sub-Sector: Child Protection

Partners will continue to ensure that refugee children at risk are identified and provided with immediate access to child protection services and other specialized support by government social service workers or other accredited service providers. This includes considerations for children arriving from residential care facilities in Ukraine.

To prevent and respond to child protection risks, child protection partners will collaborate with relevant actors to identify and refer children in need of protection to appropriate services. The Child Protection Sub-Working Group will collaborate with government and other working groups to establish standard operating procedures and referral pathways to reinforce the overall national child protection system, while enhancing the child protection workforce's technical competencies. For unaccompanied and separated children, child protection partners will continue to refer such children to government family tracing and reunification services, support appropriate family and community alternative care arrangements, and provide legal counselling on access to relevant services and guardianship procedures. Support to government will continue to ensure relevant case management systems/ best interests procedures are rolled out while registering all refugee children for referral to case management when needed.

To support children and caregivers to cope with adverse experiences and losses, child protection partners will promote MHPSS interventions, including gender, age and disability appropriate group activities in safe spaces, parenting groups, and information dissemination. RRP partners will also strengthen feedback mechanisms to ensure they are accessible for children.

For refugees who are more settled, the focus will be to ensure the appropriateness, inclusiveness and responsiveness of the existing child protection system and society at large for refugee and other marginalized children, including those with disabilities and from the Roma community. Emergency preparedness, response and contingency plans and capacity will also be developed to ensure child protection services at the border points are ready to respond in case of a sudden refugee influx.

Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

In view of the demographic profile of persons arriving from Ukraine, the prevention of and response to GBV remains a critical area of intervention. To ensure comprehensive service delivery for persons at risk and survivors of GBV, a whole-of-society approach will be implemented focusing on operationalizing and updating GBV referral pathways as well as expanding the geographical coverage and increasing clarity on the availability and accessibility of GBV services. The sector will support capacity enhancement, in terms of quality service provision and infrastructure, for the partners, including relevant authorities. Enhanced outreach and awareness-raising on the availability of services will be conducted through a variety of methods, including print materials, social media, community leaders, women-led refugee groups and group discussions with refugees. Additionally, the GBV Sub-Working Group will continue to assess risk factors and work on implementing mitigating measures at the inter-sector level and within other sectors of the RRP through capacity support and advocacy, with emphasis on support for vulnerable refugees, persons with specific needs and refugees belonging to minorities.

RRP partners will continue to provide support to the national institutions and advocate for upscaling the available infrastructure to provide all necessary services to survivors, including safe shelters. RRP partners will continue advocating for the inclusion of refugees in all national systems, including for GBV response services. High-level advocacy events, including trainings, workshops on specific issues and awareness-raising events such as those organized in the context of the 16 Days of Activism against GBV, will also be employed.

EDUCATION

Inclusion of refugee children from Ukraine remains a priority in Romania and will continue to focus on fundamentally strengthening the capacity of the Romanian education system to host and support refugee children.

The Romanian Government, in line with the European Child Guarantee approach, enacted a series of measures in March 2022 to encourage the enrolment of Ukrainian Children in the Romanian national school system but challenges with regard to the inclusion of refugee children remain significant.

At the end of the 2021-2022 school year, less than 3,000 of an estimated 30,000 school-aged children had been registered in the national education system. Although there has been some progress, the numbers remain low in 2022-2023 with around 4,000 children from Ukraine registered as of the start of the school year. The main reasons for the low enrolment in Romanian schools are attributed to challenges with language, assessment and certification of prior learning, availability of schools, teachers, and teaching support, pedagogical differences, administrative constraints, associated costs, and personal perceptions around the temporary nature of the stay in Romania, including that children are being offered the possibility to maintain their enrolment with Ukrainian schools and to participate through online learning by the Ukrainian education system. Additional barriers include the ’observer’ status accorded to asylum-seeking children in schools which prevents them from obtaining grades for a year, the complex needs of children exposed to

potentially with traumatic and distressing events, difficult living circumstances and limited parental support. Accommodating children across the different levels and cycles (kindergarten, preschool, primary school, secondary school, vocational training) is also challenging in the current environment.

The number of children registering, enrolling, and participating in formal education continues to fluctuate, which may also be because of frequent change of accommodation and pendular movements, additional influx of refugees (including from other hosting countries), and dropouts from Romanian schools which struggle to meet the needs of refugee children.

The RRP education response will employ a flexible approach that includes:

- Supporting access to kindergarten or child friendly spaces in accommodation centres, Blue Dots, and external spaces.
- Supporting government efforts to facilitate school enrolment, including through education desks and social media campaigns, as well as support to data registration.
- Enhancing schools' capacities to support children's effective participation, transitioning and inclusion (including through the provision of accelerated language training course in Romanian as second language) and to provide conducive learning environments with supportive trainings on mental health and basic psychosocial support, Romanian culture, economic inclusion, life-skills training and peer exchanges.
- Addressing acute education needs, particularly for children in distress and children with disabilities living in institutions.
- Promoting learning hubs for out-of-school children (including through schools) and other initiatives supporting children to return to learning.
- Supporting Ukrainian refugee-led learning programmes complementing the Romanian curriculum through provision of space, furniture, stationery, training, books and education support.
- Initiatives to maintain or restore links with Ukrainian education can be supported as a complement to formal education and to facilitate re-entry into the Ukrainian education system whenever return in safety and dignity is feasible.

This multi-pronged approach is aimed at identifying children in need of education according to their age and educational background. It will target both newly arrived refugee children and refugee children already in Romania, and will take into consideration the sustainability, scalability, replicability and quality of interventions, guided by the principles of equity and inclusion.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

In response to the crisis, the Government of Romania has provided those fleeing Ukraine with access to the most needed medical care through the Romanian health system. RRP partners will continue to support enhancing health care access of refugees through awareness-raising and information provision about the Romanian health system, support in addressing the language barriers between health care providers and patients and mitigating the lack of health information for those coming from Ukraine. Particular

attention is given to vaccination status and information about chronic diseases. To address specific needs of women and girls, RRP partners will promote a set of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services integrated into primary health care, to enhance access to contraception for vulnerable groups and access to clinical care for survivors of GBV. RRP partners will work with health authorities to decrease maternal and newborn mortality by improving access to SRH services. RRP partners will also promote access to specialized mental health services, including basic counselling, for refugees from Ukraine.

RRP partners will support the Ministry of Health in addressing barriers to vaccination including countering misinformation and advocacy on vaccine uptake as well as supporting the procurement of vaccines. RRP partners will also support risk communication and community engagement to address health needs and encourage access to health services. They will also advocate for simplified administrative procedures for refugees from Ukraine to access disability benefits.

Through the health interventions, the RRP partners will directly support the NPM and contribute to the realization the Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 5.

LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION

The livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion strategy for the RRP in Romania aims to support both refugees and host communities in a manner that promotes shared prosperity and access to economic opportunities. RRP Partners will advocate for economic inclusion to enhance refugee self-reliance, in turn reducing dependency on cash/social assistance and competition for limited resources. Refugees with higher protection risks will be prioritized.

In line with the NPM and the Global Compact on Refugees, RRP partners will work jointly through a whole-of-society approach that builds upon existing systems, services and programmes, and brings together the public and private sectors, civil society, international organizations, academia and refugees themselves.

The livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion strategy aims to promote self-reliance through employment assistance services; entrepreneurship, financial services, financial and legal support; mentorship, coaching, and counselling; language classes; and assistance with childcare and enrolment of children into formal education systems. Advocacy to promote the inclusion of refugees from Ukraine into employment opportunities through government-led employment assistance services and private sector engagement will be reinforced, through coaching, counselling support and formalized teaching of Romanian as a second language at scale.

Strategic locations will be targeted where refugees are most concentrated, markets supporting employment and entrepreneurship are most conducive, and political will among municipalities is strongest. There will also be a focus on improving access to data on refugees' socio-economic profiles by supporting government efforts to systematically collect and analyze socio-economic data on refugee population, disaggregated by legal status. Support will also be provided to municipal administrations with large refugee populations to improve data collection mechanisms on refugee population and household livelihoods.

Simultaneously, further exploration into sustainable mid-to-longer-term solutions will continue, with a focus on technical and vocational training, up-skilling, accelerated recognition of technical certifications and advanced degrees for asylum-seekers and refugees, entrepreneurial ecosystem development, and advocacy for improved access to social welfare. Prevention of trafficking through labour schemes, mitigation of the labour exploitation of labour, and the promotion of decent work will be prioritized.

BASIC NEEDS

Partners will deliver immediate humanitarian interventions to enable refugees to meet their basic needs, as well as achieve longer-term well-being, according to their socio-economic vulnerabilities and capacities. The response, anchored in a rights-based approach and delivered in partnership, is cross-cutting in nature and in line with the Global Compact on Refugees. Basic Needs activities aim to align with the NPM, which proposes concrete measures under the housing sector. Winter-specific responses and preparedness will continue to be prioritized.

The shelter and accommodation situation for refugees living in host communities varies from region to region. For short-term stays, refugees entering Romania will continue to be provided with accommodation and food and non-food assistance for 72 hours in the transit centres at key border crossing points run by the Department of Emergency Situations. For long-term stays, refugees have the possibility to live in rented accommodation through the 50-20 national programme or in private rentals, while others will be able to stay in temporary accommodation centres provided by various organizations and institutions. In addition, the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration will work towards increasing the long-term accommodation options for refugees, according to the NPM, including the use of un-allocated housing built by the National Housing Agency or through the Social and Necessity Building Programme.

RRP partners providing shelter/accommodation and non-food items will continue to enhance the living conditions of refugees and contribute to meeting their basic needs, through:

- Weatherproofing and repairs to improve infrastructure in temporary accommodation centres and collective accommodation.
- Distribution of warm clothes, bedding and hygiene/dignity kits pre-positioned both in Bucharest and in local warehouses.

Preparedness actions will also be consolidated in support of the government's primary response. Refugees at heightened risk will be prioritized, including children, older persons, persons with disabilities and persons from minority groups.

The Basic Needs sector will ensure that all groups and individuals will have access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and services. RRP partner agencies will continue to support local authorities in ensuring that refugees have ample water and sanitation services through containerized toilets and showers. Activities will be conducted in reception facilities, Blue Dots and transit centres, as well as health and education centres if necessary. Priority will be given to:

- Improving and maintaining access to private, safe bathrooms and hot showers which are gender-segregated and wheelchair accessible where necessary.
- Sufficient quantity and quality of water for consumption and domestic use.
- Waste management.
- Access to hygiene items/services.

Actors engaging in food security in Romania will support the authorities in the provision of immediate food assistance to refugees at border transit centres and reception areas as well as in urban settings at collective accommodation centres. This will be implemented largely through emergency multi-purpose cash assistance, which will be gradually transitioned to cash for protection with the aim of linking recipients with national social schemes, as well as the continued provision of hot meals at designated facilities.

Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

Accountability to Affected People (AAP)

All RRP partners are committed to promoting the engagement of beneficiaries in programme design and implementation, and in monitoring and evaluation of the response. RRP partners will enhance the participation of refugees from Ukraine as well as host communities and stateless persons, with specific attention to representation of women, different age groups, persons of all diversities, and the most disadvantaged groups throughout the project life cycle, including through participatory assessments.

RRP partners will aim to support the empowerment of refugee communities through community representation in programming discussions, allowing refugees to have a voice in decision-making and provide feedback on service provision. Complaints and feedback mechanisms have been established and will be further promoted in 2023 through media campaigns and materials at service delivery points. RRP partners aim to ensure that communities have real influence and impact on decision-making in an inclusive and non-discriminatory way to improve the quality and relevance of programming and services that RRP partners provide.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

PSEA is a cross-cutting priority underscored by the Government of Romania in the NPM. The PSEA Network will continue capacity building interventions for all relevant stakeholders, including the national authorities with a focus on first responders, as well as through joint inter-agency trainings. Awareness raising among the refugee community on individual rights and on the available reporting mechanisms, including through printed materials and social media, will remain a priority for the members of the network. The PSEA Network will continue to represent the RRP partners at the relevant government working groups, conducting advocacy at the national level for the adoption and implementation of relevant safeguards and providing technical support when requested.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

Due to the nature of the conflict, MHPSS is a widely recognized priority in the response and is to be integrated across sectors, including health, protection and education. RRP partners will work towards strengthening national MHPSS strategies and capacities, enhance coordination among MHPSS service providers and develop culturally adapted and needs-oriented MHPSS programmes into the overall response. This will include community- based psychosocial interventions through peer support, arts, sports, psychodrama, and community meetings to improve the well-being of individuals and communities as well as support the provision of specialized mental health services and individual focused psychosocial support activities, such as counselling.

Partnership and Coordination

Under the leadership of the Government of Romania, RRP partners work to achieve suitable outcomes for refugees from Ukraine in Romania and promote social cohesion with host communities. RRP partners work in close collaboration with national and local institutions as well as civil society actors in supporting the policies and services provided by the Government of Romania.

Partners involved	34
UN Agencies	6
International NGOs	14
National NGOs	14

Note: This list only includes appealing organizations under the RRP, many of which collaborate with implementing partners to carry out RRP activities. See 'Budget Summary by Partner' for partner breakdown per type.

Romania's frontline response has been led by a wide range of local actors including civil society actors, national NGOs, Ukrainian diaspora organizations and countless volunteers from all parts of the country. The RRP coordination strategy recognises the strengths of this whole-of-society approach and the importance of empowering local actors.

The RRP's coordination structure in Romania reflects the multi-stakeholder and partnership approach outlined in the Refugee Coordination Model and the Global Compact on Refugees. A UNHCR-led Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) was established in May 2022, which, along with a corresponding Inter-Agency working group structure, operates as an inclusive and accountable body to steer and monitor the operational inter-agency refugee response under the RRP. Technical coordination among RRP partners is structured around five sectors, namely: Protection (with sub-sectors on GBV and child protection), Education, Health, Basic Needs, and Livelihoods and Socio-economic Inclusion. In 2023, cross-cutting issues and information sharing will continue at sector level, supported by thematic coordination groups such as the PSEA Network, the Cash Technical Working Group, the Information Management Working Group, the Accountability to Affected Populations/Communication with Communities Task Force, the anti-trafficking task force and the youth/adolescent technical working group. The working groups will continue to support and complement the efforts of national authorities involved in the response through the combined expertise of UN agencies and national and international NGOs, in a robust, holistic response.

As part of the gradual shift in approach from acute emergency to longer-term protection and inclusion, the working groups and partner agencies are aligning their activities and strategic plans to complement and directly support the activities in the NPM.

While Inter-Agency Coordination structures have been firmly established at the national level, there is now a focus on localisation whereby RRP partners are extending support to government authorities at prefecture and municipal level to improve communication and collaboration between the multitude of organisations directly providing services and support to refugees, as well as strengthening links between national and local level coordination structures.

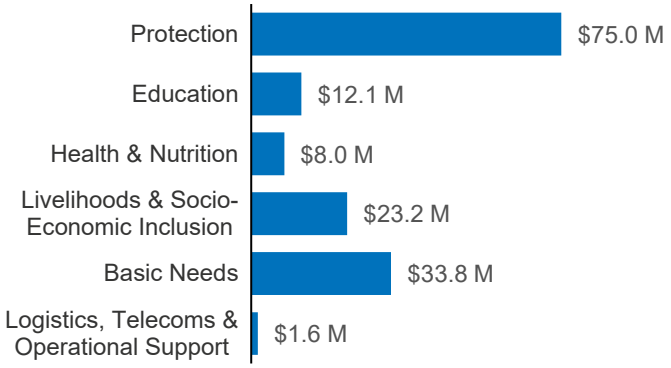
The inter-agency RCF will also ensure that humanitarian principles and the do-no-harm principle are respected throughout the response. Mainstreaming of protection into the humanitarian response by ensuring that international standards are adhered to in all sectors and a protection-sensitive approach will be reflected throughout the response as well as the IASC and Grand Bargain commitments towards accountability to affected populations and localization.

Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

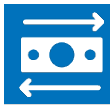
Total financial requirements in USD

$153.6 M

By sector in million USD



Total Protection requirements	$74,952,246
Other protection activities	$41,796,547
GBV	$13,732,663
Child Protection	$19,423,036



Total Cash Assistance requirements*	$21,797,200
Protection	$6,005,200
Basic Needs	$12,424,000
Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	$2,450,000
Education	$848,000
Health & Nutrition	$70,000

** This is a breakdown by sector of the requirements for cash assistance which are included in the above total sectoral budgets. Cash assistance is pursued and reflected as a key modality of assistance and protection in line with UNHCR's CBI Policy 2022-2026. Cash assistance is used as a cross-cutting modality across the various sectors, including protection, and is budgeted for accordingly and in line with a basic needs approach. As the modality of choice of the people we serve, cash assistance will be used as the primary means to meet immediate basic needs and provide important protection outcomes.*

By partner type

Partners involved	34
UN Agencies	$87,424,600
International NGOs	$29,846,825
National NGOs	$36,332,476

By partner

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
UN Agencies							
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	3,100,000	400,000	1,400,000	1,800,000	6,550,000	350,000	13,600,000
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	7,250,000	3,000,000	750,000		1,500,000		12,500,000
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	33,336,205			9,518,543	14,145,252		57,000,000
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	812,300		812,300				1,624,600
World Health Organization (WHO)	100,000		2,000,000				2,100,000
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)						600,000	600,000
National NGOs							
Asociatia Project Voiajor (Project Voyager)				2,225,000			2,225,000
Asociatia Anaid	175,000						175,000
Jesuit Refugee Service Romania	3,950,000	2,000,000		1,000,000			6,950,000
FONSS	1,512,000	100,000	70,000	90,000	3,293,000	150,000	5,215,000
Habitat for Humanity Romania					810,000		810,000
Asociatia Eliberare	500,000						500,000
Migrant Integration Centre Brasov				213,000	190,476		403,476
Salvati Copiii	2,500,000	3,000,000	1,500,000	3,000,000			10,000,000
National Youth Foundation	700,000			3,000,000	1,200,000	500,000	5,400,000
Hands across Romania Association	250,000						250,000
Fundatia Romanian Angel Appeal	3,000,000						3,000,000
ASSOC	270,000						270,000
Asociatia LOGS - Grup de Initiative Sociale	940,400		93,600				1,034,000
Asociatia Four Change	100,000						100,000

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
International NGOs							
CLEAR GLOBAL	830,000						830,000
ActionAid International	1,800,000				1,200,000		3,000,000
Danish Refugee Council	800,000			450,000			1,250,000
Terre des Hommes	1,713,009	497,737			586,503		2,797,249
Action Contre la Faim	186,000		178,000	215,000	534,000		1,113,000
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	750,000	250,000		300,000	500,000		1,800,000
Internews	1,260,000						1,260,000
Project HOPE	65,210		260,820				326,030
World Vision Romania Foundation	2,500,000	2,150,000		750,000	1,655,000		7,055,000
HEKS / EPER Romania Foundation		300,000	100,000	200,000	200,000		800,000
HIAS	200,000	300,000		400,000	200,000		1,100,000
Plan International	6,000,000						6,000,000
Médecins du Monde	152,122		863,423				1,015,545
Good Neighbours Japan	200,000	100,000			1,200,000		1,500,000
Total	**74,952,246**	**12,097,737**	**8,028,143**	**23,161,543**	**33,764,231**	**1,600,000**	**$153,603,900**