

# Poland

01 April 2023

Nearly **1.6 million refugees** from Ukraine have registered in Poland for Temporary Protection. Some registrations were deactivated subsequently, as their holders left Poland for more than 30 days, bringing the number of active PESEL registrations by the end of March to 997,374, according to GoP data ([LINK](#)).

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

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

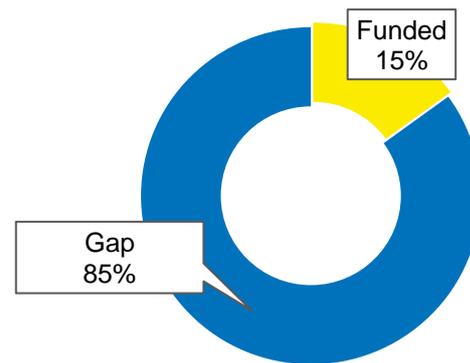
## KEY FIGURES

- **7,862** refugees received protection support and information at **05** UNHCR-UNICEF Blue Dots and **06** Community Centres in 2023.
- **13,868** vulnerable refugees received highly targeted cash assistance in 2023.
- **9,353** protection monitoring and profiling interviews were conducted in 2023.
- **28,893** core relief items (CRIs) were delivered in 2023.

## FUNDING (AS OF 28 MARCH 2023)

# US\$ 102.9 M

requested for the Ukraine Emergency Situation for Poland



## STAFFING & OFFICES

**133** international and national staff

**05** offices (02 in Warsaw, 01 Krakow, 01 Rzeszow and 01 Lublin).

## Overview

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

Refugee arrivals are expected to continue as the situation remains uncertain in Ukraine, with large scale displacement and destruction, as well as harsh winter conditions. Some refugees have moved on in Europe and elsewhere, but large numbers of refugees from Ukraine remain in Poland.

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



Distribution of winter clothes. ©UNHCR/Katarzyna Stachyra.

## Main Activities

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



### Coordination

UNHCR applies the **Refugee Coordination Model** in Poland, leading and coordinating the humanitarian response of over 80 partners (61% are national and local organisations), within the framework of the 2023 **Ukraine Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP)**, which seeks **\$709.4 M** for Poland. As of 1 April, UNHCR co-organised 37 coordination meetings in the Masovian, Malopolska, Podkarpackie and Lubelskie Voivodeships in 2023.



### Protection

UNHCR supports the efforts of the Government and local authorities to provide essential services and assistance to refugees from Ukraine and elsewhere. UNHCR provides a wide spectrum of protection activities and services, with particular attention paid to persons with specific needs. These include, among others:

- **Advocacy:** UNHCR coordinates its response with the authorities and advocates for equal access of all refugees to asylum procedures and their inclusion (particularly those with specific needs) in Poland's national social protection system.
- **Access to reliable, timely and comprehensive information**, including available services.
- **Child Protection activities:** including child-friendly spaces, psycho-social support and specialised services for children at risk and those with specific needs. As of 01 April, some **1,248 refugee children** benefited from child protection services.
- **Legal counselling and assistance:** through a network of legal partners in major cities in Poland, to assist with access to temporary protection, access to employment and social integration, social and financial benefits, residency and documentation, and legalisation of stay, among others. As of 01 April, more than **5,377 refugees** benefited from legal aid.
- **Mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS):** In group or individual activities, including counselling, recreational activities and referrals to specialised services. As of 01 April, some **569 refugees** benefited from MHPSS services.
- **Protection monitoring and profiling:** UNHCR is strengthening outreach and active identification of persons with specific needs through a network of over 40 protection monitors across Poland's main cities. As of 1 April, UNHCR and partner (REACH) conducted **9,353** protection monitoring and profiling interviews in 13 Voivodeships (Dolnoslaskie, Wielkopolskie, Malopolskie, Lubelskie, Mazowieckie, Podkarpackie, Pomorskie, Podlaskie, Opolskie, Lubuskie, Lodzkie, Slaskie and Zachodniopomorskie).
- **Community-based protection activities:** Mainly provided through the **five UNHCR-UNICEF Blue Dots and six UNHCR Community Centres**. They serve as one-stop shops providing a variety of targeted protection activities and enhancing the concept of community participation. They are also a space for community-driven initiatives, with a focus on activities promoting social cohesion. In addition, there are **several mobile outreach teams** (connected to the community centres and UNHCR Field and Sub Offices) to reach refugees with specific needs and in remote areas. As of 01 April 2023, **7,862 refugees** benefitted from protection services offered at the Blue Dots and Community Centres.



### Economic Inclusion

UNHCR is supporting the government's efforts to enhance access to employment. It plays a catalyst role, supporting the socio-economic inclusion of refugees by connecting them to potential employers. Since the beginning of the year, **UNHCR has participated in and supported organising job fairs in seven voivodeships** including Gdynia (Tri-City metropolitan), Rzeszow (Podkarpackie), Katowice (Silesian), Krakow (Malopolskie), Wrocław (Lower Silesian), Poznań (Wielkopolskie) and Warsaw (Masovian) Voivodeships. The fairs were attended by **more than 5,000 job seekers from the refugee and host community**, who had the chance to **learn about available job opportunities, ask questions, express interest in working for an employer, submit their resumes, fill out job applications, or participate in on-the-spot interviews**.



### Information and Communication with Refugee Community

To address critical gaps in information, UNHCR disseminates accurate information to refugees. This is done through the **Poland page on the UNHCR HELP website** (set up quickly at the onset of the emergency and available in English, Polish and Ukrainian and received **184,151** page views and **105,545** visits as of 01 April), **leaflets and posters** with reliable and accurate information on available services distributed at border points, in

reception centres and urban areas, as well as on **social media platforms** (Facebook and Twitter). To further enhance its communication with communities and accountability to affected populations, **UNHCR has a Regional Contact Centre**, where Poland-based operators attend refugees' phone calls. It is a **toll-free mechanism** (800 012 948) to provide information **and carry out referrals to specialised services**. The Contact Centre also has a feature to **report cases of misconduct and fraud**. Between 02 February and 01 April, the Call Centre responded to **11,639 calls**; 95% of the calls were about the cash programme, followed by legal assistance, medical aid and housing-related inquiries.



### Cash Assistance

**Cash assistance is one of the most efficient and effective ways to support people forced to flee as it respects their dignity of choice**, allowing them to decide on what they need most to support their families. As of 01 April, **13,868 vulnerable refugees** have received cash assistance under the highly targeted UNHCR cash programme since the beginning of the year. In 2022, 290,000 refugees were supported with cash assistance.



### Supplies

UNHCR supports the Government of Poland and local authorities with emergency supplies to strengthen reception capacities and respond to the refugees' urgent needs. **As of 1 April and since the beginning of the year, 28,893 essential and core relief items such as face masks, winter jackets, winter clothes, mattresses, bed linen, blankets, hygiene kits and towels have been distributed or provided to regional and local authorities and partners.**



### Working with partners

**UNHCR works with nine international and national partners** to respond to the most pressing needs of refugees in Poland. These include the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Halina Nieć Legal Aid Centre, the Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej (Association for Legal Intervention, SIP), CORE, Centrum Praw Kobiet (Centre for Women's Rights, CPK), the Polish Red Cross (PRC), Caritas, Fundacja Dajemy Dzieciom Siłę (Empowering Children Foundation, FDDS), and Habitat for Humanity. Jointly, UNHCR and these partners are working with a number of local grassroots organisations.

**UNHCR leads the refugee coordination structure in Poland**, in support of the Government-led response, through five sectors (Protection, Health, Education, Economic Inclusion, Shelter/Housing/Accommodation) and four main working groups (Information Management, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)/Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), Basic Needs and Cash Based intervention). The coordination structure aims at complementing, supporting and strengthening the national response to the refugee crisis in Poland. Information on coordination and response is available on the [UNHCR Poland Data Portal](#), including dedicated pages for each Sector/Working Group.

## Donors

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



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