



Estonia

End-of-year report of activities and achievements in 2024

Since 24 February 2022, 57,000 refugees from Ukraine have been registered for temporary protection (TP) in Estonia. As of 31 December 2024, 35,400 remained actively registered with TP status. From the outset of the war in Ukraine, Estonia has stood in solidarity with refugees from Ukraine, providing access to employment and public services. Civil society has actively supported these efforts. However, challenges remain in accessing decent work and language training. More psycho-social counselling is also required.

Since 2023, Estonia has been included in the Ukraine Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP), complementing the response led by Estonian authorities and outlining the multi-partner and multi-sector response strategy. In 2024, 14 partners implemented the RRP providing additional support and assistance to refugees in Estonia for more effective inclusion in national systems.

This inter-agency report provides an overview of RRP partner activities under the RRP and other relevant efforts. The 2024 RRP provided a common plan and appeal to assist 35,400 Ukrainians with temporary protection in Estonia. While funding constraints did not allow all partners to fully implement their plans, by the end of the year, around 14,150 persons had received humanitarian assistance through UNHCR and its partners.

KEY FIGURES



Current #ppl

Registrations

Latest update: 31 Dec 2024



35.4K

Refugees with temporary protection



FUNDING: REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN 2024



\$ 10.6 million
REQUIRED (US\$)



\$ 7.5 million (Gap)
Needed

\$ 3.0 million (28.8%)
Received



Individuals reached by Sector

Basic Needs | 3,966

Education | 200

Health & Nutrition | 750

Livelihoods & Inclusion | 279

Protection | 8,903

PSEA | 53

REFUGEE POPULATION & REACH (39.9%)



(%) People reached

Population

35.4K

14,151
39.9%

21,284
60.1%

For key figures on the 2024 RRP in Estonia, visit the [RRP Baltics Dashboard](#). | For refugee population figures and other resources, visit the [Operational Data Portal for the Ukraine Refugee Situation](#). | For a breakdown of sectoral response priorities and requirements, visit the [Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan](#) and the [Refugee Funding Tracker](#) for RRP funding information.

Regional Refugee Response

Since 24 February 2022, more than 6 million people from Ukraine have sought refuge across Europe. Through the **2024 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP)**, 313 partners in Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania and Slovakia worked towards ensuring refugees have effective access to legal status, protection and rights in their host countries and that refugees with specific needs and vulnerabilities have access to targeted support and assistance. The plan also strengthened refugees’ socio-economic inclusion in their host communities increasing their self-reliance, while at the same time reinforcing social cohesion between refugees and their hosts. In support of the government-led responses across the region, UNHCR led and coordinated the implementation of the inter-agency RRP in line with the Refugee Coordination Model, collaborating and consulting with authorities, aid agencies, civil society, and with affected populations.

Refugee Response Plan in Estonia

By the end of 2024, Estonia had cumulatively received around 57,000 applications for temporary protection for refugees from Ukraine. Temporary protection enables refugees to access healthcare, education, social benefits and the labour market.

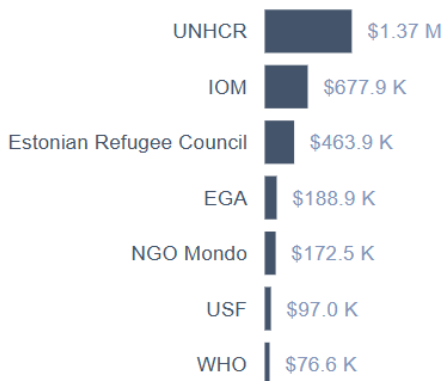
In Estonia, the response is led by public authorities. To complement this, RRP partners convened a forum to coordinate and advance RRP objectives. Co-chaired by UNHCR and the **Estonian Refugee Council (ERC)**, the coordination body included representatives of relevant state authorities such as the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Social Insurance Board, the Ministry of Culture and Integration Foundation. Through the inter-agency coordination platform, four UN agencies and ten NGOs focused on funding and its impact on programming.

Appeals & Funding received by Sector (\$3,048,325)

Basic Needs	Protection	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods	Education
\$52,059 (8%)	\$1,181,452 (28%)	\$182,131 (16%)	\$1,183,362 (28%)	--
\$625,020	\$4,175,522	\$1,157,506	\$4,215,283	\$415,917

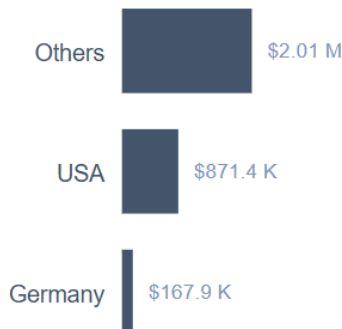
Funding received by Organization

(Millions US\$)



Donor contribution

(Millions US\$)



* "Others" includes internal allocations from UN agencies and international NGOs.

The 2024 RRP required US\$10.6 million for activities in Estonia, of which only 28.8 per cent or US\$3.0 million was funded in 2024. More than half of the appealing partners had not obtained any funding for their activities. The sectors most affected were education, which received no funding, and basic needs and health and nutrition, which were funded at 8 and 16 per cent, respectively.

The funding gap limited the ability of RRP partners to fully implement planned programmes that support efforts led by public authorities in assisting refugees. Partners prioritized protection-related activities such as legal assistance, counselling and community-based services, while other planned activities related to socioeconomic inclusion and education were scaled back, affecting more targeted efforts to support refugee inclusion and resilience. Prioritizing funding for socioeconomic inclusion and education is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of the RRP and ensuring successful outcomes for refugee support efforts.

Between May and July 2024, UNHCR and partners conducted the 2024 Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS), collecting a range of information from 600 refugee households around their situation in Estonia (accommodation, education, access to services) and outstanding needs. Prior to the data collection being carried out, RRP partners had contributed to the content of the survey. Findings from the survey formed the basis of planning and consultation activities with RRP partners in August and September, which in turn informed the development of the 2025-2026 RRP.

Partners' response to the Ukraine refugee situation

From the time that the full-scale invasion of Ukraine began in 2022, and refugees started arriving in Estonia, the public authorities in Estonia have led the refugee response. The Social Insurance Board and local NGOs were present to welcome newly arrived refugees, the majority of whom had come through Latvia. Refugees received both core-relief items as well as food, often from private donors. Reception centres were set up where arriving refugees were referred to for services. In general, those arriving via the Russian Federation entered Estonia through the Narva border crossing in the north, often heading toward Tallinn with plans to stay longer. Those that had chosen to stay in Estonia applied for temporary protection to regularize their stay in the country. After registering their residency in a local municipality, refugees accessed social services and benefits and enrolled their children in local schools.

Addressing Immediate Needs Upon Arrival

Where needed, partners delivered targeted basic needs assistance to refugees from Ukraine either travelling to onward destinations or planning to remain in Estonia. While the number of people transiting Estonia decreased over 2023 and 2024, support needs persisted for those remaining. In 2024, the basic needs sector in the 2024 RRP remained underfunded despite growing needs due to rising prices and housing shortages.

In 2024, the primary focus was on the most vulnerable refugees, helping them meet basic needs during the gap between their arrival and enrolment in Estonia's social protection system. By the end of the year, **RRP partners** had reached 3,966 individuals with basic needs services, including food, temporary accommodation, cash assistance and transportation support.

The Estonian Food Bank provided food packages to approximately 3,500 Ukrainians, with three-quarters of the food donated and one-quarter purchased. **The International Organization for Migration (IOM)** offered transportation support, temporary accommodation, cash assistance and support for both public and NGO centres. By the end of the year, IOM had reached 466 individuals.

Spotlight



On **17 December 2024**, the **Ukrainian Centre** in Pärnu hosted a **Grand Christmas Concert** at the Endla Theatre, uniting Ukrainians, Estonians and other communities. The event featured a diverse programme of Ukrainian songs and multicultural musical performances by both amateur groups and professional artists, fostering an atmosphere of unity and peace. © Ukrainian Centre, 2024

Protection Services

By the end of the year, **RRP partners** had reached close to 9,000 individuals with protection assistance, focusing on providing comprehensive support and addressing critical needs for refugees from Ukraine. This included legal counselling, guidance on local procedures and practices, emotional support services and capacity-building activities for border authorities and social workers.

ERC, through its activities in the RRP and other programmes, delivered comprehensive protection services to over 5,000 individuals, including counselling, psychosocial support, community-building activities and provided adaptation training to support refugee integration, protection monitoring and advocacy. Over 1,100 people were supported through counselling services.

IOM conducted vulnerability screenings for Ukrainians and third-country nationals (TCNs) transiting through Estonia who had chosen not to apply for international or temporary protection. These screenings evaluated the possibility of safe travel, assessed risks and provided necessary assistance. IOM also offered counselling on the availability of services in destination countries, rights in Estonia and potential risks along the route, such as human trafficking and exploitation. The organization also focused on capacity-building activities for border authorities, social workers and other stakeholders. By the end of the year, IOM had provided protection services to 298 individuals.

UNHCR protection monitoring activities continued through 2024 in partnership with implementing partners, to expand knowledge and available information concerning the situation of refugees from Ukraine in Estonia, including protection of refugee children. Partners conducted regular visits to border crossing points and, accommodation sites, and met with refugees from Ukraine to understand their situation, protection needs, problems and intentions. This helped ensure both their access to rights and services in Estonia and their

effective inclusion and integration in society.

ERC conducted systematic protection monitoring and needs assessments among refugees in Estonia to identify protection needs and service gaps. By the end of 2024, ERC had conducted 84 protection monitoring visits, interviewed over 300 individuals for the UNHCR Protection Profiling and Monitoring exercise and the UNHCR Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS), and referred 104 individuals to relevant service providers, including Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), healthcare, education and child protection services. ERC also conducted detailed service mapping for refugee-focused services.

The Estonian Human Rights Centre (EHRC), a UNHCR implementing partner, conducted 26 protection monitoring visits and provided legal assistance to 343 individuals and secondary counselling to 288 individuals. EHRC also delivered specialized training for different groups at risk. In partnership with the NGO Peaasi, EHRC also trained 32 detention centre staff on detecting mental health issues.

To strengthen refugee access to rights and services in Estonia, **ERC** and **EHRC** implemented targeted advocacy initiatives. ERC carried out 27 advocacy interventions related to access to health services, MHPSS support, discrimination cases and policy recommendations. EHRC conducted 17 advocacy interventions and appeals related to temporary protection.

In terms of community outreach, **ERC** reached 2,631 individuals through its newsletter, which provided information on training sessions, events and updates from state authorities. **EHRC** conducted 46 communication interventions, including public discussions and social media campaigns, to raise awareness and disseminate information. **Mondo** carried out 25 communication interventions via social media and news platforms, disseminating positive stories about refugees to highlight their contributions, fostering understanding with host communities.

Cross-Cutting Priorities

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

In the area of MHPSS, **ERC** ran its “MindSpring” programme, which helped refugees cope with trauma and adaptation challenges. The programme targeted parents, young adults and children. In 2024, a total of 10 groups were formed, supporting over 100 people.¹

IOM provided training for its staff, local teachers, social workers, child protection specialists, police and border guard experts, and district nurses involved in MHPSS support for Ukrainian children. Socio-recreational activities were organized for Ukrainian children. Additionally, IOM facilitated access to health services and medicines for Ukrainians and Third Country Nationals transiting through Estonia who opted not to apply for international or temporary protection in the country and were, therefore, excluded from public health assistance. To further support Ukrainian refugees, IOM provided information and assistance in navigating Estonia’s national health system. By the end of the year, 376 individuals had benefitted from these services.

Mondo provided five teacher training sessions on working with students experiencing trauma, based on UNHCR’s training material “*Teaching About Refugees - Guidance on Working with Refugee Children Struggling with Stress and Trauma*”, adapted into Estonian. A total of 48 teachers from 16 schools participated in these trainings. Teachers found the training relevant and emphasized the need to continue receiving training on trauma-informed approaches to better understand refugee children’s well-being.

Mondo also implemented art therapy sessions in cooperation with professors and master’s students of visual art therapy from Tallinn University (School of Natural Sciences and Health). A total of 23 groups met six times, including 57 boys and 82 girls (ages 7-15) as part of the *Bridges of Belonging* programme, which created a safe environment for children and supported their integration in Estonia. In 2024, Mondo provided psychological and psychiatric consultations to 347 Ukrainian refugees, including 253 repeat visits.

In December 2024, **WHO** published a report titled “*Refugee and migrant health system review: challenges*

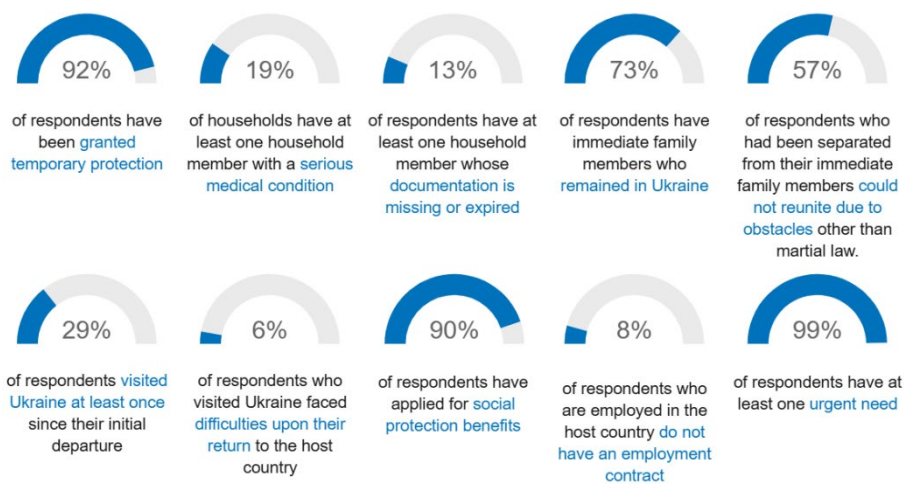
¹ Estonian Refugee Council’s Overview of 2024.

and opportunities for long-term health system strengthening in Estonia".² This report, created in collaboration with Estonia's Ministry of Social Affairs, examines the health system's capacity to serve refugees and migrants. It highlights significant barriers such as limited access to family physicians, language difficulties, long waiting times for specialists and financial constraints. Additionally, refugee health professionals face challenges in meeting Estonia's registration and qualification requirements.

Protection Monitoring

To strengthen and promote an evidence-based protection response, **UNHCR** and its partners in Estonia carried out Protection Profiling and Monitoring exercises to regularly collect and analyse data about the profiles, protection risks and needs of refugees from Ukraine and monitor changes over time. Between October and December 2024 some 192 refugees from Ukraine (representing 532 individuals) were interviewed.

Below is a snapshot of key findings. For more detailed information please visit the [Protection Profiling and Monitoring dashboard](#).



Socio-Economic Insights Survey

To support an evidence-based response for the Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for 2025-2026, the **UNHCR Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS)** was conducted in 11 countries, including Estonia. This exercise covered 8,800 households (19,300 individuals) and involved a harmonized data analysis plan and questionnaire, incorporating the UNHCR and WFP Joint Analysis Framework and the UNHCR Protection Monitoring and Results Monitoring Survey. In 2024, 600 interviews were completed in Estonia with assistance from **IOM** and **ERC**, with a detailed report launched in 2025.

In April 2024, **UNHCR** held consultations with local partners in Estonia - including public authorities, NGOs, UN agencies and refugee-led organizations - to localize the survey. This resulted in 16 additional questions being added to the final version to better address local contexts.

Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion

The livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion sector in the 2024 RRP remained underfunded, with only 28 per cent of the required funding secured by RRP partners. Some 81 per cent of Ukrainians cited language barriers as the primary obstacle to securing employment. In 2024, RRP partners had provided various entrepreneurial programmes, cultural adaptation initiatives and language training to Ukrainian refugees within the framework of the RRP and other programmes.

² Estonia: Refugee and migrant health system review

IOM provided integration activities for Ukrainian children registered under temporary protection, as well as cultural awareness events, employment support and social cohesion activities for Ukrainian refugees. In small rural municipalities, integration efforts included focused adaptation courses to improve access to the labour market. By the end of 2024, 239 individuals had benefitted from IOM's livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion interventions.

ERC conducted 165 adaptation training sessions on topics such as healthcare, social systems, education, entrepreneurship and legal issues which supported over 2,600 people in their integration.³ As a partner of the Integration Foundation in Estonia, ERC implemented the national adaptation programme "*Settle in Estonia*".⁴ ERC also established a Refugee Forum with 25 diverse members aimed at enhancing refugee representation and community cohesion.

Mondo organized eight integration activities to foster interactions between Estonian and refugee populations, addressing prejudices and building cultural understanding. These included cultural workshops, collaborative events, festivals and educational workshops in schools. A total of 817 people attended the activities, including 282 refugees.

In 2024, the **Ukrainian War Refugees' Psychosocial Crisis Support Fund (USF)** focused on empowering Ukrainian refugees, promoting self-sufficiency and supporting refugee-led initiatives. USF operated aid centres in Pärnu and Tallinn, which served as hubs for community engagement, psychosocial support and essential services. The Tallinn centre closed in mid-2024 due to funding constraints, but the Pärnu centre remained active. The Ukrainian Centre in Pärnu,⁵ a refugee-led organization (RLO) founded in late 2023 by four Ukrainian women, independently led multiple activities in 2024, providing MHPSS services, children's activities, language support and cultural events. These efforts were supported by the Ministry of Social Affairs through the Pärnu City Government, while a small grant from UNHCR was also provided as part of its support for RLOs. USF also helped establish the Pärnu Civil Society House, a shared space for the Ukrainian Centre and Estonian NGOs to collaborate. Notable achievements included the Estonian Language Hub, which operated twice a week with Ministry of Culture support and joint activities with the Red Cross Pärnu County branch. In 2024, USF reached approximately 2,000 individuals, strengthening refugee-led initiatives and fostering sustainable inclusion in Estonia.

In 2024, the **e-Governance Academy (eGA)** implemented the Digital Empowerment of the Ukrainian Community in Estonia (DEUCE) project to strengthen digital skills and resilience among Ukrainian refugees.⁶ The initiative supported refugees in navigating e-services in both Estonia and Ukraine. By the end of the year, the first cohort of 31 digital envoys had directly assisted over 500 individuals and reached an additional 40,000 through communication efforts. These envoys, recruited and trained by eGA, contributed to key initiatives, including the Tartu Help Bot, a Telegram-based tool providing 24/7 assistance and the Scam Map, a community-driven resource on fraud prevention. Other initiatives included professional empowerment workshops and guidance on Estonia's digital education systems through *Easy Stuudium*. In 2025, an additional 30 digital envoys will be engaged.

In May 2024, **ERC** and Latvian NGO partner **Shelter Safe House** launched an employability programme in Estonia and Latvia to support refugees in accessing the labour market and advancing their careers.⁷ Running until July 2025, the programme includes practical activities such as role-playing, job interview simulations and group interviews to help participants apply newly acquired skills in real-life situations. It also offers opportunities for internships, job shadowing and five training modules covering the application process, job search platforms, key documents and national labour market policies. Additional support includes personality and psychological support as well as guidance on interview stages. In 2024, the programme targeted refugees younger than 25 or older than 55 and over 80 participants took part in Estonia and Latvia.

³ Estonian Refugee Council's Overview of 2024..

⁴ "Settle in Estonia" National Adaptation Programme.

⁵ Ukrainian Centre.

⁶ DEUCE: Digital Empowerment of the Ukrainian Community in Estonia.

⁷ Edge-Up Employability Programme 2024

Education

The education sector in the 2024 RRP remained underfunded, with no funds received by RRP partners for their planned activities in 2024. Despite this, in 2024, RRP partners supported schools, students and teachers to better understand the needs of refugees and the education system in Estonia. Data from Estonian authorities show that almost 9,000 refugees from Ukraine were enrolled in the national education system (primary and secondary) and the pre-school system (*alusharidus*) in the 2023/2024 school year. SEIS data further indicates that 93 per cent of refugee children from Ukraine aged 7 to 16 were enrolled in school in Estonia during this period.

In 2024, **Mondo** organized Estonian language classes for 40 Ukrainian refugee teachers. The training was conducted in three groups, meeting twice a week. It consisted of 70 academic hours, including 50 contact lessons and 20 hours of independent work. At the end of the language training programme, Mondo collected feedback from participants regarding their progress in state exams. Of the 29 respondents, seven participants had passed the A1 exam, 17 had passed the A2 exam and five had passed the B1 exam. Additionally, 20 of the 29 respondents reported that they were working in schools. To continue their employment in Estonian schools, teachers are required to achieve B2 proficiency by autumn 2025, which involves passing an official state language exam. Mondo plans to continue providing language training in 2025 to support Ukrainian refugee teachers in achieving B2 proficiency, ensuring their continued contribution to the Estonian education system.

RRP partners in Estonia



Estonian Human Rights Centre (EHRC) is an independent non-governmental human rights advocacy organization.



Estonian Food Bank runs sixteen food banks all over Estonia that provide weekly free food support to people who need it, among them Ukrainian refugees.



Estonian Refugee Council (ERC) provides humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected people around the world and various needs-based support services to refugees in Estonia.



Estonian-Swedish Mental Health and Suicidology Institute (ERSI) is a non-government research and development organization, specializing in mental health, wellbeing, and suicidal behaviours.



Institute of Baltic Studies uses applied research, policy analysis and practical activities in the areas of migration and integration.



The e-Governance Academy (eGA) is a non-profit foundation that assists public sector institutions worldwide in digital transformation.



Hands for Ukraine is a non-government organization dedicated to providing safe, free accommodation for Ukrainian refugees, especially mothers and children.



Eluliin offers professional emotional and psychological support to vulnerable target groups from Ukraine, including counselling for victims of gender-based violence.



Mondo is an Estonian organization that focuses on education/health, subsistence, environmental and digital competencies programmes and global education in Estonia.



USF is an aid fund that works to support Ukrainian refugees and facilitate their integration into Estonia.



The International Organization for Migration (IOM), established in 1951, is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. IOM is part of the United Nations system, as a related organization.



The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations, established in 1948, responsible for international public health. The Organization connects nations, partners and communities to promote health and serve the vulnerable.



UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is a specialized UN agency founded in 1945. It promotes international collaboration in education, science, culture, and communication to foster peace and sustainable development.



EESTI PUUETEGA INIMESTE KODA
ESTONIAN CHAMBER OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Estonian Chamber of People with Disabilities (ECPD) is an umbrella organization for people with disabilities in Estonia, covering all disabilities and a wide range of chronic diseases, advocating for the rights and quality of life of people with disabilities.

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LINKS

[2024 RRP Baltics Dashboard](#) – [Regional Data Portal](#) – [Ukraine Situation RRP](#) – [Refugee Funding Tracker](#)