

Poland

6 May 2022

Since war began in Ukraine on 24 February 2022, over **3.1 million** refugees entered Poland, the majority **women and children** as well as older people and those with disabilities.

UNHCR is supporting government-led efforts through a multisectoral response focusing on **protection services, cash assistance, emergency supplies and reception capacity**.

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

KEY FIGURES

3.1 million refugees from Ukraine arrived in Poland from 24 February (Source: Government of Poland)

90% refugee women and children

2.8 million views of **UNHCR Poland HELP** page, making it the most visited HELP site globally

5 Blue Dot hubs providing protection services

55,700 refugees enrolled for cash assistance out of 360,000 targeted in the initial phase

4 cash enrollment centres in Warsaw, Krakow and Poznań and upcoming in Gdansk, Gdynia, Ostróda and Wrocław

125 trucks with emergency supplies sent to internally displaced people in Ukraine

Overview

Since war broke out in Ukraine, Poland has been transformed within a few weeks from a country hosting relatively few refugees into one of the main refugee-hosting countries in the world.

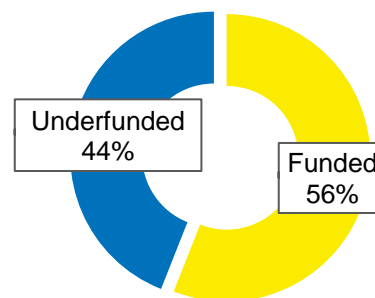
Refugee arrivals are expected to continue as the situation remains uncertain with large displacement and destruction inside Ukraine. While some refugees have moved on to other countries in Europe and elsewhere, the majority have remained in Poland.

UNHCR has boosted its presence and response to provide life-saving cash assistance, protection, and solutions, to support the Government-led efforts.

FUNDING (AS OF 6 MAY 2022)

US\$ 211.3 M

requested for the Ukraine Emergency Situation for Poland



STAFFING & OFFICES

95 international and national staff

4 offices in Warsaw, Krakow, Rzeszow and Lublin and mobile teams at border crossing points



UNHCR staff met 80-year-old Nadya at a reception centre in Przemysl, in south-eastern Poland near the border with Ukraine. She praised the warm welcome received by Polish communities since crossing the border and the happiness of leaving behind the sound of missiles and sirens. She left her country with her daughter and grandson. They have just found a family wishing to host them for the next weeks hoping to be able to return to Ukraine. © UNHCR/R. Kostrzynski, 28 April 2022

Main Activities

In close collaboration with government authorities, UN Agencies, partners, and civil society organizations, UNHCR undertakes the following activities:



Protection Information and Communication with Communities

To address critical gaps in information, UNHCR has quickly set up and regularly updates a **UNHCR HELP page for Poland**, which has become the most visited HELP page worldwide, including from within Ukraine. The page includes a **child-friendly HELP page in English, Polish and Ukrainian**. UNHCR has developed and circulates practical, safety and legal information to refugees at border points, in reception centres and urban areas, in the form of leaflets, posters, digital materials, social media and via apps like Telegram, which are widely used by people from Ukraine.



Blue Dots – Safe Spaces, Protection and Support Hubs

Blue Dots are support hubs that bring together critical protection services and information for refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine, with a particular focus on supporting those at greatest risk. These include unaccompanied and separated children, people with disabilities, older people, cases of suspected trafficking, survivors of gender-based violence and refugees from minorities such as the Roma and members of the LGBTIQ+ community. Established by UNHCR and UNICEF with local authorities and partners along major crossing points, reception sites, and urban centres, Blue Dots provide a safe space, support and referrals for health care, education, psychosocial support and more. In cities, UNHCR has set up Blue Dots linked to the cash enrollment centres, to identify persons at heightened risk. UNHCR is strengthening its ways of communicating with refugees including through child-friendly feedback initiatives at its Blue Dot hubs.



Cash Assistance

Cash assistance is one of the most efficient and effective ways to support people forced to flee, especially in fast-changing emergencies. Cash assistance respects the dignity of choice of refugees, allowing them to decide what they need most to support their family. In partnership with Santander Bank, and using BLIK as a payment method, refugees from Ukraine in Poland can receive cash quickly and safely. Through a one-off code received on their phones, refugees can retrieve cash from ATMs across the country without the need to open a bank account or having a card. The programme is a transitional emergency safety net, until refugees can be included in national welfare systems. Refugees receive 700 Polish zloty (some US\$170) per month for at least three months, with an additional 600 zloty for each family member, to a maximum amount of 2,500 zloty (approx. US\$600) per month for households of four members or more. Families can purchase goods and services from local businesses, which boosts the economy and fosters integration.



Cross-border emergency supplies to Ukraine

Poland is a transit point to Ukraine and from the onset of the emergency, **UNHCR has set up a warehouse and logistical hub in Rzeszow, south-eastern Poland and has been delivering emergency supplies by road shipment through a humanitarian corridor into Ukraine.** This key supply route allows to carry most-needed high thermal blankets, kitchen sets, solar lamps, winter jackets, sleeping bags, mattresses, towels, clothes, and other life-saving items to UNHCR's warehouses in Dnipro, Lviv and Uzhhorod in western and central Ukraine, for distribution to the increasing number of internally displaced people.



Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and anti-trafficking

UNHCR conducts awareness raising sessions on PSEA and anti-trafficking with refugees, partners and government officials **through training and distribution of information, education and communication materials** in English, Ukrainian, and Polish languages. UNHCR is working with partners to establish and run complaints and feedback mechanisms – including community-based – to prevent and end sexual exploitation and abuse, including through protection desks and protection monitoring.



Scale-up of capacity

UNHCR has been in Poland for 30 years, working with national authorities on refugee related matters. With the Ukraine emergency, UNHCR has substantially **scaled up its presence and operations across Poland.** UNHCR currently has a Country Office and Frontex Liaison Office in Warsaw and has opened three new offices in Rzeszow, Lublin and Krakow. UNHCR increased its workforce **from 8 staff members to over 90 in Warsaw, Krakow, Lublin, Rzeszow, Poznan and Gdansk, with more being deployed to support the response.** Experts in Cash-based Interventions, Coordination, Protection, Registration and Supply helped to set up specific programmes and mechanisms. UNHCR is adapting its presence as the situation evolves and based on locations where refugees are to reach those most in need of support and ensure no one is left behind.

Working with partners

UNHCR works with 4 international and national implementing partners to respond to the most pressing needs of refugees in Poland. These include Premiere Urgence International, Halina Niec Legal Aid Center, Association for Legal Intervention, Lutheran World Federation and ACTED/REACH.

UNHCR leads the overarching refugee coordination structure in Poland, in support of the Government-led response. The thematic sector working groups include Protection (with sub-sector working groups on Child Protection, Gender-based Violence, Counter-trafficking, Third-country nationals, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support); Health; Education; Shelter; Basic Needs, including Food Security, Water and Sanitation and Core Relief Items; and Logistics. In addition, there are transversal working groups on Cash, Information Management, Accountability to Affected Populations and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

UNHCR has launched – together with 142 partners – a comprehensive **Ukraine Situation: Regional Refugee Response Plan**, appealing for over US\$1.8 billion in support of the refugee response in the region until the end of December 2022, for a projected population of 8.3 million refugees. The **Response Plan chapter for Poland includes 87 partners (mostly NGOs) for a total budget of more than US\$740 million**. The Response Plan aims to complement, support and strengthen the national response to the refugee crisis in Poland and other refugee-receiving countries neighbouring Ukraine. Updated information on the response is available on the [UNHCR Poland Data Portal](#), including through dedicated pages for each Sector/Working Group.



Financial Information

The total recorded contributions for the UNHCR Poland Operation as of 5 May 2022 amount to **US\$118.7 million**. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to the Ukraine emergency response in Poland – including the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea – as well as those public and private donors who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

■ OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS ⁴ | USD

Netherlands 4 million

Norway | United States of America | Private donors

■ UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS ⁵ | USD

Sweden 95.2 million | Norway 72.5 million | Netherlands 37.2 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Germany 27 million | Private donors Spain 19.9 million | France 18.5 million | Switzerland 18.4 million | Private donors Japan 14.9 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.8 million | Italy 10 million

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LINKS

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