10 AUGUST 2022

An information stand at Solotvyno information border point - UNHCR Ukraine, June 2022

Protection at the border

UNHCR protection response at border crossing points along the Ukrainian border with EU countries and Moldova

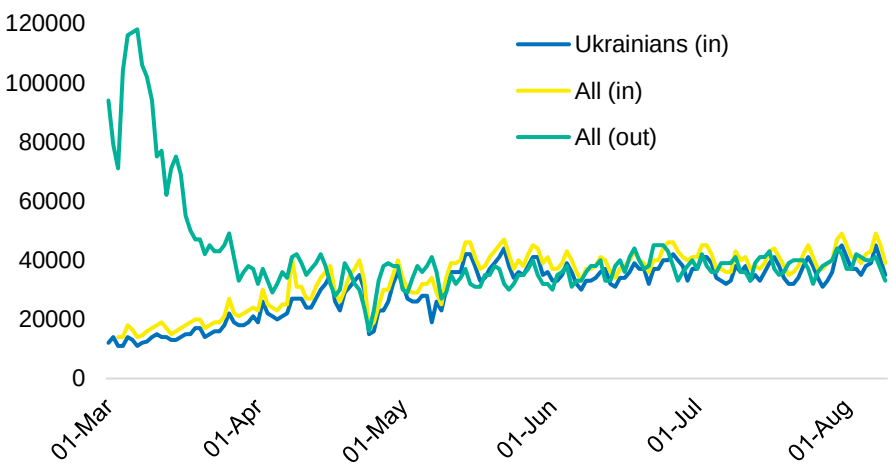
In Brief:

- UNHCR has deployed monitoring teams along the border with European Union countries and Moldova since mid-March 2022. UNHCR monitors both the conditions of crossing and movement patterns.
- Monitoring teams from UNHCR partner organizations Right to Protection, NEEKA, and the Tenth of April also provide information, counselling, and other kinds of assistance to people crossing the border in both directions.
- Teams provided direct support to at least 10,616 people crossing the border (including unaccompanied and separated children, people at risk of trafficking, and people lacking documents), in coordination with partners in neighbouring countries (as of 9 August 2022).

Background

With unprecedented numbers of people leaving Ukraine to seek safety in other countries, the situation at border points has given rise to protection concerns regarding conditions at the border crossing, as well as the unimpeded access to right to seek safety abroad. While departures from Ukraine have reduced, movements of people into Ukraine have increased, with movements in and out of Ukraine almost equal from May 2022.

Movements from and into Ukraine



Border monitoring Objectives

- Monitor the conditions of border crossing and access to safety abroad for people fleeing the armed conflict in Ukraine.
- Provide humanitarian protection support, in particular information and counselling, with particular attention given to people in situations of vulnerability, and at risk of trafficking.

10 AUGUST 2022

Border monitoring

While providing protection support, border monitoring teams assess the situation of people seeking safety abroad or coming into Ukraine. The monitoring includes individual interviews conducted with people crossing the border on the Ukrainian side of the border. The interviews are based on semi-structured questionnaires, adapted to the direction of the crossing. Interviews have been systematically conducted from early April 2022.

For people leaving Ukraine, interviews cover:

- Oblast of departure and country of destination
- Access to information
- Concerns regarding the border crossing
- Concerns regarding the stay abroad
- Intention to return

For people entering Ukraine, interviews cover:

- Country of departure, oblast of origin and oblast of destination
- Reasons for return
- Concerns when crossing the border

An interactive dashboard with International Border Crossing Point Monitoring Survey interview findings among those leaving Ukraine is available at: bit.ly/UNHCR_BCP_Survey

Findings with recommendations to relevant stakeholders were also shared in specific notes or presentations to the National Protection Cluster:

- **UNHCR BCP updates, 6 April 2022 https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/document/unhcr-briefing-note-protection-border-crossing-points-along-ukrainian**
- **Border monitoring – presentation on movements of Ukrainians into Ukraine – May 2022 https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/document/unhcr-border-monitoring-findings-movements-ukrainians-ukraine**

Protection response

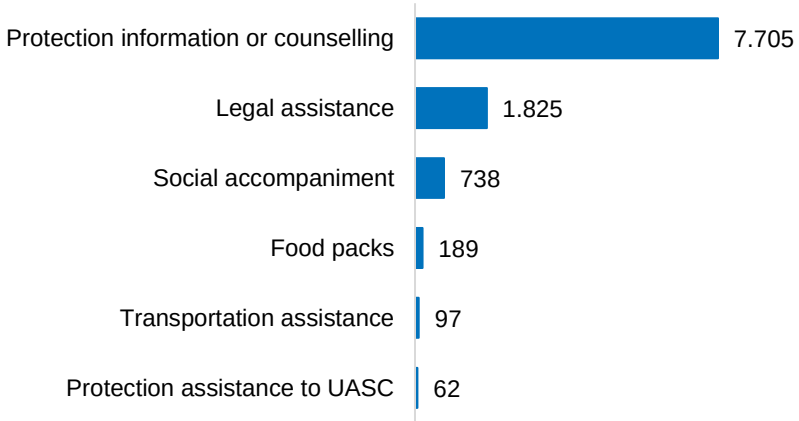
UNHCR assistance at border points includes:

Protection information/counselling – counselling for people leaving Ukraine or people entering Ukraine on issues related to the crossing of the border and their protection abroad or in Ukraine. It also includes information dissemination, including through joint UNHCR-IOM posters on protection against trafficking and hotline contacts.

Legal assistance – provision of legal assistance by lawyers regarding border crossing, documentation and other protection issues.

Food packs – provision of food packages to people queuing at the border (in the first weeks of the current conflict).

Type of assistance provided by UNHCR at border points (# of beneficiaries, 15 Mar - 09 Aug 2022)



Social accompaniment – facilitation of access to relevant institutions/organizations to solve issues encountered at the border.

Transportation assistance – provision of transportation to and from the border on the Ukrainian side for people with specific needs.

Child Protection assistance to Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) –social and legal assistance to UASC identified on the border, including referral to child protection services.

10 AUGUST 2022

Profile of people assisted at border points

Persons with disabilities and their caregivers:

- Men accompanying persons with disabilities (wife or children) lacking official certificates for the disability of the relatives.
- Men of conscription age with a disability without disability certification or the exemption from conscription certificate.

Foreign nationals:

- Foreign students enrolled in Ukrainian universities.
- Asylum seekers in Ukraine.
- Recognized refugees and Complementary Protection holders in Ukraine.
- Foreign nationals documented with Temporary or Permanent Residence Permit in Ukraine.
- Undocumented foreign nationals in Ukraine.

LGBTIQ+:

- Transgender women

Children:

- Adults accompanying children without power of attorney.
- Unaccompanied children lacking parental authorization for international travel and lacking official documents certifying guardianship by the accompanying adult.

Men of conscription age:

- Men of conscription age accompanying dependents.
- Single male parents with children.
- Caregivers with children lacking official documents certifying guardianship.
- Unmarried couples with children.
- Students enrolled in educational institutions abroad but lacking certifying documents and translation of these documents.

Undocumented people, including Roma

Information and counselling - examples

UASC

A 15-year-old Ukrainian citizen tried to cross the border, accompanied by his aunt from Ukraine to Poland. As per the Civil Code of Ukraine, children under 16 can only cross the border if accompanied by parents or with the official permission of parents certified by the Ukrainian guardianship authority. As the boy was not accompanied by his parents and did not have official permission from the parents, he and his aunt were not permitted to cross the border.

UNHCR response: UNHCR partner organization accompanied the child and his aunt to the guardianship authority and alerted UNHCR and IOM on the other side of the border to monitor their safe access to Poland.

People with disabilities

Men with disabilities of group III (people with disability who can work in facilitated conditions) may face problems crossing the border in the absence mobilization deferment certificate, although not required by law.

UNHCR response: UNHCR partners provide information support and legal advice to clarify the requirements under the law, which enables people in any disability group to cross the border, and where possible, advocate with border guards.

Foreign nationals, including asylum seekers in Ukraine

UNHCR cooperates with IOM Ukraine and IOM in neighboring countries for the protection of foreign nationals when denied crossing at the border. Since April 2022, seven cases of foreign nationals (including those who applied for asylum in Ukraine and received an application certificate called “Dovidka”) whom border guards did now allow to cross the border have been identified.

UNHCR response: UNHCR provides counselling to foreign nationals regarding their right to seek safety abroad. Lawyers from UNHCR partners help foreign nationals to have the denial by State Border Guard Services of Ukraine reviewed. Cases of rejection by Border Guards in neighboring countries are referred to IOM and UNHCR in neighboring countries for assistance.

10 AUGUST 2022

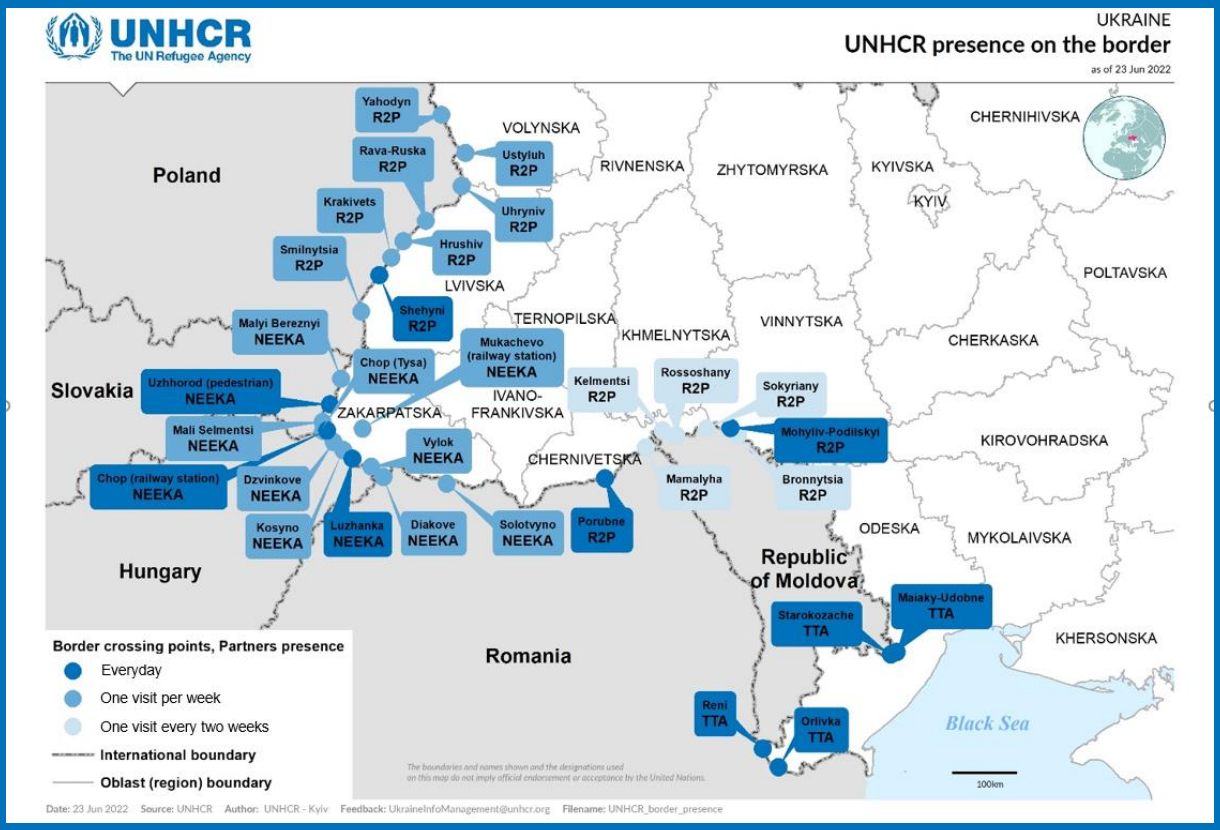
Improvement of waiting conditions for safe and dignified crossing

The assessment of key facilities available on the Ukrainian side of the border with EU countries and Moldova is done systematically by UNHCR partners. Where gaps are identified, UNHCR advocates with authorities or other relevant partners to address them or provide material support where possible. For instance, UNHCR has installed Rub Halls in Krakovets and Shehyni border crossing points (L'viv oblast) to create a "tunnel" to shelter people waiting before they reach the border check points itself.

A "tunnel" installed at the Shehyni border point (Lviv oblast) - UNHCR Ukraine/March 2022

Further, in agreement with local authorities and Border Guards, UNHCR installed information stands in Chop railway station, Diakove, Dzvinkove, Kosino, Luzhanka, Mali Selmenci, Solotvyno, Vylok, border crossing points (Zakarpattia oblast) and Starokozachie BCP (Odesa oblast) to provide information support for people crossing the border to neighboring countries and those who re-enter Ukraine. The stand contains information materials, references to social media pages, and "Telegram" and "Viber" channels supporting IDPs.

UNHCR presence at the border with EU countries and Moldova



Through its partners, UNHCR deploys teams along the border with EU countries and Moldova, with the overall objective to ensure that people can cross the border in conditions of safety and dignity. Teams deployed comprise social and legal workers, who provide information and counselling to people crossing the border, and identify and support people at risk (including unaccompanied children, people at risk of trafficking, people lacking documents) with counselling and accompaniment and referral to protection services. They also monitor the needs of people crossing the border (through interviews with a sample of people crossing the border, and based on the requests for counselling addressed), and assess gaps in the infrastructure or equipment necessary for a safe and dignified crossing.