



UKRAINE SITUATION

# REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

January-December 2023



Regional Refugee Response  
for the Ukraine Situation

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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<sup>1</sup>**

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.



# REGIONAL OVERVIEW

## Executive Summary

Now approaching the one-year mark since the escalation of hostilities, the war in Ukraine has resulted in a displacement and humanitarian crisis of epic proportions. The response by the refugee-hosting countries has been characterized by a spirit of welcome and unwavering generosity, with families and communities opening their doors to millions of refugees from Ukraine. The local response, led by national and municipal authorities across the region, has been equally remarkable: legions of volunteers, national and local non-governmental organizations and civil society actors – including many of which had never previously worked in refugee contexts, Ukrainian diaspora communities, and refugees themselves all mobilized to provide protection and assistance to those fleeing violence.

At the same time, humanitarian partners, under the overall leadership of host governments, have supported and complemented the national response, through coordinated and inclusive interventions. Many of these activities were captured in the original Regional Refugee Response Plan, launched in early March 2022, revised on 25 April 2022 and ‘recalibrated’ in October 2022 to take into account winter-related needs and other priorities which emerged across the RRP countries.<sup>2</sup>

The situation at the start of 2023 remains of grave concern and continues to require a coordinated humanitarian response at the regional level. As of end December, some 4.9 million people have registered for temporary protection<sup>3</sup> or a similar national protection scheme in Europe, and looking forward, it is expected that refugees may continue to arrive, due to the ongoing conflict and a harsh winter exacerbated by the targeting of energy and civilian infrastructure in Ukraine.

This Plan, which covers activities from January to December 2023, outlines the multi-partner, multi-sector response strategy and financial requirements of 243 different partners supporting the host governments of Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. The RRP also includes financial requirements related to

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<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, [Ukraine Situation: Recalibration – Regional Refugee Response Plan – March-December 2022](#), October 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Temporary protection is defined by UNHCR as a pragmatic ‘tool’ of international protection, which is used at times as an emergency response to the large-scale movement of asylum-seekers, providing immediate protection from refoulement and basic minimum treatment. The EU triggered application of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) on 4 March 2022 in response to the war in Ukraine; see the [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022](#). While the TPD is an EU mechanism, similar national protection schemes have been implemented in non-EU Member States, including Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Montenegro, Serbia and the United Kingdom. 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.



activities in Belarus as well as technical support provided by the partners to ensure regional coherence and coordination.

As in 2022, the 2023 RRP aims at ensuring refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis, including the rights associated with temporary protection or similar legal statuses in host countries. Special attention will be given to those refugees who are already or risk becoming vulnerable, as humanitarian support is reduced and they are no longer able to draw on savings or rely on assistance from family and friends and may also face challenges finding work. In this regard, the identification of people with specific needs for whom the provision of targeted assistance will be critical. In addition, whereas the RRP in 2022 focused primarily on the urgent provision of protection services and humanitarian assistance upon arrival, the plan for 2023 also places an emphasis on refugees' socio-economic inclusion, in recognition of the challenges faced by refugees as their displacement becomes more protracted. As the Ukraine Situation extends into its second year, supporting the capacity of communities to extend services and assistance to refugees will help to avoid overstressing resources and maintain the strong culture of solidarity witnessed in the hosting States. In this context, support to host communities will focus on support to institutions, services and facilities used both by refugees and members of host communities, particularly in urban areas. This is also crucial to promoting solidarity and social cohesion between host and refugee communities.

In 2023, particular attention will again be given to the Republic of Moldova, as a non-EU Member State. There, host communities will be included in the target population figures, where the pressures of hosting refugees have particularly strained local capacity and put pressure on scarce resources. In the spirit of the Global Compact on Refugees, it is key to promote more predictable and equitable responsibility and burden-sharing to ease pressure on the Moldovan society and support it to address the needs of host and refugee communities in the country.

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

Since the escalation of hostilities in February 2022, nearly one-third of the population has been forced from their homes in Ukraine, making it one of the largest human displacement crises in the world today. Within Ukraine, there are over 17.6 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, including 6.3 million people internally displaced by the war.<sup>4</sup>

In response to the large-scale refugee situation, the European Union triggered on 4 March 2022 the application of the Temporary Protection Directive, the duration of which was recently extended until March 2024. As of end December 2022, over 4.9 million refugees from Ukraine have registered for temporary protection or similar national protection schemes across Europe.

According to latest available data in countries covered in the RRP, women and children represent 86 per cent of the overall refugee population. The overall proportion of children stands at approximately 39 per cent, while some 9 per cent are older persons. Moreover, findings from UNHCR's latest Regional Protection Analysis Report in countries neighbouring Ukraine<sup>5</sup> show that the majority of respondents (78 per cent) are separated from some of their immediate family members, the primary reason being the restriction of freedom of movement for men due to conscription. Among those who travelled accompanied, 5 per cent travelled with unrelated children. While 32 per cent of respondents are in rented accommodation, the majority – some 64 per cent – are either being hosted or are staying in collective sites, planned sites and reception or transit centres. Twelve per cent of respondents have relatives in their host country. According to the latest UNHCR's Regional Intention Report, while most refugees surveyed in neighbouring countries hope to return to Ukraine one day (81 per cent), for the time being the majority plan to continue to stay in their current host country, with only 13 per cent planning to return in the next 3 months. The main impediment to return reported by refugees is the safety and security situation in places of origin, along with concerns about lack of access to basic services and adequate living conditions.<sup>6</sup>

Mitigating the effects of a harsh winter, worsened by attacks in Ukraine on energy and civilian infrastructure, and of the rising prices globally will remain a focus of the humanitarian response within Ukraine and in neighbouring countries in the first quarter of 2023. Access to winter-specific assistances is particularly challenging – and crucial – for vulnerable groups, such as older persons and persons with disabilities, as well as the women and children who comprise the clear majority of the refugee population, and further support is required to avoid magnifying vulnerabilities and the potential rise of harmful coping mechanisms.

In 2023 the international response to the Ukraine refugee situation remains in support of government-led efforts and is grounded in the principles of partnership governing humanitarian action, namely equality, transparency, a results-oriented approach, responsibility and

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<sup>4</sup> OCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview](#), 29 November 2022

<sup>5</sup> UNHCR, [Displacement Patterns, Protection Risks and Needs Of Refugees From Ukraine - Regional Protection Analysis # 1](#), 26 October 2022.

<sup>6</sup> UNHCR, [Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine #2](#), September 2022.

complementarity. In addition to the tremendous support provided by hosting countries, local communities and local actors, including, among others, volunteers, municipalities, national and local non-governmental organizations, civil society groups as well as refugee-led organizations and women-led organizations, continue to play a central role. Present on the ground well before the crisis began, these stakeholders bring a wealth of experience, capacity and local knowledge crucial to a well-informed response, particularly as the focus shifts from emergency response to inclusion and social cohesion. Strong solidarity and practical support on the part of the international community, in the spirit of the Global Compact on Refugees, will be more important than ever, especially given the mounting strain on national and local capacities and services in a difficult and uncertain global economic climate.

## Targeted Population

Of the over 4.9 million refugees from Ukraine registered for temporary protection or similar national protection scheme across Europe by mid-December, it is expected that at least 80 per cent plan to stay in their current host countries until hostilities subside and the situation improves. The refugee response is, broadly speaking, moving away from the acute phase of the emergency towards effective and sustained inclusion in national systems and services, maintaining protection space, and targeted support to the most vulnerable. That said, new displacement from Ukraine is likely to continue, due to the ongoing war, the harsh conditions of winter and a lack of access to fuel and adequate shelter inside the country. These newer arrivals may face particular difficulties in meeting their basic needs and are less resilient to displacement-related shocks, necessitating continued investments in anticipatory action and emergency assistance.

In 2023, the RRP population figures include refugees from Ukraine, as well as third-country nationals (TCNs) in need of international protection and people who are stateless or at risk of statelessness.<sup>7</sup> Host communities are included among the target population figures for the Republic of Moldova only. Within the EU, host community members are not included in the RRP as individuals targeted for assistance, but the Plan does address the needs of impacted host populations at the community level, with a view to expanding community resources and services that may be under strain due to the arrival of the refugee population.

The planning figures in the RRP have been agreed following consultations with governments and inter-agency partners and reflect the projected population that will require assistance from RRP partners over the course of 2023. These figures allow for planning, programming and budgeting. The projected population that will require assistance in 2023 includes refugees already in the RRP countries as well as projected new arrivals who will receive assistance in transit and those who will remain in their country of destination. Some refugees in transit may require certain types of assistance in more than one country depending on their needs. Partners in a number of RRP countries continue to provide assistance to many people who arrive but subsequently move

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<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of brevity, the term “refugees from Ukraine” will be used henceforth, and is understood to include refugees from Ukraine, as well as third-country nationals in need of international protection and people who are stateless or at risk of statelessness as appropriate. Third-country nationals are persons who have fled Ukraine but for whom Ukraine is not their country of origin, and who may be in need of international protection.

onwards – this emergency assistance – such as monitoring the ability of arrivals from Ukraine to access territory, protection, and the enjoyment of rights without discrimination and supporting host governments to strengthen reception facilities, facilitate accommodation options, provide core relief items and cash to meet basic needs – is vital and needs to be supported through the RRP. At the same time, over the course of 2023, many refugees are likely to stay in their host country as their situation becomes somewhat normalized and seek opportunities for inclusion in the local society. Support to those partners facilitating socio-economic inclusion is vital, as their activities pave the way towards longer-term solutions.

These planning figures may not align precisely with population present across the countries at any given moment in such a dynamic and rapidly changing environment, but they do aim at capturing the extent of resources required for next year.

### Targeted refugee population

Country	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes as of end Dec 2022 <sup>8</sup>	Targeted Population in 2023
Bulgaria	149,268	200,000
Czech Republic	473,216	500,000
Estonia	41,432	115,000
Hungary	33,273	200,000
Latvia	44,367	120,000
Lithuania	72,302	150,000
Republic of Moldova	102,000 <sup>9</sup>	200,000
Poland	1,508,338	2,000,000
Romania	101,733	350,000
Slovakia	104,764	200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,630,693</b>	<b>4,035,000</b>

### Targeted host population

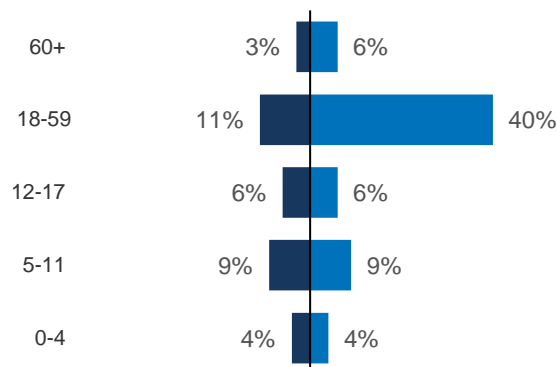
Country	Targeted Population in 2023
Republic of Moldova	120,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>120,000</b>

<sup>8</sup> 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. Please see [UNHCR's Operational Data Portal](#). The figures for temporary protection are based on data available in late December 2022. They may be slightly different from the actual end-of-year 2022 figures as the reporting timeline of the countries differ from one another and there are usually retroactive updates and adjustments.

<sup>9</sup> As of December 2022, the legal status of the temporary protection was not yet in effect in Moldova. The figure included here represents the number of Ukrainian refugees who entered the country after 24 February 2022, and who were lawfully remaining in the country under the emergency law, based on government border crossing data.

## Age and gender breakdown

■ Female ■ Male



**13 to 15%<sup>10</sup>**

Persons with disabilities



**66%**

Women and girls



**34%**

Men and boys

## Regional Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

UNHCR protection monitoring activities have identified several key protection risks for refugees from Ukraine in surrounding countries.

While the implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) in the EU and similar legal regimes in other countries has ensured prompt access to protection and rights for many, research has indicated that a number of practical, administrative and legal barriers limit access to rights.<sup>11</sup> These barriers have an important impact on the ability of individuals to access a range of rights, including education, social protection, accommodation, decent work and health care. Gaps in harmonisation between states in respect of rights granted to temporary protection beneficiaries have also been noted. In addition, access to temporary protection registration procedures continued to be challenging in some contexts for third-country nationals and stateless persons. In some cases varying periods spent outside of the host country may negatively impact on the legal status and on the access to certain benefits, such as accommodation and financial assistance. All of these factors have the potential to limit effective inclusion in national systems, undermining possibilities for self-reliance and increasing protection risks and harmful coping mechanisms which can result if refugees are unable to meet their basic needs and contribute to their host societies.

According to UNHCR's Regional Protection Analysis,<sup>12</sup> family separation is a defining feature of the Ukraine refugee crisis, with 78 per cent of consulted refugees reporting that they had been separated from close family members as a result of their departure from Ukraine. In the current context, the high incidence of family separation has led to a significant proportion of single caretaker (predominately single female-headed) households. Family separation in a refugee context can exacerbate several protection risks including gender-based violence (GBV), human

<sup>10</sup> For planning purposes, it is estimated that the proportion of persons with disabilities is between 13% (pre-war estimates of People in Need with disabilities in 2021 Ukraine Humanitarian Needs Overview) and 15% (as per WHO benchmarks). Findings from Multi-Sector Needs Assessments (MSNAs) in some of the RRP countries show similar proportions.

<sup>11</sup> UNHCR, [The Implementation of the TPD Directive – Six Months On](#), October 2022.

<sup>12</sup> UNHCR, [Regional Protection Analysis #1: Displacement Patterns, Protection Risks and Needs of Refugees from Ukraine](#), October 2022.

trafficking, exploitation, isolation and exposure to potentially traumatic events, particularly for unaccompanied and separated children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

Twenty-four per cent of protection monitoring respondents reported at least one household member with a specific need, including persons with disabilities, serious medical needs, older persons and separated or unaccompanied children. Persons with specific needs may face barriers that prevent them from fully enjoying their rights or accessing the services they need, and can face heightened risks of discrimination, abuse, violence and neglect during displacement and in their country of asylum. Data from protection monitoring indicates that households with one or more persons with specific needs may have fewer resources and more limited access to support networks in their host countries than other groups amongst the refugee population. Many may have limited access to information on existing services (including health) and face limitations in accessing employment opportunities, including family members who are required to provide care at home. Research has also demonstrated that persons at heightened risk face increased barriers in accessing their rights as temporary protection beneficiaries, with a lack of systematic identification of their specific needs one of the root causes.<sup>13</sup> The protracted nature of the crisis exacerbates distress situations and the consequent need for mental health and psychosocial (MHPSS) services. Unaddressed mental health needs, combined with the reluctance to receive such support due to stigma, can result in increased distress, marginalization and exclusion.

Access to civil documentation is also a key concern; 31 per cent of protection monitoring respondents do not hold international biometric passports, which permit a greater freedom of movement. In addition, data available prior to the escalation of the international armed conflict demonstrates that there are groups within the Ukrainian population who are stateless, or who may lack the civil documentation needed to acquire or confirm their Ukrainian citizenship and are therefore at risk of statelessness. This has also been confirmed by ongoing monitoring and legal assistance activities in hosting countries. Whilst States have implemented flexible approaches to documentation for individuals seeking to leave Ukraine as a result of the international armed conflict, reliable access to civil documentation is likely to become a pressing concern for many refugees in order to ensure their continued access to rights and services. A lack of civil documentation may also pose a barrier to return, once conditions permit.

Systematic identification and registration of unaccompanied and separated children by the authorities of the hosting countries remains a challenge, and significantly increases the risk that these children will remain outside national child protection systems, impeding their access to protection and services. In several countries, there is limited access to systems for appointment of legal guardians, or challenges in the revision of the existing care arrangements, which were in some cases established under time pressure due to the emergency situation. There is a reported shortage of suitable care-giver profiles and appointment procedures may be complex and time-intensive. RRP partners have observed a lack of systematic inclusion of unaccompanied and separated children into national child protection systems, resulting in the absence of national equivalents of best interest procedures being conducted in relation to these children. This particularly concerns the situation of children who arrived from care institutions in Ukraine.

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<sup>13</sup> UNHCR, [The Implementation of the TPD Directive – Six Months On](#), October 2022.

Continued advocacy and awareness raising is required on risks associated with potential returns of children to Ukraine, particularly during the winter, given the ongoing conflict and the precarious situation of accommodation and institutional care structures.

As in most refugee and conflict settings, risks of multiple forms of GBV increase, with women and girls placed at heightened risk at all stages of displacement. Conflict-related sexual violence in areas under military control in Ukraine, as well as risks of trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation at border points, during the journey, or after arriving in host country have been reported by refugees fleeing Ukraine. Exploitation, harassment, and abuse have also been reported in private and public accommodation, transport, and other basic services accessed by refugees. Adolescent girls, Roma women, and LGBTIQ+ individuals may face additional risks of GBV and trafficking, as a result of discrimination and/or harassment acting as a barrier to access to basic needs and protection services.

Barriers to access to services for GBV survivors are multi-fold and often parallel challenges to accessing other types of services, 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. For survivors, such barriers can have life-threatening consequences, including when relating to sexual violence where the need for time-sensitive intervention is critical. In some countries, Ukrainian mental health professionals are stepping in to fill gaps and are showing to be a successful entry point for GBV survivors. Mandatory reporting laws, as well as other legal, procedural or policy measures, continue to be major barriers for survivors' access to specialized health care, however, especially sexual and reproductive health care, including lifesaving post-rape care. Clinical Management of Rape Protocols are in some cases absent, lack effective systematic implementation, or do not fully comply with WHO guidelines. Access to sexual and reproductive health services is a challenge in many areas, particularly for adolescent girl survivors. Legal restrictions on emergency contraception or prescription requirements may also impede access to an effective GBV response, especially where refugees either cannot access a doctor or lack the funds to purchase them. Advocacy and systems strengthening on access to sexual and reproductive health remains an important intersectoral task for this response.

Refugees reported that cash was one of their most common urgent needs, as a modality to meet basic needs, such as accommodation and employment. Indeed, accommodation is likely to become a pressing need, as rental costs and energy prices continue to increase in refugee-hosting countries.

## Part 2: Regional Protection and Solutions Strategy

The Regional Protection and Solutions Strategy is focused on four key areas:

- Ensuring that all refugees from Ukraine continue to have access to territory, legal status and rights in host countries without discrimination, in line with the provisions of the Temporary Protection Directive or relevant national legal protection provisions and relevant international, regional and national refugee and human rights law.
- Reinforcing accountability to affected people through two-way communication with communities, effective feedback and response mechanisms, and a community-based approach, increasing access to information and awareness raising for refugees fleeing Ukraine on their rights and access to assistance and services through the community's preferred and trusted channels and working to support the meaningful participation and the capacity of community-based actors, including refugee- and women-led organizations and other community-based organizations.
- Supporting the prompt assistance to persons at heightened risk, with a particular focus on the prevention, risk mitigation of and response to GBV, human trafficking, protection of children and other refugees with specific needs and intersecting age, gender and diverse characteristics exposing them to further protection risks. This will include activities that focus on the promotion of mental health and psychosocial wellbeing.
- Finally, the strategy will focus on promoting effective inclusion into national systems, including health, education, accommodation, social protection, labour markets and others, without discrimination and on a par with nationals. Effective inclusion in national systems will be promoted as tool to enhance refugee protection, including by mapping barriers to refugees' access to and enjoyment of key rights and services, and by working to address those barriers with national authorities and other key stakeholders. Protection actors will also monitor the potential for rising tensions between refugee and host communities and work with national authorities and partners in support of peaceful coexistence.

Throughout the protection response, the primary role and responsibility of host countries to provide protection and access to rights will be emphasized. Protection interventions will be focused on building on, enhancing and scaling up national protection capacities as required, providing additional support and technical expertise where needed, with a view to enabling national protection actors and systems, as well as community-based and refugee-led initiatives, to stay the course for the longer term. Protection actors will also enhance and advocate for the meaningful participation and inclusion of refugees of different age, gender and diverse characteristics in the identification of needs, prioritization and design of interventions within the refugee response, in line with the Accountability to Affected People (AAP) and Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) approach. Partners working in the protection response will help promote access to a broad range of quality protection services and assistance through establishing effective partnerships with refugees, refugee-led, community-based and women-led organizations, national NGOs/civil society actors, governments, private sector actors, international NGOs and other UN agencies.



## Regional Strategic Objectives

### **SO1: Ensure refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis, including the rights associated with temporary protection or similar legal statuses in host countries.**

Although the pace of displacement outside Ukraine has slowed, data analysis indicates that over 80 per cent of refugees, while hoping to return home one day, are not planning to do so in the short-term.<sup>14</sup> In addition, population data indicates that some refugees have not sought temporary protection, which may prevent them from accessing rights and services, while others may face obstacles in accessing temporary protection after having returned to Ukraine and reentered the host country. In light of these challenges, ensuring effective outreach, providing information about legal statuses available, and supporting and monitoring access to procedures and services will remain key activities. As set out in the 2022 RRP, cross-cutting priorities of accountability to affected populations (AAP); Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA); Age, Gender, and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM), and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) will continue to be relevant in the next phase of the response. *Target population: Refugees*

### **SO2: Pave the way toward solutions and expand access to social and economic opportunities to facilitate social inclusion of refugees 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, municipal authorities, NGOs and RLOs.**

Given the rapid processing of temporary protection applications in most countries, almost immediately upon arrival to host countries, refugees from Ukraine were able to access socio-economic rights including education, access to the labour market, housing, social welfare benefits, and medical or other assistance. In the emergency context, this access to socio-economic inclusion constituted a key protective mechanism, helping to avoid potential resort to harmful coping mechanisms and mitigating some of the risks of GBV, SEA, and trafficking among a refugee population composed mainly of women and children. At the same time, many *de facto* barriers and challenges to inclusion remain. Available data shows that most refugee children have not been enrolled in schools in host countries to date. Low enrolment rates are due to a combination of factors, including limited capacity in schools as well as reluctance on the part of families to enrol their children. Early childhood education and day care is also difficult or impossible for many refugee families to access, which in turn limit work opportunities for carers, especially for women (who represent the majority of adult refugees). In line with the Global Compact on Refugees, meaningful inclusion requires continued advocacy and awareness-raising for effective access to socio-economic rights, services and opportunities, enhanced monitoring, and resolution

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<sup>14</sup> UNHCR, [Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine #2](#), September 2022.

of challenges to exercising those rights, including through the development of multi-stakeholder partnerships. *Target population: Refugees*

**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.**

Over time, it is assumed that many refugees will become increasingly self-reliant, as they are able to find accommodation, work, access services and build ties with the refugee and host communities, as well as the Ukrainian diaspora. However, other refugees may become increasingly vulnerable, as humanitarian support is reduced and they are unable to draw on savings, find work, or access social protection and services. In this context, identifying persons with specific needs and providing targeted assistance, including through cash programming, will be critical to avoid exposure to serious protection risks and premature return. Older persons and those with disabilities, as well as the separated households headed by women which comprise the majority of the refugee population, will be assisted in view of their heightened risks and barriers. Given the “invisible” nature of refugee populations in urban areas, outside of refugee accommodation centres, this support relies upon effective community outreach and cooperation with refugee leaders, refugee-led organizations, and community networks, as well as upon an effective two-way communication with communities to identify and provide services in such settings. Strengthening these community-based structures will be critical to ensure that support reaches those refugees who need it most. Targeted support may also be required to complement or enhance government services to persons with specific needs, including in the prevention and response to GBV and human trafficking, disability inclusion, the inclusion of individuals with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity, and the protection of children, and in the provision of community based and specialized MHPSS. *Target population: Refugees with specific needs*

**SO4: Advance social cohesion among refugee and host communities through targeted interventions.**

The response to the refugee outflow from Ukraine continues to be characterized by solidarity, generosity, and a strong spirit of welcome. This openness by the refugee-hosting societies, however, cannot be taken for granted, particularly as displacement becomes more protracted and the resources of volunteers, local civil society and host communities become strained. To support a welcoming environment, it will be important to put in place concrete measures that strengthen social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between the refugees and their host communities. Supporting the capacity of communities to extend services and assistance to refugees will help to avoid overstressing resources and maintain the strong culture of shared cause and community witnessed in the hosting States. In addition, the arrival of refugees has put national and local systems for service provision under significant pressure, particularly in urban areas. In some cases, social service systems were already functioning at capacity or overstretched before the refugee crisis. In this context, strengthening capacities and expanding the reach of national and local systems is critical to enable effective and meaningful inclusion of refugees. Examples of such interventions could include building additional classrooms, expanding community centers, or

expanding medical clinics, among other interventions, provided partners justify this will benefit equally refugees. This is also crucial to promoting solidarity and social cohesion between host and refugee communities. *Target population: Refugees and host communities (community-level)*

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



Protection partners will conduct protection monitoring to establish an evidence-based analysis of the protection situation of refugees from Ukraine and assess their ability to access territory, asylum, rights and services in host countries. To address the needs identified in the protection sector, partners will provide legal assistance, counselling and information to refugees from Ukraine on access to legal status, civil documentation and other rights in displacement in coordination with national authorities. Partners will additionally promote AAP, community-based and AGD-sensitive approaches to government counterparts, municipalities, service providers and other stakeholders involved in the response, including by engaging in joint activities, providing technical support and conducting capacity building, when needed. Outreach to and partnership with refugee communities, including with refugee-led organizations, will be enhanced as a key element of the response. Partners will strengthen the capacity of all actors to identify and support persons with specific needs through offering and providing training, technical expertise and advice to national and local governments, UN agencies, NGOs, civil society, as well as through community outreach and engagement with organizations of persons with disabilities and LGBTIQ+ organizations. Partners will also map practical, administrative and legal barriers for refugees' access to and enjoyment of basic rights and services, analyzing resulting protection risks with particular attention to the experiences of and risks faced by persons with specific needs of diverse age, gender and other characteristics, including minorities. Partners will work with national authorities and other stakeholders, utilizing the results of such mapping to inform, influence and advocate with key interlocutors to preserve asylum space, address barriers, facilitate inclusion and improve protection outcomes for refugees.

## Blue Dot Information and Support Hubs

Blue Dots are one-stop-shops and safe spaces which provide children, families and people with specific needs with a rest stop where they can access critical services. Nearly 40 Blue Dots have been established by UNHCR and UNICEF in Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia at strategic locations frequented by refugees from Ukraine. [Digital Blue Dots](#) have been recently launched in Hungary, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania with websites providing localized and up-to-date information about services available to refugees in each country, a mapping of existing Blue Dots, including information on legal modalities of stay, work, livelihoods, accommodation, education, childcare, medical care, disability support, social assistance, protection services and other services.

### Sub-Sector: Child Protection



The overall proportion of children among the refugee population stands at approximately 40 per cent, with countries neighbouring Ukraine showing a higher percentage than other European countries. Many children have been separated from one or both of their parents. Some separated children continue to reside with adults not directly related to them as their de facto guardians. Many continue to require specialized child protection services, psychosocial support, and follow-up on care arrangements.

The relatively high number of children from institutions in Ukraine continue to require dedicated follow-up from child protection partners, in terms of care and accommodation arrangements as well as other needs, in line with best interests considerations. Strengthening the capacity of national child protection systems in the host countries and seeking ways to complement the national child protection response remains a priority. The needs of children at risk, particularly those with disabilities and specific protection needs, will be addressed through appropriate referrals and facilitation of access to specialized services, as well as enhancing the capacity of the relevant institutions and actors.

Further inclusion of refugee children into the national child protection systems will continue to be prioritized, including Best Interests procedures fully owned by national child protection systems, and alternative care arrangements. Supporting child protection systems has greater urgency and importance in cases involving onward travel of children and their potential return to Ukraine, as well as family tracing and reunification efforts. Partners will continue to support identification and referral of children at risk to the appropriate services and support, as well as case management.

Humanitarian advocacy and interventions will continue to be coordinated through the national-level child protection coordination mechanisms, as well as the Regional Child Protection Sub-Working Group, and the joint UNHCR-UNICEF Agenda for Action for Children Displaced from Ukraine will continue to serve as an overall framework for the child protection response.

## Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



To help ensure a coordinated, coherent and effective response and mitigate potential risks, GBV partners, through the GBV Regional Sub-Working group aim to identify key gaps and needs to inform high level strategic decision-making and advocacy, as well as formulate priorities for coordinated support. This includes identifying advocacy gaps and developing appropriate advocacy messages and tools to engage relevant key stakeholders. The Sub-working group will also ensure that GBV considerations are mainstreamed into the broader regional response through the provision of strategic guidance and advice to the Regional Protection Working Group and country-level Sub-Working Groups on courses of action related to GBV prevention, advocacy, risk mitigation and response strategies.

At present, on the response end, strengthening access to quality GBV services has been identified as one of the priority areas across the RRP countries.<sup>15</sup> The regional response will therefore aim to support countries in the strengthening of their referral mechanisms around specialized GBV services both internally and across borders through technical guidance, coordination, and tool development where needed. Regional actors will also aim to support the strengthening of the capacity of service providers around GBV and the application of a survivor-centred approach through coordination with the relevant sectors, resource identification, and training material provision where needed. Finally, on the advocacy front, the regional group, in coordination with protection, health, and others, will advocate for the removal of legal and administrative barriers to access to lifesaving response services, including but not limited to clinical management of rape and safe terminations to the extent of the law.

On prevention and mitigation, gaps identified centre around access to basic services, which increases women's and girls' vulnerabilities to trafficking and exploitation, as well as access to information around GBV and specialized GBV services. In addressing the risks and vulnerabilities, RRP regional actors will support in advocating for and coordinating resources around suitable mitigation and prevention interventions, including livelihood opportunities for those at heightened risk, and in addressing the gap on information, RRP actors will support the coordination and harmonization of messaging to be used in a wide-reaching GBV awareness raising campaign. Advocacy and assessment tools targeting collective accommodation shelters will be rolled out to mitigate GBV risks and support shelters in implementing international standards for safe collective accommodations. A specific regional task force will work to coordinate and support national actors in strengthening the health response for Survivors through enhanced coordination among the Health and GBV sector, with a joint interagency strategy in support of a survivor-centred approach.

Finally, regional partners, in collaboration with relevant sectors and stakeholders, will look to strengthen and support partnerships and funding to women- and refugee-led organizations working on empowerment, risk mitigation and response to GBV, and other activities that aim to challenge harmful gender norms, especially in relation to discrimination towards refugee women and girls and

<sup>15</sup> RGTF, Making the Invisible Visible (2022), found at [https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/RGTF\\_MakingTheInvisibleVisible\\_ENG\\_0.pdf](https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/RGTF_MakingTheInvisibleVisible_ENG_0.pdf)

persons with different sexual orientation and gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics.

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## EDUCATION



To limit time-out-of-school and to prevent long-term learning losses, regional RRP partners will continue to engage with States to develop advocacy and support programmes to ensure refugee children from Ukraine are enrolled in national school systems and have access to pre-school and tertiary education. Support and guidance will be provided to relevant stakeholders throughout the 2022-2023 school year and beyond to address capacity problems in schools, including expansion of learning spaces and school infrastructure, addressing teacher shortages and gaps in provision of essential language learning and pedagogical and MHPSS services delivered through schools. RRP partners will continue to advocate for the removal of administrative and practical barriers in access to education.

In addition to inclusion in the national school systems, regional RRP partners will support, where appropriate, initiatives aimed at ensuring continuity of learning and maintaining the link between refugee children and their country of origin, regardless of nationality or legal status, which may facilitate return to learning whenever circumstances allow. Regional RRP partners will work to prevent the establishment of unsustainable parallel education systems for refugees, and will work closely with all stakeholders to ensure the best quality education possible for refugee children.

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## HEALTH AND NUTRITION



In collaboration with national governments, RRP partners will support refugees' access to quality health and nutrition services in an equitable and inclusive manner to reduce morbidity and mortality. Partners will support national health systems and strengthen health sector response capacities, support capacity strengthening initiatives and work towards the inclusion of Ukrainian health workers in the national workforce. Recent health assessments confirmed that knowledge gaps on how to access health care remain an important barrier across countries. Communications with communities to raise awareness and knowledge on health services – including by linking refugees to the national health system through multiple means in reception, transit, and other service centres as well as the Blue Dots – will remain essential to foster effective access to care. In addition, health-related awareness-raising and information-sharing on prevention of non-communicable and communicable diseases, including COVID-19, and access to vaccination will be implemented.

Partners will strengthen the continuity of care, especially for patients with non-communicable diseases and communicable illnesses like tuberculosis and HIV and will link them to national programmes. Additionally, the delivery of comprehensive MHPSS, including access to focused MHPSS and specialized clinical services will be advocated for and strengthened within national government responses and RRP partner organizations. Sexual and reproductive health including access to quality clinical services for survivors of GBV will be among key priorities. Targeted support will be provided to address the specific needs of other groups including persons with

disabilities and older persons. Partners will monitor refugees' access to and uptake of health care services and strengthen disease surveillance as well as cross border collaboration. Across countries, partners will support adequate preparation and response for ongoing and new emergencies.

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## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



The self-reliance of refugee families is dependent on their ability to find decent work. Priority areas will include facilitating access to jobs and livelihood opportunities, streamlining recognition of skills and qualifications, access to intensive and targeted language training, financial and business development services, safe and affordable childcare, promoting access to stable and affordable housing, and effective inclusion in social protection schemes.

Coordination mechanisms set up as part of the emergency response will be adapted to support longer-term inclusion. In line with a whole-of-society approach to socio-economic inclusion, partners will work with government authorities at the national and sub-national level, local service providers, civil society organizations, including refugee-led organizations, educational institutions and the private sector.

RRP partners will continue to map and monitor legal, administrative and de facto barriers to social protection schemes and services, advocate for effective inclusion and support refugees' effective access, while increasing data collection of socio-economic profiles and market opportunities to inform evidence-based planning on livelihoods, social and economic inclusion, taking into account considerations related to age, gender and diversity.

Continued support to cities and host communities with the potential to accommodate and provide opportunities to refugees – in a manner attendant to their specific needs, skills, interests, and long-term plans – will be essential. Given the often-limited access to own-source revenue streams faced by local administrations, the establishment of more direct alliances and coordination channels with the private sector can be supported.

Host community capacities are likely to become increasingly overstretched over time, exacerbated by inflationary prices, increased housing and energy costs, and aggravated economic inequalities, which may increase local tensions among socio-economically disadvantaged segments of the population to varying degrees across countries. Supporting governments at the national and municipal level to identify and implement a range of longer-term accommodation solutions, combined with expansion of public and private sector partnerships piloting affordable housing models for refugees, are an essential next step.

## BASIC NEEDS



In the first year of the response, humanitarian actors supported basic needs largely through a combination of in-kind and multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA). MPCA was delivered at scale by multiple actors, helping refugees cover their basic needs for several months, in support of national responses that were not able to immediately integrate refugees into national systems due to the magnitude and speed of the influx. With the granting of temporary protection status to refugees from Ukraine in EU Member States, most hosting countries are now equipped with legal provisions for the inclusion of refugees into national Social Safety Nets (SSNs) that are generally mature and well diversified. However, the large numbers of refugees will continue to pose significant strain on even the most advanced and well-resourced national social protection systems.

In 2023 and with the consolidation of the humanitarian response, basic needs assistance will differ in EU and non-EU countries. In EU countries, a large proportion of assistance for basic needs through MPCA will be delivered by the Member States through their respective national social protection systems. Humanitarian actors will increasingly focus on cash assistance in support of specific vulnerabilities across the RRP sectors, such as health and education, complementing national systems. In the Republic of Moldova, humanitarian actors will continue MPCA at scale, while actively coordinating with bilateral actors for the strengthening of national, shock-responsive SSNs and also gradually introducing sectorial cash support.

Humanitarian cash actors will also consolidate cash coordination mechanisms across the entire response. In line with the commitments under the Grand Bargain and the Cash Coordination Caucus, Cash Working Groups (CWGs) will seek a systematic inclusion of national actors. CWGs will also support and provide the tools for the systematic de-duplication of cash assistance across humanitarian actors, as well as the assistance provided under national SSNs.

Provision of in-kind support will also continue, with a particular focus on emergency relief items and on winterized items including clothing, blankets and sleeping bags among others. Partners will also continue to support governments in the provision of in-kind food assistance in key locations, such as border transit and reception areas, as well as collective accommodation centres. The water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) needs of refugees will also be addressed in these locations, through the distribution of hygiene kits and support to ensure safe access and availability of WASH services.

In the same vein, RRP partners will carry out interventions in support of local authorities to improve emergency centres and other collective facilities to improve conditions and accommodation capacity, particularly in the winter months, while also engaging in the identification of solutions for growing longer-term accommodation needs. Support for refugee transportation needs will also be provided by partners, for example from border points to reception areas or transport hubs for onwards movement.



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## LOGISTICS, TELECOMS AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT



Logistics, Telecoms and Operational Support activities seek to ensure the appropriate preparedness and response capacity of partners to meet the needs of refugees from Ukraine. RRP partners will maintain the timely provision of humanitarian relief items backed by coordinated service delivery and an evidence-based prioritization of needs. Regional and country-specific logistics hubs have been established and will continue to support the stockpiling and onward distribution of relief items. Supply chain capacity to assess corridors and supply routes, analyze trends, procure goods and services, and optimize and ensure timely delivery of pre-positioned stocks will be strengthened. To this end, coordination and establishment of common supply frameworks and processes will be a priority, to support humanitarian operations across RRP countries. In the Republic of Moldova, RRP partners will continue to utilize common warehousing space and transport service delivery; a Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector focused on streamlining IT and communications to reinforce multi-sector coordination will also remain operational.

## Regional Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD)



To ensure an effective and inclusive refugee response, the RRP is guided by partners' focus on age, gender, and diversity, including disability inclusion (hereafter referred to as AGD approach). Through this AGD approach, partners seek to make sure that all people of concern fully participate in the decisions that affect them, and that they enjoy their rights on an equal footing with others. The AGD approach can be achieved by using participatory methodologies to incorporate the capacities and priorities of women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds into protection, assistance and solutions programmes. It also encompasses the collection and analysis of data disaggregated by age, sex, and diversity where contextually appropriate and possible, to inform programme design, monitoring and reporting.

The Regional Gender Task Force established in 2022 co-chaired by UN Women and CARE International, will continue providing technical support working closely with partners and sectors to promote the adequate integration of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls into the 2023 refugee response.

Additionally, efforts will be made to increase meaningful participation and leadership of national and local civil society organizations, focusing on women-led organizations, women's rights organizations, and minority-rights groups, through flexible funding, capacity building, and facilitating access to humanitarian coordination structures.

Partners, in cooperation with local authorities and host communities, will advocate and implement targeted, gender-sensitive coordination, programming and financing within responses in particular for those groups which are facing complex challenges, threats, and barriers, and often experience discrimination, abuse, and violence including youth, persons with disabilities and women, as well as LGBTIQ+ persons.

#### Gender Mainstreaming

Partners will ensure integration of gender equality measures, as well as age and diversity dimensions, into the cross-sectoral refugee response effort by ensuring that women, girls, boys and men — particularly those most at heightened risk of exclusion and marginalized — have equitable access to and benefit from relief, services and information.

Gender mainstreaming will also be advanced by facilitating the participation and leadership of women's organizations across coordination and decision-making structures and processes.

## Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



Activities designed to ensure accountability to affected people and inclusion will continue to be prioritized and will be grouped around the pillars of a) participation and inclusion in line with Age, Gender and Diversity principles for meaningful consultation; b) communication and transparency, including access to information; c) feedback and response; and d) learning and adaptation.

Effective two-way communication and consultation with communities will be achieved through continuous engagement of refugee women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds in all the stages of the RRP's implementation by employing participatory methodologies. Feedback received from persons of concern will help to adjust the response where needed, informed by the use of common complaint mechanisms that are easy to use and access. Refugees will continue to access relevant, timely and up to date information through two-way communication and feedback mechanisms, such as UNHCR [HELP Pages](#), the Digital Blue Dot, the Regional Call Centre and other initiatives. The role of refugee volunteers, community-based and refugee-led organizations will continue to be reinforced, including through capacity development and small grants.

## Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



Sexual exploitation and abuse directly contradict the principles upon which humanitarian action is based, inflicts harm on those whom the humanitarian and development community is obligated to protect, and jeopardizes the credibility of all assistance agencies.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) is therefore a key priority in the response. The Ukraine emergency is also characterized by a number of specific risk factors, such as an exceptionally high incidence of family separation and of female-headed households, as well as a wide range of actors involved in the response, some of whom have limited experience with PSEA. These risk factors may be further compounded by increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities, difficulties in finding suitable accommodation, and potential fatigue among host States and host communities as the emergency extends into its second year.

PSEA is an integral and cross-cutting component of the RRP and is mainstreamed across the response for refugees from Ukraine. In addition, it requires dedicated and proactive collective efforts to mitigate and prevent risks, such as joint PSEA risk assessments, partner capacity assessments, capacity building and training, as well as community outreach and awareness raising with the refugee community.

Dedicated PSEA Networks are coordinating this work at country level in all neighbouring countries, co-chaired by UNHCR and NGO partners Fundacja Dajemy Dzieciom, Plan International and VOICE. A Regional PSEA and Safeguarding Network has also been established, co-chaired by UNHCR and Save the Children, to support these networks and ensure consistency, exchange and the collection of best practices in line with PSEA global commitments.

## Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



The integration of MHPSS across sectors, including health, protection, child protection, GBV, education, and livelihoods, remains essential to the regional response. In line with this, ensuring the comprehensive access and provision of MHPSS services across all layers of support must continue to be advocated for and prioritized amongst all partners and actors. A multi-layered approach includes strengthening supportive systems for families and communities; providing focused psychosocial support through case management and the provision of scalable psychological interventions that can be provided by both trained and supervised specialists and non-specialists; as well as access to clinical mental health care for those in need of specialized services. Included in this is the use of psychosocial activities to also address and support the increasing social cohesion needs in the region. Fundamental to these layered supports is the mainstreaming of caring for carers and supportive supervision for frontline providers, who are often from Ukraine, to prevent burnout and promote well-being.

Active MHPSS working groups have been established in all neighbouring countries and will continue to coordinate and technically guide the national MHPSS response. Partners of the national MHPSS technical working groups will actively strengthen the capacity and coordination amongst all actors, including national governments, UN agencies, NGOs, civil society and community-based organisations, including organizations of people with disabilities, through trainings, updated referral pathways and ongoing service mapping. Additionally, to strengthen cross-sectoral interventions and learning between refugee receiving countries, regional coordination efforts will be introduced and supported by WHO-UNHCR focal points through the introduction of regional experience exchanges and thematic sub-groups.

## GBV Risk Mitigation



Mainstreaming Gender Based Violence (GBV) risk mitigation is a cross sectoral responsibility that falls under the international humanitarian principle of “do no harm.”<sup>16</sup> It consists of ensuring that humanitarian programming does not inadvertently increase risks of GBV in the designs and implementation of its services. It also consists of mitigating GBV through provision of services in response to needs of women and girls, where lack of provision would itself increase the risks. Although GBV specialized programming exists to ensure mitigation, prevention, and response to GBV, mainstreaming of risk mitigation is a shared responsibility across all sectors and by all actors,<sup>17</sup> and can only be effective when owned and lead by each of the sectors, with GBV actors providing technical guidance and expertise.

<sup>16</sup> Inter-Agency Standing Committee. 2015. Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery (“GBV Guidelines”), found at [https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2015-iasc-gender-based-violence-guidelines\\_lo-res.pdf](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2015-iasc-gender-based-violence-guidelines_lo-res.pdf); See also, UNFPA, The Interagency Minimum Standards for Gender Based Violence in Emergencies Programming (2019), found at [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/19-200\\_Minimum\\_Standards\\_Report\\_ENGLISH-Nov.FINAL\\_.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/19-200_Minimum_Standards_Report_ENGLISH-Nov.FINAL_.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> See Call to Action, available at <https://www.calltoactiongbv.com/>; Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action, available at: <https://gbvguidelines.org/en/>.

Humanitarian actors can mitigate risks in advance through the implementation of minimum standards and protocols, training of all relevant staff on the GBV guiding principles and sector related risks ongoing consultation of women and girls across the cycle of the programme to assess any barriers to access, and by ensuring a robust and effective complaints and feedback mechanism to help ensure accountability and effective and timely response to risks raised. Sector lead agencies have the additional responsibilities for making sure appropriate action is taken and reflected within sector strategies and processes to reduce the risk of GBV and enhance the safety of women and girls.

The Ukraine Emergency is unique in its gender profile, given that the refugee population comprises a majority of women and children, including separated women headed households, many of whom are dependent on humanitarian assistance or social provisions provided under National schemes. Agencies have taken steps in the region to assess needs, risks, and challenges through the MSNA, protection profiling, and other assessments, the results of which serve as the basis for programme design and implementation. Sectors have utilized available global guidance for GBV risk mitigation, and specific tools have been designed or contextualized for the Ukraine emergency. These include a [GBV checklist for Reception Centers](#), [guidance for private hosts](#), a safety audit toolkit for assessing risks in different settings including collective shelters, and the recently launched Inter-Agency short [e-learning course Providing an Initial Response to Gender Based Violence](#) on safe handling of disclosures, based on the "[GBV Pocket Guide](#)", among several others. There remains much to do in this regard, however, including in terms of targeted assessments, additional GBV risk mitigation measures, and monitoring of implementation across all sectors. RRP actors will be supported in this process by GBV actors at the national and regional levels, with a continued focus on ensuring that the needs of vulnerable individuals and groups are taken into account throughout the programme cycle and reflected in risk mitigation measures.



### Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities

Providing targeted support to older persons and persons with disabilities is a priority across all sectors that requires dedicated attention and resources. The sectors will promote accessibility of services, information and accommodation, capitalizing on AGD data and analysis, to ensure that the participation of older persons and persons with disabilities is included in decision-making processes. Persons with disabilities have the same basic needs as other refugees but often face barriers to having these needs met and therefore may require specific attention and targeted interventions. RRP partners will engage based on the key principles of disability inclusion: (i) non-discrimination; (ii) awareness; (iii) participation; and (iv) accessibility. Close cooperation will also be sought with national and local organizations working with persons with disabilities.

## Partnership and Coordination

In support of the government-led responses, UNHCR leads and coordinates the implementation of the inter-agency RRP in line with the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) in a collaborative and consultative manner with authorities, aid agencies, civil society and with affected populations, including women and refugee-led organizations.

The RRP will broaden the scope of partnerships to mobilize resources and increase visibility for the needs of refugees from Ukraine, third-country nationals in need of international protection, stateless people and host communities. RRP partners and supporters will strive to ensure funding is channelled to frontline responders in a timely and efficient manner and in line with quality funding and quality partnership principles. The Global Compact on Refugees, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the UNHCR #IBelong campaign to end global statelessness by 2024 and the principle of "Leaving No One Behind" provide important frameworks for collaboration with partners.

At the regional level, RRP coordination is led by the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe (RBE). The RBE Director was appointed in March 2022 as the Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Ukraine Situation to lead the implementation of the RRP through inclusive and effective coordination of all partners, in line with the regional strategic objectives. An inter-agency Regional Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) has been established and specific working groups, networks and task forces (Protection Working Group, Inclusion Working Group, Child Protection and GBV Sub-Working Groups, Anti-Trafficking Task Force, Gender Task Force, PSEA Network) have also been activated to ensure efficient situational information management and country-specific support as required. As the UN Agency mandated by the General Assembly to lead refugee responses, UNHCR is the reference entity on refugee data, facilitating and coordinating the provision of necessary data and information to support RRP partners' response planning.

Within the framework of this RRP and building on existing country level coordination structures, inter-agency RCFs have also been established in each of the refugee-hosting countries, in support of government-led coordination mechanisms. The country level RCFs are led by the UNHCR Country Representatives and work with all partners in the response, including with relevant sector working groups. This will enable RRP partners to maximize the response and avoid duplications and parallel systems. It will also guide joint advocacy initiatives and resource mobilization efforts in support of the country-level response plans. Through the RRP, UNHCR will continue to ensure that joint assessments, data and information management, monitoring and reporting systems, and communication and information-sharing tools are effectively implemented and strengthened in coordination with governments and relevant stakeholders.

By articulating the needs of refugees, impacted host communities and other people of concern, stating how and by whom these needs will be addressed and defining the financial requirements of all the partners involved, the RRP serves as an effective channel to more predictable and equitable

Partners involved	243
UN Agencies	13
International NGOs	48
National NGOs	148
IFRC&RC	6
Faith-based Organizations	20
Academia	1
Regional organizations	1
Refugee-led organizations	6

*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.*

responsibility-sharing, to ease the pressure on host communities and foster social cohesion – two key objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees.

More specifically, the many positive actions taken by the hosting Governments, particularly in the areas of inclusion and refugee self-reliance, are examples of policy pledges that could be made at the upcoming Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in December 2023, and that could be matched against continued support from the international community. Country-level Regional Coordination Fora and Working Groups can be venues where potential pledge cultivation and follow-up on the pledges made at the 2019 GRF can be discussed.

In addition, the RRP also serves to illustrate many of the good practices that have implemented across the response by the hosting Governments, such as the swift activation of a temporary protection scheme to facilitate prompt access to protection and services, mainstreaming of refugees in government protection schemes, and prompt access to the labour market, among others. This showcasing of good practices will be instrumental in sharing learnings at the upcoming GRF, to inform and inspire further international solidarity and facilitate comprehensive responses in future refugee emergencies in the region and beyond.

### **Information Management Coordination**

As part of the Refugee Coordination Model, UNHCR has established Information Management Working Groups (IMWGs) at the regional level and in the RRP countries to facilitate inter-agency coordination on data/IM initiatives. Through these coordination structures, UNHCR shares information related to the Ukraine Refugee Situation with IMWG members and ensures there is a harmonised approach to data/IM initiatives within the humanitarian community, and with government authorities and local actors.

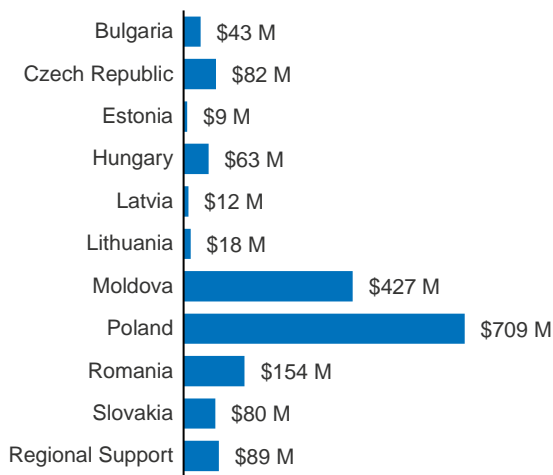
In support of UNHCR's protection and coordination mandates, the Refugee Data Management Framework (RDMF) was rolled out in 2022 and will continue to be strengthened in 2023, to ensure a consistent and accurate refugee narrative. Through the RDMF, UNHCR, together with partners, will ensure there are updated refugee population statistics (both flow and stock figures), protection profiling and monitoring and intentions surveys, monitoring of collective sites, area-based assessments and multi-sector needs assessments to inform the response. UNHCR will also undertake other data/IM initiatives in partnership, or as inter-agency initiatives to understand the social economic integration of refugees in host countries. Furthermore, the RDMF will facilitate coordination of data/IM initiatives amongst humanitarian actors to avoid duplication and identify and fill information gaps.

## Regional Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

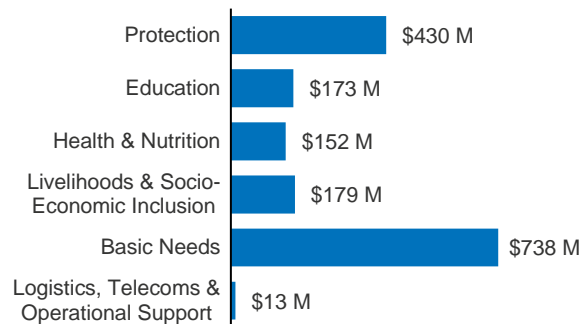
 Total financial requirements in USD **\$1,685,495,254**


### Budget summary


By country in million USD



By sector at regional level in million USD



 Total Protection requirements	\$429,814,783
Other protection activities	\$256,603,244
GBV	\$57,604,368
Child Protection	\$115,607,171

 Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$450,792,321
Protection	\$32,283,836
Basic Needs	\$401,651,006
Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	\$15,834,479
Health & Nutrition	\$175,000
Education	\$848,000

\* 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	243
UN Agencies	\$1,011,571,328
International NGOs	\$260,437,958
National NGOs	\$238,386,882
IFRC & Red Cross/Crescent Societies	\$110,310,569
Faith-based Organizations	\$62,614,217
Academia	\$76,000
Regional organizations	\$ 598,900
Refugee-led organizations	\$1,499,400

## By partner

Organization	Organization type	Budget (USD)
A.O. Serviciu pentru Pace	National NGO	\$125,380
ACTED	International NGO	\$8,541,000
Action Contre la Faim	International NGO	\$4,925,394
ActionAid International	International NGO	\$4,437,500
ADRA Moldova	Faith-based Organization	\$3,512,000
Aid for Ukraine	National NGO	\$847,520
Ak-Nordost	National NGO	\$25,000
Alliance of Organisations for Persons with Disabilities from Moldova	National NGO	\$20,000
American International School of Budapest	Academia	\$76,000
AO Asociația pentru Combaterea Izolării Informaționale ECOU	National NGO	\$38,000
AO Centrul de Drept al Avocatilor/Law Center of Advocates	National NGO	\$18,000
AO Centrul de Reabilitare Medico-Sociala pentru Persoane cu Vedere Slaba „LOWVISION”	National NGO	\$35,000
AO Societatea Invalizilor din RM	National NGO	\$1,014,525
AO SOS Autism	National NGO	\$466,200
Artscape	National NGO	\$142,828
Ashoka Innowatorzy dla Dobra Publicznego	National NGO	\$450,000
Asociatia Anaid	National NGO	\$175,000
Asociatia Eliberare	National NGO	\$500,000
Asociatia Four Change	National NGO	\$100,000
Asociatia LOGS – Grup de Initiative Sociale	National NGO	\$1,034,000
Asociatia Project Voiajor (Project Voyager)	National NGO	\$2,225,000
Asociația Tinerilor cu Diabet DIA (DIA Association of People Living with Type 1 Diabetes)	National NGO	\$2,590
ASSOC	National NGO	\$270,000
Association Energy	National NGO	\$112,211

Organization	Organization type	Budget (USD)
Association for Aid and Relief Japan	International NGO	\$1,076,095
Association MARTA Centre	National NGO	\$115,500
Be An Angel	National NGO	\$640,000
Bibliothèques sans Frontières	International NGO	\$820,000
Budapest Methodological Social Center	National NGO	\$3,268,527
Bulgarian Helsinki Committee	National NGO	\$166,972
Bulgarian Red Cross	IFRC and Red Cross	\$7,000,000
CARE	International NGO	\$23,000,000
Caritas Lithuania	Faith-based Organization	\$359,327
Caritas Bulgaria	Faith-based Organization	\$3,949,600
Caritas Poland	Faith-based Organization	\$27,766,000
Caritas Slovakia	Faith-based Organization	\$2,313,483
Carpathian Foundation Slovakia	National NGO	\$241,700
CASMED	National NGO	\$19,500
Catholic Relief Services	Faith-based Organization	\$4,055,112
Center for Public Policy PROVIDUS	National NGO	\$267,908
Center for Reproductive Rights	International NGO	\$710,000
Central Roma Council in Poland	National NGO	\$1,950,400
Centrul National de Prevenire a Abuzului fata de Copii	National NGO	\$301,500
Charity Centre for Refugees	National NGO	\$1,360,034
Church World Service	Faith-based Organization	\$2,744,220
CLEAR Global	International NGO	\$2,142,373
Clinica Juridica Balti	National NGO	\$356,500
Coaliția Vocea Romilor	National NGO	\$400,000
Comenius Foundation for Child Development (Fundacja Rozwoju Dzieci)	National NGO	\$9,500,000
Common Ground	National NGO	\$265,650
Community Organized Relief Effort	International NGO	\$6,550,000
Cordelia Foundation for the Rehab. Of Torture Victims	National NGO	\$150,000
Crisis and Counselling Centre "Skalbes"	National NGO	\$26,943
Crossborder Civilians	International NGO	\$20,000
CSO "Moms in Action"	National NGO	\$267,000
CultureLab Foundation	National NGO	\$500,000
Danish Refugee Council	International NGO	\$12,429,233
Daruso is helping Ukraine	National NGO	\$330,000
Dévai Fogadó (formerly Mandák Ház)	Faith-based Organization	\$335,000

Organization	Organization type	Budget (USD)
Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe	International NGO	\$965,000
Dignita	National NGO	\$18,500
Diversity Development Group	National NGO	\$34,650
Doctors of the World-Belgium	International NGO	\$1,500,000
Dorcas	Faith-based Organization	\$462,000
Early Starters International	International NGO	\$194,200
Eluliin	National NGO	\$168,418
Equita	National NGO	\$1,103,200
Friends of Mariupol	National NGO	\$98,752
Hands for Ukraine	National NGO	\$173,250
Institute of Baltic Studies	National NGO	\$72,050
International House Tartu	National NGO	\$46,876
Johannes Mikhelson Centre	National NGO	\$165,197
Köömen	National NGO	\$45,150
Ukrainian Cultural Center	National NGO	\$5,000
Estonian Chamber of People with Disabilities	National NGO	\$52,140
Estonian Food Bank	National NGO	\$962,000
Estonian Refugee Council	National NGO	\$1,502,280
Erőforrás Alapítvány United Way Hungary	National NGO	\$537,881
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	UN Agency	\$4,000,000
Faros Elpidas	International NGO	\$2,410,000
Fondul pentru Prevenirea Criminalitații	National NGO	\$31,074
FONSS	National NGO	\$5,215,000
Food Bank SOS in Warsaw	National NGO	\$560,000
Food Bank	National NGO	\$4,077,990
Foundation "Caritas Latvija"	National NGO	\$162,703
Foundation for Access to Rights	National NGO	\$173,340
Foundation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church	Refugee-led Organization	\$150,000
Fundacja ADRA Polska	National NGO	\$38,525,500
Fundacja Autonomia	National NGO	\$275,104
Fundacja BloomPro	National NGO	\$170,000
Fundacja Centrum Praw Kobiet (Women's Rights Centre)	National NGO	\$600,000
Fundacja Dajemy Dzieciom Siłę (Empowering Children Foundation)	National NGO	\$1,180,000
Fundacja Dobrej Edukacji	National NGO	\$25,000
Fundacja DOSTĘPNYŚWIAT	National NGO	\$420,000
Fundacja Feminoteka	National NGO	\$450,000
Fundacja HumanDoc	National NGO	\$1,910,000
Fundacja In Corpore	National NGO	\$100,000

Organization	Organization type	Budget (USD)
Fundacja Kocham Dębni	National NGO	\$282,014
Fundacja Leny Grochowskiej	National NGO	\$1,450,000
Fundacja Zakręcie	National NGO	\$50,000
Fundacja Newstory	National NGO	\$3,808,000
Fundacja OneWorld–OneHeart	National NGO	\$5,000
Fundacja Profil	National NGO	\$401,782
Fundacja UN Global Compact Network Poland	National NGO	\$720,000
Fundacja UNDERSTANDING	National NGO	\$20,000
Fundacja Uniwersytet Dzieci	National NGO	\$300,000
Fundacja Zustricz	National NGO	\$282,000
Fundatia "DonBosco"	Faith-based Organization	\$361,200
Fundatia Romanian Angel Appeal	National NGO	\$3,000,000
Good Neighbours Japan	International NGO	\$1,500,000
Gribu palīdzēt bēgļiem/Want to Help Refugees	National NGO	\$99,226
Habitat for Humanity International	International NGO	\$100,000
Habitat for Humanity Poland	National NGO	\$6,595,000
Habitat for Humanity Romania	National NGO	\$810,000
Halina Niec Legal Aid Center	National NGO	\$20,000
Handicap International	International NGO	\$1,196,430
Hands across Romania Association	National NGO	\$250,000
HEKS/EPER Romania Foundation	International NGO	\$800,000
HEKS/EPER	Faith-based Organization	\$1,270,000
HelpAge	International NGO	\$2,205,290
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Slovakia	National NGO	\$20,860
Helveta	International NGO	\$4,890,598
HIAS	International NGO	\$11,690,100
Hope Foundation	National NGO	\$500,000
Hope4	International NGO	\$286,000
Humanosh Slawa I Izek Wolosianski Foundation	National NGO	\$15,434,000
Hungarian Baptist Aid	Faith-based Organization	\$1,450,000
Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta	Faith-based Organization	\$1,520,000
Hungarian EMDR Association	National NGO	\$15,000
Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship/Oltalom Charity Society	Faith-based Organization	\$650,000
Hungarian Helsinki Committee	National NGO	\$224,900
Hungarian Interchurch Aid	Faith-based Organization	\$860,000

Organization	Organization type	Budget (USD)
Hungarian Red Cross	IFRC and Red Cross	\$500,000
Hungarian Reformed Church Aid	Faith-based Organization	\$4,923,000
HunHelp	Refugee-led Organization	\$62,000
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	IFRC and Red Cross	\$13,932,720
International Labour Organization (ILO)	UN Agency	\$1,935,000
IMPACT Initiatives	International NGO	\$1,060,000
International Centre for Migration Policy Development	Regional Organization	\$598,900
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	UN Agency	\$167,296,087
International Orthodox Christian Charities	International NGO	\$1,650,000
International Rescue Committee	International NGO	\$27,648,500
Internationaler Bund Polska	National NGO	\$2,008,000
Internews	International NGO	\$2,100,000
INTERSOS	International NGO	\$5,548,060
Jesuit Refugee Service	International NGO	\$33,695
Jesuit Refugee Service Romania	National NGO	\$6,950,000
Kalejdoskop Kultur	National NGO	\$300,000
Katalyst Education	National NGO	\$5,500,000
Keystone Moldova	National NGO	\$1,163,281
Klub Inteligencji Katolickiejw Warszawie	Faith-based Organization	\$1,150,000
Latvian Red Cross	IFRC and Red Cross	\$185,955
Latvian Scout and Guide Central Organization	National NGO	\$56,700
League for Mental Health in Slovakia	National NGO	\$200,000
Lexis-Vamos Foundation	Refugee-led Organization	\$450,000
Liszewska-Bowen Foundation	National NGO	\$955,000
LITERA Egyesület	National NGO	\$37,600
Lithuania Red Cross	IFRC and Red Cross	\$3,191,893
Lumos Foundation Moldova	National NGO	\$902,490
Lutheran World Federation	Faith-based Organization	\$3,561,600
Mareena	National NGO	\$1,273,000
Medair	International NGO	\$700,000
Médecins du Monde	International NGO	\$2,581,688
Medical Teams International	Faith-based Organization	\$623,151
MedSpot Foundation	National NGO	\$40,000
Menedék Hungarian Association for Migrants	National NGO	\$539,928
Menekültek Online Segítő Társasága (Refugee Help Digital Network)	National NGO	\$117,500

Organization	Organization type	Budget (USD)
Mentalnie Równi	National NGO	\$893,000
Metropolitan Orthodox Christian Charity ELEOS	Faith-based Organization	\$545,000
Migrant Integration Centre Brasov	National NGO	\$403,476
Migration Aid	National NGO	\$2,482,330
Misja Słowiańskaw Europie	National NGO	\$228,000
Multiculturalism & Migration Observatory	National NGO	\$20,000
Nasz Wybor (OurChoiceFoundation)	National NGO	\$1,030,000
National Youth Foundation	National NGO	\$5,400,000
NCUM	National NGO	\$2,520,000
Next Step Hungary Association	National NGO	\$376,270
NGO Young Folks LV	National NGO	\$295,016
Norwegian Refugee Council	International NGO	\$26,025,000
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)	UN Agency	\$1,609,854
ONG Asociația profesorilor de limba ucraineană "Promini"	National NGO	\$30,625
Order of Malta Relief Organization	Faith-based Organization	\$203,524
OurWay	National NGO	\$287,000
Oxfam	International NGO	\$2,848,835
PCPM-Polish Center for International Aid	International NGO	\$2,775,628
Peace Winds Japan	International NGO	\$2,404,100
People in Need	International NGO	\$16,954,590
Pituary Foundation	National NGO	\$81,300
Plan International	International NGO	\$17,905,619
Platforma pentru Egalitate de Gen	National NGO	\$65,300
Polish Center for International Aid	National NGO	\$37,904,591
Polish Humanitarian Action	National NGO	\$8,817,004
Polish Migration Forum Foundation	National NGO	\$1,790,000
Polish Red Cross (Polski Czerwony Krzyż) & International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	IFRC and Red Cross	\$85,500,001
POLSKI INSTYTUT OTWARTEGO DIALOGU	National NGO	\$1,256,000
PRO UKRAINA	National NGO	\$6,750,000
Project HOPE	International NGO	\$2,634,655
Pszi Pont	National NGO	\$310,000
Public Association „DEMOS”	National NGO	\$290,340
Reachout Foundation	National NGO	\$42,193
RET International	International NGO	\$11,550,000
Rețea Femeilor pentru Democratie "Women`s Democracy Network"	National NGO	\$238,600
Roma Coalition	National NGO	\$500,000
Romaversitas Foundation	National NGO	\$150,000

Organization	Organization type	Budget (USD)
Salvati Copiii	National NGO	\$10,000,000
Samaritan Association of Latvia	National NGO	\$1,209,285
Samaritan Slovakia	National NGO	\$35,500
Save the Children	National NGO	\$23,235,816
Scouting Slovakia	National NGO	\$5,000
Situation Centre Open Doors	National NGO	\$492,575
Slovak Humanitarian Council	National NGO	\$2,573,422
SOK (Samodzielność od Kuchni) Foundation	National NGO	\$1,835,000
Soleterre	International NGO	\$1,200,000
Solidarités International	International NGO	\$1,698,859
SOS Children's Villages	International NGO	\$35,000
Stowarzyszenie MIASTO WSPÓLNE	National NGO	\$27,816
Stowarzyszenie MUDITA	National NGO	\$896,000
TENENET NGO	National NGO	\$2,976,000
Terre des Hommes CH	International NGO	\$1,640,000
Terre des Hommes	International NGO	\$3,298,749
The Human Rights League	National NGO	\$688,450
Trauma Center	National NGO	\$40,000
TUTU-Podkarpackie Stowarzyszenie dla Aktywnych Rodzin	National NGO	\$1,850,000
Ukraine Support and Renovation Foundation	National NGO	\$95,807
Ukrainians for Ukrainians	Refugee-led Organization	\$300,600
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)	UN Agency	\$5,789,927
The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	UN Agency	\$200,000
Union of Young Roma "TarnaRom"	National NGO	\$85,000
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	UN Agency	\$229,500,000
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	UN Agency	\$47,886,800
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	UN Agency	\$2,850,000
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	UN Agency	\$408,926,156
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	UN Agency	\$26,576,800
UNITY	Refugee-led Organization	\$295,000
Voice Amplified	International NGO	\$1,838,000
Volunteer Center Lublin	National NGO	\$527,750
We are together	Refugee-led Organization	\$241,800
We World	International NGO	\$2,037,131
World Food Programme (WFP)	UN Agency	\$34,490,180
World Health Organization (WHO)	UN Agency	\$80,510,524
World Vision International	International NGO	\$2,737,215

Organization	Organization type	Budget (USD)
World Vision Romania Foundation	International NGO	\$7,055,000
Za Dobroto Foundation	National NGO	\$819,114
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,685,495,254</b>

### Regional Technical Support Budget by Partner<sup>18</sup>

Partner / Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
UN Agencies							
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	3,320,000		1,450,000	1,000,000	5,670,000	1,700,000	13,140,000
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)				3,894,800		2,000	3,896,800
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	410,000		150,000		100,000		660,000
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	21,673,358			6,855,613	20,726,876		49,255,847
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	8,837,537	4,524,329	1,601,281	928,322	4,963,465		20,854,934
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)	500,000						500,000
World Health Organization (WHO)			450,000				450,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,740,895</b>	<b>4,524,329</b>	<b>3,651,281</b>	<b>12,678,735</b>	<b>31,460,341</b>	<b>1,702,000</b>	<b>88,757,581</b>

<sup>18</sup> This budget includes technical support provided by partners at the regional level to ensure coordination and coherence across the RRP countries, as well as requirements for Belarus.




## Regional Monitoring Results






Monitoring of the protection situation and response interventions remains a key component to ensure that protection outcomes are achieved for persons and where necessary corrective action is taken.

A set of common indicators across all RRP countries and agreed with partners will help to ensure the tracking of progress toward the strategic objectives in a consistent manner. This plan has been designed in a manner that allows it to evolve with the rapidly changing circumstances on the ground. To monitor context-specific aspects, additional indicators have also been developed at country level to measure specific outputs and outcomes. Achievements will be monitored through an online system “Activity Info” where partners report against the indicators set in the monitoring frameworks.

Data on indicators will be summarized in country and regional dashboards on a regular basis to support continuous analysis of progress. The Inter-Agency working groups will also outline a monitoring framework, which will among other things delineate what information is needed to gauge deliverables of the response plan. Importantly, the framework will allow disaggregation of results by gender, age and disability to ensure that persons at risk and specific groups, such as women and persons with disabilities are not missed in the implementation of this response plan. In order to maintain accountability to affected populations, feedback mechanisms will be established, allowing affected/target populations and RRP partners to regularly communicate. This is aimed at ensuring that the needs and concerns of affected people guide and adjust the response priorities based on feedback.

The targets below are based on partners’ budgets and capacities, informed by the needs on the ground. Achieving these targets will be subject to a timely receipt of the funding requirements.

Sector	Indicator	Target	
	Protection	# of individuals who have been supported in accessing protection services	1,319,000
	Child Protection	# of children provided with child protection services	678,000
	Child Protection	# of participants trained on child protection and children's rights	15,500
	GBV	# of persons reached through community outreach and prevention activities on GBV, disaggregated by age and gender	1,277,000
	GBV	# of GBV referral pathways established and functional	45
	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)	# of PSEA network members and partner personnel trained on SEA risk mitigation, prevention and response	8,600
	Education	# of children enrolled in formal education in host countries	1,010,000

Sector	Indicator	Target
 Education	# of children participating in non-formal education programmes in host countries	304,000
 Basic Needs	# of individuals who received assistance for basic needs	1,527,000
 Health and Nutrition	# of consultations provided for mental health and psychosocial support	468,000
	# of individuals supported in accessing health care services	706,000
	# of individuals trained to provide health services to refugees and host populations	18,000
 Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion	# of individuals who received support in livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion services and development programmes	910,000
 Cash	# of individuals who received cash assistance	916,000

COUNTRY CHAPTER

# BULGARIA



# > At a Glance

## Bulgaria Planned Response (January-December 2023)



**200,000**

targeted refugee population



**\$43.4 M**

total financial requirements in USD



**18**

partners involved



# BULGARIA

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

Since the escalation of the conflict in February 2022, more than 977,000 refugees have crossed into Bulgaria as of end-December, based on official data from the State Agency of Refugees and Chief Directorate of Border Police.<sup>19</sup> Among them, some 149,000 have requested and received temporary protection which grants refugees with access to a number of rights and national social protection networks and public services. The average number of daily arrivals and departures remain similar to each other (3,120 arrivals per day/3,020 departures per day). As of end-December, some 50,200 refugees from Ukraine currently remain in the country,<sup>20</sup> and reside mostly in the coastal area and larger cities, including Sofia and Plovdiv. New arrivals mainly enter Bulgaria via the Romanian-Bulgarian border (63 per cent), and through the Durankulak and Ruse border crossing points, and are dispersed across the country. Based on Government of Bulgaria temporary protection registration data, most refugees are women and children (respectively 50 per cent and 36 per cent), and older persons make up 12 per cent. The risks of gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), forms of human trafficking and protection risks facing children remain high.

The national accommodation policy, which currently benefits some 9,800 refugees from Ukraine, has been extended by the Government of Bulgaria until 24 February 2023. Vulnerable new arrivals who have no means are expected to be accommodated in State and municipal facilities. A caretaker government has been in place in Bulgaria since 22 June 2022, and a taskforce created in mid-November 2022 under the new administration meets with the participation of UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM, the Bulgarian Red Cross (BRC) and key responders.

The Bulgaria chapter of the regional RRP represents the strong commitment of 18 humanitarian partners to work jointly and through a coordinated response on the challenges affecting refugees and third-country nationals (TCN) fleeing Ukraine and in need of international protection,<sup>21</sup> as well as affected host communities. A significant emphasis of the inter-agency response in Bulgaria is focused on supporting the Government in providing key protection services, livelihoods support and inclusion opportunities. With the possibility of an increase in refugee numbers in 2023, the

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<sup>19</sup> Government of Bulgaria State Agency for Refugees, Temporary Protection registration database, <https://ukraine.gov.bg>, 30 November 2022.

<sup>20</sup> This figure is an estimate based on the number of arrivals and departures of Ukrainian nationals from Bulgaria tracked by the Chief Directorate of Border Police. The Government of Bulgaria does not deregister TP holders who have left the country, and the Border Police does not check the TP status of departing Ukrainian nationals. The targeted population planning figures for 2023 take into account the estimated numbers of refugees who remain in country and those expected to seek temporary protection next year.

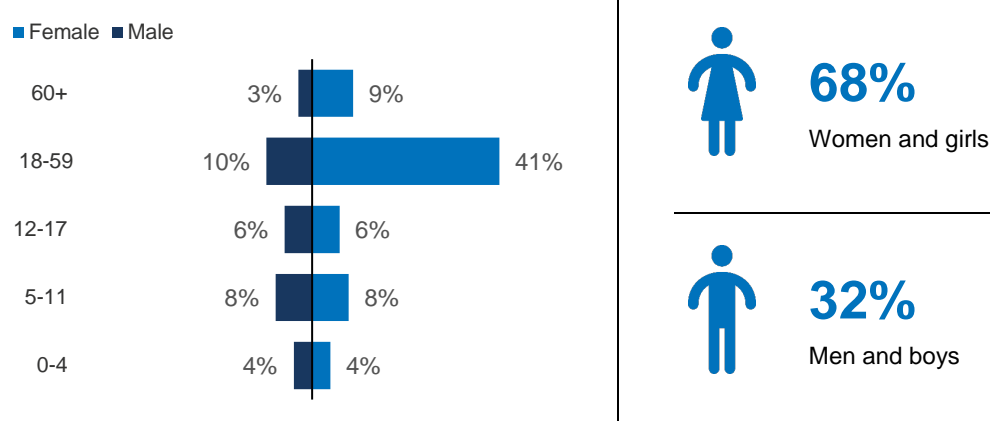
<sup>21</sup> These include nationals of Russia, Moldova, Armenia, Turkmenistan, Belarus, and others.

authorities' response efforts will be complemented by coordinated interventions of UN agencies, national NGOs, civil society actors, community-based and faith-based organizations and the International Federation of the Red Cross in a coherent and consistent manner.

## Population planning figures

Bulgaria	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection as of end- Dec 2022 <sup>22</sup>	Targeted population in 2023
Refugee Population	149,268	200,000

## Age and gender breakdown<sup>23</sup>



## Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

While further needs assessments, profiling and intention surveys will be conducted, the greatest needs currently faced by refugees and third-country nationals in need of international protection, either in-transit or at destination, based on currently available data are:<sup>24</sup>

- Basic humanitarian needs, including access to food, health, nutrition, accommodation and core relief items;
- Protection needs, including information and counselling on rights, access and availability of services, legal assistance, child protection, GBV, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), support to persons with specific needs;
- Access to national systems, quality education and strengthened socio-economic inclusion, such as support to integrate into the labour market.

<sup>22</sup> 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.

<sup>23</sup> Calculations based on the Temporary Protection registration database.

<sup>24</sup> This includes findings from UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity focus group discussions and data from site-profiling of government accommodation facilities which can be accessed at: [Opsmap Bulgaria \(cartong.org\)](https://opsmap.bulgaria.cartong.org).



*Ukrainian refugee Olga, 35, and her 10-year-old daughter Anya, from the city of Dnipro, sit in their room in the Severina Hotel in the Bulgarian Black Sea resort of Sunny Beach. © UNHCR/Dobrin Kashavelov*

Strengthening refugees' access to health services has been identified as a crucial need, as a shortage of medical supplies, stretched capacity for service delivery and limited health insurance coverage afforded through temporary protection present significant barriers. This includes supporting the nutrition needs of children, lactating mothers, older people and other vulnerable individuals, which the Government has highlighted as a gap. The provision of winter-related core relief items continues to also be a priority need. Across the response, communication with communities on available services and government support is a significant gap. As a top priority, there is a need to enhance communication with the refugee community and access to information for refugees on the available services, including health, education, employment, and state social services; monitor barriers to access; and advocate for inclusion in national systems.

## Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

Bulgaria's Protection and Solutions Strategy will focus on the inclusion of refugees in national protection services and interventions to support their integration into society. National authorities will continue to have the overall responsibility for refugee protection – as well as the inclusion of refugees in national services and the larger community – with the support of a range of civil society actors, local NGOs, UN Agencies and other international organizations. RRP partners will promote the inclusion of refugees in government-led longer-term solutions within the strategies of the State Agency for Refugees and local/regional authorities based on vulnerability identification and intention assessments. They will also support the Government in conducting various needs assessments and profiling surveys to ensure continued accommodation and basic needs for the most vulnerable refugees before the governmental accommodation programme is currently scheduled to come to an end in February 2023. RRP partners will ensure reception standards are guaranteed by strengthening reception capacity and conducting protection monitoring of arrivals to ensure access to territory, rights, and services on a non-discriminatory basis, including for TCNs.

Interventions to facilitate protection and solutions will align with and complement the government social welfare system, aiming to address the gaps for the most vulnerable categories and support unmet specific needs. In coordination with national institutions and counterparts, the protection response will be harmonized to ensure integration of refugees into national social and economic systems, including through conducting gap analyses between legal and practical access to government benefits and services. In addition, RRP partners will engage in advocacy to eliminate barriers to accessing social protection schemes and public services. Concurrently, refugees will be supported with access to information, legal and social counselling, and eligibility advice in navigating governmental administrative procedures. Fostering social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities will remain an important cross-cutting response priority across all interventions to ensure longer-term social stability of refugees in Bulgaria. RRP partners will work in cooperation to promote the social inclusion and civic engagement of refugees and the local community, especially adolescents and youth, for social cohesion and peaceful and resilient societies.

Interventions will be focused on key locations which host the largest numbers of refugees, namely Burgas, Dobrich, Plovdiv, Ruse, Sofia, and Varna. The provision of Blue Dot services – i.e. legal aid, MHPSS, protection etc. – in six key locations of Burgas, Dobrich, Ruse, Sofia and Varna, will remain a priority. More locations will be considered, should additional needs be identified. Assistance will target the most vulnerable groups, including those who may be at risk of harmful coping mechanisms. It will also target those at risk of sexual exploitation, abuse, GBV and trafficking, children at risk – as well as those with MHPSS needs, older persons and persons with disabilities, and LGBTIQ+ persons. Strengthening the capacity of the education system together with national partners and key stakeholders is a priority for the integration of refugee children, including supporting schools in creating an environment supportive of integrating refugee children and adolescents in mainstream education as well as through extracurricular activities and non-formal education (including language acquisition, skills-building, civic participation and sports activities). Strengthening health systems, supporting the national health workforce, supporting immunisation efforts and providing MHPSS to refugees, many of whom are likely to remain in the



country, will also be a priority. Communication with communities will be further developed and strengthened to ensure greater information-sharing and combatting disinformation and stigmatisation.

## Country Strategic Objectives

The RRP in Bulgaria supports the operationalization of the overarching regional RRP Strategic Objectives (SO). It aims to uphold rights associated with temporary protection or similar legal status in Bulgaria; to ensure a whole-of-society approach in line with the Global Compact on Refugees, recognising in particular the critical role played by national and local actors, including government ministries, municipal authorities, NGOs and community-based organizations; and engaging with and strengthen community-level protective mechanisms.

### SO1: Ensure refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis

RRP partners will aim to monitor access gaps and advocate for inclusion in government services. In partnership with the government, partners will ensure that refugees have access to dignified reception conditions and essential protection services (protection, legal assistance, child protection, GBV response, provision of information, community-based MHPSS). RRP partners will also ensure that refugees have access to – and know how to access – the government accommodation scheme and social protection as well as formal education for children. Partners will support the Government's provision of accommodation, including through site monitoring. All of the above will be closely tied to RRP partners' efforts to improve refugees' access to information on the services available to them. RRP partners will develop a clear strategy and coordination mechanism on communication with communities to ensure greater information-sharing and combat disinformation and stigmatization. This will help partners to reinforce two-way communication systems and ensure that refugees are able to provide feedback and participate in the development of programming.

### SO2: Pave the way toward solutions and expand access to social and economic opportunities

To support the socio-economic inclusion of refugees, RRP partners will seek strategic partnerships and promote interlinkages with development actors and the private sector. Partners will focus on job market assessments linking the findings to refugees' skills and provision of job counselling, as well as capacity building initiatives. RRP partners will also work closely with local authorities to facilitate job placement of refugees in local businesses. All of these priorities will aim at enhancing the self-reliance of refugees.

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

RRP partners will support the most vulnerable refugees with heightened protection risks and specific needs through targeted assistance. Partners will work with communities to strengthen the identification of persons with specific needs and ensure safe referrals to specialized services. RRP partners will also support the government to ensure that social protection services are age, gender and diversity sensitive – and accessible for those who may be at higher risk, including persons with disabilities, older persons, LGBTIQ+ individuals, GBV survivors, victims of trafficking, children at risk and survivors of abuse, exploitation and violence including unaccompanied and separated children. Partners will also complement and enhance government services by providing targeted support including psycho-social support and strengthening community-level protection mechanisms.

### **SO4: Advance social cohesion between refugee and host communities through targeted interventions**

In close coordination with local municipalities and civil society organisations, RRP partners will aim to strengthen interventions that promote social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. This will include awareness raising for local stakeholders on diversity and non-discrimination. Partners will support local authorities to develop policies and services to facilitate refugee inclusion and integration. RRP partners will also support opportunities to enhance inclusive communities, including safe spaces, activities for social, cultural and recreational events, and positive dialogue and information exchange between refugee and host communities. This aims to enhance community-based support for refugee reception and integration.

All the above will be to build on, enhance and scale up national protection capacities by supporting and working with community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, civil society and informal networks established by refugees and host communities to build on their resources, capacities and improve reach and sustainability of reception and inclusion initiatives.

#### **Blue Dots in Bulgaria**

UNHCR, UNICEF together with Bulgarian Red Cross and Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, have jointly opened six Safe Space, Protection and Support Hubs, commonly known as Blue Dots, where refugees are supported with essential services, safe spaces, protection, and legal assistance – as well as referrals to other specialized service providers. Back-to-school and learning information campaigns have been organized in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, regional education, and health departments as well as NGO partners to ensure children's smooth enrolment and transition to the next school year.

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



Various protection activities will be provided by RRP partners, including:

- Identify and facilitate access of persons at heightened risks to appropriate services
- Legal information and assistance, including representation and counseling
- Protection monitoring
- Information on access to social and basic services
- Adolescent and youth engagement

Capacity building for local authorities to strengthen their knowledge on identifying and working with persons with specific needs and for service providers to capacitate their knowledge and skills on national arrangements and procedures for access to temporary protection holders.

All protection interventions will mainstream mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and community-based mechanisms. Blue Dot Hubs will provide key protection services and information for refugees with referrals for specialized services, with a particular focus on children at risk, persons with disabilities, those at risk of trafficking, survivors of GBV and refugees from the LGBTIQ+ community. The minimum package of services will include basic psychosocial support, legal aid and counseling, child and family friendly spaces, identification of vulnerabilities and protection risks and appropriate referrals.

RRP partners are closely supporting local authorities and communities in working with adolescents to address young people's needs and empower them to reach their full potential and become agents of positive change. This includes engaging and mobilizing young people to participate and contribute positively to their communities; skills-building; MHPSS support; and systems strengthening for meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes on national and local levels.

#### Sub-Sector: Child Protection



Priority will be given to strengthening the Government's child protection systems and services, including national, regional, and local authorities' capacity to support children at risk and families, including unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). This will include supporting the Government with documentation and identification of children at risk; best interests procedures; psychosocial support; family tracing and reunification; and alternative care arrangements. To support the above, appropriate capacity building to authorities as well as frontline professionals will also be provided. Interventions will ensure that children at risk have access to specialized services, social support and access to child-friendly information. RRP partners will provide UASC and caregivers with MHPSS, legal aid and information sessions in relation to the temporary protection, asylum and family reunification procedures. Support will also be provided for parents and caregivers to strengthen and expand their knowledge, skills and capacities on providing nurturing and responsive parenting and

caregiving for young children, and to facilitate their access to social services including health and developmental monitoring of young children.

### Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



RRP partners will prioritize strengthening GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response activities to ensure GBV survivors, including SEA and survivors of trafficking for sexual exploitation, have access to quality support services, GBV prevention programmes are in place and that all other sectors are supported to mitigate the risks of GBV within their interventions. RRP partners will support the government in reviewing and strengthening the existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on GBV prevention and response adopted by the State Agency for Refugees and ensure a comprehensive multi-sectoral response. The revision of the SOPs will include establishing and reinforcing GBV referral pathways.

RRP partners will continue to provide quality services to survivors of GBV, including SEA and trafficking for sexual exploitation, and work closely with other response sectors, including health and legal, to ensure a survivor-centered, multi-sectoral quality response. They will also implement prevention activities that include empowerment, establishing community-based prevention mechanisms, engaging men and boys in GBV prevention, awareness raising and information sessions. Partners will collaborate with local actors, particularly including women-led and refugee-led organizations, on the implementation of these planned activities to strengthen the community-based response.

RRP partners will support other sectors' GBV risk mitigation efforts, including by providing capacity development to frontline responders and community members on safe disclosure and referral of GBV survivors. This will also include support in assessment and analysis, including safety audits as relevant for each sector (Education, Basic Needs, Health and Nutrition, Livelihoods and Socioeconomic Inclusion).

Additionally, RRP partners will work in cooperation with government institutions, non-governmental organizations and other actors to reduce the risks of trafficking and provide targeted support to victims of trafficking, in collaboration with the National Commission for Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings.

## EDUCATION



The Bulgaria RRP will continue to prioritize the integration and inclusion of Ukrainian children and adolescents in the formal national school system to ensure the continuity of their education, including early learning. Some 19,250 refugee children from Ukraine currently reside in Bulgaria, but only a small number of those are

enrolled in Bulgarian schools.<sup>25</sup> RRP partners and the government, including at the municipal level, will work together on back-to-school information campaigns to ensure the smooth enrolment and transition of children into the formal national education system in the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years. This will include advocacy for removal of barriers in access to education, contributions to capacity building in Bulgarian schools to host refugee children, and provision of learning materials for refugee children in preschool and primary school. Support will also be provided to teachers, social workers and psychologists working closely and supporting refugee children. Partners will engage service providers, host communities and refugees for social and behavioral change for inclusion in education.

RRP partners will support Bulgaria's national policy on Bulgarian language certification. In particular, there is a lack of state funding for free language classes and free certification of language skills for refugees. As this has been identified as a gap and a key first step of integration for refugees of all ages, RRP partners will provide language classes (Bulgarian, English, Ukrainian) for children. Digital education will also be explored.

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION



The health response will prioritize supporting the national health response in providing timely and appropriate public health interventions, including emergency first aid response, basic health care, MHPSS services, information on accessing local health systems and informing on hygiene and public health measures. RRP partners will conduct refugee population needs assessments aimed at informing the national health system response. RRP partners will also build the capacity of health actors to ensure they have the necessary knowledge and skills to respond to the needs of GBV survivors, including clinical management of rape.

In Bulgaria, focus group discussions with refugees from Ukraine have found that a very small percentage minority of respondents are registered with a general practitioner due to various reasons, including lack of information about the health system, inability to pay health insurance, inability to find a general practitioner who would take them as a patient and lack of translation. Other difficulties include a lack of medical assistance in resort towns on the coast where many refugees are accommodated as well as a lack of assistive devices (wheelchairs, crutches etc.) for persons with disabilities. In light of the above, RRP partners will provide awareness raising and appropriate information on accessing medical care services including for persons with disabilities – as well as counseling on Infant and Young Child feeding for caregivers, and health promotion through community workshops. RRP partners will provide primary health care services including through mobile teams for vulnerable populations (e.g. pregnant women and children). Partners will also provide psychosocial support (particularly for caregivers of young children) including psychological first aid, physiotherapy and speech therapy for those with disabilities or specific needs, early intervention for children with developmental difficulties and disabilities, and transportation assistance to access health facilities to vulnerable refugees. The most vulnerable

<sup>25</sup> Government of Bulgaria State Agency for Refugees, Temporary Protection registration database, <https://ukraine.gov.bg>.

will also be supported with medication and the costs of medical exams. For those in need of specialized MHPSS, timely identification, referrals and consultations will be provided. Capacity building on MHPSS for all frontline workers, including local authorities working with refugees, will also be provided. Partners will also monitor the access of refugees to health services in coordination with the public authorities to reinforce capacities where necessary, while responding to shortages of medical staff, health facilities and medical supply chains.

## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



RRP partners' livelihoods interventions will reinforce access to jobs and employment opportunities and will include related childcare services and skill building for young people to facilitate refugee and host community members' ability to access decent work. To promote livelihoods, RRP partners will assess local markets for employment opportunities for refugees complemented by trainings and courses to enhance their practical skills. RRP partners will establish peer support networks, provide employment counselling, and support pilot employment initiatives. Direct support will also be provided for female refugees and refugee youth to enhance their employment and entrepreneurship competencies, including demand-driven vocational training for employment in the IT sector, such as business development and financial services. At the same time, RRP partners will continue to advocate with and expand partnerships with the private sector for the inclusion of refugee populations in employment opportunities. The private sector will be engaged on ongoing activities to identify potential collaboration and expansion of initiatives.

Priority will also be given to activities focusing on integration of refugees within the community. As national authorities do not provide comprehensive Bulgarian language courses to temporary protection holders – which are key for access to employment, integration and inclusion – activities will include Bulgarian and English language classes for adults. Social cohesion activities in community and education centres will target both Bulgarian and Ukrainian youth and be complemented by psychosocial support.

Furthermore, RRP partners will work with government authorities to improve data collection and analysis as well as monitoring and evaluation of refugees' socio-economic situation.

### Highlights

Language training and employment-enabling support is being provided by community-based organizations and enthusiastic volunteers for adults of all ages. These include Bulgarian and English language courses, with positive feedback that this support contributes to employment opportunities. Additional resources will serve to expand the territorial coverage and increase learning hours and class places of language training programmes provided by community-based organizations that have proved highly effective in linking refugees with decent work.

## BASIC NEEDS



Based on identified needs, partners will provide hygiene kits and WASH kits, with a particular focus on vulnerable refugee female headed households. Food vouchers and cash for emergency accommodation will also be provided to mitigate any imminent protection risks. For the winter months, the inter-agency response will include one-time cash assistance to the most vulnerable refugee households to meet their most basic additional household needs to survive the winter, as well as the provision of core relief items such as blankets, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, winter clothes and baby formula. RRP partners will also support the Government's efforts to provide dignified accommodation for refugees in state facilities, based on site profiling and joint inter-agency needs assessment.

RRP partners will support the Government in scaling up accommodation capacity including for temporary shelter while supporting local authorities in identifying additional reception facilities to accommodate those with both immediate and longer-term needs. The conditions of reception and accommodation facilities will be monitored to ensure safe and accessible conditions for all arrivals, including persons with specific needs, and to support national authorities on any identified gaps.

Across the response in Bulgaria, food, rental, and basic needs support continue to be priority needs. RRP partners will provide cash for protection in support of unmet specific needs, complementing but not replacing government social protection schemes. This will be accompanied by strong protection advocacy for inclusion and the continued provision of protection services. The provision of cash for protection and cash for winterization is an important protection intervention to mitigate the risk of exploitation and other protection risks. While Bulgaria is a member of the EU, it has yet to receive a budget allocation for the refugee response to cover some of the most vulnerable categories of refugees in the government social assistance programmes.

## Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



RRP partners will ensure Accountability to Affected People through both traditional and creative means, exploring online tools. RRP partners will furthermore support the Government to have a communication and community engagement strategy for the response. Effective and accessible feedback and response mechanisms will be put in place and socialised with communities, with inter-agency referrals and collective approaches as needed. Identification and protection referral for persons with disabilities and older persons with additional or specific protection needs, including access to counselling, sign language interpretation, referral to medical services, replacement of lost or damaged assistive devices, will be key. RRP partners will identify misinformation and disinformation through community engagement in digital and analogue channels to further inform appropriate messaging and engagement.

## Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



Sexual exploitation and abuse directly contradict the principles upon which humanitarian action is based, inflict harm on those whom the humanitarian and development community protect, and jeopardise the credibility of all assistance agencies. In Bulgaria, RRP partners work closely with the Government to mitigate and prevent risks as well as to ensure a robust complaints mechanism is in place and further strengthened. This includes establishing PSEA focal points in each organization, joint SEA risks assessments, partner capacity assessments, capacity building and training as well as community outreach and awareness raising on the risks of trafficking and SEA with the refugee community. Information on SEA and risks of trafficking are being distributed at entry points and Crisis Centres.

PSEA is an integral and cross-cutting component of the RRP and is mainstreamed across the response to assist and protect refugees fleeing from Ukraine. The emergency is also characterized by several specific risk factors, such as an exceptionally high incidence of family separation and a prevailing percentage of female-headed households, as well as a wide range of actors involved in the response, some of whom have limited experience with PSEA. These risks may be further compounded by increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities, difficulties in finding suitable accommodation, and potential fatigue among host States and host communities as the crisis continues.

## Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



In Bulgaria, there is an important need for multi-layered community-based and specialized MHPSS services. MHPSS will be mainstreamed across all sectors as a priority response. Interventions will support refugees' access to MHPSS services while also strengthening community-level support by the government and humanitarian actors. Key priority areas for MHPSS are: 1) capacity building of government and frontline staff working in Protection, Child Protection, GBV, Health, Education and other sectors; 2) strengthening and integrating community-based MHPSS interventions into the national Mental Health Strategy and its action plan; and 3) enhancing coordination between RRP partners, the Government at central and provincial levels, academia, other I/NGO and professional organizations, the donor community and inter-ministries. Referral mechanisms will also be strengthened among service providers to cover multi-layered MHPSS interventions. All MHPSS activities will be planned, implemented and evaluated in alignment with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines on MHPSS in Emergency Settings, which will be translated into local languages for the government and frontline service providers.

RRP partners will coordinate MHPSS interventions with the Bulgarian Ministry of Health and under the national Mental Health Strategy (2021-2031), and the national Mental Health Advisory Board. The Inter-Agency Coordination group will also enhance linkages and coordination of MHPSS interventions in the RRP with other relevant government ministries, including the Ministries of Social Protection, Education and Labour. Additionally, an MHPSS Technical Working Group will be formed to ensure coordination and provision of evidence-based, culturally adapted and community-based MHPSS services.



## Partnership and Coordination

In Bulgaria, the Refugee Coordination Model has been activated in support of the Government's efforts with an established inter-agency coordination working group led by UNHCR. Sectoral discussions co-led by UNHCR, RRP partners and the Government will continue focusing on protection (including sub-sectors on child protection and GBV), education, basic needs (comprising shelter/accommodation, NFIs, WASH), health and nutrition, and livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion. Within the Inter-Agency Coordination group, an Accommodation Task Force is being activated to support the Government's assessments and needs for accommodating new refugee arrivals. An inter-agency Cash Working Group and MHPSS Technical Working Group are also being convened. The interim Council of Ministers has formed a new Task Force for the Ukrainian Refugee Response, focusing on inter-ministerial coordination related to the general refugee response. Meanwhile the inter-agency coordination group will closely communicate with the Government Task Force on thematic issues in support of national plans.

The Refugee Coordination Forum will continue to promote coherence and complementarity between the 2023 RRP and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-2027 as well as the 2023 Global Refugee Forum (GRF). The 2023 RRP will count on the response of 11 national NGOs, four UN agencies, the IFRC/RF, one faith-based organization and one regional organization. Projects under the RRP will bridge the humanitarian response and longer-term development planning to build resilience at the individual, community and institutional level. The participation of refugees and women-led organizations will be reinforced. RRP partners will jointly work on joint assessments and monitoring of activities as key priorities, that help all actors ensure a needs-based response. The inter-agency Multi-Sector Needs Assessment and regional protection monitoring will also help identify key needs and priority areas for intervention in each sector.

Partners involved	18
UN Agencies	4
National NGOs	11
IFRC&RC	1
Faith-based Organizations	1
Regional organizations	1

*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.*

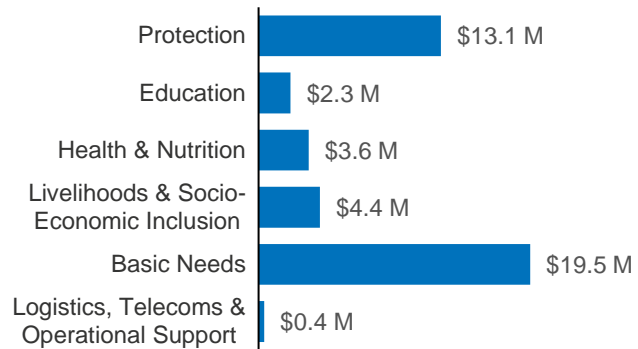
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### Total financial requirements in USD



**\$43.4 M**

### By sector in million USD



Total Protection requirements	\$13,070,721
Other protection activities	\$11,056,539
GBV	\$633,736
Child Protection	\$1,380,446

Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$18,853,999
Protection	\$1,500,000
Basic Needs	\$17,353,999

\* 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	18
UN Agencies	\$28,964,226
National NGOs	\$2,874,532
IFRC&RC	\$7,000,000
Faith-based Organizations	\$3,949,600
Regional Organizations	\$598,900

## By partner

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
<b>UN Agencies</b>							
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	8,824,540			2,905,000	7,624,802		19,354,342
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	1,381,583	1,369,084	836,583		581,584	401,900	4,570,734
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	2,000,900	187,250	267,500	240,750	989,750		3,686,150
World Health Organization (WHO)			1,353,000				1,353,000
<b>National NGOs</b>							
Aid for Ukraine	75,000	151,800		414,200	206,520		847,520
Ak-Nordost			25,000				25,000
Association Energy				112,211			112,211
Bulgarian Helsinki Committee	166,972						166,972
Dignita	18,500						18,500
Foundation for Access to Rights	173,340						173,340
Pituary Foundation			81,300				81,300
Reachout Foundation		42,193					42,193
Situation Centre Open Doors		297,000	77,500	118,075			492,575
Ukraine Support and Renovation Foundation	61,607			34,200			95,807
Za Dobroto Foundation	168,279	276,930	81,078	15,423	277,404		819,114
<b>IFRC &amp; Red Cross/ Crescent Societies</b>							
Bulgarian Red Cross	200,000		900,000		5,900,000		7,000,000
<b>Faith-based Organizations</b>							

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
Caritas Bulgaria					3,949,600		3,949,600
Regional Organizations							
International Centre for Migration Policy Development				598,900			598,900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$13,070,721</b>	<b>\$2,324,257</b>	<b>\$3,621,961</b>	<b>\$4,438,759</b>	<b>\$19,529,660</b>	<b>\$401,900</b>	<b>\$43,387,258</b>

COUNTRY CHAPTER

# CZECH REPUBLIC



# > At a Glance

## Czech Republic Planned Response (January-December 2023)



**500,000**

targeted refugee population



**\$81.6 M**

total financial requirements in USD



**4**

partners involved



# CZECH REPUBLIC

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

As of end December 23 2022, a total of 473,216 refugees from Ukraine have received temporary protection (TP) status under the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD). The Czech Republic is both a transit and, primarily, a destination country for refugees from Ukraine, with one of the highest numbers of registered refugees from Ukraine globally, both by absolute number and per capita. The large Ukrainian pre-war diaspora, the dynamic economy with one of the lowest unemployment rates in the EU and the significant solidarity of the host community with refugees have led to large numbers of Ukrainians choosing to seek safety in the Czech Republic.

As the country does not have external Schengen land borders, it is difficult to track the number of new arrivals and pendular movements. The number of Ukrainian nationals granted TP is growing steadily, up to approximately 10,000-15,000 per month, and many refugees consider the Czech Republic their ultimate destination. While onward and pendular movements from and to the Czech Republic continue, making it difficult to establish the exact numbers of those who remain in the country, the RRP for the Czech Republic projects a population of some 500,000 refugees who will pass through and/or stay in the country in 2023 and who will be targeted by assistance by RRP partners, which excludes any contingency figures for a further possible influx. Given the harsh winter conditions, the development of the conflict in Ukraine in the coming months may contribute to an increased flow of refugees into neighbouring countries and the Czech Republic.

Current TP holders are allowed to legally reside in the Czech Republic until March 2023 under the package of national laws – “Lex Ukraine” – passed in March 2022, which focused on the rapid registration of refugees, as well as the introduction of key measures related to access to health insurance, the labour market and education, humanitarian allowances for refugees, and solidarity allowances for hosts. Amendments to the law were passed in June and a new draft is under discussion in late 2022, in view of the extension of the TPD to March 2024.

The Government has developed a comprehensive adaptation/inclusion agenda targeting refugees from Ukraine through a three-phased strategy: flight for safety, adaptation and coexistence, and long-term solutions. The government strategy is articulated around 13 priority areas assigned to 13 working groups, including coordination, communication, financing, digital management, and

inclusion (e.g., housing, education, health, social affairs, security, etc.).<sup>26</sup> The Czech Government is revising its strategy for 2023, and RRP partners will strive to align the RRP accordingly.

The generosity shown by the Government and the immediate wave of solidarity from the Czech society towards refugees from Ukraine has been remarkable; most are accommodated by the local population, with only a portion in state-run facilities. These efforts are complemented by Inter-Agency initiatives of UN Agencies present in the country (thereafter 'RRP partners'), as well as national and international NGOs and civil society actors.

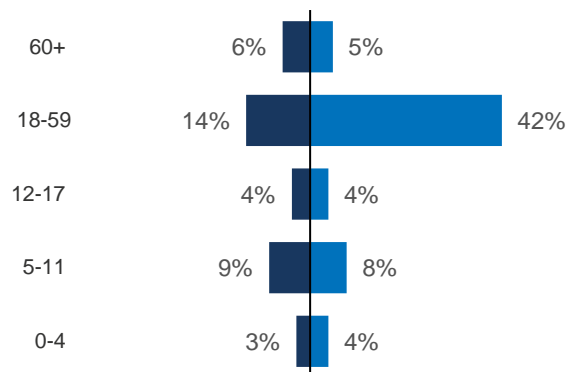
Despite the impressive response provided to date, the ability of the current social and economic structures to absorb and integrate the sizeable Ukrainian refugee population in the longer term is expected to be strained as the year advances. The Czech Government plans to incorporate vulnerable refugees into the social safety nets already in place for vulnerable Czech nationals, though the details of these changes to the government accommodation scheme for refugees remain under discussion with the Lex Ukraine 5 package. Accommodation arrangements for refugees are included in the RRP strategy to ensure a sustainable response and unhindered access to rights for the refugee population without discrimination, so that no one is left behind.

## Population planning figures

Czech Republic	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection as of end Dec2022 <sup>27</sup>	Targeted Population in 2023
Refugee Population	473,216	500,000

## Age and gender breakdown<sup>28</sup>

■ Female ■ Male



**63%**

Women and girls



**37%**

Men and boys

<sup>26</sup> Czech Republic: [Determination of strategic priorities of the Government of the Czech Republic to deal with the refugee wave related to the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation](#), April 2022.

<sup>27</sup> 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.

<sup>28</sup> Calculations based on Temporary Protection data (for male / female and children / adults disaggregation) and UNHCR's Regional Profiles and Intentions Surveys [#1](#) and [#2](#) (for specific age group disaggregation).



## Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

The vast majority of refugees from Ukraine are women and children, with 75 per cent of adults under the age of 45 and 28 per cent of adults under the age of 30.<sup>29</sup> A mother with one child is the most common household setup, with 26 per cent of children under the age of 5.<sup>30</sup> Family separation is a factor exacerbating existing protection risks, increasing the psychosocial stress of adults, and undermining children's protection and affect their wellbeing and development, ultimately leaving refugees at risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse. Based on the findings of the protection monitoring conducted in 2022, refugees are coming to the Czech Republic with significant ongoing vulnerabilities in addition to forced displacement and family separation. Among these are both mental and physical trauma and distress, and gender-based violence (GBV) due to the conflict situation or difficulties in Ukraine accessing basic services, giving rise to needs related to child protection and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). In addition, approximately 8 per cent of respondents in the latest UNHCR intention survey from September 2022 reported that one or more members of their household aged 5 or above have a disability, with a lot of difficulty in walking, seeing, hearing, remembering, communicating or self-care.<sup>31</sup> People with disabilities often struggle to obtain health care and social assistance, in addition to accommodation, because facilities frequently do not have the necessary accessibility features, like ramps and handicapped-accessible restrooms.

Almost one year into the crisis, with limited possibility to return, refugees in the Czech Republic are in need of mid- and longer-term accommodation arrangements. According to the government, 75 per cent of Ukrainians are living in private housing, 10 per cent in solidarity housing (hosted by Czechs or Ukrainians), and 15 per cent are in state-funded accommodation. Securing accommodation arrangements, in particular during the winter season with increased living and utility costs, remains a significant need. Housing considerations are also directly associated with access to employment for adults, access to education for children, and eligibility for social assistance, as they are linked to official residence documents and addresses. Also, the integration of Ukrainians living in non-residential housing remains a priority to ensure access to employment and childcare, in particular for refugees from the Roma minority. In the Czech Republic, host communities, the private sector and municipal authorities, as well as RRP partners, have been instrumental in supporting the Czech Government to provide both temporary and longer-term accommodation to refugees.

Refugee children have the right to education under similar conditions to Czech citizens, and enrolment in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary grades (up to the age of 15) is mandatory. According to the Ministry of Education, around 60,000 Ukrainian children enrolled in the 2022/23 school year.<sup>32</sup> However, one in every four refugee children enrolled in the previous academic year stopped attending or dropped out of school across pre-primary, primary and secondary education levels for various reasons, including issues of demand and capacity. There is significant pressure on existing schools, including kindergartens, in terms of capacity, space and resources to

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<sup>29</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, [Situation of Refugees fleeing Ukraine](#), 13 July 2022.

<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Interior, [Statistics related to the war in Ukraine](#), 31 October 2022.

<sup>31</sup> UNHCR, [Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine #2](#), September 2022.

<sup>32</sup> Ministry of Education, [Current numbers of Ukrainian children in Czech schools](#), 19 September 2022

accommodate additional students, particularly in Prague. Acquisition of the Czech language, a shortage of teachers and other support staff, and the psychosocial support needs of children further add to the multifaceted challenges for school enrolment and learning by refugee children and youth in Czech Republic.

TP holders have access to humanitarian benefits, including health insurance, however, amendments introduced through the Lex Ukraine II changed the system, whereby the humanitarian allowance for refugees has been limited to 150 days, after which period they shall be entitled to the same level of benefits as Czech citizens, depending on income and accommodation status. Financial coverage of health insurance coverage for TP holders is limited to a maximum of 150 days, except for children and older persons. Vulnerable refugees will gradually be included in the national social protection system already in place for vulnerable Czech people, however, there may be gaps for particular groups in the adequacy and timing of the payment of benefits. Tailored health and psychosocial assistance for persons with disability are also critical priorities, to ensure protection and promote the inclusion of refugees with disabilities in the Czech Republic.

Given the demographic profile of the refugee population, there are heightened protection risks, in particular for women, GBV, including SEA and human trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes, labour exploitation, and child protection risks, including separation of children from their parents and close family members. Alongside enhanced support to expand capacity in the sectors of education, health and social protection, RRP partners are also seeking to provide targeted assistance to vulnerable refugees, including unaccompanied and separated children, survivors of exploitation/trafficking/GBV, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ persons, refugees from the Roma community and people with psychosocial and mental health needs.

## Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

The RRP protection and solutions strategy for the Czech Republic aims at supporting the efforts of the national authorities at all levels in addressing the needs of refugees from Ukraine and looking for ways to facilitate adaptation and inclusion into the national protection schemes, with a focus on the most vulnerable. In particular, the RRP response will support and complement the Czech Government's strategy for adaptation, coexistence, and long-term solutions, in line with the multi-stakeholder and partnership approach enshrined in the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

RRP partners will strive to ensure a coherent and predictable protection response with the participation of refugees while strengthening national protection systems. Specific attention will be given to the protection needs of single women, female-headed households, unaccompanied and separated children, older persons, LGBTIQ+ persons, people with serious medical conditions and persons with disabilities. Efforts will be made to support frontline workers in identifying and providing services to vulnerable refugees and third-country nationals (TCNs) to mitigate life-threatening risks and risks linked to sexual exploitation and abuse.

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

### Country Strategic Objectives

#### **SO1: Support the Czech Government to ensure refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis, including the rights associated with temporary protection.**

- Strengthen the protection response of the Czech Government and all relevant actors to register new arrivals, identify and refer persons with specific needs among the refugee population, and provide required specialized services and humanitarian assistance, that apply an age, gender and diversity approach. Support local actors to provide targeted legal and social counseling and assistance to persons of concern.
- Support and strengthen national child protection systems and services provided by state institutions and NGOs, to ensure the social service workforce can adequately respond to the specific needs of refugee children and their families, in particular unaccompanied and separated children and children at heightened risk, such as children with disabilities and children from minority groups.
- Reinforce the capacity of organizations specialized in supporting survivors of GBV, exploitation, and trafficking with a particular focus on women and girls and facilitate access to services, support, and assistance through highly targeted in-person outreach work, online outreach, and training of relevant first responders.

**SO2: Work in partnership with national and local governments and civil society to create solutions and expand refugees' access to social and economic opportunities to facilitate a whole-of-society approach to inclusion.**

- Ensure access of refugees to livelihood and economic opportunities through professional skills training, short-term employment opportunities and job placements, job counseling and language training, and support for recognition of qualifications, while ensuring that protection risks, such as exploitation and trafficking, are minimized and addressed. The focus will be placed on ensuring that vulnerable refugees, including persons with disabilities and single mothers, are provided with access to livelihood support.
- Provide technical and operational support to the Czech Government and regional authorities in provision of safe, accessible and long-term accommodation, including through developing long-term accommodation strategies and pilot initiatives, such as improvements to collective sites, renovation and outfitting of existing apartments and piloting innovative approaches to increasing housing supply.
- Continue to support the inclusion of refugee children into the national education system through increasing school capacity and services, along with the capacity of school staff to respond to the educational and socio-economic needs of teachers and students, whilst providing flexible/alternative programmes for those most vulnerable and out-of-school.

**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.**

- Continue to support existing national measures and systems of the government and civil society, through a multi-sectoral humanitarian response, to ensure refugees' protection, assistance and inclusion to enhance early identification of persons with specific needs and their referral to specialized services.
- Support the Czech Government to ensure that refugees are systematically included in the different forms of social protection, such as people with disabilities, and that targeted support is provided during winter for vulnerable refugees. It is envisaged that targeted support will be required to complement and enhance the Czech Government services to persons with specific needs, including psychosocial support, prevention and response to GBV and human trafficking, disability inclusion and in the protection of children.
- Reinforce accountability to affected people (AAP) through establishing and strengthening two-way communication with communities, increasing access to information and awareness-raising for refugees and TCNs.

#### **SO4: Advance social cohesion between refugees and host communities through targeted interventions.**

- Scale up innovative approaches and strengthen partnerships to enhance refugee inclusion through assistance to local civil society and refugee-led organizations.
- Leverage the potential of refugees and refugee-led and Ukrainian diaspora organizations to help solve some of the challenges faced in accessing rights and services and facilitate dialogue and information exchange between refugees, Czech Government authorities and the broader Czech population.
- Provide individual and community integration support to promote and advance social cohesion and self-sufficiency, for example, through access to the labour market and Czech language courses, as well as social, cultural, and recreational events and exchanges.

#### **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Czech Republic**

Collaboration across government, civil society and UN Agencies on the provision of MHPSS is crucial to the response and in 2022 it has led to a number of initiatives to ensure care and support is provided to refugees from Ukraine.

The National Institute of Mental Health, for example, has mapped the psychosocial services for Ukrainians in the Czech Republic. AMIGA, a Czech NGO, has established a network of Ukrainian- and Russian-speaking specialists in mental health, health care, social work and education, who work with refugees in their native language to improve psychological health and resilience, and to better adapt to the challenges of displacement due to the war. Many of the professionals engaged through AMIGA are Ukrainian refugees themselves and provide their specialized services to give back to the Ukrainian refugee community. These examples demonstrate ways to engage refugees in the response, strengthen community-based protection mechanisms, deploy skills and expertise of refugees for the benefit of their own community and support the livelihoods and engagement of refugees in the Czech Republic.

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



Partners will conduct protection monitoring to rapidly identify emerging protection risks and gaps in the response to inform evidence-based protection advocacy and engage with authorities at the national level to address key findings. Partners will also increase outreach in communities, in Prague and outside of the main cities, to identify refugees with specific needs and ensure they are referred to specialized services. Specific attention will be given to single women, female-headed households, and unaccompanied and separated children, as well as older persons, LGBTIQ+ persons, people with serious medical conditions and those living with disabilities.

Efforts will be made to support national protection mechanisms in the identification and provision of services to persons with specific needs. Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse will also form a key part of the response. To this end, particular attention will be paid to engaging and empowering the refugee community to ensure their participation in designing and implementing the response, through participatory assessments, focus group discussions, collaboration with refugee and community-led organizations and other forms of support to the refugee community.

#### Sub-Sector: Child Protection



To improve the protection environment for girls and boys impacted by the crisis, partners will work to strengthen and complement the national child protection system, ensuring critical child protection prevention and response services are provided to refugee children at risk, as well as their non-discriminatory access to registration, documentation and rights. Existing response services will continue to be strengthened to ensure their effectiveness in preventing and responding to child protection risks and violations and to guarantee that children and their families have access to integrated support services. The response will focus on supporting existing protection mechanisms and the national social assistance system to identify and refer the most at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children, children with disabilities with protection needs, and other children at risk, to appropriate services and support. Additional support services will complement cash assistance to benefit children identified as at risk to ensure they are provided with comprehensive support through the best interest procedure, ensuring direct service provision and referral to specialized services as needed. Specific efforts will be directed towards identifying and protecting refugee children from the Roma community and ensuring non-discriminatory access to the socio-economic assistance scheme.

Increasing access to information on children's rights and child protection services, including those related to violence against girls and boys, will continue to be key in the humanitarian response. Engagement with regional and local authorities and civil society organizations will be enhanced to identify local needs and solutions through support to sub-national authorities and community-based structures and services. In particular, partners will work to expand and strengthen comprehensive

packages of community-based integrated protection services in the country's 14 regions, including outreach and individualized case management, information dissemination on services and referral pathways, MHPSS and identification and protection of the at-risk children. Frontline social service workforce capacity will be bolstered in the regions with the highest number of refugees, and standardized, protection-sensitive referral mechanisms between sectors will be strengthened.

### Sub-Sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



Partners will collaborate with national authorities and other relevant organizations supporting the establishment of protection-sensitive systems (including age, gender, and diversity considerations, SEA and trafficking for sexual exploitation preventive measures, vetting systems for volunteers, and volunteer organizations providing transport, and accommodation).

Partners will also cooperate with government and organizations on GBV risk-mitigation across all sectors, in particular for those engaged in the distribution of assistance, provision of accommodation, and enhanced dissemination of information to refugee communities, through outreach and communication to ensure women and girls have access to information on GBV services.

Partners will reinforce the capacity of organizations specialized in supporting GBV survivors, including victims of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes, facilitate access to services, support, and assistance to survivors among the refugee population from Ukraine in the Czech Republic, through highly targeted in-person outreach work, online outreach, and training of relevant first responders on safe disclosures and referrals.

Partners will also support organizations in managing safe shelters and providing social and psychosocial services, as well as legal and reintegration support for victims of exploitation and trafficking.

## EDUCATION



Partners will prioritize inclusion of refugee children from Ukraine in the national formal education system in the Czech Republic, in close cooperation with the Czech Government and in line with its inclusion policies in education of refugee children. This will include accelerating key interventions to provide high-quality education and learning opportunities for refugees from early childhood to adolescence in formal education in the national school system. School capacity and services, including classroom spaces, furniture, equipment, learning materials, lunches etc., will be improved to provide safe and conducive learning environments.

Partners will contribute to building capacity of school staff – teachers, teaching assistants and school directors, among others – to address learning and socio-emotional needs of vulnerable children at pre-primary, primary and secondary schools, including Ukrainian refugee children and

children with disabilities. MHPSS will be provided to both children and teachers by specialist support staff including Ukrainian psychologists and through School Counselling Centres.

Partners will provide flexible and innovative programmes to meet various learning and development demands of refugees. These programmes include 'adaptation/preparatory classes' for Ukrainian students with intensive Czech language classes to facilitate integration into schools, as well as extracurricular activities and non-formal education and skills development programmes for both Ukrainian and Czech children and adolescents. Through these programmes, children and youth can connect with peers and improve their socio-emotional well-being. Finally, partners will strengthen the education management information system and use of data at regional, municipality and school levels for providing effective support and allocating resources.

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## HEALTH AND NUTRITION



Health sector partners aim to reinforce the government-led response, by supporting the Ministry of Health and other government authorities and local actors with capacity-building, tools and technical assistance as needed and aligned with the EU temporary protection mechanisms and response for health. This includes promoting extension of the entitlement to the full range of publicly financed health services for refugees and removing administrative, financial and communication barriers for refugees in accessing health services.<sup>33</sup>

Specific interventions by partners will focus on equitable access to quality primary health care services for refugee women, children and adolescents through the expansion of outpatient centres within university hospitals and general practitioner (GP) facilities across the country; ensuring the continuity of care and referrals for chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and chronic communicable diseases (CDs), particularly HIV and tuberculosis (TB); and health promotion interventions delivered through the regional health promotion centre under the National Institute of Public Health. Partners will also focus on strengthening the capacities of Czech doctors and other health care providers on communication skills related to the cultural aspects of the provision of care, including interpersonal communication skills on the topics of vaccinations and psychosocial support. They will engage in supplementary communication and language support to ensure refugees are aware of health care entitlements linked to the TP status, to help them to access the health system, and to increase awareness around HIV prevention and support access to HIV treatment. Partners will address vaccine hesitancy by supporting the national vaccination

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<sup>33</sup> More specifically, partners will support government and health authorities in designing policies to increase access and reduce barriers to health services and to medicines and medical products for the refugee population in the Czech Republic. They will work alongside national health systems to set up early warning mechanisms to strengthen surveillance systems that detect and respond to potential threats. They will conduct Risk Communication and Community Engagement situational analyses and implement on-going listening and feedback mechanisms through building inclusive networks, engaging individuals with potential vulnerabilities to take an active part in protecting their health, and assisting programmes that serve at-risk individuals to develop continuity of operations plans. Also, they will conduct needs assessments, and health situational and risk analyses, to understand the needs of refugees in the Czech Republic, their health status and potential threats, while monitoring and evaluating access to and utilization of health services, gaps and barriers, especially among vulnerable populations, including refugee health entitlements under and outside EU temporary protection, to ensure meaningful access to health care in the Czech Republic.



campaign and initiating behavioral change interventions promoting vaccinations and other preventive measures, targeting both refugee and host communities.

To address the shortage of doctors and particularly pediatricians in the country, partners will work jointly with public institutions to increase availability and access to primary health care services. Partners will collaborate with educational institutions to increase the capacities of Ukrainian doctors by enrolling Ukrainian health care providers into courses to increase their understanding of the Czech health care system and support successful approbation exams. They will also support the accreditation and licensing of Ukrainians doctors and health care workers to enable their meaningful integration into the health system.

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## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



The Czech Republic rapidly supported refugees' access to national documentation, even prior to the activation of the TPD, thus enabling access to programmes and services, including social protection, from the onset of the response. Despite this favorable legal environment, refugees' socio-economic inclusion is constrained by a range of de facto and administrative barriers: language, limited options for childcare, inflexible documentation requirements, strained services, capacity gaps, lack of awareness by the private sector on refugees' profiles and their right to work, and limited availability of information on rights and services and the institutional pathways to accessing these.

The response will thus include socio-economic profiling; stakeholder mapping; close monitoring of access gaps to inform advocacy efforts and partnerships development; assistance to refugees to access services and market opportunities through information provision, job counseling and accompaniment as well as provision of legal services; and development of socio-economic inclusion partnerships with the public and private sectors, civil society, international organizations, academia and refugees themselves; and technical support to the government to address barriers for inclusion.

Partners will support interventions that not only address the immediate needs of the most vulnerable refugees but will also focus on planning and delivering medium- and long-term strategies to increase their resilience, expand and strengthen national systems, and support adults in connecting to work and youth to skills for employability, including technical skills, soft skills, and job search skills. Partners will also promote dialogue, mutual understanding and social cohesion among refugees and host communities as a means of facilitating peaceful coexistence and promoting solutions, including long-term socio-economic inclusion.

## BASIC NEEDS



Ensuring safe, systematic and dignified access to food, accommodation and other basic needs among refugees in the Czech Republic is a top priority. This includes needs of new arrivals in 2023 and those who arrived in 2022. To sustain the ongoing response for refugees from Ukraine, the scope of engagement of RRP partners will cover both direct provision of immediate life-saving assistance and capacity support to local authorities and response actors.

Under the RRP, actors will continue to support the Government with a focus on securing short- and medium-term food security through the continued provision of immediate in-kind food assistance, as well as multi-purpose cash assistance for food and basic needs for vulnerable households, pending their inclusion in the national social assistance programme or successful integration into the Czech labour market.

The high number of refugees continues to stretch available resources and expose shortages of suitable and sustainable accommodation options. In close coordination with local and national authorities, RRP partners will continue to assist relevant ministries by providing immediate short-to-mid-term accommodation options for the most vulnerable refugees and mid-to-long term housing solutions. This includes adequate response and preparation for the winter season through enhancing existing accommodation facilities, targeted cash grants and exploration of new modalities for timely, accessible and dignified accommodation.

A key area requiring significant resources is support to municipalities/regions outside of Prague with systematic accommodation models, recognizing that social housing capacities are either not available or extremely limited. Integrating refugees into the regular housing market may require innovative approaches, alongside cash grants and additional support systems.

## Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)



Activities to ensure accountability to affected people and inclusion will continue to be prioritized and will be grouped around the pillars of a) participation and inclusion in line with Age, Gender, and Diversity principles for meaningful consultation; b) communication and transparency, including access to information; c) feedback and response and d) learning and adaptation.

Continuous engagement of refugee women, men, girls, and boys of diverse backgrounds in all RRP implementation stages will be sought by employing participatory methodologies to develop, implement, and evaluate humanitarian interventions. Feedback received from refugees will help to adjust the response where needed. Refugees will continue to access relevant, timely and up-to-date information through two-way communication and feedback mechanisms, such as the [UNHCR HELP Page](#), IOM Help Line, Regional Call Centre and other initiatives. The role of refugee volunteers and community-based and refugee-led actors will continue to be reinforced, including

through dissemination and use of tools and guidance, such as on the registration and vetting of volunteers, as well as community-based feedback and complaint mechanisms.

### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) is a key priority in the response. Sexual exploitation and abuse directly contradict the principles upon which humanitarian action is based, inflict harm on those whom the humanitarian and development community is obliged to protect, and jeopardize the credibility of all assistance agencies. The Ukraine emergency is characterized by a number of specific risk factors, such as an exceptionally high incidence of family separation and of female-headed households, as well as a wide range of actors involved in the response, some of whom have limited experience with PSEA. These risk factors may be further compounded by increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities, difficulties in finding suitable accommodation, and potential fatigue among Czech Government and host community as the emergency extends into its second year.

PSEA is an integral and cross-cutting component of the RRP and is mainstreamed across all sectors for refugees from Ukraine. In addition, it requires dedicated and proactive collective efforts to mitigate and prevent risks, such as joint SEA risk assessments, partner capacity assessments, capacity building and training, and community outreach and awareness raising with the refugee community. A Regional PSEA and Safeguarding Network has been established, co-chaired by UNHCR and Save the Children, to support these national efforts and ensure consistency, exchange, and the collection of best practices in line with PSEA global commitments.

### Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) is a multi-sectoral issue widely recognized as a priority in the response. MHPSS is mainstreamed across all sectors as a cross-cutting issue, in particular Protection, Child Protection, GBV and health, with sectors identifying MHPSS-related challenges and prioritizing areas of intervention within their scope. MHPSS services and actors will also work to address the language and cultural differences and barriers present across the response.

Key strategic priority areas for MHPSS include: a) protecting and improving the psychosocial well-being of host and refugee communities, especially vulnerable populations such as older persons, caregivers, unaccompanied and separated children, GBV survivors, LGBTIQ+ persons, etc.; b) supporting access to specialized mental health services while reinforcing the capacity of the existing resources; c) integrating MHPSS into other humanitarian sectors as well as working with ministries of health, education, and social protection to support national MHPSS policies; and d) mainstreaming staff care and self-care in the MHPSS workforce through capacity-building interventions and support to caregivers to ensure the well-being of families and children

An MHPSS working group is established and active in the Czech Republic and will continue to coordinate and technically guide the MHPSS response in coordination with national authorities. Partners of the national MHPSS technical working group will strengthen capacity and coordination among all actors, including the Government, UN Agencies, NGOs, civil society and community-based organizations, including child protection authorities, through trainings, updated referral pathways and service mapping.

## Partnership and Coordination

In line with the Refugee Coordination Model, RRP partners have developed coordination structure to support the existing government coordination mechanism, which includes working groups in 13 key priority areas, including coordination, communication, financing, digital management, and all the relevant aspects of refugee integration (e.g., housing, education, health, social affairs, security, etc.).

Partners involved	4
UN Agencies	4

*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.*

The Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) is the key coordination body of the RRP partners, within the framework of the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM). Co-chaired by the Ministry of the Interior (Mol) and UNHCR, comprising relevant representatives of the Government, civil society organizations coordinated within the NGO Consortium, and UN agencies, the RCF aims to strengthen coordination of the RRP partners with the Government and civil society, providing strategic guidance for the identification and implementation of relevant interventions, ensure preparedness and contingency planning, as well as providing guidance to the Protection Working Group (PWG), reporting to the RCF. It works closely with the Government Working Group on EU/International Strategy, ensuring coordinated response and accountability towards refugees and the donors. The RCF meets regularly to discuss key strategic topics and facilitates related dialogue among the key stakeholders.

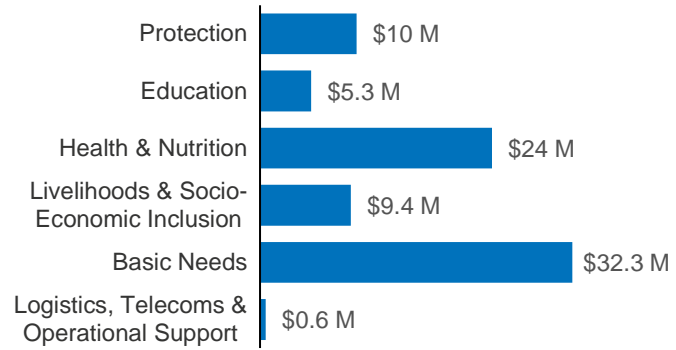
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### Total financial requirements in USD



**\$81.6 M**

### By sector in million USD



Total Protection requirements	\$9,990,160
Other protection activities	\$2,329,010
GBV	\$1,532,174
Child Protection	\$6,128,976

Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$20,622,206
Basic Needs	\$19,422,206
Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	\$1,200,000

\* 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 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	4
UN Agencies	\$81.6 M

## By partner

Partner / Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
UN Agencies							
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	696,836		384,285	5,149,415	7,168,190	640,474	14,039,200
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	5,207,498	5,320,676	3,677,661		18,422,206		32,628,041
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	4,085,826			4,223,482	6,661,739		14,971,047
World Health Organization (WHO)			19,940,000				19,940,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,990,160</b>	<b>\$5,320,676</b>	<b>\$24,001,946</b>	<b>\$9,372,897</b>	<b>\$32,252,135</b>	<b>\$640,474</b>	<b>\$81,578,288</b>

COUNTRY CHAPTER

# ESTONIA



# > At a Glance

## Estonia Planned Response (January-December 2023)



**115,000**

targeted refugee population



**\$9.1 M**

total financial requirements in  
USD



**14**

partners involved





# ESTONIA

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

Estonia has been a destination country for many refugees from Ukraine since the escalation of hostilities in February 2022. For Estonia, it is the largest refugee influx in its history. Refugee arrivals constitute more than 3 per cent of the Estonian population, making Estonia a refugee-hosting country with a very significant per-capita share. By the end of December 2022, Estonia had registered more than 41,000 refugees from Ukraine for temporary protection and there are several thousands of Ukrainians who lived in Estonia already before the war based on various grounds, such as work permits. In addition, more than 2,000 refugees who had left Ukraine prior to 24 February 2022 and were not eligible for temporary protection under Estonian law have been granted subsidiary protection under fast-tracked asylum procedures. Estonia is also a transit country for more than 50,000 Ukrainian citizens who have travelled through the Russian border to reach other EU Member States or return to the government-controlled territories of Ukraine.

Many refugees have family and friendship links with the large Ukrainian diaspora that has been present in Estonia for decades, and others are familiar with the country as seasonal workers. This, together with the country's generous assistance and support policy, as well as the exceptional welcoming and solidarity shown by the Estonian population, have been instrumental in supporting the reception and integration of refugees from Ukraine.

Estonia continues to provide access to territory and temporary protection to refugees from Ukraine, whose numbers are growing. Although 2,800 refugees from Ukraine have voluntarily de-registered for temporary protection and authorities estimate that more have also left Estonia for other countries or returned to Ukraine, it cannot be excluded that those persons may come back to Estonia as their return to Ukraine might not be sustainable. As the military activities are ongoing in many parts of Ukraine, the infrastructure has been severely impacted and harsh weather conditions persist over the winter season, the authorities assume there will be significant further arrivals of refugees from Ukraine.

The Estonian Government swiftly responded to the influx of refugees from Ukraine by ensuring that Ukrainians in need of protection had the right to enter and remain in Estonia, including by amending the Aliens Act. Estonia had already transposed provisions of the Temporary Protection Directive into Estonian law, which meant that no further legislative steps were needed to activate temporary protection and provide support under the temporary protection regime. Furthermore, Estonia adopted amendments in its laws which simplified and lowered the requirements related to work permits for Ukrainian citizens. In this way, refugees from Ukraine have been mainstreamed into the social support and protection framework Estonia provides to all its residents. The Estonian

Government also provides refugees from Ukraine with the same level of social protection, access to health care, education and other benefits as its citizens. Immediate support in the form of short-term accommodation, food and social assistance is available for those who have no place to stay or no other support measures, including those in transit.

The Estonian Government has set three main goals for its response to the Ukraine refugee situation: 1) ensuring the sustainability of public and state services for all; 2) providing refugees with the appropriate conditions to achieve self-sufficiency and independence; and 3) creating conditions for refugees to integrate into the Estonian society while maintaining ties with Ukrainian language and culture.

Despite the whole-of-society response, refugees continue to face a number of challenges to be able to fully support themselves and their families while government support measures are being stretched to their limits. Therefore, this RRP has been developed to complement the government-led response for refugees from Ukraine living in Estonia.

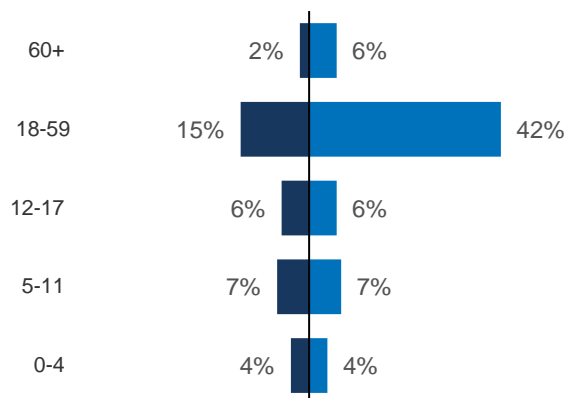
## Population planning figures

Estonia	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection as of end Dec 2022 <sup>34</sup>	Targeted Population in 2023
Refugee Population	41,432	115,000

### Total

## Age and gender breakdown<sup>35</sup>

■ Female ■ Male



**65%**

Women and girls



**35%**

Men and boys

<sup>34</sup> 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.

<sup>35</sup> Own calculations based on Temporary Protection registration database.

## Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

Most refugees from Ukraine are women (48%) and children (34%).<sup>36</sup> Therefore, a range of protection risks faced specifically by women and children have become apparent. In addition, women with children face a lack of employment opportunities and effective access to decent work, in particular due to challenges in finding suitable childcare options and accommodation in areas where suitable jobs are available. There is a continuous need to raise awareness on child protection matters and risks of gender-based violence (GBV), not only with refugees but with staff and volunteers engaging with refugees as well.

While Estonia is preparing for new refugee arrivals from Ukraine, there are challenges with the full extension of public services in education and health care due to a shortage of specialists, limited funding and infrastructure. Coordination and inclusion of civil society in the response planning, delivering and decision-making could be strengthened. The authorities are also concerned about the tight labour market and shortages with accommodation as there is little social/public housing and the private rental market has been exhausted.

The Estonian Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens provides a framework for effective protection and facilitates refugees' access to rights and services on an equal footing with Estonian citizens, including access to education, health care, and social protection. Despite this favourable legal environment, de facto barriers for socio-economic inclusion exist, such as gaps in information that refugees have about rights and services they are entitled to and how to access these, as well as economic inclusion prospects, language barriers and documentation requirements.

Through protection monitoring it has been confirmed that accommodation is one of the main gaps. As far as short-term accommodation is concerned, the State provides accommodation for those in need via special arrangements with hotels and the cruise-ferry in Tallinn for an initial duration of four months.<sup>37</sup> Protection monitoring shows it could take longer for some refugees to move to medium or long-term accommodation, due to shortages of other suitable options. The authorities provide a special one-time grant to support those refugees who move into long-term accommodation and there are plans to support municipalities in renovating unused buildings to provide apartments for refugees. Nevertheless, medium to longer-term housing solutions in Estonia are limited, with significant shortages in more populated areas and lengthy wait lists for social housing. More housing options are available in areas that are less populated, but those areas in turn offer less employment opportunities and limited public transportation.

While refugees from Ukraine who benefit from temporary or subsidiary protection have been mainstreamed into the Estonian health insurance system, protection monitoring shows it is often difficult for them to access medical support through general practitioners due to lack of medical

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<sup>36</sup> Calculations based on Temporary Protection registration data, available from Estonian Police and Border Guard Board as of 31 October 2022.

<sup>37</sup> The Estonian authorities have procured short-term accommodation capacity from various commercial accommodation providers, such as hotels and guest houses. A shipping company has also leased a cruise-ferry moored at the Port of Tallinn to provide larger-scale short-term accommodation.

staff in the country, language barriers and relatively high costs or long queues for certain types of health care (specialized care, dental care, psychological support).

Assessments show that psycho-social assistance is necessary for refugees from Ukraine. Basic psycho-social support by trained government or NGO staff is currently available at reception, accommodation and information points. However, scaling-up support for the large number of arrivals has proven to be challenging, due to the small number of experienced staff available.

Many refugees from Ukraine are interested in learning Estonian. A1 level language courses are provided by the Government and there are plans to offer A2 level courses from the summer of 2023. Further options include language courses for unemployed persons offered as part of employment services. Protection monitoring has shown that more flexible language learning opportunities, including learning through practical and hobby activities and on-the-job language learning, are needed to complement existing options.

Many children from Ukraine are still not taking part in the national education system, even though it is compulsory for all school-age children living in Estonia. In Estonia, schools enjoy a high degree of autonomy in organizing the studies and delivery of the national curriculum, which can sometimes lead to a lack of inclusion of children from Ukraine among Estonian children (especially when separate Ukrainian classes are created).

There are significant numbers of refugees from Ukraine who transit through Estonia to reach other EU Member States or to return to Ukraine either temporarily or permanently. From February to December 2022 over 53,000 refugees were recorded entering the country with the intention of transit. Refugees in transit are provided with basic needs assistance at the border points or reception points.

## Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

The RRP protection and solutions strategy for Estonia aims to support the efforts of the national authorities in addressing the needs of refugees from Ukraine, with a focus on the most vulnerable.

RRP partners will strive to ensure a coherent and predictable protection response with the participation of refugees while supporting national protection systems. Specific attention will be given to the protection needs of single women, female-headed households, children, older persons, people with serious and/or chronic medical conditions, and persons with disabilities. Efforts will be made to support frontline workers in identifying and providing services to vulnerable refugees and third-country nationals in need of international protection to mitigate life-threatening risks and risks linked to sexual exploitation and abuse.

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

### Country Strategic Objectives

#### **SO1: Support the Estonian Government to ensure refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis, including the rights associated with temporary protection.**

- Support the protection response of the Government and all relevant actors to identify and refer persons with specific needs among the refugee population and provide required specialized services, including psycho-social support and humanitarian assistance, that apply an age, gender and diversity approach. Support local actors to provide targeted legal and social counselling and assistance to persons of concern, including through mentoring services.
- Support reception capacity and monitor the situation of new arrivals to ensure their early access to rights and services on a non-discriminatory basis, as well as to enable early identification, referral, and assistance to persons with specific needs.
- Support government efforts with regards to prevention, as well as identification and mitigation of risks related to GBV, trafficking and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Facilitate access to services, support, and assistance through in-person outreach work, and training of relevant first responders.

#### **SO2: Ensure that refugees with specific needs continue to have access to State services, as well as targeted support and assistance, while also engaging with and strengthening community-level protection mechanisms.**

- Support existing national measures and government systems to ensure that refugees with specific needs continue to have access to targeted referrals, including psycho-social support, as well as assistance with basic needs, including health, housing, food, and non-food items, while

strengthening community-level protection mechanisms and facilitating outreach to the refugee community.

- Complement and enhance government services to persons with specific needs by providing targeted support, including psycho-social support, mentoring services and disability inclusion.
- Reinforce accountability to affected people (AAP) through establishment of two-way communication channels, ensuring that refugees are able to participate in the development of programming for protection and solutions and provide feedback on the same.

**SO3: Work in partnership among the national and local governments and civil society to create solutions and expand refugees' access to social and economic opportunities to facilitate a whole-of-society approach to inclusion.**

- Support refugees' access to livelihood and economic opportunities, including through activities at accommodation sites and other locations, making sure that particularly vulnerable refugees such as single mothers, older persons and people with disabilities, receive adequate support (for example, support group meetings, group or individual counselling, guidance regarding employment opportunities, etc.).
- Support the inclusion of refugee children into the national education system through needs-based counselling and other interventions.

**SO4: Advance social cohesion between refugees and host communities through targeted interventions.**

- Scale up innovative approaches and strengthened partnerships to enhance refugee inclusion into Estonian society. Support refugee and host community youth to develop capacities and skills.
- Leverage the potential of refugees, to help solve some of the challenges faced in accessing rights and services and facilitate dialogue and information exchange between refugees, government authorities, and the broader population; this will include advocating for the inclusion of Ukrainian health workers in the health care delivery system.
- Provide integration support to advance social cohesion and self-sufficiency, for example, through activities that target refugees' access to the labour market, as well as social, cultural, and recreational events and exchanges with local population.

### More than 2,000 refugees from Ukraine participated in outreach events

NGO partner Estonian Human Rights Centre coordinated the organization of more than 80 outreach events involving leisure activities, aiming at socialization, inclusion and integration, in which refugees from Ukraine participated. During the events, some refugees were interviewed in order to provide information regarding their experience in Estonia and to identify any systematic gaps or challenges. In case of need, persons were referred to specific assistance or services, while systemic issues were recorded and raised with the authorities.

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



Partners will rapidly identify and address protection risks and gaps based on continuous and dynamic protection monitoring activities, with the intention to also inform advocacy. They will liaise with the authorities to enhance the refugee population's access to government protection and assistance programmes. Partners will also increase outreach activities in refugee hosting communities, both in and outside of cities, to identify refugees with specific needs and ensure they are referred to relevant services. Specific attention will be given to single women, female-headed households, unaccompanied and separated children, older persons, people with serious and/or chronic medical conditions and persons with disabilities.

Efforts will be made to support national protection mechanisms in the identification of and referral to services for persons with specific needs.

Partners will engage with the refugee community and ensure its participation in designing and implementing the response, through participatory assessments, focus group discussions, and engagement with refugee and community-led organizations.

Partners will provide information and counselling – including legal counselling – to new arrivals as well as refugees already in-country. This information will cover issues related to legal status, including on procedures to access temporary protection, and support to access rights and services, with a view to enhancing protection of persons at heightened risk such as persons with disabilities, serious and/or chronic medical conditions, older persons, single women and children. Partners will also focus on dissemination of information on rights and access to services and provide individual support and mentoring.

There will be a particular focus on complementing the government response to the needs of those most vulnerable among refugees.

## Sub-Sector: Child Protection



Partners will develop inter-cultural activities for families with children, enabling them to find their way into new social networks, thus helping with the child's positive development in a new environment. Partners will focus on the needs of the children as well as those of the parents. This includes providing group counselling sessions for families as well as cultural mediation. Partners will support government actors in identifying unaccompanied and separated children, as well as other children-at-risk, at information and service delivery points, and in the course of conducting other protection related activities, including protection monitoring, making relevant referrals and following up as appropriate. Child protection actors will also emphasize MHPSS activities, particularly at the community level, helping to ensure that children are able to establish social ties and engage in play and creative activities.



### Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

In view of the potential exposure to GBV risks, partners will support the government by undertaking protection monitoring assessments and assisting with strengthening GBV prevention and response measures.

Moreover, partners will raise awareness about GBV and trafficking and support the authorities to establish safe spaces where refugees can seek assistance or information in a safe and confidential manner.

If GBV incidents are disclosed in the course of non-specialized refugee support activities, partners will be equipped to ensure safe and survivor-centred referrals to government-provided, specialized services. Partners with specialized knowledge will also identify and provide counselling services to refugees at risk of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

## EDUCATION



Estonian schools are autonomous, so the placement of children from Ukraine in schools has been at the discretion of the schools, resulting in different practices and levels of inclusion across the country. Protection monitoring shows that many children from Ukraine placed in the Estonian school system face challenges integrating and learning the local language. At the same time, Ukrainian teachers have been hired to meet the increased demand for education.

Partners will channel their efforts towards supporting educators from Ukraine working in Estonian schools, enabling them to have increased expertise in the Estonian educational system, digital competencies and active learning methods. Partners will also provide trainings for teachers to increase their capacity with supporting inclusion of refugee children in a multi-cultural classroom, handling a new situation in their classrooms, with emphasis on children with trauma, language barriers and other difficulties that may arise. An educational toolkit will be developed to support teachers, youth workers and other educators in teaching young people on matters of forced displacement.



Assistance will be offered to Estonian and Ukrainian educators together, through an art therapy-based train-the-trainers programme. Partners will also develop and pilot a needs-based counselling methodology and intervention programme for schools where refugee children and youth study. Special focus will be given to children in the form of organizing study visits to museums, developing teaching materials on various topics, as well as conveying art-therapy sessions.

## HEALTH & NUTRITION



Partners will aim to reinforce the government-led response by supporting government authorities and local actors with capacity-building and technical assistance as needed; will promote continuity of care and referrals for those with chronic illnesses linking them to the national system, and access to vaccine-preventable diseases.

Partners will advocate with the Government to include Ukrainian health workers in the health care delivery for refugees; this will help strengthen the health system and decongest outpatient departments, thereby easing the pressure on the system, and relieving the language barrier. The response will also focus on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services to address the needs of refugees. Translations, adaptations and trainings will also be provided in Ukrainian language to reduce barriers to care and access to health services.

## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



Partners will support interventions that focus on planning and delivering medium- and long-term strategies for the self-reliance of refugees through income security.

Partners will support refugee women to start family and micro-businesses through a dedicated entrepreneurship programme, or to access decent employment by providing counselling, language training and the additional skills training needed to fulfil the requirements for available job positions. Awareness-raising activities, cultural events and activities in schools and communities to promote social cohesion and cultural orientation are also planned. There is a special focus on persons with disabilities and their relatives who can benefit from support groups and dedicated information sessions. Partners will expand efforts in the area of public awareness raising and communication campaigns aimed at acceptance, inclusion and empowerment.

## BASIC NEEDS



Vulnerability and needs-based multi-purpose cash assistance is provided to refugees from Ukraine in Estonia and in transit. Partners also provide food aid to refugees in need (including to those in transit), to complement quarterly state provided food packages and work toward sustainable food security. While significant efforts have been made to provide accommodation, Partners will complement state efforts to secure long-term accommodation options for refugees and renovating apartments for the most vulnerable refugees

in need. Partners will also enhance the work to match refugees with owners of houses or apartments. Refugees in transit will also be provided with onward transportation assistance and temporary accommodation in case of need.

## Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



Activities designed to ensure accountability to affected people and inclusion will continue to be prioritized and will be grouped around the pillars of a) participation and inclusion in line with Age, Gender and Diversity principles for meaningful consultation; b) communication and transparency, including access to information; c) feedback and response; and d) learning and adaptation.

Effective two-way communication and consultation with communities will be achieved through the continuous engagement of refugee women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds in all the stages of the RRP's implementation by employing participatory methodologies. Feedback received from persons of concern will help to adjust the response where needed. Refugees will continue to access relevant, timely and up to date information through two-way communication and feedback mechanisms, such as UNHCR HELP Pages, the Digital Blue Dot, the Regional Call Centre and other initiatives. The role of refugee volunteers, community-based and refugee-led organizations will continue to be reinforced, including through capacity development and small grants.

### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



Sexual exploitation and abuse directly contradict the principles upon which humanitarian action is based, inflict harm on those whom the humanitarian and development community is obligated to protect, and jeopardize the credibility of all assistance agencies.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) is therefore a key priority in the response. The Ukraine emergency is also characterized by a number of specific risk factors, such as an exceptionally high incidence of family separation and of female-headed households, as well as a wide range of actors involved in the response, some of whom have limited experience with PSEA. These risk factors may be further compounded by increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities, difficulties in finding suitable accommodation, and potential fatigue among host States and host communities as the emergency extends into its second year.

PSEA is an integral and cross-cutting component of the RRP and is mainstreamed across the response for refugees from Ukraine. It requires dedicated and proactive collective efforts to mitigate and prevent risks, such as joint SEA risk assessments, partner capacity assessments, capacity building and training, as well as community outreach and awareness raising with the refugee community.

## Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



The refugee response in Estonia will have a strong focus on MHPSS which has proven to be of utmost importance for the overall well-being of refugees. Therefore, partners aim to implement known community-based methodologies, directed at helping refugees tackle stress, identity, trauma and general challenges related to their experiences of flight. The latter will be done in peer-to-peer psycho-social groups for children, youth and adults, through providing group members psycho-education, skills, and raising awareness. Partners will also deliver programmes specifically targeted at supporting youth's ability to be aware of their emotions and develop skills that build their resiliency and overall well-being.

An emotional support hotline, engaging refugees from Ukraine who have relevant expertise and experience, will be provided for crisis counselling. Additionally, focused individual as well as group psychosocial support, such as psychological counselling will be provided. Supplementary attention will be extended to individual consultations with specialists (i.e. psychologists) for the parents of refugee children to facilitate a primary reflection on their concerns and their situation, focusing particularly on the changes in behaviour of their children stemming from displacement and/or distressing events experienced.

## Partnership and Coordination

In Estonia, the RRP has been developed by partners in close coordination with the Estonian Government to ensure complementarity with government measures. Coordination and information-sharing mechanisms have been developed as a response to the crisis, such as the Extended Meeting of the Coordination Council on Refugee Policy chaired by the Ministry of the Interior, which takes place every month. There are also other, sectoral mechanisms in place or being established to ensure coordination. Within the RRP, re-activation of the NGOs Roundtable of Refugee Organizations is planned to ensure alignment in advocacy efforts.

Within the framework of the RRP, partners have decided to convene a coordination body to coordinate and advance RRP objectives, which will initially meet once a month. Co-chaired by UNHCR and a NGO partner, the coordination body will also include representatives of relevant state authorities, including the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Social Insurance Board.

Partners involved	14
UN Agencies	3
National NGOs	11

*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.*

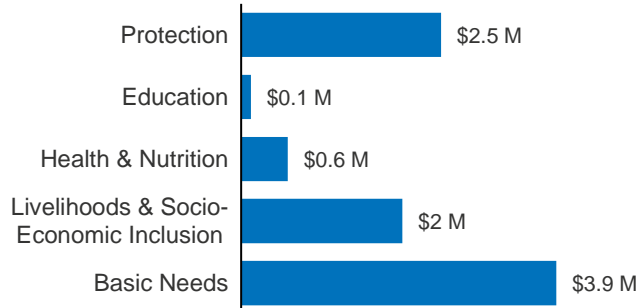
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### Total financial requirements in USD



**\$9.1 M**

### By sector in million USD



Total Protection requirements	\$2,484,685
Other protection activities	\$2,248,160
GBV	\$99,920
Child Protection	\$136,605

Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$2,246,689
Protection	\$170,796
Basic Needs	\$2,075,893

\* 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	14
UN Agencies	\$5,844,652
National NGOs	\$3,291,113

## By partner

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Inclusion	Basic Needs	Total USD
UN Agencies						
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	1,627,924			976,755	651,170	3,255,849
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	346,472		278,999	390,390	1,342,943	2,358,804
World Health Organization (WHO)			230,000			230,000
National NGOs						
Eluliin	115,774		52,644			168,418
Estonian Chamber of People with Disabilities				52,140		52,140
Estonian Food Bank					962,000	962,000
Estonian Refugee Council	283,550	116,630		369,150	732,950	1,502,280
Friends of Mariupol	25,440				73,312	98,752
Hands for Ukraine	8,475		19,775		145,000	173,250
Institute of Baltic Studies	72,050					72,050
International House Tartu				46,876		46,876
Johannes Mihkelson Centre				165,197		165,197
Köömen				45,150		45,150
Ukrainian Cultural Center	5,000					5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,484,685</b>	<b>116,630</b>	<b>581,418</b>	<b>2,045,658</b>	<b>3,907,375</b>	<b>\$9,135,766</b>

COUNTRY CHAPTER

# HUNGARY



# > At a Glance

## Hungary Planned Response (January-December 2023)



**200,000**

targeted refugee population



**\$62.7 M**

total financial requirements in USD



**37**

partners involved



# HUNGARY

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

Since the escalation of hostilities, Hungary has committed to keeping its borders open to people fleeing the war in Ukraine. As of end December 2022, the number of border crossings from Ukraine reported by the Hungarian Border Police totalled over 3.9 million, with 2 million crossings directly from Ukraine and 1.9 million crossings through the Romanian border.<sup>38</sup> While the vast majority chose to move onward, some 33,200 individuals have registered for temporary protection in Hungary.<sup>39</sup> People who have fled Ukraine due to the war remain in Hungary through different legal statuses, including temporary protection, residence permits and various visa schemes. Pendular movements between Ukraine and Hungary for family visits, retrieving documents, and checking on properties are taking place. It is expected that refugee flows into Hungary will continue in 2023 due to the ongoing conflict. In addition, millions of Ukrainians, uprooted by the war, are facing winter in displacement or are living in damaged homes ill-suited to protect them from the cold, a situation foreshadowing potential additional pressure on neighbouring countries throughout the winter period. Any significant escalation of the conflict would likely bring on a significant additional influx.

The Government, including local municipalities, host communities and humanitarian actors, in particular charities, local NGOs, and refugee-led organizations, have been engaged in the response since the beginning, rapidly scaling up reception capacity to meet the immediate needs of those arriving at border entry and registration points. The initial response was heavily supported by volunteers and the solidarity of the host community.

Almost one year into the full-scale war, the influx of refugees from Ukraine is putting pressure on the national system, while solidarity efforts are impacted by price inflation, rising utility costs and cost of living, affecting host communities and refugees alike. In this context, RRP partners will focus their efforts on ensuring a safe and protective environment for vulnerable refugees and their families, in close cooperation with the Hungarian Government, ensuring equitable access to basic assistance and protection of all refugee women, girls, men, boys and persons with specific needs, including Roma refugees. This includes supporting refugee inclusion into national systems and promoting their active participation in the labour market, while ensuring adequate safeguard and

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<sup>38</sup> [UNHCR Data Portal/Hungary](#), reporting official numbers of the Hungarian Border Police. The numbers include multiple crossings by the same person and multiple nationalities.

<sup>39</sup> [UNHCR Data Portal/Hungary](#), reporting information from the National Directorate-General of Aliens Policing of Hungary.



protection measures are in place to support those with specific needs and facing heightened protection risks.

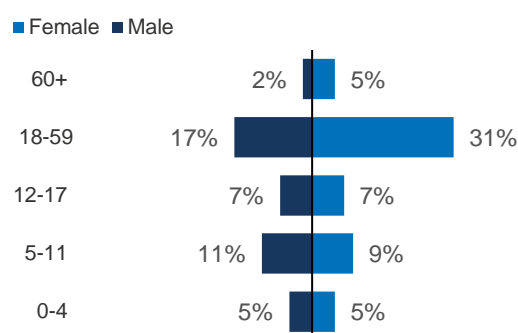
The temporary protection status, in principle, allows refugees to access social services, health care and the right to work; however, challenges remain in practice, rendering medium to longer-term solutions for refugees from Ukraine difficult, especially in rural areas.<sup>40</sup> In particular, the lack of access to information and language barriers limit refugees' ability to attain education, employment, and social protection. Challenges relating to the lack of a permanent address, lack of childcare options, and the inability to provide documents also affect social protection, including the regular provision of subsidies from the government. Issues such as the need for psychosocial support and access to subsidized housing have also become pressing.

While targeting refugees, third-country nationals (TCNs) in need of protection, as well as people who are stateless or at risk of statelessness who directly fled the war in Ukraine, the RRP strategy in Hungary also seeks to highlight the significant impact of the war on the host community. Partners pay particular attention to the importance of expanding community resources and services that may be under pressure, with a focus on institutions, services, and facilities used by refugees and members of host communities, to ensure community safety nets can be maintained. Supporting the capacity of communities to extend services and assistance to refugees is essential to maintain continued support and ensure refugees can continue to seek safety in Hungary.

## Population planning figures

Hungary	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection as of end Dec 2022 <sup>41</sup>	Targeted Population in 2023
Refugee Population	33,273	200,000

## Age and gender breakdown<sup>42</sup>



**57%**  
Women and girls

**43%**  
Men and boys

<sup>40</sup> UNHCR, [The implementation of the Temporary protection directive: Six months on](#), October 2022.

<sup>41</sup> 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. The number does not reflect the actual in-country refugee population, as individuals who have fled Ukraine due to the war remain in Hungary through different legal statuses, including temporary protection, residence permits, and various visa schemes, for which disaggregated data by nationality are not available.

<sup>42</sup> Calculations based on the [Hungary - Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment \(MSNA\)](#), November 2022.

## Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

The Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) and UNHCR protection monitoring and profiling have highlighted the protection needs, vulnerability, and exposure to risk for refugees who fled Ukraine due to the war and are currently hosted in Hungary.<sup>43</sup>

Many households have one or more members with specific vulnerabilities and profiles at heightened protection risks, including persons with disability (13 per cent of households), older persons aged 60 and above (8 per cent of households), children (44 per cent), and single women-headed households (84 per cent).<sup>44</sup> Large-scale family separation is one of the defining aspects of this crisis, with over half of the refugee families separated from their immediate family members due to the war and military conscription. Family separation in the context of displacement often exacerbates specific protection risks, including gender-based violence (GBV), human trafficking, exploitation (including sexual exploitation and abuse), violence, and leads to isolation, and further psychosocial effects, particularly for persons with specific needs, such as unaccompanied and separated children, older persons, and persons with disabilities. Refugees from the Roma minority face specific constraints to accessing protection services and socio-economic inclusion, in particular education.<sup>45</sup> Some refugees have also faced psychological, physical, or sexual violence before fleeing to Hungary and need specialized, culturally adapted and community-based psychosocial support. Persons with disabilities, including children, face challenges accessing services, partly due to the limited availability of dedicated services and the lack of identification procedures enabling timely referral to social protection measures, including dedicated benefits. Among the various services, people with disabilities notably struggle to access health care and social protection, in addition to accommodation, as facilities often lack the proper accessibility conditions suited to their needs.

Barriers to accessing livelihood and employment are hindering social inclusion and affecting the sustainability of the response. Unemployment among refugees in Hungary remains very high, with seven out of ten refugees in Hungary currently not working due to language barriers, mismatching of skills/previous job experience, or the lack of childcare services.<sup>46</sup> Also, refugees with work in Hungary are often under-employed, performing a job below their skills level due to language barriers, administrative hurdles in skills recognition and lack of information about the local labour market. As a result, four out of ten refugee households face challenges in meeting their basic needs. Refugees are therefore relying on their savings, borrowing money, or are forced to reduce essential expenditures. Four per cent reported resorting to harmful coping mechanisms, such as high-risk informal jobs, begging, and child labour. Two out of ten refugee households also reported difficulties with access to food.<sup>47</sup>

Price inflation, rising costs of living, and utility costs are affecting the financial resources of refugees, their savings and accommodation arrangements, and increasingly so during the winter

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<sup>43</sup> [Hungary - Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment \(MSNA\)](#), November 2022; and UNHCR, [Hungary: Protection Profiling & Monitoring Factsheet](#), 30 August 2022.

<sup>44</sup> [Hungary - Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment \(MSNA\)](#), November 2022.

<sup>45</sup> Romaversitas, "[The Situation of Transcarpathian Romani Families Fleeing from Ukraine to Hungary](#)", 2022.

<sup>46</sup> [Hungary - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment \(MSNA\)](#), November 2022.

<sup>47</sup> [Hungary - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment \(MSNA\)](#), November 2022.

months.<sup>48</sup> Likewise, local governments are also struggling to maintain refugee accommodation centres due to the sharp increase of utilities costs. As a result, refugees are at heightened risk of eviction or substandard housing conditions, which will impact school enrolment and exacerbate vulnerabilities, power imbalances, and gender inequalities, hence, risks of sexual exploitation and abuse. Medium-term housing solutions is of particular concern for many, with 45 per cent of refugees interviewed in the MSNA having identified housing solutions for less than six months, among whom 15 per cent have solutions for less than one month; this in turn risks increasing vulnerabilities.

According to national legislation, it is mandatory to enrol children between the ages of 3 and 16 into formal school in Hungary. Yet, one in three refugee children from the households surveyed in the MSNA is currently not enrolled in school, mainly because they are enrolled online in Ukrainian schools, are attending community-run schools in Hungary (58 per cent), because of language barriers (28 per cent), and/or because of lack of places in nearby schools (18 per cent). Enrolment rates are even lower among Roma refugee children due to a combination of administrative barriers, lack of information on where and how to enrol children in school, and pre-existing educational gaps.<sup>49</sup> Children who are enrolled need additional support to access accelerated learning programmes and to catch up due to prolonged absence from school, uneven quality of online education and language barriers. Also, refugees with temporary protection status are entitled to health coverage, free emergency health care, testing for Covid-19, and vaccination.<sup>50</sup> While refugees seem to be generally aware of their entitlements, access to timely health care, particularly outside the urban centre, is more complicated due to language barriers. In the long term, the capacity of the health care system could be overloaded in specific areas such as paediatric services, mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS), expensive treatments for chronic non-communicable diseases, as well as tuberculosis or HIV.

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<sup>48</sup> Although refugees in collective accommodations have food and rent costs usually covered by the government or humanitarian organizations, shelter management also have to cope with inflation and its impacts on the sustainability of the accommodation offered. Refugees covering their own rental costs directly, for example in private accommodations, will have stretched financial resources to address rental and utility fees, including the heightened costs of heating during the winter months.

<sup>49</sup> Romaversitas, "[The Situation of Transcarpathian Romani Families Fleeing from Ukraine to Hungary](#)", 2022, page 39.

<sup>50</sup> From the onset of the emergency, the government issued a ministerial directive ensuring access to primary and secondary health care services for refugees through the national networks of hospitals and primary clinics.

## Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

The response in Hungary will work to address the urgent needs of refugees, stateless individuals, and TCNs in the country, including at-risk groups and individuals with specific protection needs, by means of improved protection monitoring and strengthened inclusion and social cohesion.

RRP partners will support existing government efforts through a multisectoral humanitarian response, reinforcing reception standards, strengthening the national protection systems and their workforce, building the capacity of frontline professionals, and improving information-sharing. Partners will aim at strengthening national authorities' response at border crossings and collection/help points in Budapest, urban areas and the rest of the country.

Community consultations through a participatory approach will be central to programme design, in line with Accountability to Affected People (AAP) principles, to continuously identify the changing needs of the population and ensure the response meets the needs of those it seeks to serve. Moreover, the response aims to ensure strong engagement to prevent and respond to protection risks, including with regard to sexual and labour exploitation, abuse, and harassment. Focus will also be placed on child protection risks linked to parental absence, given the high prevalence of family separation.

The protection strategy for Hungary is linked to the Sustainable Development Goals by promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. In particular, and in line with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), partners aspire to enhance refugee self-reliance and the sustainability of the response by actively working toward social inclusion and social cohesion of refugees in Hungary.<sup>51</sup> Pending durable solutions, the strategy supports the protection of fundamental freedoms, the maintenance of good relations, and peaceful coexistence between communities by strengthening relevant national institutions as a key modality for achieving the result.

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<sup>51</sup> In particular, building up on the recommendations of the Global Refugee Forum (GRF), the strategy will pursue the objective of placing refugees at the centre of the response, enabling a more systematic, inclusive, and meaningful refugee participation in Hungary; promoting access to funding for refugee-led organizations ; addressing barriers to refugee engagement, including through equal partnership approaches; fostering amicable and mutually beneficial relationships with host communities; involving refugees in efforts to increase educational pathways and employment opportunities; and considering the specific needs, priorities, and capacities of different members of refugee populations through the age, gender, diversity approach to make interventions more effective and sustainable. See Recommendation #6, [UNHCR - 2023 Global Refugee Forum - Proposed Concept Note](#)

## Country Strategic Objectives

The response will be guided by the following strategic objectives (SO), firmly rooted in the Regional RRP Strategic Objectives:

### **SO1: Ensure refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis, including the rights associated with temporary protection or similar legal status in Hungary.**

- Strengthen the protection of refugee women, girls, men and boys in Hungary by supporting national and local systems for registration, identification, service provision and referral of persons with protection risks, including unaccompanied and separated children, older persons, and persons with disabilities, through centres providing humanitarian assistance, national and local institutional/governmental service providers, community centres, and information hubs, 'Blue Dot' hubs for refugees and TCNs.<sup>52</sup>
- Strengthen reception capacity and monitoring of arrivals to ensure access to rights and services on a non-discriminatory basis for all refugees to enable early identification, referral, and assistance to persons with specific needs, including children.
- Support national and local authorities to strengthen child protection systems to ensure quality; safe; age-, gender- and diversity-sensitive; and equitable child protection services and support for refugee children in Hungary, with a focus on unaccompanied and separated children and children at risk.
- Strengthen mechanisms for responding to GBV, including health, legal and MHPSS services; develop and disseminate clear GBV referral pathways and entry points for disclosure, in line with guidance developed by the Protection Working Group, and work closely with communities, such as local women-led organizations, and other sectors to ensure the incorporation of concrete measures to mitigate and reduce GBV risks in all elements of the response; partners will strengthen the access to sexual and reproductive health rights, in particular for women and girls.
- Support national anti-trafficking systems to ensure safe and unconditional access for refugee adults and children to identify cases and ensure quality multi-sectoral response measures and protection for victims of trafficking and to contribute to the reduction of risks by addressing key contributing factors, including by ensuring timely access to quality information, safe accommodation, and legal employment.
- Prioritize protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), including strengthening inter-agency networks and PSEA coordination mechanisms and systems at the national level, supporting prevention efforts and efforts to integrate the survivor- and victim-centred approach as an overarching principle throughout RRP partners programming.
- Work with communities to collaboratively create, update and share messaging and key information on how to access services through trusted channels and accessible formats, including community-based and social media networks.

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<sup>52</sup> The centres will provide information, two-way communication, counselling, psychosocial support, response to feedback, safe spaces for children and women, protection case management, and referrals, using, where appropriate and necessary, remote assistance for refugees and third-country nationals in need of protection support.

- Mainstream protection across all the sectors, particularly among non-specialized actors.

**SO2: 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.**

- Include systematic procedures to identify persons at heightened risk as part of registration procedures for temporary protection and other forms of legal stay, as well as procedures to renew residency and other associated documentation to enable the identification of vulnerable groups.
- Ensure that vulnerable refugees with specific needs continue to have access to targeted support and assistance for basic needs, including health, housing, food, and non-food items, while strengthening community-level protection mechanisms and promoting the outreach of humanitarian actors to the refugee community, in particular outside of Budapest and the urban centres.
- Ensure an age, gender, diversity (AGD) approach to refugee meaningful inclusion, in particular for persons with disability, older persons, children and youth, and match the identification of individuals at heightened risk with upscaling specialized services, including early intervention services with adequate capacity and resources.
- Integrate mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) across the sectors, especially Protection, Education, and Health, to strengthen the mental health and psychosocial well-being of refugees and TCNs.

**SO3: Pave the way toward solutions and expand access to social and economic opportunities to facilitate the inclusion of refugees in Hungary 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 non-governmental, women-led and refugee-led organizations.**

- Facilitate access to sustainable and safe medium to long-term housing opportunities for vulnerable refugees and TCNs ensuring that identified solutions are designed to mitigate protection risks and promote dignified accommodation arrangements for refugees in Budapest and across the country.
- Expand safe and practical access of refugees to livelihood and economic opportunities in Hungary, minimizing protection-related risks such as labour exploitation, trafficking, family separation and any form of violence, by engaging enterprises and employers in expanding work opportunities for refugees, by supporting refugees' legal right to employment and removing administrative, legal or practical barriers to legal employment (including through skills recognition and upskilling, job-matching and information provision on the labour market, provision of childcare and language learning for adults) and by enhancing collaboration with local institutions that provide tailored and contextualized livelihoods initiatives.
- Ensure that pathways to national education opportunities are functional and accessible for refugees of different backgrounds. In particular, help Hungarian schools to welcome refugee

children including through the provision of dedicated support, accelerated learning programmes, language classes and mainstreaming of key protection and MHPSS principles.

- Strengthen trust between refugees and national authorities by leveraging the potential of refugees, refugee-led and Ukrainian and other diaspora organizations to help solve some barriers in accessing rights under the temporary protection scheme, including bureaucratic and language barriers.
- Provide evidence-based research to support best practices in refugee inclusion and foster knowledge exchange and lessons-learned schemes to champion the promotion of innovative and effective solutions.

#### **SO4: Advance social cohesion between refugees and host communities through targeted interventions.**

- Scale up innovative approaches, strengthen partnerships and capacitate local civil society to enhance social cohesion and socio-economic inclusion of refugees. In line with Recommendation 12 of the Outcomes of the High-Level Officials Meeting,<sup>53</sup> support refugee and host community youth to develop capacities and skills. Engage and support universities to promote refugee education and access work opportunities.
- Scale up initiatives that tackle racism and xenophobia by realizing the potential of sports, summer schools, and joint initiatives between the host community, refugees, and Ukrainian and other diaspora groups in Hungary, to promote inclusion and protection. Draw on local-level knowledge and expertise in refugee-hosting areas and organizations working with Roma minorities to ensure the promotion of inclusive practices.
- Support activities that provide mutual benefits to both host community members and refugees acknowledging the importance of inclusive systems which may benefit all populations regardless of status. Promote joint initiatives and common programming where partners provide regular, non-refugee programming.

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<sup>53</sup> UNHCR, [Outcomes of the High-Level Officials Meeting](#), December 2021.

### Active involvement of Refugee-led Organizations

Refugee-led Organizations (RLOs) have been actively supporting the Ukraine crisis response from the beginning, with a focus on direct assistance of families in need and social cohesion activities. Some are supported by Ukrainians who have lived in Hungary for years already and can provide information and support to newly arrived refugees in Hungary. While their overarching aim is to support refugees in their basic needs, accessing services and providing them with mental and psychosocial support, they also emphasize the importance of community building. [HunHelp](#) focuses on fundraising and distributing food vouchers to families across the country. [Lexis](#) organizes community events, information sessions, and language classes in the capital, as well as distributing food and non-food items to the most vulnerable. [Unity](#) facilitates Hungarian language courses, daycare, and supplemental schooling in Budapest. The [Foundation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church](#) in Budapest focuses on education activities and daycare for children, besides offering spiritual support and organizing events for integration.

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



To ensure a safe and inclusive response, protection will be reflected in the humanitarian strategy by promoting the centrality of protection, strengthening the formal protection systems and mainstreaming protection principles across all sectors, jointly with capacity-building initiatives on core protection principles of frontline organizations and volunteers, promotion and sharing of good practices through the key coordination bodies.

In 2023, RRP partners will continue to support Hungarian authorities at all levels to strengthen the protection environment for all refugees, TCNs and stateless individuals and to safeguard access to territory, legal status, and rights. This will include protection monitoring and consultations with refugees and other stakeholders to identify challenges in access to rights and services so that these can be addressed collectively. Particular attention will be paid to arrivals (both at the border/ key entry points and within the country) and those who need support in inclusion and accessing their rights while living in Hungary – promoting effective inclusion as a protection tool. To this end, partners will work closely with frontline officials and the broader range of local stakeholders throughout Hungary to support the identification of vulnerabilities and needs (including unaccompanied and separated children, GBV survivors, persons at risk and victims of trafficking, older persons, persons with disabilities, refugees with specific mental health and psychosocial needs, stateless persons, and vulnerable TCNs), appropriate referrals to special procedures and reception conditions, and inclusion in the national system where possible or referral to other available services.



Partners will continue to provide information and legal advice to new arrivals and refugees in the country on status, including on procedures to access temporary protection and support to access rights and services, in particular, to enhance protection for persons at heightened risk – i.e., minority groups, older persons, persons with disabilities, single women and children.

To address the risk of trafficking and exploitation, specific prevention activities targeting refugees, humanitarian organizations, employers, and private companies will be put in place to reinforce coordinated prevention and response mechanisms. At the same time, cooperation with law enforcement authorities will be strengthened.

### Sub-Sector: Child Protection



Children constitute approximately half of the applicants for temporary protection in Hungary. Often children are separated from at least one parent or travel with other (non)related adults and are psychologically impacted by the war.<sup>54</sup> The sub-sector will work with the National Child Protection systems (e.g., case management/best interests procedure, guardianship and law enforcement), as the first and foremost respondent, by advocating for the inclusion of the TP holders into the National Child Protection Act and related protection mechanisms of the national system, capacity development, and promotion of joint referral mechanisms. While many refugees live in Budapest and most service providers are located there, enhancing capacities outside the capital and in rural areas remains a high priority, in particular for sports clubs hosting refugees and children in collective sites.

The Child Protection sub-sector will continue to provide and support complex social work services, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services and capacity building of frontline responders in close cooperation with national and local child protection actors and service providers. In parallel, community-based child protection mechanisms will be supported and strengthened to provide parental support and prevent family separation. Dedicated age-specific interventions targeting children and adolescents will continue to mitigate protection risks in various activities, such as afterschool psychosocial programmes, weekend activities and summer camps.

Child-friendly awareness-raising initiatives on child protection, including the risk of trafficking, risk of abuse and exploitation and SEA will be conducted to inform about available services and other relevant information, including on sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents, in coordination with the interagency working groups.

The offer of general and specialized parenting support programmes and services will be strengthened and extended to rural areas where refugees are hosted, including through the identification and capacity building of new potential service providers. Private legal guardians and caregivers of unaccompanied and separated children will constitute a priority target.

<sup>54</sup> [Hungary - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment \(MSNA\)](#), November 2022.

## Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



GBV remains a protection priority for the response in Hungary. Reporting remains very limited however, in particular considering the refugee profiles in Hungary, constituted mostly of single women, head of household, and children with high levels of family separation.<sup>55</sup> Based on monitoring activities and focus group discussions conducted in 2022, various risks have been observed among refugees from Ukraine, including threats of sexual violence, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment and human trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes, in addition to a significant concern of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

The integration of GBV prevention, response, and risk mitigation measures are among the main priorities under the scope of the Protection sector. This will be operationalized through 5 different areas of focus, including:

- Strengthening the national response system jointly with the relevant actors, both governmental and non-governmental, to ensure adequate quality of GBV services are in place and are available to all survivors. Joint trainings, experience sharing, and adaptation of global guidance to the local context will be done in consultation with local actors and under the lead of the Protection Working Group to ensure an inclusive system for refugee survivors.
- Ensuring access to multisectoral survivor-centred response services and safe access to sexual and reproductive health, MHPSS services. This will also entail regular mapping of GBV services, updating of the GBV referral pathways and trainings for humanitarian workers on safe handling of disclosure and referrals of GBV survivors, in addition to regular consultation with the community through integrating GBV-related questions into various assessment exercises to have a better understanding on existing barriers to services.
- Expanding the prevention activities to ensure maximum reach, including dissemination of information on services, helplines, and platforms, awareness messaging and campaigns in various languages (Ukrainian, Russian, Hungarian and English).
- Supporting all sectors and areas of work to identify GBV risks and advocating for prompt action to be taken to mitigate these risks and integrate GBV risk mitigation measures into all work plans and strategies in line with GBV guidelines. The outcome of the GBV safety audits will be used as a guiding source to support relevant sectors in identifying GBV risks in their interventions. Under the lead of the Protection Working Group, risk mitigation trainings will be provided, GBV focal points from the sectors will be identified and be supported in drafting risk mitigation workplans.
- Strengthening the capacity of GBV and non-GBV actors to ensure a “do-no-harm” and survivor-centred approach to GBV survivors and fostering sharing of experiences, best practices, and complementarity of services.

In addition, GBV partners will ensure proper flow and sharing of information on GBV services at the country level through the Protection Working Group to ensure timely response and access to survivors. Engaging with local communities, refugee-led organizations and women-led

<sup>55</sup> [Hungary - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment \(MSNA\)](#), November 2022.

organizations will also play an essential role in identifying gaps and barriers in the GBV response and fostering a collaborative effort to address these barriers.

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## EDUCATION



Partners will prioritize inclusion of refugee children from Ukraine in the national formal education system, in close cooperation with the government. Ensuring access to education for refugee children in Hungary will require a wide range of contextual support to children, caregivers, teachers, and their community for successful integration into the formal national education system. Refugee children from Ukraine in Hungary have diverse profiles and come from various backgrounds, rendering their education needs equally diverse.

Improving access to quality education and strengthening national systems are the identified priorities. Access to education requires multiple interventions tailored to the specific needs of refugee children from Ukraine. For those who do not speak Hungarian, access to formal education requires a preparatory language learning intervention. For children who have been out of school for longer, accelerated learning programmes can close the learning gap and facilitate integration. Partners will also focus on improving the quality of the learning environment – through provision of supplies and professional development for educators – and sensitize parents on school enrolment and access to education for children.

In addition to educational interventions for preparing children to access formal education, providing timely and accessible information on the rights and duties associated with the temporary protection status in Hungary, including steps to enrol children into formal school, is identified as an essential intervention, along with non-formal education interventions, such as catch-up classes and language classes for children and youth.

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## HEALTH AND NUTRITION



The primary and secondary health care system will be supported by WHO and other RRP health partners, increasing national authorities' ability to address the needs of both host communities and refugees. Priority will be given to strengthening emergency medical assistance and referral services, as well as monitoring refugees' access to and usage of health services. Through referrals to the strengthened national health care system, partners will ensure that refugees with pre-existing conditions, including chronic conditions, and new situations and in need of medical care, are provided with adequate assistance.

Health and nutrition interventions for early child development in close coordination with municipalities will be of paramount importance to ensure a healthy development and protective environment in the early childhood stages. The Ministry of Interior, responsible for the national health system, is supporting refugees' access to health, by offering access to local health systems and services and allocating resources for the refugee population in the country, including funding for any potential co-payments for prescription drugs. Partners will set up mobile teams stationed at

border crossing points to provide medical care, screening and emergency first aid, as well as testing, hospitalization and vaccination for COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. In addition to these ongoing efforts, partners will also support information dissemination both to refugees and providers on existing policies and rights ensuring refugees know where and how to seek medical assistance.

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## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



As a priority for 2023, RRP partners will strengthen the economic inclusion of refugees in Hungary and access to the local labour market, by enhancing collaboration with local institutions with tailored and contextualized livelihoods initiatives. Special attention will be given to the integration of women into the labour market. RRP partners will implement programmes to prepare refugees for entering the job market and keeping them there, including counselling, CV-writing, interview-skill development and mentoring, and will operate referral mechanisms for these services, with the goal to promote refugees' employment opportunities and mitigate the risk of skills mismatch.

A focus will be placed on addressing barriers to accessing livelihoods and economic inclusion, such as the increased provision of childcare (including by increasing the capacity of local schools), and increased language learning for adults, also addressing administrative, legal or practical barriers to accessing decent work, through skills recognition, upskilling, job-matching, and linking job availability and accommodation.<sup>56</sup>

Allowing refugees to continue their careers in Hungary and advance professionally will permit them to contribute more effectively to future recovery and reconstruction efforts in Ukraine, once conditions are conducive for returns. Building upon discussions around the good practices of 2022, partners will explore the possibility to facilitate the hiring of Ukrainian health care professionals, teaching assistants, and cultural communicators, addressing the lengthy and complicated procedures associated with the recognition of qualifications. Employment programmes offering flexible working hours for parents in collaboration with private, municipal, and state actors will also be explored.

To promote safe and legal employment and mitigate the risks of abuse and exploitation linked to employment, RRP partners will raise awareness of labour rights, work-related risks and exploitation among the refugee community, in particular through refugee-led organizations, and engagement of the business community.

Finally, RRP partners will continue to work to enhance refugees' enjoyment of a broad range of socio-economic rights, including legal access to employment, linked to temporary protection,

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<sup>56</sup> Employment opportunities are also affected by the lack of stable accommodation, due to limited housing facilities near areas with more employment opportunities and a tendency by employers to not hire people without a permanent registered address, which poses a challenge for individuals living in temporary accommodation and other transitional forms of shelter.

through information campaigns, outreach, and direct support in accessing TP. The campaigns will also target employers' lack of awareness of the rights of TP holders to employment.

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## BASIC NEEDS



Partners will continue to provide short-term housing solutions and work closely with State-sponsored shelters to ensure immediate needs for emergency accommodation can be fulfilled and existing shelters are adequate for winter. In addition, as the war continues, needs for mid to long-term, affordable housing have become a priority.

Partners will broaden rent and subsidy programmes, identify alternative affordable housing models and engage in awareness campaigns on accommodation services and support available, targeting also refugees living in private accommodations through social media and broader campaigns.

Through the interagency Basic Needs Working Group, mapping of the current accommodation capacity will be ensured, to facilitate referrals among actors for accommodation solutions, in line with protection principles of safety, inclusion, and non-discrimination, in particular for TCNs, Roma minority, persons with disability and older refugees. Partners will also consider, in coordination with municipalities and local authorities, the improvements of collective sites, in particular in rural areas.

Cash-transfer and voucher programmes and in-kind donations will also remain a key priority for meeting the basic needs of newly arrived refugees, as well as the most vulnerable which may require specific supplementary assistance, and/or temporary support. Likewise, strengthening social protection systems, including cash schemes with local governments, will be of paramount importance to address the needs of refugee children and families. Partners will seek to ensure increased outreach in rural areas, strong safeguarding mechanisms and effective targeting. In addition, efforts will be made to support coordination across actors involved in distribution of voucher programmes to ensure effective use of resources.

Access to food by refugee families – particularly larger households or households with individuals with specific needs, such as older refugees, persons with disabilities, pregnant and lactating women – will be integrated by partners, in Budapest and in other counties, with a focus on expenditure patterns and allocation of household resources. While partners will gradually transition out of the provision of hot meals, except in some key locations and border crossing points for new arrivals, support through vouchers or in-kind distribution to support access to nutritious food will continue. This will be done either through food parcels or via vouchers through a range of access points including through distribution centres and online platforms. In addition, where people are hosted in collective sites, the use of collective kitchens in the sites will be promoted.



*Ethnic Hungarian families fleeing Ukraine are hosted at the cultural center of the border town Beregsurány..*  
© UNHCR/Zsolt Balla

## Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



Activities to ensure accountability to and inclusion of refugees from Ukraine will continue to be prioritized and mainstreamed throughout all sectors. Community engagement, through the age, gender, and disability-sensitive approach, will remain the backbone of the response, with RRP actors prioritizing outreach to refugees, enhancing information provision through both online and in-person channels, and working with refugee-led, community-based, and women-led organizations.

Two-way communication channels with refugees will be strengthened, considering the feedback of refugees in Hungary in terms of their preferred language (i.e. Hungarian, Ukrainian and Russian) and way of communication, including social media, telephone info lines, chatbots, online info pages (e.g. help.unhcr.org), and the Digital Blue Dot. The availability of feedback and complaint mechanisms for services provided by partners will be enhanced, including on social media and online platforms, to promote safe access to information and mitigate the risk of rumours and misinformation. The role of refugee volunteers, and community-based and refugee-led actors will continue to be reinforced. RRP partners will continue to disseminate and use tools and guidance, such as registration and vetting of volunteers, as well as community-based feedback and complaint mechanisms.

### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



The emergency is characterized by a number of risk factors, such as an exceptionally high incidence of family separation and of female-headed households, which are in turn compounded by increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities and reliance on external support, difficulties in accessing suitable accommodation and the overall nature of the response that has mobilized a wide range of actors. Capacity development of such actors is critical, as oftentimes organizations active in the humanitarian response lack experience or training for their own staff and volunteers when it comes to SEA risks. Assessments also point to important areas for strengthening linked to recruitment procedures and vetting, knowledge of expected standards of conduct, access to information for refugees (as well as staff and volunteers) on refugees' rights and entitlement and effective feedback and accountability mechanisms.

PSEA is an integral and cross-cutting component of the RRP and is mainstreamed across the response. Current efforts underscore the importance of fully implementing PSEA measures and risk mitigation across all sectors and by all actors responding to the crisis, notably in shelters and accommodations, at border, transit, and distribution points. With SEA risk reduction being a shared responsibility by all actors involved, the established PSEA Task Force will keep engaging and advising partners to ensure dynamic risk assessment, the development of protocols and standards within their operations, lessons learned and exchange and the collection of best practices in line with PSEA global commitments. The PSEA Task Force will continue to also closely engage and coordinate with GBV and Child Protection actors to ensure that comprehensive service provision is available and can be safely accessed.

## Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



MHPSS is a widely recognized priority in the response, as highlighted by the result of the multi-sector needs assessment recently completed in Hungary. It touches on a wide range of sectors, including health, protection, GBV, child protection and education, and therefore MHPSS activities have already been integrated as critical activities across the response. In 2023 this will be further strengthened through a joint interagency structured MHPSS strategy for both implementing and monitoring activities in health facilities, reception centres, educational institutions, protection and community settings, Blue Dots, and through the strengthening of MHPSS capacities of national service providers. The strategy will also aim to ensure further coordination among MHPSS actors and increase availability of evidence-based, culturally adapted, and need-oriented MHPSS programmes integrated into the overall response.

Priority interventions by MHPSS partners in Hungary will include:

- Continued investment in MHPSS situation analysis and needs assessments.
- Promotion of common understanding of the essential concepts and best practices for the provision of MHPSS.
- Awareness raising on mental health issues and availability of psychosocial support at various levels.
- Community based psychosocial support activities such as art, sports, psychodrama, cultural/spiritual, and community meetings to support/improve the well-being of individuals and communities.
- Providing focused nonspecialized/ specialized MHPSS services and making referrals to support, maintain, and improve mental health and psychosocial well-being.
- Providing capacity-building activities such as trainings, supervision, workshop, and webinars for response partners



## Partnership and Coordination

In 2022, a multistakeholder partnership among humanitarian actors, including NGOs, charities and faith-based organizations, civil society, refugee-led organizations, associations run by the Ukrainian diaspora and UN Agencies was established and functional within the context of the Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF), in which over 70 different organizations were active. The RCF is coordinated by UNHCR. Under the umbrella of the RCF, a sub-coordination structure was set up among actors as part of the response, with a focus on basic needs and protection, including child protection and GBV, MHPSS, education, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. Co-chairing of key working groups was launched in 2022 and saw the participation of local NGOs (Trauma Center for the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Working Group, Next Steps for the Basic Needs Working Group) and women-led organizations (Voice for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Task Force) and UNICEF (for the Child Protection and the Education Working Groups) and will be further expanded in 2023 to interested organizations, with a focus on refugee-led organizations.

Partners involved	37
UN Agencies	5
International NGOs	6
National NGOs	14
IFRC&RC	1
Faith-based Organizations	6
Academia	1
Refugee-led organizations	4

*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.*

For 2023, the participation of organizations in the RRP was expanded, from 22 partners in 2022 to 37 in 2023, mobilizing new actors to the response. In line with the localization agenda, RRP partnership in Hungary heavily relies on Hungarian organizations (75 per cent of the partners), including local NGOs (18) and charities (6), as well as organizations led by refugees (4).

### Solidarity in Action

Romaversitas, a Roma-led education NGO from Hungary, witnessing the arrival of Ukrainian Roma refugees, started a programme to support the inclusion of Romani children in the Hungarian school system. The programme focused on organising thematic capacity-building events for professionals implementing projects for this group of vulnerable children, as well as leveraging crucial resources, including financing for their work. To base their interventions on the voices of refugees themselves, young Roma students from Hungary also reached out to more than 160 Romani refugee families during the summer of 2022 to map their experiences, fears and prospects and ultimately, to show solidarity with the Roma refugees.

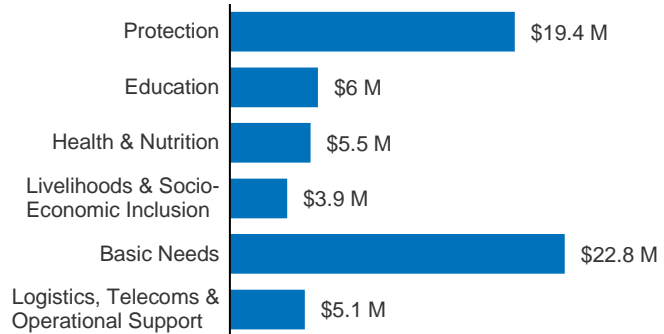
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### Total financial requirements in USD



**\$62.7 M**

### By sector in million USD



Total Protection requirements	\$19,376,538
Other protection activities	\$11,532,453
GBV	\$2,594,870
Child Protection	\$5,249,215

Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$6,589,154
Protection	\$534,000
Basic Needs	\$4,930,154
Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	\$1,125,000

\* 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	37
UN Agencies	\$40.1 M
International NGOs	\$3.1 M
National NGOs	\$8.3 M
IFRC&RC	\$0.5 M
Faith-based Organizations	\$9.7 M
Academia	\$0.1 M
Refugee-led organizations	\$1 M

## By partner

Partner / Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
UN Agencies							
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	1,647,000	540,000	405,000	67,500	5,265,000	405,000	8,329,500
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	3,633,000	2,513,000	1,800,000		2,002,000	1,158,000	11,106,000
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)						600,000	600,000
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	10,502,449			2,352,279	4,671,940		17,526,668
World Health Organization (WHO)			500,000			2,000,000	2,500,000
International NGOs							
Center for Reproductive Rights	30,000		30,000				60,000
International Rescue Committee	650,000	200,000					850,000
Jesuit Refugee Service	15,069	18,626					33,695
SOS Children's Villages	20,000				15,000		35,000
Terre des Hommes - Switzerland	800,000	180,000	540,000		120,000		1,640,000
VOICE Amplified	500,000						500,000
National NGOs							

Partner / Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
Budapest Methodological Social Center					3,268,527		3,268,527
Cordelia Foundation for the Rehab. of Torture Victims			150,000				150,000
Erőforrás Alapítvány United Way Hungary		166,023	15,683	30,423	147,935	177,817	537,881
Hungarian EMDR Association			15,000				15,000
Hungarian Helsinki Committee	224,900						224,900
LITERA Egyesület		37,600					37,600
MedSpot Foundation			40,000				40,000
Menedék Hungarian Association for Migrants	470,915	69,013					539,928
Menekültek Online Segítő Társasága (Refugee Help Digital Network)	30,000	25,000	25,000	10,000	25,000	2,500	117,500
Migration Aid		294,930	233,500		1,953,900		2,482,330
Next Step Hungary Association	53,785	97,180		11,690	82,815	130,800	376,270
Pszí Pont			310,000				310,000
Romaversitas Foundation		150,000					150,000
Trauma Center	20,000		20,000				40,000
IFRC & Red Cross/ Crescent Societies							
Hungarian Red Cross		500,000					500,000
Faith-Based Organizations							
Dévai Fogadó (formerly Mandák Ház)		35,000	25,000		275,000		335,000
Hungarian Baptist Aid	80,000	50,000		50,000	1,270,000		1,450,000
Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta	350,000	120,000	100,000	50,000	850,000	50,000	1,520,000
Hungarian Interchurch Aid	150,000	100,000	100,000	10,000	350,000	150,000	860,000
Hungarian Reformed Church Aid	23,000	500,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,600,000	400,000	4,923,000
Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship (MET) /		100,000			550,000		650,000

Partner / Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
Oltalom Charity Society (OKE)							
Academia							
American International School of Budapest	16,000	60,000					76,000
Refugee-Led Organizations							
Foundation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church		150,000					150,000
HunHelp					62,000		62,000
Lexis - Vamos Foundation	80,420	39,145	40,540		289,895		450,000
UNITY	80,000	50,000		125,000	40,000		295,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$19,376,538</b>	<b>\$5,995,517</b>	<b>\$5,549,723</b>	<b>\$3,906,892</b>	<b>\$22,839,012</b>	<b>\$5,074,117</b>	<b>\$62,741,799</b>

COUNTRY CHAPTER

# LATVIA



# > At a Glance

## Latvia Planned Response (January-December 2023)



**120,000**

targeted refugee population



**\$12 M**

total financial requirements in USD



**14**

partners involved



# LATVIA

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

Since the escalation of hostilities in Ukraine, Latvia indicated its readiness to receive and support refugees fleeing Ukraine. Over the ensuing months, Latvia saw the arrival of tens of thousands of refugees from Ukraine including some who transited through the country and continued towards other countries. The Ukraine refugee situation resulted in Latvia facing the largest influx of refugees in its history.

As of end December 2022, more than 44,000 refugees from Ukraine have been registered for temporary protection in Latvia - representing some 2 per cent of the Latvian population. In addition, more than 230,000 citizens of Ukraine have transited Latvia crossing through the Russian or the Belarusian border to reach other EU Member States or return to the government-controlled territories of Ukraine. The presence of a Ukrainian diaspora in Latvia, the country's generous assistance and support policy, as well as the extraordinary reception and solidarity provided by the Latvian population have all been instrumental factors in supporting the reception and integration of refugees from Ukraine to remain and receive temporary protection in Latvia.

Latvia provides effective access to territory and temporary protection to refugees from Ukraine, whose numbers are steadily growing. Although 4,500 refugees have reported their departure from Latvia, their return to Ukraine may not be sustainable and hence, the authorities do not exclude that those refugees might come back to Latvia. Further, taking into account the ongoing fighting in Ukraine, the severe damage to civilian and energy infrastructure and the upcoming harsh winter conditions, it is assumed that the inflow of refugees into Latvia will continue.

In early March 2022, Latvia swiftly adopted the Law on Assistance to Ukrainian Civilians to offer effective protection and facilitate access of refugees from Ukraine to rights and services on an equal footing with Latvian citizens.<sup>57</sup> Latvia introduced a broad temporary protection definition covering citizens of Ukraine who were in Latvia and became refugees due to circumstances arising in Ukraine (refugees *sur place*), stateless persons and other persons affected by the conflict in Ukraine, including third-country nationals (TCNs) in need of international protection. The Law provides for special regulations for immediate assistance with accommodation and food, expedited registration, and access to education, health care, and social protection. Some 76 per cent of refugees from Ukraine are women and children, including more than 500 unaccompanied or

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<sup>57</sup> Law on Assistance to Ukrainian Civilians of the Republic of Latvia, adopted on 3 March 2022, entered into force on 5 March 2022, available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/330546>.



separated children. The Law stipulates special conditions and increased assistance and support in case of persons with specific needs.

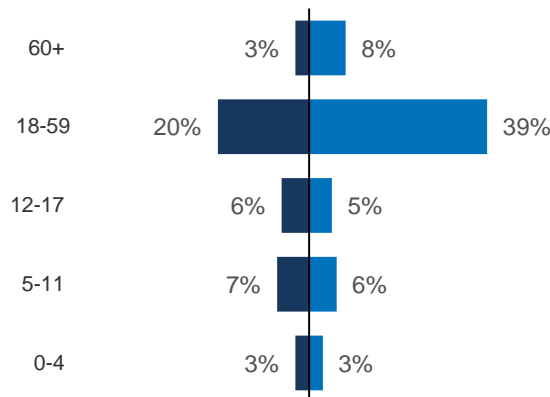
Despite the whole-of-society approach and tailored assistance focused on immediate needs as well as services available for persons with specific needs, refugees continue to face a number of challenges to be able to fully support themselves and their families. In view hereof, the present RRP has been developed to complement the government-led response for refugees from Ukraine currently residing in Latvia.

### Population Planning Figures

Latvia	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection as of end Dec 2022 <sup>58</sup>	Targeted Population in 2023
Refugee Population	44,367	120,000

### Age and gender breakdown<sup>59</sup>

■ Female ■ Male



**61%**

Women and girls



**39%**

Men and boys

### Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

Most refugees from Ukraine are women and children (47 and 30 per cent respectively). Consequently, a range of protection risks specifically faced by women and children have become apparent. Women with infants and small children lack employment opportunities and effective access to the labour market. There is a continuous need to raise awareness on child protection matters and risks of GBV, not only among refugees but also with staff and volunteers engaging with refugees.

<sup>58</sup> 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.

<sup>59</sup> Own calculations based on government data.

Protection monitoring has shown that refugees with disabilities have difficulties accessing suitable accommodation due to the lack of adapted living space. Further, due to delays with registration for disability status and limited state resources, support with health care and additional financial support from municipalities does not always reach refugees with disability in a timely manner, thus creating a gap and exacerbating their vulnerability.

Accommodation needs also exist among the refugee population in general. While initial support with accommodation is available for all refugees from Ukraine in the first months after arrival in Latvia, medium to longer-term housing solutions across Latvia are limited, with significant shortages in largely populated areas. More housing options are available in areas that are less populated, but those areas in turn offer less employment opportunities and limited public transportation. In municipalities that can offer more permanent housing options, costly renovations are often needed.

Assessments show that many refugees, in particular those who have recently arrived, need psychosocial assistance. Given the limited availability of Ukrainian-speaking mental health professionals in Latvia, a gap exists in this regard. Further, there is a need to provide psychological first aid training to frontline workers, including but not limited to staff and volunteers working in the border areas, who are usually the first ones to engage with newly arrived refugees in Latvia.

The demand for additional Latvian language courses for refugees continues to be significant. As of October 2022, according to the Society Integration Foundation, more than 3,000 Ukrainians had started learning Latvian at A1 level, and close to 200 had started an A2 level course. More opportunities for language learning, including after working hours, are needed to cater for all those who wish to learn Latvian language and for whom this is crucial in view of securing decent work.

Language learning is equally important for school-aged children in order to enable them to effectively be included in the Latvian education system. At the moment, only about one-half of all registered children from Ukraine in Latvia are enrolled in local schools, while the other half presumably follows online education provided by schools in Ukraine.<sup>60</sup> In addition to support with language learning, it is vital to support school children with their emotional needs, including through social and extra-curricular educational activities. Many of them also need support with school supplies and equipment, such as laptops. A priority of this RRP will be to ensure that as many refugee children and youth from Ukraine as possible find a place in formal education in Latvia.

Refugees in transit also face a range protection risks, given their vulnerable situation and dependence on support for their onwards journey. In 2022, more than 230,000 citizens of Ukraine transited through Latvia to other EU Member States or to return to the government-controlled territories of Ukraine. Refugees in transit are in need of a basic reception structure at the border, even for a short period of time only, in order to cover immediate needs such as food, water, warm clothes and sanitary facilities. These short stop-overs provide an opportunity for first responders to

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<sup>60</sup> According to the Ministry of Education, as of the end of November 2022, 4,336 out of 9,882 registered children are enrolled in education institutions.

identify and where possible, address vulnerabilities and specific protection risks, such as human trafficking, protection risks facing children and GBV.

## Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

The RRP protection and solutions strategy for Latvia aims at supporting the efforts of the national authorities in addressing the needs of refugees from Ukraine, with a focus on the most vulnerable. Given the composition of the refugee population as described above, a significant portion of protection programming will focus on the needs of women and children, as well as addressing the impact of family separation, including possible MHPSS interventions.

RRP partners will strive to ensure a coherent and predictable protection response with the participation of refugees, in support of national protection systems. Specific attention will be given to the protection needs of single women, female-headed households, children, older persons, people with serious medical conditions, and persons with disabilities. Efforts will be made to support frontline workers in identifying specific needs and providing appropriate referrals and services to vulnerable refugees and TCNs in need of international protection, to mitigate serious protection risks, including those linked to possible sexual exploitation and abuse. Inclusion of refugees in state-provided services will constitute a key point for advocacy and support to government, in line with the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees.

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

### Country Strategic Objectives

#### **SO1: Support the Latvian Government to ensure refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis, including the rights associated with temporary protection.**

- Support the protection response of the government and all relevant actors to identify and refer persons with specific needs among the refugee population and provide required specialized services, including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and humanitarian assistance, that are age-, gender-, and diversity sensitive. Support local actors to provide targeted legal and social counseling and assistance to persons of concern, including through mentoring services.
- Support reception capacity and monitor the situation of new arrivals to ensure their early access to rights and services on a non-discriminatory basis, as well as to enable early identification, referral, and assistance to persons with specific needs.
- Support government capacity with regard to the identification and mitigation of GBV, trafficking and SEA risks. Support development of effective prevention and response capacity.

**SO2: Ensure that refugees with specific needs continue to have access to State services, as well as targeted support and assistance, while also engaging with and strengthening community-level protection mechanisms.**

- Support existing national measures and government systems to ensure that refugees with specific needs continue to have access to targeted referrals, including psycho-social support, as well as assistance with basic needs, including health, housing, food, and non-food items, while strengthening community-level protection mechanisms and promoting humanitarian actors' outreach to the refugee community.
- Complement and enhance government services to persons with specific needs by providing targeted support, including psycho-social support, mentoring services and disability inclusion.
- Reinforce accountability to affected people (AAP) through establishment of two-way communication channels, ensuring that refugees are able to participate in the development of programming for protection and solutions and provide feedback on the same.

**SO3 Work in partnership among the national and local governments and civil society to create solutions and expand refugees' access to social and economic opportunities to facilitate a whole-of-society approach to inclusion.**

- Support refugees' access to livelihood and economic opportunities, including through additional language training and support activities at accommodation sites and other locations, making sure that in particular vulnerable refugees such as single mothers and those with disabilities, receive adequate support.
- Support the government to ensure that refugees are systematically included in the different forms of social protection and government services.
- Complement the central Government's and municipalities' provision of accommodation through short-term support to newly arrived refugees, as well as housing support for refugees with disabilities.
- Support the inclusion of refugee children into the national education system through individual mentoring programmes, while also offering activities that focus on connections and friendship for children and youth.

**SO4: Advance social cohesion between refugees and host communities through targeted interventions.**

- Scale up innovative approaches and strengthened partnerships to enhance refugee inclusion into Latvian society. Support refugee and host community youth to develop capacities and skills.
- Leverage the potential of refugees, to help solve some of the challenges faced in accessing rights and services and facilitate dialogue and information exchange between refugees, government authorities, and the broader population.
- Provide integration support to advance social cohesion and self-sufficiency, for example, through activities that target refugees' access to the labour market, through additional Latvian language courses, as well as social, cultural, and recreational events and exchanges.

## Initiatives

Civil society organisations I Want to Help Refugees and Your Friends have set up support points in the border area to help newly arrived refugees from Ukraine. Refugees in transit receive support with some of their basic needs and have access to information and psychological first aid. Since the start of the project, thousands of refugees have been assisted with hot meals and drinks, a warm place to rest, information about temporary protection arrangements in Latvia and onwards transportation.

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



Partners will conduct protection monitoring to rapidly identify emerging protection risks and gaps in the response to inform evidence-based protection advocacy and engage with authorities at the national level to address key findings. Partners will also increase outreach activities in refugee hosting communities, both in and outside of cities, to identify refugees with specific needs and ensure they are referred to relevant services. Specific attention will be given to single women, female-headed households, unaccompanied and separated children, but also older persons, LGBTIQ+ persons, people with serious medical conditions and persons with disabilities.

Efforts will be made to support national protection mechanisms in the identification of and referral to services for persons with specific needs. Particular attention will be paid to new arrivals with specific needs, including in border areas and during transit.

Partners will engage with the refugee community and ensure its participation in designing and implementing the response, through participatory assessments, focus group discussions, engagement with refugee and community-led organizations, and other forms of support to the refugee community.

Partners will provide information and counselling – including legal counselling - to new arrivals as well as refugees already in-country, about status questions, including on procedures to access temporary protection and support to access rights and services, in particular with a view to enhancing protection for persons at heightened risk such as persons with disabilities, single women and children. Partners will further provide mentoring services to accompany refugees in their engagement with national service providers and help them navigate the national support systems.

Partners will further create an online coordination and knowledge exchange platform for NGOs working with refugees from Ukraine across the three Baltic countries.

### Sub-Sector: Child Protection



Partners will support the identification, referral and provision of specialized child protection services to children at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children. In addition, partners will develop inter-cultural activities for children and their families, enabling them to find their way into new social networks, thus helping with the child's positive development in a new environment. Further, partners will provide a multi-layered approach to services in order to address the mental health and psycho-social needs of children who may have experienced distressing events.

### Sub-Sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



Protection from trafficking for sexual exploitation as well as sexual exploitation and abuse will also form a key part of the response. To address the risk of GBV, including trafficking for sexual exploitation and SEA, specific prevention activities, including training and awareness-raising activities targeting, among others, refugees and volunteers, will be put in place to reinforce coordinated prevention and response mechanisms.

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION



Health sector partners aim to reinforce the government-led response by supporting the Ministry of Health and other government authorities and local actors with capacity-building and technical assistance as needed. WHO will design, plan, and conduct a survey of unmet medical needs, including the MHPSS needs, of refugees from Ukraine. Translations, adaptations and trainings will be provided in Ukrainian language to reduce barriers to care and access to health services.

Particularly vulnerably refugees, such as those with disabilities, will be provided with a wide range of support measures. Further, refugees will receive emergency dental treatment where this is not covered by the State. In the event of gaps in the provision of mainstream health care to refugees – a situation which may arise in the case of newly arrived refugees – they will receive cash and voucher assistance (CVA) to purchase medicine or undergo medical treatment.

## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



The Latvian Law on Assistance to Ukrainian Civilians provides a framework for effective protection and facilitates refugees' access to rights and services on an equal footing with Latvian citizens, including access to education, health care, and social protection. Despite this favourable legal environment, *de facto* barriers for socio-economic inclusion exist, such as gaps in information in terms of the rights and services refugees are entitled to and how to access these, as well as economic inclusion prospects, language barriers and documentation requirements.

The civil society response will include a range of activities focused on provision of legal support, information and individual counselling and mentoring. Partners will provide services such as translation of documents, including birth certificates and educational qualifications. In-depth legal support, including legal counselling on access to rights and services, will be provided in cases where a simple legal consultation is not enough to help refugees on their way to inclusion. Partners will also focus on dissemination of information on rights and access to services and provide individual support and mentoring, including through a peer educator network. Socio-economic inclusion support activities will also be provided at the accommodation facilities.

Partners will further complement the Government's efforts to offer language classes across the country. Language clubs to practice speaking Latvian language will be organised, as well as additional language classes for those refugees who are unable to sign up for classes organised through the national system. Language training will be prioritized so that refugees can more rapidly access decent employment, while refugee job prospects and access to employability initiatives such as trainings, mentorship programmes, internships and apprenticeships will also be enhanced via increased engagement with the private sector.

To foster refugees' social inclusion in Latvian society, partners will organise recreational activities such as welcoming events, cultural events, workshops and exchanges for adults and children. Cooperation with cultural institutions, such as libraries, museums, and cultural centres, may be considered as a potential for synergy to promote inclusion in the local community. Partners will also set up activities that help establish new friendships for young people as well as activities that help refugees to get to know Latvia better. To promote social cohesion, partners will organise awareness-raising campaigns among the local population as well as in schools.

Particular attention will be given to refugee children and youth, and their needs in terms of emotional support and recreational and educational activities. Partners' plans include the opening of a resource centre for young refugees, running emotional support groups and offering safe meeting spaces for youth from both Ukraine and Latvia.

At present, only about 50 per cent of all registered children from Ukraine in Latvia are enrolled in local schools. The reasons parents are reluctant to have their children participate in the national education system relate to language barriers and perceived incompatibility between the Ukrainian and Latvian education systems. Thus, many children still rely on remote education provided by their schools in Ukraine. Civil society partners will continue to advocate for refugee children to enrol in Latvian schools, while also offering language clubs for children and youth as well as other educational and after-school activities to facilitate social inclusion of children, even in situations in which they may not be enrolled in formal education. Further, support with equipment for educational purposes, such as laptops, is envisaged.

To improve the overall refugee response, and with a view to paving the way for more agile service provision in the second year of the Ukraine refugee situation, an assessment of municipalities' performance in terms of reception of refugees from Ukraine will be carried out. The assessment will be followed by solution models for gaps identified.

## BASIC NEEDS



The Law on Assistance to Ukrainian Civilians provides for expedited registration of refugees from Ukraine as well as special regulations for immediate assistance with accommodation and food.

Gaps with covering basic needs have been identified in particular in border areas, where refugees spend a short period of time before moving on to the capital or other places. Strengthening reception conditions for newly arrived refugees from Ukraine and persons with specific needs in transit is crucial, in particular at border crossing points, to ensure that refugees during their short term stay at the border can cover their basic needs, have access to information as well as psychological first aid. Partners will provide support with transportation, temporary accommodation, and cash assistance for refugees in transit.

Further, humanitarian assistance will also be provided at transit sites in main cities in Latvia. At the main bus station in Riga, an assistance desk will be in place, where further transport can be coordinated. There is also a shop where winter clothes and other necessities are offered free of charge. Donations, including food, clothes and furniture, are also distributed from a warehouse in Riga. This warehouse is intended for refugees who are not in transit but cannot cover their basic needs despite the assistance provided by the State.

Short-term accommodation, up to a number of months, is available free of charge in hotels and other accommodation places across Latvia. Further state-sponsored initiatives to create short-term living space include financial support to host families and the reconstruction of a new reception facility offering 250 places and expected to be completed in early 2023. The main gap in terms of accommodation consists in the lack of mid- to long-term housing solutions. Moreover, short-term accommodation requires further scaling-up in order to cater for all who need it.

Partners will provide a small-scale temporary accommodation arrangement for new arrivals for a period not exceeding 30 days. Through this arrangement, a maximum of 70 persons can be assisted at a time. Further, partners will support refugees with disabilities to find suitable accommodation adapted to their specific needs. Housing will be offered to them for a short period of time, and after that, they will receive support to find a suitable longer-term solution. Partners will also assist with adapting accommodation to meet the specific needs of persons with disabilities.



## Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



Activities designed to ensure accountability to affected people and inclusion will continue to be prioritized and will be grouped around the pillars of a) participation and inclusion in line with Age, Gender and Diversity principles for meaningful consultation; b) communication and transparency, including access to information; c) feedback and response; and d) learning and adaptation.

Effective two-way communication and consultation with communities will be achieved through continuous engagement of refugee women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds in all the stages of the RRP's implementation by employing participatory methodologies. Feedback received from persons of concern will help to adjust the response where needed. Refugees will continue to access relevant, timely and up to date information through two-way communication and feedback mechanisms, such as UNHCR HELP Pages, the Digital Blue Dot, the Regional Call Centre and other initiatives. The role of refugee volunteers, community-based and refugee-led organizations will continue to be reinforced, including through capacity development and small grants.

### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



Sexual exploitation and abuse directly contradict the principles upon which humanitarian action is based, inflicts harm on those whom the humanitarian and development community is obligated to protect, as well as jeopardizes the credibility of all assistance agencies.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) is therefore a key priority in the response. The Ukraine emergency is also characterized by a number of specific risk factors, such as an exceptionally high incidence of family separation and of female-headed households, as well as a wide range of actors involved in the response, some of whom have limited experience with PSEA. These risk factors may be further compounded by increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities, difficulties in finding suitable accommodation, and potential fatigue among host States and host communities as the emergency extends into its second year.

PSEA is an integral and cross-cutting component of the RRP and is mainstreamed across the response for refugees from Ukraine. In addition, it requires dedicated and proactive collective efforts to mitigate and prevent risks, such as joint SEA risk assessments, partner capacity assessments, capacity building and training, as well as community outreach and awareness raising with the refugee community. A Regional PSEA Network has also been established to support national efforts and ensure consistency, exchange and the collection of best practices in line with PSEA global commitments.

## Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



MHPSS will be a focus of the refugee response in Latvia. The integration of MHPSS across sectors, including health, protection, child protection, GBV, education, and livelihoods is essential to the national response. In line with this, ensuring comprehensive access and provision of MHPSS services across all layers of support must continue to be advocated for and prioritized amongst all partners and actors. Partners will therefore provide psychosocial support through community-based interventions, including group activities such as support groups for women and children and arts-based psychosocial support. Additionally, focused in-person and remote psychosocial support for refugees, such as individual basic counselling, will be provided in parallel to providing and ensuring access to specialized mental health care and support. Refugees who have just crossed the border and who are still in border areas will also be provided with psychological first aid. Also fundamental is the mainstreaming of caring for carers and supportive supervision for frontline providers, who are often from Ukraine, to prevent burnout and promote well-being.

## Partnership and Coordination

In Latvia, the Government has established a coordination structure, referred to as 'Operative Management Centre' which organises weekly meetings with participation of Ministries, municipalities, other central organs, civil society organizations and UN agencies. The Operative Management Centre is the key coordination body, led by the Ministry of the Interior. The meetings aim to strengthen coordination among government ministries, as well as between government and civil society and UN agencies, providing strategic guidance for the identification and implementation of relevant interventions and ensuring preparedness and contingency planning.

Partners involved	14
UN Agencies	3
International NGOs	1
National NGOs	9
IFRC&RC	1

*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.*

RRP partners that participate in the weekly Operative Management Centre meetings will capitalize on this coordination mechanism and utilize it strategically for the purpose of advancing specific RRP objectives while ensuring that information on progress of the response and emerging needs and priorities is shared among all RRP partners. In addition, RRP partners will come together in a regular coordination meeting co-organised by UNHCR and the Ministry of the Interior.

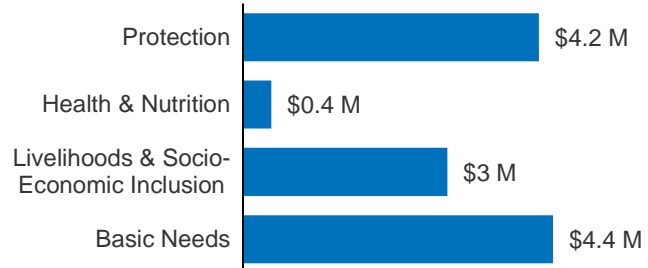
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### Total financial requirements in USD



**\$12 M**

### By sector in million USD



Total Protection requirements	\$4,195,372
Other protection activities	\$3,876,937
GBV	\$68,435
Child Protection	\$250,000

Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$155,000
Basic Needs	\$50,000
Health and Nutrition	\$105,000

\* 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	14
UN Agencies	\$6.5M
International NGOs	\$2.8M
National NGOs	\$2.5M
IFRC&RC	\$0.2M

## By partner

Partner / Acronym	Protection	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Total USD
<b>UN Agencies</b>					
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	1,617,924		970,755	647,170	3,235,849
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	257,143		428,571	2,377,714	3,063,428
World Health Organization (WHO)		230,000			230,000
<b>International NGOs</b>					
PCPM-Polish Center for International Aid	2,196,237			579,391	2,775,628
<b>National NGOs</b>					
Caritas Latvia		22,209	140,494		162,703
Center for Public Policy PROVIDUS			267,908		267,908
Common Ground			265,650		265,650
Crisis and Counselling Centre Skalbes	8,568	18,375			26,943
Gribu palīdzēt bēgļiem / I Want to Help Refugees			29,768	69,458	99,226
Latvian Scout and Guide			56,700		56,700
MARTA Centre	115,500				115,500
Samaritan Association of Latvia			736,925	472,360	1,209,285
Young Folks				295,016	295,016
<b>IFRC &amp; Red Cross/ Crescent Societies</b>					
Latvian Red Cross		105,000	80,955		185,955
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,195,372</b>	<b>375,584</b>	<b>2,977,726</b>	<b>4,441,109</b>	<b>\$11,989,791</b>

COUNTRY CHAPTER

# LITHUANIA

# > At a Glance

## Lithuania Planned Response (January-December 2023)



**150,000**

targeted refugee population



**\$17.8 M**

total financial requirements in USD



**10**

partners involved



# LITHUANIA

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

By the end of December 2022, 72,000 refugees from Ukraine had been registered for temporary protection in Lithuania, constituting approximately 2.5 per cent of the host country population. The Lithuanian authorities are making plans to receive up to 150,000 refugees in 2023, though a number of these are expected only to transit. This has been and remains the largest inflow of refugees in the history of Lithuania. The Government, civil society and host community have coalesced to work toward a whole-of-society approach to ensuring reception and protection conditions for refugees arriving from Ukraine. Public discourse has been consistently welcoming.

The majority of those fleeing Ukraine have arrived in Lithuania through other EU Member States, primarily Poland. Arrivals in Lithuania directly from Belarus or the Russian Federation are low. Response actors estimate that over 70 per cent of refugees from Ukraine registered for temporary protection have remained in Lithuania. The rest have moved on to secondary destinations or returned to Ukraine. Transit is generally characterized by rapid intra-EU travel through Lithuania, without significant stops.

The refugee response is coordinated overall by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, with municipalities and civil society as key actors supplementing central government programming. The system is based on inclusion in mainstream Lithuanian education, other social services and social support system, as well as on open access to the job market. As of the end of November 2022, around half of working age refugees have found employment and approximately half of school-age children are enrolled in Lithuanian schools. Certain benefits remain inaccessible to refugees registered for temporary protection until receipt of their temporary residence permit, a wait which has reduced from four months to one but continues to temporarily impact reception conditions. Civil society actors fill a variety of response gaps, particularly in the areas of assistance with basic needs and comprehensive advice on life in Lithuania.

Throughout 2022, 45 per cent of refugees have been able to secure housing independently, either on the open market or otherwise. Another 46 per cent have been placed with volunteer hosts through a centralized civil society platform. The remaining 9 per cent are housed in government accommodation.<sup>61</sup> Refugees renting housing privately can apply for government subsidies. However, not all housing solutions are long-term and sustainable due to volatility in the rental

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<sup>61</sup> Based on data provided by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour information.

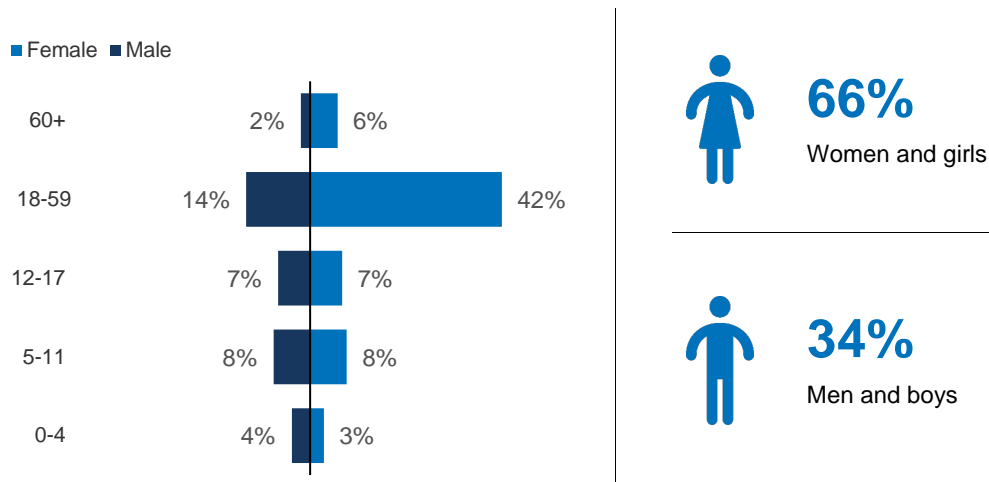
market, high maintenance costs because of energy price crisis, and some reluctance by private owners to lease to refugees. Moreover, private housing capacity, and especially that of volunteer hosts, is currently at its saturation point. Accordingly, the Government is setting up national and municipal group accommodation centers in primarily more remote areas, which may make access to the labour market, education and health services more difficult.

Notwithstanding the particularly strong efforts by the Government of Lithuania and the existing synergy between public actors, the private sector, civil society and individuals in ensuring best possible reception, protection and inclusion of refugees from Ukraine, certain more specific needs require further action, including from international partners. The present plan aims to address the remaining areas of concern in 2023 through a focus on protection and profile-specific basic needs, especially those of vulnerable groups. Solutions may include cash assistance, the adaptation of health care system capacities to respond more closely to the needs of refugees, and building of support, skills and opportunities needed to ensure sustainable livelihoods.

### Population Planning Figures

Lithuania	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection as of end Dec 2022 <sup>62</sup>	Targeted Refugee Population in 2023
Refugee Population	72,302	150,000

### Age and gender breakdown<sup>63</sup>



<sup>62</sup> 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.

<sup>63</sup> Calculations based on data provided by the government.



## Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

Most refugees from Ukraine are women (48 per cent) and children (35 per cent). Women face heightened protection risks, such as gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), trafficking and labour exploitation. In addition, many women must care for children and other dependents on their own. Some experience difficulty accessing jobs, daycare services and affordable housing. Single mothers with 3 or more children are particularly vulnerable to poverty. Support with basic needs alongside support in accessing the labour market is needed to ensure the self-sufficiency of refugee women.

By the end of December 2022, over 25,000 children from Ukraine had been granted temporary protection, of whom approximately 1,000 are unaccompanied or separated. Among the latter, more than 80 children continue to remain under institutional care in Lithuania, including three groups of small children with disabilities who were relocated from institutional care homes in Ukraine together with Ukrainian care staff. There is a continued need for child-focused protection activities, including further development of procedural frameworks, cash for basic needs, and awareness-raising on child protection matters.

The Lithuanian educational system has faced an unprecedented adaptation challenge in terms of scale and time, in its efforts to include refugee children from Ukraine in mainstream education. While around one half of school-aged refugee children are enrolled in Lithuanian schools, more than one third of those enrolled continue to simultaneously attend their Ukrainian schools, raising concerns about the quality and sustainability of their education as well as the workload they face in school. To ease adaptation in the host society, Lithuanian language tuition and extracurricular activities geared toward inclusion are needed to promote a safe childhood for all refugee children.

Refugees with disabilities, as well as older refugees, and their families face specific vulnerabilities due to a heightened risk of poverty, arising from barriers to obtaining gainful employment and limited access to needed services. Refugees with disabilities have been facing difficulties navigating disability level assessment and recognition procedures, resulting in delayed access to social benefits and services in Lithuania. Older refugees and those with disabilities are in need of further inclusion in host country social programmes, including through mentorship and accompaniment in disability recognition procedures.

In 2023, refugee access to secure and affordable housing will continue to be of concern, including due to increasing rent and utility costs resulting from higher energy prices. With private housing saturated, the number of projected new arrivals is expected to exceed spaces available at government accommodation sites, with services to be provided by municipalities and civil society. Furthermore, most of the accommodation centers are being set up in more remote areas, which poses challenges for access to employment and services. Preparedness and capacity of municipal social support systems may vary from municipality to municipality. Measures aimed at complementary housing alternatives and comprehensive case management are essential for a dignified and safe reception for refugees with specific needs.

Refugees are generally able to avail themselves of the public health care system in Lithuania. However, a number of cases involving access difficulties continue to be reported. Moreover, partners have noted a degree of lack of awareness among refugees about the extent of their health

care entitlements. The situation calls for additional advocacy at the policy level, programmes aimed at capacitation of the health system and personnel, as well as awareness raising activities in the refugee community.

Efforts have been made to address the MHPSS needs of refugees, but engagement and participation remains low. There is a need to subsequently adapt the service structure to better ensure access to support to meet the needs and profiles of the Ukrainian refugee community. This includes efforts to destigmatize mental health and innovatively provide community-based support. Moreover, an understanding is emerging that support is also essential for frontline workers, who have been exposed to potentially distressing stories, along with high workload and expectations, and are at risk of burnout. Innovative services and solutions, such as training activities and group support are needed.

Inclusion of newly arriving refugees in the mainstream social support system is gradual and at present typically requires longer than a month. Processing times between registration for temporary protection and issuance of temporary residence permits have decreased from an earlier peak of four to six months to around one month, during which time, access to certain programmes and benefits is not available. Further processing time is required in respect of applications for social services lodged once the residence permit is received. Refugees in the initial transition period require needs-based assistance from civil society, including counseling and cash-based support.

## Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

The RRP protection and solutions strategy for Lithuania aims to support the efforts of the national authorities in addressing the needs of refugees from Ukraine, with a focus on the most vulnerable.

RRP partners will strive to ensure a coherent and predictable protection response with the participation of refugees while strengthening national protection systems. Specific attention will be given to the protection needs of single women, female-headed households, children, older persons, people with serious medical conditions, and persons with disabilities. Efforts will be made to support frontline workers in identifying and providing services to vulnerable refugees and third-country nationals to mitigate life-threatening risks and risks linked to sexual exploitation and abuse.

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

### Country Strategic Objectives

#### **SO1: Support the Lithuanian Government in ensuring refugees' access to protection and assistance, including the rights associated with temporary protection, on a non-discriminatory basis,**

- Support the protection response of the Government and all relevant actors to identify and refer persons with specific needs among the refugee population and provide required specialized services, including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and needs-specific humanitarian assistance, that are age-, gender-, and diversity sensitive. Support local actors to provide social counseling and assistance to refugees, including through mentoring services.
- Support reception capacity and monitor the situation of new arrivals to ensure their early access to rights and services on a non-discriminatory basis, as well as to enable early identification, referral, and assistance to persons with specific needs.
- Support government capacity with regard to identification and mitigation of GBV, trafficking and SEA risks. Support development of effective prevention and response capacity.
- Support and strengthen existing child protection mechanisms and services provided by state institutions to ensure the social service workforce can adequately respond to the specific needs of refugee children and their families, in particular unaccompanied and separated children and children at risk.

#### **SO2: 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.**

- Support existing national measures and government systems to ensure that vulnerable refugees with specific needs continue to have access to targeted referrals, including community-based psycho-social support as well as assistance with basic needs, including health, housing, food, and non-food items, while strengthening community-level protection mechanisms and promoting humanitarian actors' outreach to the refugee community.

- Complement and enhance government services to persons with specific needs by providing targeted support, including psycho-social support, mentoring services and support for disability inclusion.
- Reinforce accountability to affected people (AAP) through establishment of two-way communication channels, ensuring that refugees are able to participate in the development of programming and provide feedback on the same.

**SO3: Work in partnership with the national and local governments and civil society to create solutions and expand refugee access to social and economic opportunities to facilitate a whole-of-society approach to inclusion.**

- Support refugee access to livelihood and economic opportunities, including through additional language training and support activities, making sure that particularly vulnerable refugees such as single mothers and those with disabilities, receive adequate support.
- Support the Government to ensure that refugees are systematically included in the different forms of social protection and government services.
- Complement the central government and municipal provision of accommodation through short-term support to newly arrived refugees.
- Provide integration support to advance inclusion, through, *inter alia*, social, cultural, artistic and recreational events and exchanges.

**SO4: Advance social cohesion between refugees and host communities through targeted interventions.**

- Identify innovative approaches and strengthened partnerships to enhance social cohesion between refugees and host community members. Support refugee and host community youth to develop capacities and skills.
- Leverage the potential of refugees to help solve some of the challenges faced in accessing rights and services and facilitate dialogue and information exchange between refugees, government authorities, and the broader population.
- Support children's integration in the national school system through the development of inter-cultural capacity of teaching staff.

### **Initiatives**

As the result of a whole-of-society effort, most refugees in Lithuania have been accommodated in private housing from the beginning of the Ukraine situation. While some found their hosts directly, the [#StrongTogether](#) civic initiative has been instrumental. Seizing upon an outpouring of goodwill, the volunteer group stepped in at a strategic time, setting up a platform that helped match locals offering over 10,000 living spaces at no cost with more than 30,000 refugees (46% of total population) looking for accommodation.

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



Monitoring and advocacy efforts will rapidly identify and address protection risks and gaps. Partners will engage in continuous and dynamic assessments of government social services available to refugees to identify coverage issues. They will liaise with the authorities to enhance the refugee population's access to government protection and assistance programmes. Moreover, studies will be carried out to identify refugees' intentions and inclusion perspectives, enabling further tailoring of services.

There will be a particular focus on complementing the government response to the needs of those most vulnerable among refugees, including addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. Cash disbursements will be made to persons at risk, including survivors of violence who continue to be in an unsafe situation, exploitation and abuse, as well as to households with children and expecting mothers to assist in the creation of dignified living conditions.

A community outreach approach will be adopted to identify needs, vulnerabilities and community-based protection opportunities. Response actors will organize regular community events to scale up community engagement and foster refugee-led initiatives. Small grants will be made available to mobilize refugee resources and gradually leave implementation of initiatives to the refugee community itself.

#### Sub-Sector: Child Protection



Partner activities will include a specialized focus on the needs of children, as well as on their parents. Further to addressing child-specific basic needs, resiliency and coping skills will be strengthened or children in need of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). Partners will provide support to government entities responsible for the care for unaccompanied and separated children, including those in institutional care, so as to ensure that these children's best interests are taken into account in all decisions that affect them.

#### Sub-Sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



In view of the potential exposure to GBV risks at collective accommodation centers, partners will support the government with assessments of these centres and putting in place mainstream GBV risk mitigation measures. At the same time, the presence of partners at these sites may afford a certain degree of protection to refugees.

Moreover, partners present at accommodation centres will raise awareness about GBV and support the authorities responsible for these centres to establish safe spaces where refugees can seek assistance or information in a safe and confidential manner. Partners will be equipped to

ensure safe disclosure and confidential and survivor centered referrals to government-provided, specialized services.

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## EDUCATION



To achieve the effective inclusion of refugees from Ukraine in the Lithuanian education system, partners will support refugee students in the further development of skills instrumental for enhanced inclusion outcomes. To complement Lithuanian language learning at schools, supplementary classes will be offered at children's day centres, where other extracurricular activities will also be available to promote integration with the host community. Public school teachers will receive training on intercultural learning methods for use with students fleeing Ukraine, an activity which will lead to a more inclusive and needs-responsive educational environment for refugee children.

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## HEALTH AND NUTRITION



Partners will prioritize addressing existing administrative, financial and communication barriers to refugees accessing the full range of health services and medicines. They will join forces in ensuring not only the availability of primary and secondary health care services, including treatment of tuberculosis and access to vaccines, but also awareness of these opportunities among the refugee community. To ensure that refugee needs in the area of health care are addressed, needs assessment tools will be developed and access to health services will be monitored.

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## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



In view of the ongoing progress in the employment rate among refugees in Lithuania,<sup>64</sup> partners will further concentrate and expand efforts in the area of livelihoods. Capitalizing on the Government's regular gathering of statistics on refugee access to employment, partners will advocate for systematic collection and analysis of comprehensive data on socio-economic inclusion of refugees. Furthermore, partners will support interventions that focus on planning and delivering medium- and long-term strategies for the self-reliance of refugees through income security. Such initiatives will include job seeker counselling and mentorship programmes, job market-oriented training, including English language classes, internship schemes, as well as business advice and small business grants to enable entrepreneurial ventures among the refugee population.

Capitalizing on the government's commitment to registering statistics on refugees' access to employment, RRP partners will advocate for further systematic collection and analysis of

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<sup>64</sup> Statistical updates on the employment of Ukrainians are published at <https://socmin.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys/socialine-integracija/lietuva-ukrainai/ukrainieciai-lietuvoje-statistika>.

comprehensive data on refugees' socio-economic situation to facilitate evidence-based planning and well-targeted support for longer-term inclusion. Development of socio-economic inclusion partnerships between the public and private sectors will prominently feature the role of civil society in the response. Cultural and artistic communities will be mobilized for projects and events fostering direct exchanges and synergies with the refugee community. Partners will use the opportunities presented by such activities to expand efforts in the area of public awareness raising and communication campaigns aimed at acceptance, inclusion and empowerment. Furthermore, the inclusive capacity of the Lithuanian educational system will be developed through training of teachers in the area of intercultural learning.

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## BASIC NEEDS



Among the most pressing needs of refugees arriving in Lithuania are housing and comprehensive advice on various topics, such as availability of public services, opportunities, rules and life in Lithuania, for example. From the beginning of the crisis, uptake in these areas has been extensive, allowing the government and civil society to develop frontline expertise.

To complement housing-only services at municipal collective accommodation sites, partners will concentrate their presence at and around these centers to provide reception- and protection-related services, such as humanitarian aid, needs assessment, identification of vulnerabilities, psycho-social support, child-friendly spaces and GBV risk mitigation. As a top priority, partners will provide cash for housing to act as a stopgap measure during periods of full occupancy at government accommodation centers, as well as a protection solution for vulnerable individuals and households who cannot be safely accommodated in collective housing due to their specific needs.

The basic needs of newly arriving and underserved refugees will be addressed by providing food packages and cash-based interventions (CBI), and also by working toward sustainable food security. Partners will open soup kitchens and food banks, with a particular focus on rural areas, where the government intends to direct the majority of new arrivals.

Considering the use at full capacity of resources currently available for refugee advice and guidance, partners have developed a mutually coordinated strategy for the expansion of these services. Utilizing a case management approach and tools, partners will offer comprehensive one-stop-shop consulting to refugee households through advice, mentorship and, when needed, referrals. Moreover, a scheme whereby host community households mentor refugee households long-term will be implemented, aiming at an organic support model.

## Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



Activities designed to ensure accountability to affected people and inclusion will continue to be prioritized and will be grouped around the pillars of a) participation and inclusion in line with Age, Gender and Diversity principles for meaningful consultation; b) communication and transparency, including access to information; c) feedback and response; and d) learning and adaptation.

Effective two-way communication and consultation with communities will be achieved through continuous engagement of refugee women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds in all the stages of the RRP's implementation by employing participatory methodologies. Feedback received from persons of concern will help to adjust the response where needed. Refugees will continue to access relevant, timely and up to date information through two-way communication and feedback mechanisms, such as UNHCR HELP Pages, the Digital Blue Dot, the Regional Call Centre and other initiatives. The role of refugee volunteers, community-based and refugee-led organizations will continue to be reinforced, including through capacity development and small grants.

### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) is a key priority in the response. Sexual exploitation and abuse directly contradict the principles upon which humanitarian action is based, inflict harm on those whom the humanitarian and development community is obligated to protect, as well as jeopardize the credibility of all assistance agencies. The Ukraine emergency is characterized by an exceptionally high incidence of family separation and of female-headed households, as well as a wide range of actors involved in the response, some of whom have limited experience with PSEA. These risk factors may be further compounded by increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities.

PSEA is an integral and cross-cutting component of the RRP and is mainstreamed across all sectors. In addition, it requires dedicated and proactive collective efforts to mitigate and prevent risks.

### Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



The response will include a multisectoral approach that focuses on addressing the mental health and psychosocial needs of refugees as well as ensuring care for those providing support on the frontlines of Lithuania's response. MHPSS services will be provided across all layers of support, including community-based activities, such as support groups for women and children; focused psychosocial support, such as basic counselling; as well as access to specialized mental health support. Additionally, adaptation of MHPSS approaches, and capacity building in skills such as psychological first aid, will be provided for



refugees and practitioners. Advocacy and practical support will also be deployed in order to strengthen the capacity of the health and social systems to address refugee needs.

## Partnership and Coordination

In Lithuania, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (MSSL) performs the lead role in the coordination of government response, including policy-level advocacy. Among other activities, the Ministry hosts interagency meetings, where a spectrum of government and civil society actors update each other on the latest developments in the response and informally discuss any needed specific actions. The MSSL is also the key government interlocutor for civil society response actors more generally.

Partners involved	10
UN Agencies	3
National NGOs	6
IFRC&RC	1

*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.*

Given this coordination forum, those RRP partners that form part of the government-led inter-agency meetings will capitalize on the coordination mechanism in place and utilize it strategically for the purpose of advancing specific RRP objectives. Further, and in support of this existing modality of response actor collaboration, UNHCR will facilitate government and civil society interactions and exchanges as needed, while ensuring that information on progress in the response and emerging needs and priorities is shared among all partners. To that end, RRP partners will come together in a monthly RRP coordination meeting co-organised by UNHCR and the MSSL.

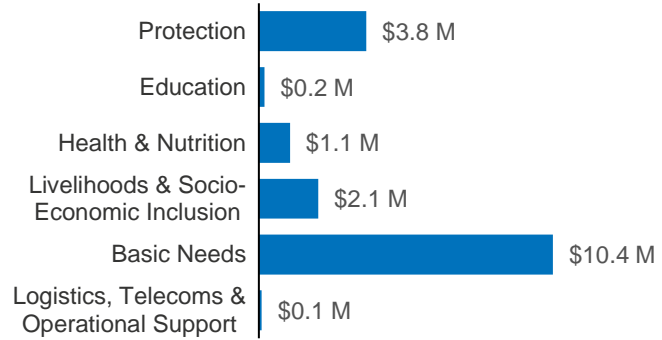
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### Total financial requirements in USD



**\$17.8 M**

### By sector in million USD



Total Protection requirements	\$3,849,751
Other protection activities	\$3,627,315
Child Protection	\$222,436

Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$5,983,134
Basic Needs	\$5,913,134
Protection	\$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	10
UN Agencies	\$8.7M
National NGOs	\$6.0M
IFRC&RC	\$3.2M

## By Partner

Partner / Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
<b>UN Agencies</b>							
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	1,780,739			890,370	1,780,739		4,451,848
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	299,065	111,280	486,850	570,310	1,947,400	139,100	3,554,005
World Health Organization (WHO)			650,000				650,000
<b>National NGOs</b>							
Artscape				142,828			142,828
Diversity Development Group	34,650						34,650
Food Bank					4,077,990		4,077,990
Save the Children	222,436				924,958		1,147,394
Caritas Lithuania				171,839	187,488		359,327
Order of Malta Relief Organization		65,297		138,227			203,524
<b>IFRC &amp; Red Cross / Crescent societies</b>							
Lithuanian Red Cross	1,512,861			174,256	1,504,776		3,191,893
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,849,751</b>	<b>176,577</b>	<b>\$1,136,850</b>	<b>\$2,087,830</b>	<b>\$10,423,351</b>	<b>139,100</b>	<b>\$17,813,459</b>



COUNTRY CHAPTER

# MOLDOVA

# > At a Glance

## Republic of Moldova Planned Response (January-December 2023)



**200,000**

targeted refugee population



**120,000**

targeted host-community members



**\$427 M**

total financial requirements in USD



**73**

partners involved



# MOLDOVA

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

Since 24 February 2022, over 680,000 individuals have fled to the Republic of Moldova (hereafter Moldova) from Ukraine. Out of this total, approximately 102,000 refugees (which represents some 4 per cent of the population of Moldova) currently remain in the country and more arrive each day. The profile of the refugee population in Moldova is comprised mainly of women (65 per cent including all age groups), children (33 per cent, out of them 51 per cent boys and 49 per cent girls) and older persons (22 per cent both men and women, who are mainly living in urban centres).<sup>65</sup> Throughout 2023, 200,000 refugees are expected to access a range of humanitarian services and will require access to socio-economic inclusion opportunities.

Moldova is facing a compound crisis of energy and food security, curtailed economic growth, growing inflation and limited institutional capacities and resources to respond to the challenges. In October 2022, annual inflation reached 34.6 per cent. At this level of inflation, it is estimated that the number of people living in poverty with less than 5.5 USD per day will reach 520,000 or 21 per cent of the population.<sup>66</sup> Despite this challenging context, Moldova has set an example in welcoming refugees, operationalizing key aspects of the vision laid out in the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).

Throughout 2022, the response of UN agencies, international NGOs, the Red Cross Movement, and local civil society organizations to the refugee influx in support of government-led efforts has been centred on receiving and providing life-saving assistance to new arrivals, facilitating access to basic services and providing safe transportation for those moving onwards. Nearly one year later, the refugee response in Moldova continues to adapt to the changing environment, while humanitarian actors continue to provide immediate humanitarian support to address winter-related needs and protection concerns by targeting those individuals at heightened risk. The 2023 refugee response also aims to support the strengthening of national systems and the socio-economic inclusion of refugees as well as expand social cohesion interventions to prevent and address social tensions. This is especially relevant as refugees in Moldova access a more stable and predictable legal status through the implementation of the temporary protection regime which requires partners to support refugees' access to the associated rights – including education, health care, employment, housing, protection, and social assistance – and to address *de facto* challenges to

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<sup>65</sup> Refer to the Operational Data Portal for Moldova for detailed information on population trends <https://data.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/248?sv=0&geo=680>

<sup>66</sup> UNDP, [Moldova: Potential Impacts of Increased Food and Energy Prices on Poverty and Vulnerability](#).

inclusion, such as the need for childcare, language skills, information and awareness about available services and rights, and material resources. National systems are stretched and also require sustained support.

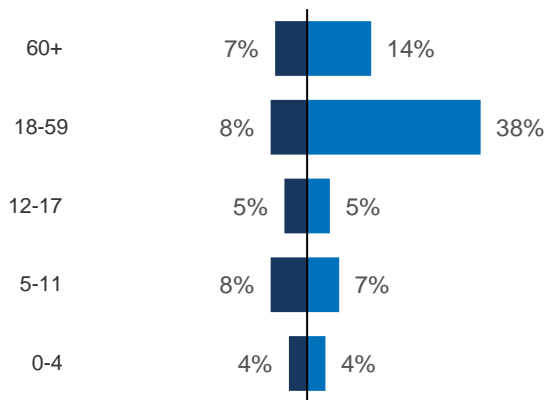
The generous response of Moldova must continue to be matched with stronger commitment and support by the international community. In the spirit of the Global Compact on Refugees, strengthening predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing is key to ease pressure on the Moldovan society and support it in addressing the needs of host and refugee communities.

### Population Planning Figures

Moldova	Refugees lawfully residing in Moldova as of end Dec 2022 <sup>67</sup>	Targeted Population in 2023
Refugee Population	102,000	200,000
Host Population		120,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>320,000</b>

### Age and gender breakdown<sup>68</sup>

■ Female ■ Male



**68%**

Women and girls



**32%**

Men and boys

<sup>67</sup> As of 31 December 2022, the legal status of the temporary protection was not yet in effect in Moldova. The figure included here represents the number of Ukrainian refugees who entered the country after 24 February 2022, and who were lawfully remaining in the country under the emergency law, based on government border crossing data.

<sup>68</sup> Calculated based on UNHCR’s PROGRES database for CBI.

## Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

Moldova has guaranteed access to the territory for persons fleeing Ukraine and has provided them with a secure legal status outside of the national asylum system,<sup>69</sup> which has been overwhelmed since the Ukraine refugee crisis began. Since 24 February 2022, over 11,000 asylum applications have been received by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, a 9,000 per cent increase compared to 2021. While the current legal status provided to refugees ensures access to many basic rights, it does not provide security of stay over the longer term and has limitations in terms of certain associated rights.

It is anticipated that the temporary protection regime will be implemented in 2023, providing refugees with a stable and predictable legal status, which in turn will improve their access to human rights and opportunities for socio-economic inclusion. In this regard, operationalization of the temporary protection regime will require further engagement of the international community by supporting Moldova to strengthen national systems and services.

Most refugees in Moldova are women and children, with most women being single heads of households.<sup>70</sup> Given the profile of the refugee population, risks of gender-based violence (GBV) and human trafficking remain high. Based on previous assessments conducted in Ukraine, more than 2/3 of females have experienced GBV in different forms.<sup>71</sup> This reality is compounded by reports of conflict-related sexual violence in areas under military control in Ukraine and increased risks of GBV in the context of forced displacement, including the risk of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Structural challenges affecting the overall provision of GBV- and MHPSS-related services in Moldova, as well as prevailing cultural gender norms and stigmatization of mental health conditions in both Ukraine and Moldova pose additional risks for refugees - especially for women, girls and LGBTIQ+ persons. Findings from the GBV Safety Audit conducted in June 2022 indicate that Intimate partner violence (IPV) is widespread in the region and that there is limited awareness of psychological and economic violence. Safety Audit participants mentioned that most survivors of GBV do not disclose or seek support in the region due to the culture of silence. While there was an awareness of the range of services available for refugee and host communities across Moldova, the participants lacked awareness of the specialized GBV services, leading to gaps in survivors' access to timely health and other support services.<sup>72</sup> Children comprise at least 33 per cent of the refugee population in Moldova based on data from enrolment in humanitarian programmes, while the government's data on the refugee population flows suggests that children constitute up to 48 per cent of the refugee population in the country, with an estimated 2 per cent being separated or unaccompanied. While according to the emergency law refugees from Ukraine have access to Moldovan schools and pre-schools, enrolment remains low. Out of an estimated 27,300 school-age refugee children (3-17 years old), only about 1,800 children have enrolled in Moldovan schools for the 2022-2023 academic year.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, children are more exposed to protection risks including

<sup>69</sup> Commission for Emergency Situation (CSE) provisions on the right of residence of displaced persons from Ukraine during the state of emergency and during up to 90 days after its expiration.

<sup>70</sup> UNHCR, [Profiles, Needs & Intentions of Refugees from Ukraine](#), August 2022.

<sup>71</sup> OSCE, [Survey on Violence Against Women: Ukraine - Results Report](#).

<sup>72</sup> [Ukraine Situation-Moldova: GBV Sub-Working Group Gender-Based Violence Safety Audit Report](#) and [Rapid GBV Risk Assessment in CVA](#).

<sup>73</sup> Data provided by the Ministry of Education and Research. Figures as of 31 October 2022.



violence, abuse, exploitation, trafficking and increased vulnerability to cumulative stressors and resultant psychosocial effects, including on mental health.

Regarding the Roma refugee population, stigma, discrimination, language differences and illiteracy are major barriers to accessing services, information and local inclusion opportunities.<sup>74</sup> Lack of documentation confirming their citizenship represents an additional protection risk for statelessness, as well as a barrier to accessing and enjoying human rights and services. As with the asylum system, the stateless determination system is under-resourced and requires additional support considering the increased demands resulting from the refugee influx.

Out of the total refugee population, 21 per cent are older refugees, of whom almost one-third are single older persons. This group also constitutes the largest share of refugees with a disability in Moldova<sup>75</sup> and are at high risk of marginalization due to barriers in participating in community life and in accessing services.<sup>76</sup>

According to various intention surveys conducted in Moldova, 79 per cent of refugees indicated being uncertain about their plans to move to another country or to return to Ukraine.<sup>77</sup> For those choosing to remain in Moldova, a primary challenge has been accessing basic services, including long-term housing solutions and health services.<sup>78</sup> In terms of livelihoods and employment, 62 per cent of the adult refugee population interviewed in the context of the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment expressed interest in finding a job<sup>79</sup>. However, the lack of a stable and predictable legal status and relevant language skills, coupled with limited access to childcare services and general lack of awareness among refugee and host community on issues related to employment of refugees, have hindered efforts to promote livelihoods opportunities.

While reception capacities have been strengthened at border points, including through the refugee crisis centres of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and reception centres in Palanca and Otaci, the increasing vulnerability of new arrivals makes the provision of basic needs assistance and protection services for those choosing to remain in the country and in the context of the winter season imperative.<sup>80</sup> This is especially true for those at heightened risk, including single women, female-headed households, children (including unaccompanied and separated children), persons

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<sup>74</sup> Women, older persons, and people with disabilities among the Roma population are less likely to read and write or do so with difficulties. Over 50% of Roma people are estimated to lack formal education, with 68% of research respondents stating that they cannot read or write or can only read and write with difficulty; 59% stated they have no or limited numeracy skills ([Internews, Understanding the information ecosystem: Roma refugees in Moldova](#)).

<sup>75</sup> [Moldova - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment \(MSNA\) Report](#), September 2022.

<sup>76</sup> According to the Needs Assessment of Older Refugees, 82% of older people interviewed had at least one health condition, with 51% having more than one. Only 32% of those interviewed who had a health condition reported that they could fully access their medication. The key reasons for not having access were cost, availability, and difficulty to access the local market. 60% of older refugees living outside Refugee Accommodation Centres reported having to adopt negative coping strategies to survive, including using savings (47%), not paying rent (20%), and borrowing money (16%). Older persons also constitute the biggest group among refugees with a disability in Moldova, and are especially vulnerable to being marginalized due to barriers to participate in community life and access services ([HelpAge, Needs Assessment of Older Ukrainian Refugees](#)).

<sup>77</sup> UNHCR, [Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine #2](#), September 2022.

<sup>78</sup> Around 22% of refugees have reported having health issues requiring access to health care. This includes missed immunizations, uncontrolled hypertension in older persons, missed antenatal care visits for pregnant women, untreated acute respiratory infections in young children, or untreated mental health conditions and psychological distress.

<sup>79</sup> [Moldova - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment \(MSNA\) Report](#), September 2022.

<sup>80</sup> Winter contributes additional challenges and vulnerabilities among refugees, as the humanitarian crisis is interlinked with pre-existing development issues that have been further exacerbated by the energy crisis. In preparation for winter, refugees expressed needs for personal non-food items and cash to cover rent and utility bills in the face of increasing prices and depletion of savings as a negative coping mechanism ([ACTED, CRS, UNHCR and PiN: Rapid Winterization Needs Assessment 2022](#)).

with disabilities, people living with HIV, older persons, LGBTIQ+ and minority ethnic groups, including Roma refugees.

## Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

The 2023 RRP Protection and Solutions Strategy for Moldova builds upon the Regional Protection and Solutions Strategy and is informed by consultations held with key stakeholders in Moldova.<sup>81</sup> It responds to the needs and risks identified through inter-sectoral and sector specific needs assessments and analyses. Moreover, recognizing the primary role and responsibility of the Moldovan Government to provide protection and access to rights, the 2023 RRP Protection and Solutions Strategy focuses on supporting national and local protection systems, including key actors and their capacities, providing technical expertise and material support where needed.

In 2023, RRP partners will work together with Moldovan authorities at central and local levels, refugees and affected host communities to:

- **Safeguard Access to Territory, Legal Status and Rights in Moldova:** Ensure refugees from Ukraine have access to safety and international protection through the provision of technical and material support for the strengthening of the national asylum, statelessness and integration systems, that are age-, gender-, and diversity sensitive, and for the implementation of the temporary protection regime and associated rights, complementing and supporting government authorities, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Protection monitoring will continue to be conducted to ensure an evidence-based analysis of the protection situation, and to monitor intentions and displacement trends, as well as access to rights and services. Specific challenges affecting at-risk and marginalized groups to access a legal status will be considered and addressed to ensure we leave no one behind, in particular children, persons with disabilities, older persons, ethnic minorities, including Roma refugees, and LGBTIQ+ refugees
- **Strengthen Accountability to Affected People (AAP) through Communication with Communities, Community-based and an Age, Gender, and Diversity Approach:** Enhance accessible, safe, and confidential complaint and feedback mechanisms and information channels, and improve consultation and collaboration with refugee and host communities. For this, RRP partners will strengthen support to local civil society organizations – including women, Roma, disability, and refugee-led organizations – to enhance their participation and leadership. Partners will also expand support to community-based initiatives to boost integration and social cohesion. Additionally, local Refugee Coordination Forums will be strengthened to enhance participation of local public authorities and civil society organizations through an area-based approach. Finally, RRP partners will work together to mainstream gender, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), age, disability and diversity considerations across the response and ensure that all population groups from all ages and genders are reached, consulted, and integrated throughout the response.

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<sup>81</sup> [MOLDOVA - REFUGEE COORDINATION FORUM - 2023 REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN LOCAL CONSULTATIONS](#), OCTOBER 2022.

- **Enhance Protection of Persons at Heightened Risk:** Ensure persons at heightened risk are identified and referred to specialized services in a timely and safe manner. Partners will provide technical and material support to national and local protection systems to prevent, mitigate the risk of and respond to child protection incidents, GBV, human trafficking and violation of human rights of persons at heightened risk. Multipurpose cash assistance will be provided to the most vulnerable refugees and affected host community members to mitigate protection risks. RRP partners will also advocate for comprehensive access to MHPSS services for persons fleeing Ukraine and support for volunteers and other frontline responders. RRP partners will continue to advocate for onward transportation to EU countries of individuals at risk - including persons with serious medical conditions – and for those in need of family reunification. Finally, RRP partners will strengthen the mainstreaming of SEA risk mitigation measures across sectors.
- **Promote Effective Inclusion as a Protection Tool:** Support the effective inclusion of refugees into national systems and services, as well as into national and local development plans. Partners will provide support to key government institutions at national and local levels to support system strengthening in the coverage of refugee basic needs in the shorter-term while further strengthening the government social protection capacity to include refugees in the medium- and long-term. RRP partners will seek to better equip these institutions to build resilience against future shocks and crises, for the benefit of both refugees and Moldovans, thereby fostering social cohesion. A central aspect of the 2023 refugee response in Moldova will be the collaboration with and support to Moldovan authorities and institutions to operationalize the temporary protection regime and associated rights and assistance to persons in need of international protection, including health and education. Partners will also promote livelihoods opportunities for refugees and the most vulnerable affected Moldovans, strengthening self-reliance and enabling refugees to contribute to the development of the country, including through initiatives promoting women's empowerment and participation.

While the 2023 RRP emphasizes transitional measures to promote the socio-economic inclusion of refugees in the medium and long term, the volatile situation in Ukraine highlights the need to maintain emergency preparedness and response capacity in the event of a mass influx in close collaboration with government authorities and to respond to the needs of new arrivals, especially in the context of the winter season.

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

## Country Strategic Objectives

### **SO1: Ensure refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis, including the rights associated with temporary protection in Moldova.**

RRP partners aim to support refugees in accessing protection services, including legal assistance, individual consultation, provision of information on rights and services in relevant languages – including minority languages and sign language – and community based MHPSS activities. RRP partners will work with refugees and host communities to identify obstacles and challenges that may affect access to protection and assistance, with special attention to at-higher risk and marginalized groups, including children, older persons, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, in particular Roma refugees, and LGBTIQ+ refugees.

### **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 the critical role played by national and local actors, including government ministries, municipal authorities, NGOs and RLOs.**

Guided by the GCR and the whole-of-society approach, RRP partners will advocate for and support the socio-economic inclusion of refugees in national and local systems and services, promoting a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach. Partners will promote interlinkages and complementarity with development priorities and plans for Moldova contributing to address both the root causes and the consequences of the crises affecting the country, which also affect the prospects for the socio-economic inclusion of refugees. Partners will engage with public and private sector actors to strengthen national and local systems and services and create an enabling environment for the socio-economic inclusion of refugees, avoiding the creation of parallel systems and prioritizing activities that promote the self-reliance of refugees and affected vulnerable host community member. Partners will also support and promote access to education, health, MHPSS, protection, transitional and long-term shelter solutions, and financial services in close coordination with national and local public authorities, and in line with national priorities. In addition, partners will focus on strengthened localization, engaging local civil society organizations – including refugee- and women-led organizations – and local government actors through capacity-building initiatives, flexible resources, and facilitated access to refugee response coordination structures

### **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.**

RRP partners will respond to the needs of persons at heightened risk – including unaccompanied and separated children, survivors of GBV, LGBTIQ+ individuals, Roma refugees, stateless persons, persons living with HIV, older persons and persons with disabilities – by providing targeted support and assistance. RRP partners will work in collaboration with both refugee and host communities, as well as with protection systems and services at national and local levels,

including community-based organizations and networks to strengthen safe identification and referral of persons with specific needs to specialized services.

#### **SO4: Advance social cohesion between refugee and host communities through targeted interventions.**

To ensure Moldova remains a positive protection space for refugees – and a good example of realizing the GCR – it is a priority to maintain the level of social acceptance of refugees and strengthen interventions promoting social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. In this regard, RRP partners will work in consultation and collaboration with both refugee and affected host communities to strengthen community-based participatory initiatives aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue and understanding and inclusion while supporting initiatives led by the communities themselves. Moreover, RRP partners will strengthen the capacity of communities to extend services and assistance to refugees, while facilitating refugees' participation in consultation mechanisms at the local level. In addition, partners will promote an integrated strategy and approach to combat racism, discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, including through awareness-raising campaigns aimed at highlighting the positive contributions of refugees to Moldovan society. RRP partners will seek to mainstream social cohesion and conflict-sensitive approaches across their programming, ensuring that affected communities are more prepared, resilient, and less at-risk because of the refugee response.

#### **HIV Response in Moldova**

Forced displacement disproportionately affects people living with HIV, as access to treatment and HIV-related services is often disrupted. However, refugees living with HIV have encountered a strong support network through the work of 10 national NGOs that ensure the continuity of HIV treatment and prevention services. With the support of UNAIDS and in close coordination with the Ministry of Health, more than 200 refugees have been provided with continuous antiretroviral treatment through the National AIDS programme, and more than 5000 refugees have been covered with integrated HIV, tuberculosis, MHPSS and sexual and reproductive health and rights services through a community-based approach.

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



The Protection sector will continue to support the Government of Moldova – including the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection – in providing protection to those fleeing the war in Ukraine, with a particular focus on persons with specific needs who may be at heightened risk on arrival or as their displacement becomes more protracted. To support access to the territory, partners will engage in border monitoring activities in key locations, and will capture key demographic information on arrivals, specific needs, and future intentions to inform programming.

Once temporary protection is activated, RRP partners will support the Government to inform refugees and eligible third-country nationals (TCNs) of this right and how to access it through inclusive and accessible means. Legal counselling and assistance will also be provided to those wishing to apply for asylum and stateless status and to access services.

In implementing protection activities, RRP partners will ensure that persons with specific needs are identified and able to access services across sectors. Targeted services, including MHPSS, will be provided to at-risk and marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, older persons, children, including those unaccompanied and separated children, survivors of GBV, victims of trafficking, ethnic minorities, including Roma refugees, and LGBTIQ+ refugees in coordination with the Roma, Disability and Anti-Trafficking Task Forces. Mobile teams will be deployed to ensure that refugees living in remote areas or with mobility issues are reached. For those transiting through Moldova, protection services, including MHPSS, are also available at border crossing points for those who wish to access them.

RRP partners will work in close collaboration with national authorities to prevent trafficking in persons by disseminating relevant information in languages accessible to the refugee and local populations on how to stay safe and on available services, raising awareness on risks and signs of trafficking, strengthening the capacity of local actors, including national authorities, and providing assistance to survivors.

In organizing and delivering protection interventions, RRP partners will pursue a community-based approach where appropriate, with activities serving both refugee and host communities and promoting social cohesion. Planned activities include the establishment of inclusive and accessible community service centres, community service initiatives, support to community-based activities, including the organization of sports, arts, and cultural events, in coordination with national and local authorities to ensure a joint and complementary approach. Partners will also identify the emergence of social tensions, including through misinformation, and respond accordingly, and will work in close collaboration with local actors, including municipalities.

RRP partners will support government institutions through capacity-building and technical support to strengthen the national asylum, statelessness, and integration systems – including the modernization of the government's information management system – and to promote refugee

inclusion. For those in need of solutions abroad, including for family reunification, relocation to European countries will be pursued through the EU+ Air Transfer Program.

### Sub-Sector: Child Protection



The Child Protection sub-sector will prioritize strengthening the national child protection system, including child-friendly procedures, and inclusion of refugee children, both girls and boys, including those with disabilities and representatives of ethnic minorities, particularly Roma, in service provision. The Government of Moldova has been proactive in incorporating refugee children into national child protection systems, though gaps and capacity issues remain. Partners will provide support to child protection actors, ensuring that the best interests of children at risk are evaluated and upheld, with a particular focus on preventing violence and family separation as well as addressing children's MHPSS needs.

At border points, partners will continue to support national authorities in ensuring best interest procedures are in place for all unaccompanied and separated children and other children at risk. Partners will promote family-based alternative care arrangements, when needed.

Blue Dots and other child-friendly spaces, including those in refugee accommodation centres, will continue to provide MHPSS, protection and educational services for all children at risk, children with specific needs and survivors of violence, including child survivors of GBV, trafficking, and exploitation.

MHPSS activities will also target families and communities and include life skills development and parenting support. Prevention of violence and response services, including case management and referral to specialized services, will be enhanced. An emphasis will be put on increasing adolescents' participation in programme design, especially adolescent girls, due to their specific needs. Additionally, support will be provided to children enrolled in educational institutions to promote their integration and skills development. Child protection partners will work closely with GBV actors to ensure a child- and survivor-centred approach, and to ensure SEA prevention and risk mitigation measures are in place.

Partners will disseminate child-friendly information, using existing platforms including those promoting AAP, and strengthen child-friendly feedback and complaint mechanisms.

### Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



RRP partners will prioritize the provision of multi-sectoral services to survivors of GBV and groups at risk including women, girls, boys, and men, with additional emphasis on adolescent girls, persons with disabilities, and older persons. Intimate partner violence (IPV), often referred to as domestic violence, is widespread in the region. The findings of the GBV Safety Audit conducted by the GBV SWG in 2022 highlighted that sexual harassment and abuse are among the top risks reported by the refugees in the safety audit. Trafficking in persons, mainly for the purpose of sexual exploitation, was also

identified as a risk disproportionately affecting young single women, adolescent girls, and unaccompanied children. Services will include MPHSS and medical services (including clinical management of rape) and access to sexual and reproductive health services, legal counselling, Safe Spaces, recreational and life skills activities, GBV case management including provision of cash and voucher assistance to GBV survivors, hotlines, functioning GBV referral pathways and referral of survivors to specialized and non-specialized services, as well as distribution of dignity kits, and menstrual hygiene items to women and girls.

The GBV SWG will work to promote the need for diversifying the entry points for access to survivor-centered GBV services based on the preferences of the community, in particular the most at-risk groups. Furthermore, there will be more focus on a coordinated approach to communication, awareness-raising, and information-sharing on GBV services and risk reduction. Advocacy efforts on GBV and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights will also be streamlined through the GBV SWG. Messages will be empowering, and age-appropriate and avoid reinforcing harmful gender norms such as stigmatization and victim-blaming.

To improve the overall GBV prevention and response programming, partners will implement capacity enhancement activities targeting service providers to enhance survivors' access to quality care. The capacity-building activities cover the areas of MPHSS, GBV case management, core concepts and guiding principles, safe referrals, engagement of men and boys on GBV prevention, and anti-trafficking with emphasis on the needs of minority groups and persons with disabilities. Improved data collection and information management on GBV in line with best practices and standards will also be prioritized.

The support will be through capacity-sharing activities and the enhancement of funding for existing local women's organizations providing GBV services, as well as government social services, especially in underserved host community locations. Furthermore, the GBV SWG will work closely with local women's organizations to ensure a comprehensive approach to GBV prevention and response (e.g., employment skills, vocational training, basic assistance, life-skills, adolescent girl appropriate activities, host-refugee women joint community activities, etc.). The GBV SWG will also work closely with other sectors (especially health, including MPHSS and Cash) to support risk reduction and prevention actions through their interventions.

To strengthen the GBV prevention strategies for survivors of GBV and groups at risk, the GBV response will focus on expanding awareness-raising and advocacy activities to prevent and break the silence around GBV while ensuring greater inclusion of men and boys, tailoring the materials to meet the needs of people with limited literacy and increasing diversity in language. GBV risk mitigation mainstreaming will be scaled up across sectors through dedicated interventions, including assessments, safety audits and assessment of GBV risks in cash and voucher assistance, to mitigate risks that expose certain groups to GBV.

The GBV SWG will link with other sectors, especially Health, including MPHSS and Cash, to mainstream GBV risk mitigation through their interventions. This will be done through capacity building activities in particular on GBV core concepts, safe disclosure, referral and tailored GBV risk reduction capacity development relevant to their specific sectors. Furthermore, the GBV SWG will link with the sectors to include messages on GBV and available services in their communication materials and share identified GBV risks by the SWG with other sectors to enable



collective and coordinated measures to reduce risks. The GBV SWG will continue working closely with the PSEA and AAP Task Forces to strengthen prevention and mitigation of SEA, to ensure a victim-centred approach to SEA cases, and to reinforce reporting and feedback mechanisms.

## EDUCATION



The equitable inclusion of all pre-school and school-aged refugee children, including those with disabilities and Roma children, into the national education system of Moldova remains a sector priority in 2023, along with investments in strengthening the capacity of the Moldovan education system to accommodate them. Refugees from Ukraine in Moldova consistently identify education and learning as their top priority while in displacement. In this context, expansion of access to all forms of education and improvement of quality and inclusiveness of education and learning for refugee and vulnerable Moldovan children and adolescents are key strategic priorities for RRP partners, continuously coordinating their efforts through the Education Sector Working Group and authorities at the national and local levels.

In line with national education directives and policies, refugee children and their families will be given access to quality and inclusive formal and non-formal education services, learning opportunities (including Romanian language learning) and extracurricular activities (including summer camps) available to pre-school and school-aged boys and girls and adolescents, in safe and secure learning environments. Inclusive and accessible Play and Learning hubs will promote play-based learning. To ensure the physical and mental wellbeing of children, MHPSS interventions targeting students, teachers and other education personnel will be continued, along with programmes mainstreaming and promoting protection of refugee children, including gender-sensitive and gender-based violence prevention initiatives. Interventions will also be focusing on support to parents, including positive parenting sessions and their active involvement in education processes. With the goal of ensuring access of children to education, RRP partners will undertake activities focused on cultural diversity and inclusion, including combatting racism and xenophobia.

RRP partners will continue to support the inclusion and remuneration of Ukrainian teachers in Moldova. Coordination with national authorities and specialized service providers will continue to facilitate access to skills development for students and teachers, teacher training, and availability of language support and learning supplies, materials, technologies and devices, including those ensuring inclusion of children with disabilities and Roma children.

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION



The Health and Nutrition sector will provide short- and long-term solutions for a resilient health and invest in further health system development.

Building on universal health coverage principles and improving health system and community resilience, the Health and Nutrition sector will: (i) promote access to inclusive and accessible life-saving critical care and gender-, age- and diversity-responsive essential health services, including MHPSS, and sexual and reproductive health and rights; (ii)

support health system recovery; (iii) improve public health emergency preparedness and response; (iv) integrate and further develop health information and surveillance for an effective response and evidence-based decision-making; and (v) facilitate effective leadership and coordination of health humanitarian interventions.

Interventions will be coordinated with the Ministry of Health and other central and local public authorities and will be aligned with the national health system development strategies. Health financing and financial protection mechanisms will be implemented in collaboration with the national health insurance company to support access by refugees and affected vulnerable Moldovans to health care services. The improvement of the health information system will be promoted to improve the monitoring of refugee health, monitoring of communicable and noncommunicable diseases as well as accessibility and affordability of health care.

Investments in health workforce, guideline development and capacity-building activities will improve disease prevention (including immunization and screening) and health promotion and literacy, and enhance the quality of essential health services to refugees and affected host communities, including maternal, new-born and child health, response to GBV including sexual violence, dialysis and cancer control services, and emergency medical services at all levels of service delivery. Partners will also coordinate with authorities the distribution of medical supplies and equipment to first-line responders.

## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



Partners will deploy an integrated approach towards the socio-economic inclusion of refugees, while promoting social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities and strengthen local level capacities to respond to the refugee influx. The sector will operationalize the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, with a shift to planning for medium and long-term scenarios that strengthen the capacities and resilience of refugees and host communities.

This approach will require interventions that strengthen the enabling environment for socio-economic inclusion of refugees and facilitate their access to the labour market including through self-employment and entrepreneurship, in coordination with relevant national authorities, institutions and private sector. Partners will collaborate with employment agencies to promote strategic areas for the country that can benefit from the human potential of refugees. Interventions will be tailored to the differentiated needs of women, persons with disabilities, young people, minorities, and other vulnerable groups, including persons at heightened risk of GBV and/or trafficking in persons. These interventions will reduce the socio-economic vulnerability of refugees and host communities, improve mental health and psychosocial well-being, decrease the financial burden on host communities and facilitate increased investments into the development of Moldova.

Livelihoods and socio-economic inclusion interventions will also strengthen the capacities of national and local authorities and institutions to nurture peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities through social cohesion interventions.

Partners will continue to work with national and local authorities to plan and deliver resources, services, and measures that reduce the environmental impact of the refugee response and

contribute to a lower-carbon and more sustainable economy. Such measures will capacitate national and local authorities to adapt and adequately respond to the refugee influx.

These interventions will be coordinated with the Government at central and local levels to enhance national ownership and engage civil society and the private sector towards economic and social development, also contributing to the implementation of the temporary protection regime.

## LOGISTICS, TELECOMS AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT



Partners will continue to provide warehousing support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, by coordinating the storage and distribution of humanitarian assistance and facilitating the firewood distribution on subsidized rates to the hosting community and most vulnerable groups of refugees. On the other hand, six partners will still benefit from the joint warehousing services, sharing common space in several warehouses, with additional warehouses maintained by individual agencies in line with their respective core relief items distribution programmes, and support to government warehouses.

The Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS) will maintain a minimal presence to reinforce multi-sector coordination by streamlining IT and communications into operational preparedness and response strategies for the delivery of assistance to refugees and other persons of concern. RETS is working to deliver internet connectivity in Blue Dot hubs, Community Centres, and refugee accommodation centres across the country. Partners and other sectors will be fully engaged in the assessment, planning and implementation of the RETS response. At the same time, the main RETS-related responsibilities will be handed over to the Government of Moldova.

## BASIC NEEDS



Providing for basic needs and reducing food insecurity helps minimize harmful coping strategies and fosters social cohesion. To this end, RRP partners will support initiatives that effectively engage and benefit both refugee populations and the host community, including:

- Support access to adequate and accessible temporary shelters for refugees in the country by improving the living conditions to meet minimum standards, including for safety and protection, and strengthening management capabilities. For this purpose, RRP partners will continue to collaborate with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection on the support to Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs) and Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs).
- Provide humanitarian transportation, including for persons with disabilities, from borders to other areas within Moldova, including temporary shelters, and to third countries.
- Provide basic assistance through the distribution of non-food items at the borders, among host communities and in temporary shelters, as well as through multipurpose cash assistance.

- Provide mid and long-term inclusive and accessible shelter solutions for the most vulnerable refugees through tailored improvements of living/shelter conditions based on different gendered needs and preferences.
- Improve community and public space infrastructure, including its accessibility, for refugees and host communities.
- Support national and local social housing programmes with infrastructure improvements to enable access to housing for refugees and local communities.

Mechanisms will be put in place to ensure assistance is tailored and delivered in a dignified, gender and protection-sensitive manner, taking in consideration the specific demographics of the refugee population, while ensuring GBV and SEA risk mitigation measures, as well as complementarity with and integration into national social protection systems.

In 2023, RRP partners will also aim to extend food assistance to refugees as well as host community members in targeted locations pursuant to the availability of resources. Assistance in the form of cash, vouchers and in-kind food will be provided to refugees at border crossings and to those living in host communities or at Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs). Support for food assistance will be coordinated to ensure common targeting criteria and will consider the specific dietary needs of certain groups such as older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant and lactating women, children under five and people with chronic illnesses. Additionally, partners will align respective activities to promote continued social cohesion between refugees and host communities, including through adapted targeting, community outreach and communication, and monitoring the relations between host and refugee communities to track social cohesion gains and identify risks.

RRP partners will continue to address the immediate gender-specific needs of refugee women, girls, boys and men and host communities around safe access to and availability of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, including at border crossing points, RACs and host communities. Partners will prioritize interventions in geographical areas where refugees are entering Moldova as well as in adjacent communities and settlements, aiming to also provide services to host communities to contribute to strengthened social cohesion. Partners will also target WASH needs in schools where refugee children are enrolled or are expected to enrol. WASH actors will utilize a gender-, age- and diversity- sensitive approach in their programming that responds to the needs, capacities, aspirations and priorities of women, girls, and groups at heightened risk, including GBV survivors, LGBTIQ+, older persons, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities. Gender-related protection risks will also be considered and addressed in all WASH activities, as will MHPSS and PSEA. Partners will also engage in activities supporting solid waste management, collection, and disposal.

RRP partners implementing WASH activities will continue closely coordinating their interventions within the WASH sub-working group, as well as with all other relevant refugee coordination working groups, such as the Accommodation and Transportation Working Group. In addition to ensuring preparedness and contingency plans are in place, this ensures the WASH response takes into consideration the environmental impact of interventions, for example the risk of pollution associated with hygiene kits. Partners will also focus on standardizing the contents of hygiene kits in 2023 to minimize duplication.

### Highlight on the Disability Taskforce

Led by [Keystone Moldova](#) and OHCHR, the RCF Disability Taskforce is a coordination forum comprised of 15 local organizations working with persons with disabilities – including Organizations of Persons with Disabilities - to promote and mainstream disability inclusion across the refugee response, following a human rights based approach. Throughout 2022, the taskforce partners supported over 4000 refugees with disabilities in Moldova, including through the provision of assistive technology, housing, nutrition services, health care, rehabilitation, MHPSS, accessible humanitarian transportation and legal assistance.

## Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



In 2023, RRP partners will work to further strengthen Accountability to Affected People (AAP) across the refugee response in Moldova. Priority will be given to strengthen comprehensive accountability processes nationwide, including accessible feedback and complaint mechanisms, meaningful community engagement, communication with communities and organizational learning.

The AAP Task Force will provide capacity-building and awareness-raising activities among partners at local level to mainstream the concept and promote minimum AAP standards as well as core humanitarian principles. The latter includes strengthening inter-institutional and inter-agency coordination for the advancement of collective AAP, including a joint reporting mechanism that informs the response, and establishing efficient, inclusive and accessible community-based feedback and complaint mechanisms with an age, gender, and diversity approach, in coordination with the PSEA Network and in close collaboration with local organizations, including refugee- and women-led organizations.

To ensure that refugees and affected host communities have accessible, accurate, timely and reliable information on humanitarian assistance and their rights and obligations, the AAP Task Force will promote a coordinated approach to avoid duplications and misinformation (harmonization of messages, common FAQ, information sessions), as well as joint campaigns on topics such as access to services, international protection, MHPSS, and prevention of trafficking, fraud and other protection risks, among other topics and in close coordination with relevant sectors.

At both the inter-agency and organizational level, RRP partners will jointly work to strengthen systematic processes promoting the inclusive and meaningful participation of refugees and affected host community members in decisions that concern them, ensuring an age, gender, and diversity approach.

## Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



PSEA is a system-wide obligation and mandatory requirement for all RRP partners. Existing risk factors highlight the need to further advance collective efforts to prevent, mitigate the risk and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse. Identified risks include the profile of the refugee population – mainly composed of women and children, high rates of family separation, prevailing gender norms, a wide range of actors involved in the response, some of whom have limited expertise on PSEA, as well as increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities.

In 2023, the PSEA Network will continue to work with partners to promote safeguarding measures at the inter-agency and organizational levels, with the objective of ensuring that refugees and affected host communities can enjoy their rights and access services and assistance safely and with dignity. Prioritized activities of the PSEA Network are focused on:

- **Capacity-Building:** Deliver awareness-raising, trainings and briefings for aid workers on the UN standards of conduct and IASC Six Core Principles relating to SEA. Moreover, support will be provided to organizations towards strengthening their institutional PSEA capacity, including on investigation.
- **Community Outreach, Engagement and Awareness Raising:** Work in close collaboration with refugee and affected host communities to promote awareness on PSEA, including obligations of aid workers, reporting mechanisms and assistance to victims, and strengthen engagement with affected community members and local civil society organizations, including organizations of persons with disabilities.
- **SEA Risk Assessment and Mitigation:** Conduct an Inter-Agency SEA risk assessment that will inform risk mitigation measures across sectors, while providing evidence for improved PSEA planning.
- **Inter-Agency Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms:** Roll-out the Inter-Agency PSEA Standard Operating Procedures for Providing Assistance to Survivors and Recording and Processing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Complaints in Moldova, and further facilitate availability and access to safe, and confidential reporting mechanisms of SEA allegations, ensuring a survivor-centred and human-rights based approach.

## Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



In 2023, MHPSS partners in Moldova will continue to adopt a holistic, cross-cutting, multi-sectoral approach designed to protect and promote psychosocial well-being, prevent severe mental health problems, and treat such conditions when they occur.

MHPSS service delivery will continue to focus on ensuring refugees have access to the full continuum of services while also reinforcing existing national MHPSS structures and resources. Emphasis will be placed on capacity-building of health care workers, educators, social workers, local authorities, and others to ensure they have the skills and knowledge needed to provide ethical and effective MHPSS services. To directly address MHPSS needs, partners will continue to operate service points in refugee accommodation centres and deploy mobile teams to host communities. Services offered at these points will be gender- and age-appropriate and include

counselling, psychoeducation, socialization, recreation, self-expression, stress-relief, referrals, etc. Individuals requiring additional specialized support will be referred to Community Mental Health Centres. To reach individuals with access challenges, partners will operate hotlines and accessible on-line platforms.

MHPSS will be mainstreamed into other sectors such as Protection, Education and Basic Needs. Frontline workers in these sectors will be trained in scalable interventions such as psychological first aid and Problem Management Plus (PM+) to improve their ability to recognize individuals in distress and link them with the right services in a manner that respects their privacy and dignity. Other prioritized response modalities in 2023 will include:

- Situation analyses/assessments
- Remote modalities (hotlines, digital self-care, etc.)
- Assessments and referrals to specialized services – including psychotropic medication support when appropriate
- Safe spaces for all women, children, youth and older persons, including those with disabilities and ethnic minorities, such as Roma refugees
- Peer support networks
- Awareness-raising activities/ dissemination of accessible information, education and communication materials to provide information and reduce stigmatization
- Coordination, service mapping, and strengthening of MHPSS referral mechanisms

## Gender Mainstreaming



The Gender Task Force (GTF) will work with RRP partners and sectors to promote integration of gender into the refugee response to ensure that the needs, capacities and priorities of women, girls, men and boys — related to pre-existing gender roles and inequalities, along with the specific gendered impacts of displacement — are recognized and addressed. Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting women's empowerment in humanitarian action will help ensure that the response is equitable, and that it establishes and protects the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons.

The GTF will promote the systemic collection and analysis of sex, age, and disability disaggregated data (SADD) and will support gender mainstreaming across sectoral and inter-sectoral assessments to enhance availability and accessibility of gender-sensitive and responsive programmes and services for all. It will also ensure that all population groups are reached and regularly consulted, including those facing increased risks and vulnerabilities.

Additionally, efforts will be made to increase meaningful participation and leadership of national and local civil society organizations, focusing on women-led organizations, women's rights organizations, and minority-rights groups, through flexible funding, capacity building, and facilitating access to humanitarian coordination structures.

## Multi-purpose Cash Assistance



As the modality of choice by refugees and host communities, cash assistance respects their dignity and independence and gives them a sense of normality and ownership by allowing them to decide how best to address their priority needs. Cash has a positive effect on local economy and stimulates social cohesion through strengthened relationship between the refugees and host communities. Further, cash is an effective tool to mitigate harmful coping-mechanisms.

In 2023, partners will provide cash assistance to refugees and host communities for basic needs and some sectorial outcomes (protection, accommodation) with respect to transitional nature of the cash-based assistance programmes. From the onset of the programme design, partners will mainstream protection, disability, and gender equality to ensure the accessibility and inclusiveness of assistance for persons in need, including women at risk, single mothers, children, people with disabilities, older persons, Roma, persons living with HIV, families with many children, LGBTIQ+ and other vulnerable groups. In this respect, RRP partners will continue to work closely with the Protection Sector (including GBV and Child Protection), the Cross-Sector Task Force (Gender, MHPSS, AAP and PSEA) as well as Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion actors to strengthen the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

The overall strategy for the cash assistance has been defined by the Cash Working Group in collaboration with the Government of Moldova:

- Providing inclusive and accessible cash assistance to refugees and host communities to meet their basic needs in dignity and to mitigate protection risks.
- Ensuring the overall cash response is coherent, avoids duplication, and finding opportunities to increase effectiveness.
- Supporting relevant authorities through technical assistance and capacity building to promote the inclusion of affected population to social protection systems.
- Promoting the use of streamlined mechanisms, standards, and tools across partners for harmonized, quality and accountable programming.



## Partnership and Coordination

From the onset of the refugee influx into Moldova, an inter-agency Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) led by the Government of Moldova and UNHCR was established comprising eight sectoral working groups and three cross-sectoral taskforces. In line with the Refugee Coordination Model, the RCF has supported the Government's leadership of the response by ensuring a common strategy and vision among partners that is aligned with government priorities and the needs of refugees and affected host communities. From 40 partners initially participating under the RRP in 2022, the RCF has grown to include over 90 partners reporting activities, while 73 partners have included activities and will seek funding under the 2023 RRP.

Partners involved	73
UN Agencies	13
International NGOs	28
National NGOs	24
IFRC&RC	1
Faith-based Organizations	7

*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.*

The RCF will continue to foster evidence-based coordination in the framework of the Refugee Data Management System, and to strengthen engagement with traditional and non-traditional partners to catalyze refugee protection, inclusion, and social cohesion over time. In addition, the RCF will promote coherence and complementarity between the 2023 RRP and the UNSDCF 2023-2027, ensuring the refugee response contributes to medium- and long-term national development priorities, by supporting to build the resilience of systems and services and facilitating refugee inclusion. Moreover, UNHCR will closely work with the Resident Coordinator as he leads the engagement of the UNCT with the UN Common Pledge 2.0 ahead of the 2023 GRF. The participation of refugees and host communities – including refugee- and women-led organizations – will be reinforced, including through local refugee coordination forums. The protection, child protection and GBV sectors, among others, will continue to be coordinated through the RCF working and sub-working groups that were established in 2022. A Protection Advisory Group (PAG), comprised of six members of the PWG plus the chair and co-chair, was created at the end of 2022 to help guide the work of the PWG in 2023. Each coordination forum will develop workplans for the coming year and coordinate activities through monthly meetings and continued correspondence.

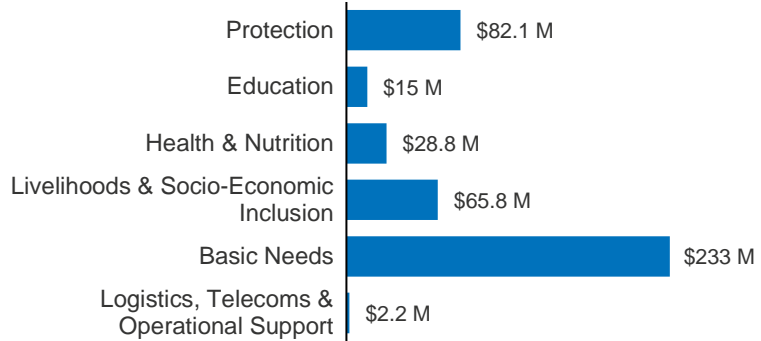
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### Total financial requirements in USD



**\$427 M**

### By sector in million USD



Total Protection requirements	\$82,106,962
Other protection activities	\$49,249,068
GBV	\$15,859,415
Child Protection	\$16,998,479

Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$176,909,534
Protection	\$5,376,200
Basic Needs	\$160,473,855
Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	\$11,059,479

\* 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	73
UN Agencies	\$305,213,484
International NGOs	\$84,397,072
National NGOs	\$10,390,939
IFRC&RC	\$13,932,720
Faith-based Organizations	\$13,027,683

## By Partner

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
<b>UN Agencies</b>							
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)				4,000,000			4,000,000
International Labour Organization (ILO)				1,935,000			1,935,000
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	7,070,000		2,885,000	5,600,000	18,970,000	500,000	35,025,000
The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	45,000		155,000				200,000
UN Human Rights Office in Moldova (OHCHR)	1,609,854						1,609,854
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)	2,057,988			3,081,939			5,139,927
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	450,000						450,000
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	10,500,000	5,500,000	3,000,000		14,000,000		33,000,000
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	2,000,000			39,840,000	2,150,000		43,990,000
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	19,869,532			1,289,269	92,764,373	1,576,826	115,500,000
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	6,900,000	1,690,000	6,750,000	1,500,000	3,890,000	96,000	20,826,000
World Food Programme (WFP)					34,490,180		34,490,180
World Health Organization (WHO)			9,047,524				9,047,524
<b>International NGOs</b>							
ACTED	585,000			910,000	7,046,000		8,541,000
Action Against Hunger (Action Contre la Faim)			852,800		885,800		1,738,600

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
ActionAid International	687,500						687,500
Association for Aid and Relief Japan	1,076,095						1,076,095
Bibliothèques sans frontières	110,000	60,000		650,000			820,000
CLEAR Global	849,488						849,488
Danish Refugee Council	650,600		30,000	84,000	451,600		1,216,200
Early Starters International		194,200					194,200
Handicap International	1,196,430						1,196,430
HelpAge	254,300				1,950,990		2,205,290
Helvetas	889,200			1,429,000	2,572,398		4,890,598
HIAS	456,000			269,100	65,000		790,100
Hope4					286,000		286,000
International Rescue Committee	1,150,000	305,000	200,000	300,000			1,955,000
Internews	840,000						840,000
INTERSOS	1,222,300	390,000	1,481,760	140,000	914,000		4,148,060
Medecins du Monde	240,012		1,326,131				1,566,143
Norwegian Refugee Council	3,650,000	2,625,000		2,050,000	4,900,000		13,225,000
Oxfam	1,691,075						1,691,075
Peace Winds Japan		211,900			2,192,200		2,404,100
People In Need	721,000	249,500		489,500	14,944,590		16,404,590
Plan International	5,853,694	284,273			3,297,153		9,435,119
Project HOPE	209,851		913,929				1,123,780
Solidarités International	9,771	372,254	20,000	117,705	1,179,130		1,698,859
Terre des Hommes	501,500						501,500
VOICE Amplified	138,000						138,000
WeWorld	696,536	346,095		200,000	794,500		2,037,131
World Vision International	746,403	991,328		556,830	442,653		2,737,215
<b>National NGOs</b>							
A.O. Serviciu pentru Pace	86,880	38,500					125,380
Alliance of Organisations for Persons with	20,000						20,000

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
Disabilities from Moldova							
AO Asociația pentru Combaterea Izolării Informaționale ECOU	38,000						38,000
AO Centrul de Drept al Avocatilor/ Law Center of Advocates	18,000						18,000
AO Centrul de Reabilitare Medico-Sociala pentru Persoane cu Vedere Slaba „LOW VISION”			35,000				35,000
AO Societatea Invalizilor din RM	183,200				831,325		1,014,525
AO SOS Autism	68,000	10,000		60,000	328,200		466,200
Asociația Tinerilor cu Diabet DIA (DIA Association of People Living with Type 1 Diabetes)			2,590				2,590
Be An Angel					640,000		640,000
CASMED		19,500					19,500
Centrul National de Prevenire a Abuzului fata de Copii	201,000	100,500					301,500
Charity Centre for Refugees	68,867	88,352	174,279	120,527	908,009		1,360,034
Clinica Juridica Balti	96,500	103,400		4,700	151,900		356,500
Coaliția Vocea Romilor				400,000			400,000
CSO "Moms in Action"	103,000	30,000		20,000	114,000		267,000
Fondul pentru Prevenirea Criminalității	31,074						31,074
Keystone Moldova	1,163,281						1,163,281
Lumos Foundation Moldova	252,270	56,520	64,800		528,900		902,490
NCUM	360,000			600,000	1,560,000		2,520,000
ONG Asociația profesorilor de limba ucraineană "Promini"		30,625					30,625
Platforma pentru Egalitate de Gen	40,500		20,000		4,800		65,300
Public Association „DEMOS”	39,492	89,390		39,492	121,966		290,340

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
Retea Femeilor pentru Democratie "Women's Democracy Network"		238,600					238,600
Union of Young Roma "Tarna Rom"		85,000					85,000
IFRC & Red Cross/ Crescent Societies							
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)			1,164,000		12,768,720		13,932,720
Faith-based organizations							
ADRA Moldova	3,222,000				290,000		3,512,000
Catholic Relief Services		704,432			3,350,680		4,055,112
Church World Service	168,770		197,000	78,450	2,300,000		2,744,220
Dorcas	149,000			20,000	293,000		462,000
Fundatia "Don Bosco"		228,000			133,200		361,200
HEKS/EPER	870,000				400,000		1,270,000
Medical Teams International			496,671		126,480		623,151
<b>Total</b>	<b>82,106,962</b>	<b>15,042,369</b>	<b>28,816,484</b>	<b>65,785,512</b>	<b>233,037,746</b>	<b>2,172,826</b>	<b>\$426,961,899</b>

COUNTRY CHAPTER

# POLAND



# > At a Glance

## Poland Planned Response (January-December 2023)



**2,000,000**

targeted refugee population



**\$709.4 M**

total financial requirements in USD



**83**

partners involved





# POLAND

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

Poland has generously welcomed large numbers of refugees from Ukraine since the escalation of the war in Ukraine. After the first ten months of the crisis, some 1.5 million refugees had registered with the Polish authorities and were granted temporary protection. Given the ongoing conflict and unpredictable situation in Ukraine, it is expected that refugee flows into or transiting through Poland will continue. An escalation of conflict, as well as the difficult conditions during the winter months, could trigger new arrivals to Poland and reinforce challenges in access to accommodation and essential services. While recent surveys indicate that most refugees from Ukraine hope to return to their place of origin, the majority are planning to stay in Poland for the time being because of ongoing instability and concerns for their safety and security in Ukraine.<sup>82</sup>

Among Poland's current refugee population, a significant number of individuals and groups have heightened protection needs. Most households are composed of women, children, and older persons, with family separation being a common feature of their displacement pattern. Consequently, protection risks arise including exposure to abuse, exploitation and gender-based violence (GBV). Moreover, some population groups are increasingly vulnerable and remain dependent on the government's social protection assistance and support, often residing in collective shelters for longer periods, while newly arriving refugees have more acute protection needs due to prolonged exposure to conflict and violence, which has an impact not only on their ability to cope financially, but also emotionally given higher exposure to traumatic events. According to the latest protection profiling findings from Poland, 64 per cent of the respondents plan to stay in Poland mainly due to safety reasons.<sup>83</sup> The intention to stay was higher among refugees traveling with at least one person with specific needs (68 per cent), especially single parents and persons with a medical condition. Among respondents, 15 per cent intended to return to Ukraine, while another 15 per cent were uncertain about further plans.<sup>52</sup> Only 6 per cent planned to move to another country, with Germany, Canada and Norway being the most frequently reported destinations. The wish to move onward was more popular among those who arrived in August and September (18 per cent), than among those who arrived in the previous months (3 per cent).

At national and local levels, Polish authorities have responded to refugee arrivals by ensuring access to essential, life-saving services. Along border areas, reception centres and host

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<sup>82</sup> UNHCR, [Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine #2](#), September 2022; and UNHCR–Reach, [Refugees from Ukraine in Poland: Profiling Update](#), August 2022.

<sup>83</sup> UNHCR–Reach, [Refugees from Ukraine in Poland: Profiling Update](#), September 2022.

community accommodations with warm food were established and transportation services were made available. Moreover, to promote self-reliance and inclusion, refugees were granted access to the labour market and the national social service system, in line with provisions of the EU's Temporary Protection Directive. Authorities supported with childcare and admitted Ukrainian students into the Polish school system, while also facilitating online education. To address basic needs, emergency cash payments to refugees were provided. Households hosting refugees also received financial support. Local communities and civil society were highly responsive, and rapidly mobilized volunteers to provide relief items and offer accommodation across the country.

The Poland chapter of the 2023 Regional Response Plan reaffirms the commitment to support the government response by humanitarian partners, including civil society, refugee-led organizations, UN agencies, faith-based-organizations, international and national NGOs, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

While the Government has the primary responsibility to protect refugees, partners of the 2023 RRP will continue to coordinate with authorities under the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) in a complementary and cohesive manner, ensuring that multisectoral activities are impactful and address refugee needs, and are in line with government priorities. The national and localized coordination mechanisms in the regions of Mazowieckie (Warsaw), Malopolskie (Krakow), Lubelskie (Lublin) and Podkarpackie (Rzeszow) will further strengthen cooperation and synergies, while the role of Polish organizations will remain a central feature to support the sustainability of the response.

## Population Planning Figures

As of end December 2022, 1,508,338 refugees from Ukraine have registered for temporary protection in Poland, obtaining a national identification number, known as PESEL, which allows access to services such as health and social support.<sup>84</sup> Additionally, 1,596 Ukrainians have applied for international protection as of 13 November 2022.

More than 40 per cent of refugees from Ukraine in Poland are children and 65 per cent are female. Over 60 per cent of the registered refugee population is accounted for in five destination regions, including the voivodeships of Mazowieckie (includes Warsaw), Dolnoslaskie (includes Wroclaw), Slaskie (includes Katowice), Malopolskie (includes Krakow), and Wielkopolskie (includes Poznan).<sup>85</sup>

According to the Protection Profiling carried out in September 2022 in Poland,<sup>86</sup> 80 per cent of respondents were separated from an immediate family member (mostly due to martial law limitations for men to leave the country). Results from the multisectoral needs assessment indicate

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<sup>84</sup> Government of Poland, Registered [applications](#) for the UKR status due to the conflict in Ukraine, January 2023

<sup>85</sup> Government of Poland, [Statistical data on Ukrainian citizens registered as a foreigner based in connection with the conflict in Ukraine, September 2022](#).

<sup>86</sup> UNHCR–Reach, [Refugees from Ukraine in Poland: Profiling Update](#), September 2022.

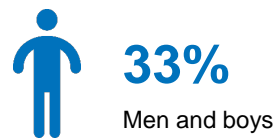
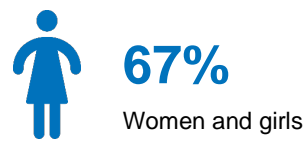
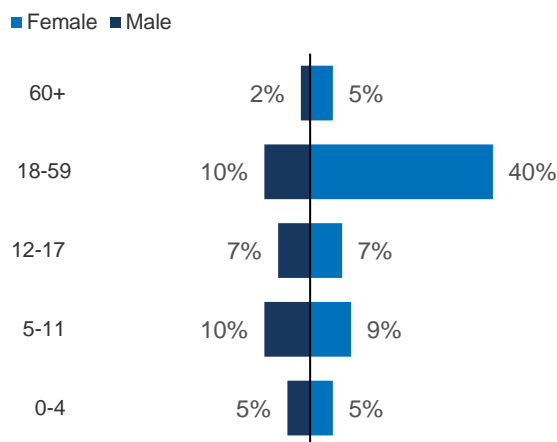
that most arrivals come from Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson and Donetsk oblasts in Ukraine.

The projected population of refugees displaced from Ukraine and third-country nationals (TCNs) in need of international protection who are expected to be in need of assistance in 2023 is two million. This figure may be revised (upwards or downwards) due to the fluidity of movements across borders and the unpredictable situation in Ukraine. It is expected that new arrivals will continue, along with pendular movements in and out of Ukraine and onward movements to third countries as some persons reunite with family members. The possibility of a new influx from Ukraine will also remain high due to the volatile situation and precarious living conditions during the harsh winter season.

Poland	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection as of end Dec 2022 <sup>87</sup>	Target population in 2023
Refugee Population	1,508,338	2,000,000

**Total**

**Age and gender breakdown<sup>88</sup>**



<sup>87</sup> 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.

<sup>88</sup> Calculations based on Temporary Protection registration data.

## Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

The *Act on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine in the Context of the Armed Conflict in Ukraine of 12 March 2022* sets out a broad range of provisions protecting refugees from Ukraine, including on documentation, access to employment, health care, education and social security benefits on par with Polish nationals.<sup>89</sup> While TCNs previously residing in Ukraine are not covered by the Special Act, they fall within the scope of the Act on Granting International Protection from 2003, which regulates temporary protection in Poland in accordance with the Implementing Decision by the Council of the European Union.

Among Poland's current refugee population, a significant proportion of individuals and groups have heightened protection needs. According to the results of a multi-sectoral needs analysis conducted between August and September 2022, 8 per cent of Ukrainian household members were found to be at risk of disability most of them being older adults (over 60 years of age). A further 26 per cent individuals reported the need to access health care.<sup>90</sup> People with heightened protection needs also include unaccompanied and separated children, children out of school and/or at risk of violence and exploitation, woman at risk of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and labor exploitation, survivors of GBV, including intimate partner violence, refugees of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics, as well as people from ethnic minorities such as the Roma population.<sup>91</sup>

Outputs from the Protection Sector's joint analysis, a multi-sectoral needs assessment, protection monitoring, community feedback mechanisms and reports from Ukrainian-led organizations, partners and authorities indicate that vulnerabilities for women, children, older people and people with disabilities are increasing as they are dependent on social protection assistance and reside in collective shelters for longer periods. These groups have limited opportunities for meaningful inclusion and gainful livelihood, thus increasing the likelihood of marginalization.<sup>92</sup> In some cases, this has reportedly triggered returns to Ukraine even when conditions were not necessarily conducive nor safe.<sup>93</sup>

In this context and given the increasing pressure that the refugee response has put on the Government of Poland's social protection system, the current legislation is likely to be amended to include an obligation for refugees staying in collective centres to contribute to the cost, unless they fall within a list of vulnerable categories that will be exempt from payments.

Widespread family separation and the absence of social support networks have exacerbated vulnerabilities among refugees. In particular, the conflict has placed women and adolescent girls

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<sup>89</sup> Government of Poland Ministry of the Interior and Administration, [The Act on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with armed conflict on the territory of that country](#), 12 March 2022. According to the provisions of the Act, citizens of Ukraine, who left their homeland due to the war, will be able to stay in Poland for 18 months legally. It will apply to people who came to Poland directly from Ukraine and declared their intention to stay in the territory of the country. The Act assumes assigning a PESEL number to Ukrainian citizens who came to Poland in connection with the war. This solution will allow the implementation of many public services for these people.

<sup>90</sup> Poland: Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment, data collection between August and September 2022, final report to be published.

<sup>91</sup> [Human rights, needs and discrimination – the situation of Roma refugees from Ukraine in Poland](#), 26 October 2022.

<sup>92</sup> Paweł Adamowicz Union Of Polish Metropolises, [Social and psychological effects of selected housing solutions for refugees from Ukraine](#), September 2022.

<sup>93</sup> NRC, [Ukrainian Homecoming: A Study of Refugee Returns from Poland](#), 5 September 2022.



*Ivana and her daughter Alina wait to register for UNHCR's cash assistance programme for refugees from Ukraine in Warsaw. © UNHCR/Maciej Moskwa*

under precarious circumstances and exposed them to risks of exploitation and trafficking, while many remain vulnerable to these factors in workplaces and host community accommodation in Poland.<sup>94</sup> Newly arriving refugees exhibit more acute protection needs due to longer exposure to conflict and violence and the loss of belongings or destruction of their homes. Many have lived through multiple episodes of displacement within Ukraine and now in Poland experience insecure or unstable accommodation challenges accessing longer-term accommodation.

Refugees from Ukraine may obtain a national identification number (PESEL) through registration which enables them to legally access social assistance and health care services; yet persons with disabilities or serious medical conditions often encounter difficulties in exercising the benefits, while older individuals remain at risk of isolation due to limited mobility. The situation is equally precarious for large numbers of unaccompanied and separated children who were placed in residential or group care homes after being evacuated from Ukraine under bilateral agreements. Finally, members of the Roma community, already a marginalized group within Ukraine, were forced to flee and remain highly susceptible to acts of discrimination and violence.

Mental health and psychosocial needs amongst refugee communities remain elevated, especially among older people, with evidence from protection monitoring suggesting more compounded and complex mental conditions among new arrivals, who may require specialized psychiatric care and medical interventions.<sup>95</sup> Other critical needs include access to services for persons with specific protection needs, sexual and reproductive health care, GBV survivor-centred care, and gender-affirming care.

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<sup>94</sup> UNODC, [Conflict in Ukraine: Key Evidence on Risks of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants](#), August 2022; and Human Rights Watch, [Poland: Trafficking, Exploitation Risks for Refugees](#), 29 April 2022.

<sup>95</sup> Poland: Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment, data collection between August and September 2022, final report to be published.

## Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

The overarching principles guiding the Poland Protection and Solutions strategy consists of: 1) the centrality and mainstreaming of protection; 2) a government-led response supported by the Protection Sector members to ensure coherence, sustainability and avoid duplications; 3) transition from an initial emergency response towards self-reliance and inclusion; and 4) ongoing preparedness for potential influxes.

The strategic vision aims at supporting the Government to ensure access to territory, provision of legal status and documentation and access to rights for all refugees from Ukraine. This will be achieved through engagement with a wide range of actors in a whole-of-society approach, with the goal of addressing immediate needs, expanding opportunities for inclusion and longer-term solutions and promoting non-discriminatory approaches, through an age, gender and diversity lens.

Protection analysis remains a crucial tool to inform evidence-based programming for protection, including documenting good practices and capturing the needs and priorities of refugee communities. In the context of joint efforts to prepare for additional waves of displacement from Ukraine, support will be provided through context and gap analysis, predictive modelling, training and capacity building, supporting coordination at national and field levels, and mobilizing resources as needed.

The joint protection response aims to minimize protection risks faced by refugees upon arrival in Poland and address their most immediate needs, by supporting timely and person-centred access to information and providing legal assistance, psychosocial support, and material assistance, including but not limited to cash-based interventions.

Identification and referral of persons with specific needs to specialized services remains limited and requires support from the protection actors operating on the ground, both at the border and in areas where refugees settled. Persons with disabilities are a group that has been prioritized for the response and require specific attention and support given administrative obstacles to access services.

Ten months into the emergency response, with conditions conducive to return absent for now and into the foreseeable future, supporting refugees' socio-economic inclusion and self-reliance in Poland has become crucial. The 2023 response will therefore include initiatives to promote reskilling, upskilling and both technical and language training, as well as support for entrepreneurship and financial inclusion in collaboration with the private sector. Linking refugees with affordable accommodation, childcare and education services will also be explored and promoted as they are key enabling factors for employment. Supporting the Government to provide alternatives to collective shelters and ensuring more sustainable options will be addressed jointly by all protection actors, with consideration for the specific needs and vulnerabilities of certain groups.

Displacement from Ukraine has been characterized by family separation, with the majority (over 90 per cent) of those who fled being women and children while most men remained behind. Protecting children and women at risk is central to the response. Key response priorities will include

strengthening the provision of information on access to services and referral mechanisms; community integration, education of refugee children and addressing their psychosocial needs through child-friendly spaces, MHPSS and counselling. Advocacy will also focus on the protection of unaccompanied or separated children as well as refugee children who are in institutional or alternative care settings to ensure they are identified and included within the national child protection architecture; and advocacy promoting the best interests of the child in all actions affecting them.

The protection response also aims to prevent and respond to GBV, by enhancing coordination, supporting the delivery of multisectoral and accessible services for survivors across the country, enhancing national and regional referral pathways and expanding prevention activities through information and awareness campaigns, including through women and girls' empowerment programmes and community-based approaches.

Increasing risks of exploitation are reported, particularly given the considerable reliance on host families for accommodation, but with reports of smugglers and traffickers targeting collective shelters where those most at risk reside. Supporting the Government to establish mechanism to prevent and identify risks of trafficking is central to the response. The need to screen, register and monitor volunteers, volunteer organizations and private companies, including those providing transport is crucial to mitigate abuse.

Poland's generous response to refugees from Ukraine is remarkable, yet the pressure on national services, the economy and local communities will remain a distinguishing feature in 2023. Promoting social cohesion and peaceful coexistence among refugee groups, and between refugee and host communities, is a key cross-cutting factor in project design and implementation.

Actors will promote dialogue and mutual understanding at different levels of response, including with local authorities and among refugees and host communities to foster a protection environment that promotes resilience and inclusiveness. At the same time, RRP partners will raise awareness and advocate against misinformation, discrimination, xenophobia and exclusion toward refugees through community-led approaches targeting diverse age and gender groups. RRP partners will support the Government to create livelihoods opportunities and an enabling environment to foster self-reliance, and medium to long-term inclusion of refugees into the Polish economy and society.

Protection partners are committed to ensuring that refugee and local community-based structures are consulted and engaged throughout the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all assistance and protection services. Accountability to Affected Populations is a strategic priority within the Ukraine refugee response framework, reflected in the government's ongoing effort to improve communication with persons of concern, ensuring that refugees enjoy rights on an equal footing and participate meaningfully in the decisions that affect their lives, families, and communities. The Protection Sector is committed to ensure that effective complaint and feedback mechanisms are put in place across the board, and has stressed the need to ensure that communication with communities adjust to the needs of diverse population, making messages accessible for all, including minority groups.

## Country Strategic Objectives

The 2023 Poland chapter of the Regional Response Plan is fully aligned with and guided by the regional strategic objectives (SO) of the plan, namely to:

### **S01: Ensure refugees' access to protection status and rights on a non-discriminatory basis**

This includes activities to support and strengthen the Government's protection response as well as that of all relevant stakeholders to register new arrivals, identify and refer persons with specific needs, and provide relevant services and humanitarian assistance, that are age-, gender-, and diversity sensitive. While the RRP was established to respond to the Ukraine refugee situation, RRP partners will continue to advocate for an inclusive 'one refugee approach' for all persons of concern, to reduce and ultimately eliminate differences in rights based on the nationality in approaches to protection assistance. As such, RRP partners will provide protection, assistance, and services, including GBV, to population in need at the point of delivery in a non-discriminatory manner.

### **S02: Pave the way toward solutions and expand access to social and economic opportunities to facilitate inclusion through a whole-of-society approach and in line with the Global Compact on Refugees, recognizing the critical role played by national and local actors, including NGOs and RLOs**

Working towards durable solutions is a critical aspect across the RRP response especially as given that many refugees from Ukraine are likely to remain in Poland for the near future, RRP partners will work to ensure access for refugees to livelihood and economic opportunities, including for the most vulnerable refugees. Partners will also continue to support the inclusion of refugee children into the national child protection and education systems. Effective access to the social protection system will also be strengthened. These aims can only be achieved through the active engagement and participation of national and refugee-led organizations, and the firm commitment by the Government of Poland.

### **S03: 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**

RRP partners will respond to the needs of most vulnerable individuals, including women, children at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children, older persons, people with disabilities, asylum seekers, and stateless persons, by providing targeted support and assistance. RRP partners will work and engage with both local communities and the refugee population, to strengthen two-way communication systems aimed at receiving complaints or provide a response and make referrals to process the complaints.



#### **S04: Advance social cohesion between refugee and host communities through targeted interventions**

Record high inflation, the energy crisis, and the pressure on municipal and central level service provision may heighten tensions between host communities and refugee population. Against the backdrop of these challenges, social cohesion has been identified as a key objective of the 2023 RRP. RRP partners, thanks to their wide network of partners and solid relations with both central and municipal authorities, will advocate against misinformation and seek to support the development of positive relations between refugee and host communities.

RRP partners will operationalize these objectives in complementarity to existing national structures, as the identification of key activities and responses took place in consultation with the Government of Poland – ensuring alignment and a unified vision between sector interventions and the government's priorities.

Localization and sustainability will play a crucial role in the 2023 plan for Poland. Stakeholders are committed to empowering national and local humanitarian action by increasing the share of financing accessible to these actors and supporting the enhancement of their national delivery systems, capacities, and preparedness planning in the spirit of the Global Compact on Refugees.

Furthermore, RRP partners will aim to adopt best practices and advocate for an inclusive and equitable 'one refugee approach', which seeks to reduce and ultimately eliminate differences in the exercising of rights and access to services based on nationality.

#### **Highlight on the achievements of community-based organizations**

Community-based organizations play a key role in the humanitarian response to the Ukraine refugee crisis by providing direct assistance and helping newly arrived refugees adapt to the Polish environment. Zustricz is a Ukrainian community-based organization founded in 2016 and focused on promoting solidarity and the integration of refugees from Ukraine in Polish communities in and around Krakow, providing mental health and psychosocial assistance and managing several community centres in the city. Zustricz successfully implements outreach activities targeting highly vulnerable refugees in smaller peripheral cities across Malopolska voivodeship, where access to services and information is often limited.

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



In view of the influx of refugees from Ukraine into Poland, the government adopted the *Act on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens in the Context of the Armed Conflict in Ukraine* on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2022. The law provides broad protections to Ukrainian nationals who fled the conflict in Ukraine on or after the 24 February 2022<sup>96</sup> and allows for extended legal stay, access to employment, health care, education and to social security benefits on par with Polish nationals. While TCNs previously residing in Ukraine are not covered by the Special Act, they fall within the scope of the Act on Granting International Protection from 2003. Building on the national legal framework, the Protection Sector priorities for 2023 will include:

- Promoting access to durable legal status, documentation, and rights through advocacy, provision of information and legal aid, and enhancing access to national systems and services.
- Mitigating protection risks affecting persons with specific needs by ensuring early identification of these groups by all responders – including national authorities – and promoting access to specialized services, with a particular focus on the prevention of and response to GBV, trafficking, as well as the protection of children, persons with disabilities, older persons, persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnic minorities and other refugees with specific needs.
- Fostering social cohesion with actions that mitigate potential conflict between refugees from Ukraine and the Polish society through continuous constructive and inclusive engagement with communities and promotion of positive public narratives. Establishing mechanisms to facilitate two-way communication with refugee and local communities in all phases of the response to ensure it addresses the most pressing needs and priorities as expressed by refugees.

#### Sub-sector: Child Protection



Nearly all refugee households from Ukraine comprise women and children who have experienced family separation, with many children at risk of child protection issues, such as psychosocial distress or exposure to violence, neglect, or abuse, which require immediate access to relevant services. Interventions are critical to adequately respond to the numerous factors that children faced during their journey, upon arrival and during their stay in Poland. The national system's capacity to provide time-sensitive child protection services such as case management/Best Interests Procedure, alternative care or guardianship arrangements is under strain to absorb the added demand of at-risk children fleeing from Ukraine. Owing to ongoing needs and in support of the Government's response, Child Protection actors will focus on:

<sup>96</sup> [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/382](#), 4 March 2022.

- Advocating for the use of Best Interests Procedures and establishing referral pathways that complement national legislation and existing systems.
- Strengthening identification and referral of unaccompanied, separated and at-risk children to specialized services.
- Support relevant family tracing and reunification services alongside relevant inter-agency partners.
- Disseminating child-friendly, accessible messaging on preventing family separation, child rights and response services.
- Ensuring child-friendly community feedback mechanisms are widely accessible, including to children with disabilities.
- Encouraging the psychosocial well-being of refugee children and youth from Ukraine through mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), as well as access to health care services including communicable diseases prevention.
- Advocating for family and community-based alternative care solutions over institutional care as a global best practice and, when not possible, advocating to ensure institutional care facilities are properly staffed and monitored in line with best practices.

Actors will further reinforce national capacities by strengthening alternative care arrangements and enhancing the screening of caregivers, and providing technical support, training and capacity building to frontline service providers, existing child protection service providers and refugee and diaspora-led organizations. Further longer-term inclusion and social cohesion strategies will be developed to support refugee children and adolescents in the national education system.

### Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



The disproportionate number of women and children displaced by the Ukraine crisis elevates the need to respond to, prevent and mitigate the risks of GBV such as sexual violence, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and human trafficking, for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Vulnerabilities are multiplied by family separation, challenges in accessing livelihoods and accommodation in collective shelters. Sector priorities will reinforce prevention, strengthen response, and bolster national capacities by:

- Expanding information and awareness campaigns about GBV, services and helplines, empowerment programmes, community-based approaches and gender-transformative initiatives.
- Mapping services, establishing and maintaining localized referral pathways that incorporate GBV assistance such as psychosocial support (PSS), including case management, medical services, legal aid and are made available in English, Polish, Ukrainian and Roma languages.
- Ensuring multisectoral and accessible specialized services to GBV survivors at a national level, while ensuring access to free-of-charge sexual and reproductive health and clinical management of rape services in the humanitarian response.
- Expanding GBV specialized services to reach women and girls, especially those at heightened risk of GBV or residing in underserved areas.

- Mainstreaming the outcomes of GBV safety audits (risk assessments) and strengthening the capacity of other sectors on GBV integration and risk mitigation to ensure that all identified risks are reduced addressed, and services are accessible for refugees.
- Strengthening the capacity of GBV and other sector actors to respond with a survivor-centred approach, supporting localization initiatives, and ensuring financial support to organizations that provide GBV services.

These activities will complement and invest in national response capacities including local women-led organizations and refugee-led organizations, civil society organizations and government providers, to ensure adequate, compassionate, confidential, and professional care to all GBV survivors, including marginalized groups like women and girls with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ populations and refugees of other nationalities. Strengthening the response in other services – in particular health, education and social welfare – will ensure a multisectoral and holistic approach that addresses survivor needs.

## EDUCATION



With Poland currently hosting one of the largest populations of school-age refugees and youth from Ukraine, their inclusion in the national education system remains a priority. Non-formal forms of education, such as those aimed at retaining a link with the education system of the country of origin, will continue to be supported where appropriate and where they benefit refugee learners.

At the onset of the humanitarian response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis in Poland, the Education Sector focused on providing access to formal and non-formal education with the support of the government's March Act,<sup>97</sup> that has been revised to adjust the Polish education system offer to the needs of Ukrainian students. In addition to the admission of Ukrainian pupils to regular classes, the Polish Government recommended the schools to provide preparatory classes (with emphasis on Polish language tuition), additional Polish language classes and compensatory classes as part of formal education within the Polish system of education along with provision of learning materials, while at the same time, accordingly to the choice of educational path, Ukrainian curriculum through distance learning implemented within the Ukrainian system of education was accessible.

According to the Ministry of Education and Science (data from 30.11.2022), 191,383 children were enrolled in formal education in Poland, including 36,171 children in kindergartens in 2022-2023 school year.<sup>98</sup> The ongoing instability in Ukraine continues to cause families to flee, impacting enrolment and putting pressure on the already scarce spaces in Polish educational institutions.

<sup>97</sup> Government of Poland, [Law on assistance to Ukrainian citizens in connection with the armed conflict in Ukraine](#), 12 March 2022.

<sup>98</sup> Open data: (EN) [https://dane.gov.pl/en/dataset/2711,uczniowie-uchodzcy-z-ukrainy/resource/43221/table?page=1&per\\_page=20&q=&sort=](https://dane.gov.pl/en/dataset/2711,uczniowie-uchodzcy-z-ukrainy/resource/43221/table?page=1&per_page=20&q=&sort=); Otwarte dane: (PL) [https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/2711,uczniowie-uchodzcy-z-ukrainy/resource/43221/table?page=1&per\\_page=20&q=&sort=](https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/2711,uczniowie-uchodzcy-z-ukrainy/resource/43221/table?page=1&per_page=20&q=&sort=)

Sector actors will focus on strengthening the Polish education system by responding to the tailored needs of all refugee children, including the most vulnerable. Priority activities focus on expanding quality education, including early learning, through face-to-face peer activities and online modalities.

Enhancing teachers' capacities, including teaching Polish as a language of instruction will be prioritized, as language acquisition is a main barrier for Ukrainian children to enroll and connect with their Polish peers.

Provision of MHPSS to students and parents will also remain a key area, and investments and services will expand to smaller towns. Evidence-based data will underpin decisions to ensure impactful, quality interventions. The Sector will continue supporting and complementing the government's efforts, and advocate for the creation of safe learning spaces while taking necessary measures through community engagement and promoting the importance of education continuity and early care among Ukrainian families.

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION



The Government ensures that refugees from Ukraine have free and equal access to the national health system, which has put additional demands on the Polish health care infrastructure. Moreover, refugees are mainly women, children, older people, and individuals with disabilities, with the latter two groups needing specialized and/or continuous health care. The Health Sector's priority activities in support of the government – notably the Ministry of Health – and local authorities are:

- Addressing the needs of vulnerable people, particularly older people and people with disabilities.
- Improving access to quality health care services by raising awareness and knowledge about the Polish health system and services and establishing collaborative and efficient referral pathways.
- Ensuring that older people and the chronically ill have equal access to treatment and essential medications and ensuring proper care for pregnant women and newborns.
- Increasing vaccination coverage, especially among children, older persons, persons with disabilities and persons with chronic illnesses by supporting the Ministry of Health and local authorities with information campaigns and risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) messaging.
- Ensuring adequate preparation and response for ongoing and new emergencies.
- Ensuring the possibility of safe relocation from Poland to the other EU Member States for Ukrainian patients on a needs-basis.

The activities listed above are in line with and complement the government's identified priorities rather than duplicate the activities of the Polish national health system.

Given the high percentage of female headed households and young children among the Ukrainian refugee population, there is a need for specific nutritional support. While the government and local community provide food to the refugee population including mothers and caregivers, there is a

need to support provision of complementary food for young children, children in preschools and schools as well as in the accommodation and reception centres. Poland, like many European countries, did not have a preparedness strategy on infant and young child feeding (IYCF) in times of crisis, and it is therefore critical to promote exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate IYCF practices among refugees and Polish mothers. Based on the global IYCF in Emergencies documents, relevant procedures and guidelines will be developed to provide an efficient internal quality control system for the work of milk banks in emergency situations. Actors will also provide counseling for refugees to support breastfeeding women in deep lactation crises due to distress related to the war trauma and/or other emergency circumstances.

## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



While employment opportunities are widely available to refugees from Ukraine in Poland thanks to the Special Act, key challenges remain in accessing decent jobs. This situation elevates vulnerabilities among the refugee population, the majority of whom are women-headed households with caregiving responsibilities for children and older people. The hurdles are two-fold: on the one hand there is a mismatch between employment offers and demand, while on the other hand there is a gap in enabling services, especially childcare and access to education. Partners will focus on complementary socio-economic inclusion and livelihoods activities for both formal and self-employment. They will do so by supporting reskilling, upskilling and professional Polish language trainings, by providing support for entrepreneurship and financial inclusion through private sector partnerships, and by linking refugees with affordable accommodation, childcare and education services. In view of the special needs and capacities of certain groups, partners will implement targeted interventions aimed at reducing households' vulnerabilities that address people with disabilities or patients living from serious illness. Effective access to relevant social protection schemes will also be supported. In support of the Government's priority to promote refugee inclusion within the job market, partners will maximize comparative advantages and advocate for a whole-of-society approach that encourages opportunities for refugees to participate in the economic life of Poland as employers, entrepreneurs, consumers and citizens.

## BASIC NEEDS



Refugees already residing in Poland continue to need basic personal and household items, while the fluid situation in Ukraine highlights the potential for new arrivals who will likely travel with limited resources. Harsh winter conditions heighten the existing vulnerabilities, especially of certain groups such as older persons or those with special medical conditions. Thanks to the government and civil society's response, the provision of goods was mobilized to cover border areas, transit sites and some longer-term accommodations. Yet as the crisis continues, resource gaps and decreased donations impact sustainability. RRP partners are thus complementing support with a focus on addressing a number of key areas. The provision of basic non-food items (NFIs) to meet individual needs, such as dignity kits and clothing adapted to winter conditions, as well as communal needs at shelters, such as appliances, heating

devices, bedding and partitions; the provision of non-perishable food and warm meals at reception points and accommodation sites, and if necessary, at border crossings; and support to transport services from border points to reception areas or transport hubs for onwards movement will be prioritized. RRP partners' actions will bolster the government-led response and complement services provided at the local level while helping to maintain ongoing and contingency response capacity while ensuring targeting is adapted to diverse and specific needs of individuals.

Support is also needed to maintain services and adequate hygiene conditions. WASH partners will focus on the prevention of waterborne diseases by providing access to WASH facilities, services, and hygiene services and supplies to refugees throughout their journey and in locations where they settle. Partners are also committed to supporting municipalities to maintain and improve hygiene through the provision of hygiene supplies and hygiene services at the accommodation and reception centres as well as schools and preschool facilities. Partners will also provide refugees with essential supplies such as WASH dignity kits, and support schools with hygiene materials.

According to the Profiling carried out in September 2022,<sup>99</sup> access to safe and dignified accommodation remains one of the most pressing needs for refugees from Ukraine. The largest groups among them reside in rented accommodation (44 per cent), host families (20 per cent), and collective sites (13 per cent) and reception centres (8 per cent). Yet the sustainability of these options is declining, owing to rising costs, a competitive housing market and ongoing strain on host communities. To address the situation and ensure access to adequate housing, shelter actors' responses will prioritize:

- Providing cash for rent to support with rental fees and subsidies for utility costs (heating, utilities), targeting also members of the host community.
- Developing housing assistance interventions and programmes that address short-term, mid-term and longer-term needs.
- Providing thermal upgrades and rehabilitating existing shelter facilities to improve energy efficiency and ensuring adequate standards, while incorporating adaptations of spaces for people with disabilities or other specific needs.
- Reinforcing shelter-related coordination tools that will allow for efficient referral schemes and effective needs assessment outputs.
- Developing cross-cutting measures that promote self-reliance and facilitate access to the labour market, which can encourage refugees to move to individual housing.
- Conducting advocacy and providing technical support on the development of a sustainable, long-term housing assistance policy, targeting both refugee and host communities.

Polish authorities have established legislation allowing Ukrainian refugees to access social benefits and employment, yet refugees continue to face complex challenges that impact their ability to benefit from safety nets and many remain unable to meet basic needs. Among the obstacles are language barriers, lack of relevant work experience, low wages and insufficient childcare services, all of which impact opportunities for gainful, dignified employment and self-reliance. This is exacerbated by increased cost of living, rising energy and accommodation prices and additional

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<sup>99</sup> UNHCR-REACH, [Refugees from Ukraine in Poland – Profiling Update](#), September 2022.

needs during the winter. Since new arrivals are likely to possess fewer resources and social capital, while having more limited coping strategies than earlier groups, they will require additional support to access food, accommodation and clothing.

Acknowledging the primary role of the Government in providing social protection, the focus of cash assistance partners will be on complementing the governmental response through targeted interventions for members of specific vulnerable groups, such as older persons, persons with disabilities, and those with chronic medical conditions who face challenges in gaining full and effective access to the national social protection system as well as single mothers with small children excluded from the labour market. TCNs in need of international protection to whom access to national social protection does not extend, are another group that will be prioritized. Targeted intervention will be accompanied by policy advocacy for the extension of inclusive social protection services. Cash-based initiatives will support and complement the government's response and bridge the gap between arrival in-country and access to employment and/or government assistance and services.

The sector's interventions will build on and accompany the government's capacity and response at both local and national levels.

## Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



Women, girls, men, boys and individuals from diverse backgrounds affected by the crisis have the right to receive information on their rights, responsibilities and entitlements, and be kept aware of protection and assistance programmes. Through continuous engagement, affected populations are informed about issues and decisions that have an impact on their lives.

Accountability to Affected People (AAP) remains a strategic priority within the Ukraine refugee response framework. AAP indicators, alongside an Age, Gender and Diversity orientation, detail the specific provisions on how women, girls, men, boys as well as persons from diverse community groups, both from refugee and host populations will be included in humanitarian planning and the decision-making processes and how any potential challenges to access complaints and feedback mechanisms will be addressed by response actors. A wide range of Communication with Communities (CwC) tools will be regularly updated and made available in languages and formats accessible to all community groups. This will address critical communication and information gaps and be tailored the needs of different population groups.

Community-centred protection mechanisms provided through partnership, direct engagement with refugees, community-led organizations and networks as well as strong collaboration with the government remain the emphasis in protection response. The ongoing efforts of the Government will be supported to improve communication with persons of concern and ensure that refugees can enjoy their rights on an equal footing and participate meaningfully in the decisions affecting their lives, families, and communities. Additionally, integration of AAP standards into cross-sectoral



activities and capacity programmes such as adaptive training in Polish, Ukrainian, and Roma languages will continue to assist national actors' (government structures, non-government organizations and volunteer networks) work.

### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) is recognized as a specific form of GBV and a breach of humanitarian actors' accountability to affected populations. The high percentage of women, including single female-headed households, as well as children and older persons, among refugees from Ukraine, coupled with their high mobility and the range of actors engaged in the response, including many volunteers, exacerbate the risk of SEA. In 2022, the PSEA Network in Poland has been leading the coordination efforts to tackle SEA and moving into 2023, priorities will concentrate on:

- Strengthening PSEA capacities of organizations taking part in the response, with an emphasis on national organizations, while improving the understanding international organizations have of the local context and legal framework.
- Raising awareness of stakeholders taking part in the response on the risks of SEA, with attention to intersectional ties and vulnerabilities. This shall be done through information campaigns developed for and in consultation with refugees and communities, and advocacy aimed at authorities to enhance their understanding and response to SEA.
- Enabling a survivor-centred response to SEA, through the establishment of an inter-agency complaint and feedback mechanism, in line with best practices.
- Supporting the prevention capacities of the Polish authorities, while boosting their response capacity – with a survivor-centred approach – to SEA allegations, involving persons who are not identified as humanitarian aid workers, but who are part of the response.

### Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



The exposure to distressing events and the ongoing daily stress of continued displacement of refugees can cause or deepen existing mental health conditions and increase psychological distress, particularly for women and children who have fled while other family members remain in Ukraine. MHPSS will remain a priority cross cutting issue integrated and will be mainstreamed across all sectors. MHPSS services should cover multilayer support including community-based psychosocial support, brief psychological interventions and further specialized services. MHPSS interventions will further account for cultural difference and language barriers to bolster effectiveness and support mental health and psychosocial well-being. Key strategic areas that partners will address in 2023 for MHPSS include:

- Strengthening MHPSS integration and mainstreaming within all sectors.
- Mainstreaming caring for caregivers – supporting humanitarian workers who work on the frontlines and caregivers to ensure their well-being along with their families, including children.

- Promoting the psychosocial well-being of older people and direct programmes to support individuals to maintain and manage full lives.
- Ensuring access to community-based and brief psychosocial interventions to overcome low-moderate signs of distress.
- Ensuring access to clinical mental health services while reinforcing the capacity of existing institutions and resources.

## Partnership and Coordination

Since March 2022, the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) has been adopted to respond to the sudden influx of refugees from Ukraine and facilitate cohesive interventions that were in line with government priorities while maximizing resource complementarity and impact. Taking a localized approach, inter-agency Refugee Coordination Fora (RCF) are established in Mazowieckie, Malopolskie, Lubelskie and Podkarpackie regions to ensure that partners and authorities are abreast of developments and jointly plan response interventions in an inclusive manner. The combined expertise of specialized actors under the RCF safeguards the integration of refugee policy, law and humanitarian principles within all sector response activities. The RCF architecture recognizes and integrates the lead role of the Government as well as the critical role that local partners and civil society organizations have in the response with some 50 national partners included in coordination structures and in the 2023 RRP. Additionally, the 2023 RRP will count on the presence of 24 INGOs, the IFRC/PRC, four faith-based organizations and six UN Agencies. This diverse composition and orientation also supports sustainability efforts and will strengthen further synergies aimed at engaging with the donor community, the private sector and international financial institutions.

Partners involved	83
UN Agencies	6
International NGOs	24
National NGOs	48
IFRC&RC	1
Faith-based Organizations	4

*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.*

The RCF remains flexible and will adapt to the needs by streamlining structures to maximize efficiency, effectiveness and strengthen cross-fertilization in 2023, while building the response around cross-cutting issues, such as the complementarity of efforts with the Polish authorities, AAP, PSEA and integrating a social cohesion perspective into all aspects of the programming.

Thus, a lean, functional and inclusive structure of sectoral coordination groups will be in place at central level, closely linked to local coordination mechanisms. Corresponding to their thematic expertise and competence, sectoral groups are often co-led by national NGOs or other civil society actors alongside UN Agencies, taking thus a major role in coordination and bringing in their specific expertise in areas such as Protection or Accommodation, while linking to other national or local actors. Joint assessments and monitoring of activities will remain key priorities of the Information Management Working Group that will help all actors to ensure a needs-based response. The Multi Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) carried out in 2022 helped identify priority areas of intervention for 2023 and will also guide coordination priorities.

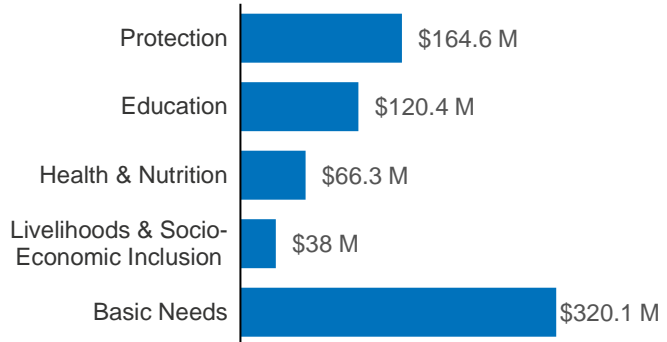
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### Total financial requirements in USD



**\$709.4 M**

### By sector in million USD



\* 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.

Total Protection requirements	\$164,645,927
Other protection activities	\$96,181,095
GBV	\$18,415,953
Child Protection	\$50,048,879

Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$176,343,305
Protection	\$18,627,640
Basic Needs	\$157,715,665

### By partner type

Partners involved	83
UN Agencies	\$293.9 M
International NGOs	\$137.4 M
National NGOs	\$159.6 M
IFRC&RC	\$85.5 M
Faith-based Organizations	\$33.02 M

### By partner

Partner Name	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Total USD
UN Agencies						

Partner Name	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Total USD
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	16,500,000			10,000,000	35,000,000	61,500,000
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	25,720,000	47,372,500	3,300,000		6,701,440	83,093,940
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	900,000					900,000
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	45,335,887			5,324,782	52,239,331	102,900,000
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	1,720,800		795,400			2,516,200
World Health Organization (WHO)			43,000,000			43,000,000
<b>International NGOs</b>						
Action Contre la Faim	580,000			150,000	1,343,794	2,073,794
ActionAid International	750,000					750,000
CARE	7,000,000	6,500,000	500,000	6,000,000	3,000,000	23,000,000
Center for Reproductive Rights	200,000		250,000			450,000
CLEAR Global	462,885					462,885
Community Organized Relief Effort	1,050,000	1,300,000			4,200,000	6,550,000
Crossborder Civilians					20,000	20,000
Danish Refugee Council	8,013,033			1,500,000	450,000	9,963,033
Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe	335,000				630,000	965,000
Faros Elpidas	1,450,000	350,000		5,000	605,000	2,410,000
HIAS	4,000,000				5,800,000	9,800,000
IMPACT Initiatives	160,000	40,000	40,000		820,000	1,060,000
International Orthodox Christian Charities	80,000	100,000		300,000	1,170,000	1,650,000
International Rescue Committee	3,550,000	881,000		7,000,000	13,037,500	24,468,500
Intersos	400,000		400,000	600,000		1,400,000
Medair	340,000		60,000		300,000	700,000
Norwegian Refugee Council	1,500,000	3,000,000			6,500,000	11,000,000
Oxfam					1,157,760	1,157,760
Plan International	1,653,000	400,000			417,500	2,470,500
Project HOPE	1,184,845					1,184,845
RET International	4,550,000	5,000,000			2,000,000	11,550,000
Save the Children	6,502,633	8,216,465			7,369,324	22,088,422
Soleterre	1,200,000					1,200,000

Partner Name	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Total USD
Voice Amplified	895,000				125,000	1,020,000
<b>National NGOs</b>						
Ashoka Innowatorzy dla Dobra Publicznego				450,000		450,000
Central Roma Council in Poland	1,950,400					1,950,400
Comenius Foundation for Child Development (Fundacja Rozwoju Dzieci)		9,500,000				9,500,000
CultureLab Foundation		500,000				500,000
Food Bank SOS in Warsaw					560,000	560,000
Fundacja ADRA Polska	2,000,000	3,600,000			32,925,500	38,525,500
Fundacja Autonomia	275,104					275,104
Fundacja BloomPro	65,000	105,000				170,000
Fundacja Centrum Praw Kobiet (Women's Rights Centre)	150,000	200,000	20,000		230,000	600,000
Fundacja Dajemy Dzieciom Siłę (Empowering Children Foundation)	1,080,000	100,000				1,180,000
Fundacja Dobrej Edukacji		25,000				25,000
Fundacja DOSTĘPNY ŚWIAT			420,000			420,000
Fundacja Feminoteka	250,000				200,000	450,000
Fundacja HumanDoc	740,000	500,000		100,000	570,000	1,910,000
Fundacja In Corpore		30,000	70,000			100,000
Fundacja Kocham Dębniki	101,948	144,762			35,304	282,014
Fundacja Leny Grochowskiej		200,000			1,250,000	1,450,000
Fundacja na Zakręcie				50,000		50,000
Fundacja New story	400,000	400,000		1,134,000	1,874,000	3,808,000
Fundacja One World – One Heart	5,000					5,000
Fundacja Profil	401,782					401,782
Fundacja Global Compact Network Poland	230,000	300,000			190,000	720,000
Fundacja UNDERSTANDING		20,000				20,000
Fundacja Uniwersytet Dzieci		300,000				300,000
Fundacja Zustricz	148,000	134,000				282,000
Habitat for Humanity Poland					6,595,000	6,595,000
Halina Niec Legal Aid Center	20,000					20,000
Hope Foundation	100,000	100,000	200,000		100,000	500,000

Partner Name	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Total USD
Humanosh Slawa i Izek Wolosianski Foundation		380,000	13,000,000		2,054,000	15,434,000
Internationaler Bund Polska	84,000	1,120,000			804,000	2,008,000
Kalejdoskop Kultur	300,000					300,000
Katalyst Education		5,500,000				5,500,000
Liszewska-Bowen Foundation	220,000	35,000	40,000		660,000	955,000
Mentalnie Równi	558,000	335,000				893,000
Misja Słowiańska w Europie					228,000	228,000
Multiculturalism & Migration Observatory			20,000			20,000
Nasz Wybor (Our Choice Foundation)	620,000	200,000			210,000	1,030,000
Polish Center for International Aid	3,086,957	19,480,819			15,336,815	37,904,591
Polish Humanitarian Action	1,037,004				7,780,000	8,817,004
Polish Migration Forum Foundation	1,440,000	350,000				1,790,000
Polski Instytut Otwartego Dialogu	270,000	700,000	200,000		86,000	1,256,000
PRO UKRAINA	250,000	500,000			6,000,000	6,750,000
Roma Coalition	95,000	100,000	125,000		180,000	500,000
SOK (Samodzielność od Kuchni) Foundation	575,000	1,260,000				1,835,000
Stowarzyszenie MIASTO WSPÓLNE	27,816					27,816
Stowarzyszenie MUDITA	40,000		41,000	450,000	365,000	896,000
TUTU - Podkarpackie Stowarzyszenie dla Aktywnych Rodzin	1,650,000	200,000				1,850,000
Volunteer Center Lublin		73,000			454,750	527,750
<b>IFRC &amp; Red Cross/ Crescent Societies</b>						
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) & Polish Red Cross (Polski Czerwony Krzyż)	4,333,334		3,666,667		77,500,000	85,500,000
<b>Faith-based Organizations</b>						
Caritas Poland	4,700,000	60,000		4,900,000	18,106,000	27,766,000
Klub Inteligencji Katolickiej w Warszawie	50,000	500,000	100,000		500,000	1,150,000
Lutheran World Federation	1,103,500	280,000			2,178,100	3,561,600

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Partner Name	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Total USD
Metropolitan Orthodox Christian Charity ELEOS	255,000		35,000	35,000	220,000	545,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$164,645,927</b>	<b>\$120,392,546</b>	<b>\$66,283,067</b>	<b>\$37,998,782</b>	<b>\$320,079,118</b>	<b>\$709,399,440</b>

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COUNTRY CHAPTER

# ROMANIA





# > 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,<sup>100</sup> 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.<sup>101</sup> Around 7,700 refugees live in accommodation centres managed by the Government of Romania.<sup>102</sup>

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.

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<sup>100</sup> 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>

<sup>101</sup> UNHCR–Reach, Romania - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA), [key preliminary findings](#), November 2022.

<sup>102</sup> UNHCR, Operational Data Portal/Romania, [Overview on Sites and Locations](#), accessed 17 November 2022

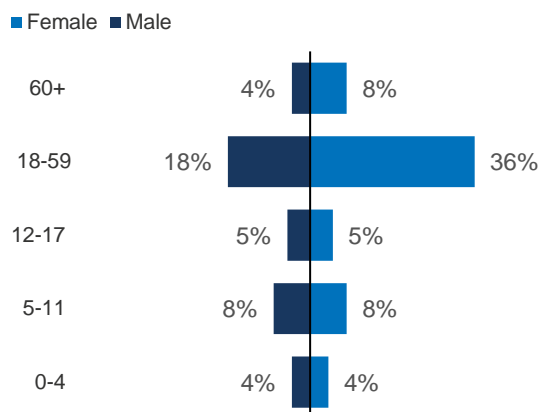
Since the start of the Ukrainian refugee crisis, refugees in Romania have been able to benefit from effective government-led support mechanisms. RRP partners work in support of the refugee response provided by the Government of Romania, delivering complementary assistance in the areas of protection, 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 <sup>103</sup>	Target Population in 2023
Refugee Population	101,733	350,000

### Age and gender breakdown<sup>104</sup>



**61%**  
Women and girls



**39%**  
Men and boys

<sup>103</sup> 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.

<sup>104</sup> 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.<sup>105</sup>

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;<sup>106</sup> and only approximately 15 per cent of working-age Ukrainian nationals are formally employed in Romania.<sup>107</sup> 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<sup>108</sup>. 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

<sup>105</sup> Source: Government authorities. See: UNHCR, Romania Data Portal, [Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation \(unhcr.org\)](https://www.unhcr.org/situations/ukraine)

<sup>106</sup> Ministry of Education data, as shared during Government Working Group meeting under the NPM, 10 November 2022.

<sup>107</sup> 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.

<sup>108</sup> 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<sup>109</sup> and a projected GDP growth of 1.8 per cent in 2023,<sup>110</sup> 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.<sup>111</sup>

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*

<sup>109</sup> [Romania Inflation Rate - 1991-2021 Historical - November Forecast](#), October 2022.

<sup>110</sup> Romania, GDP forecast - [Economic forecast for Romania \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>111</sup> 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 through 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*

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.

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,

## 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.

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.

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.*

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.

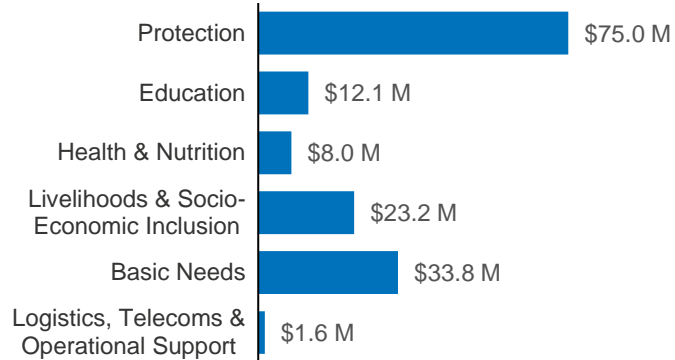
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### 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

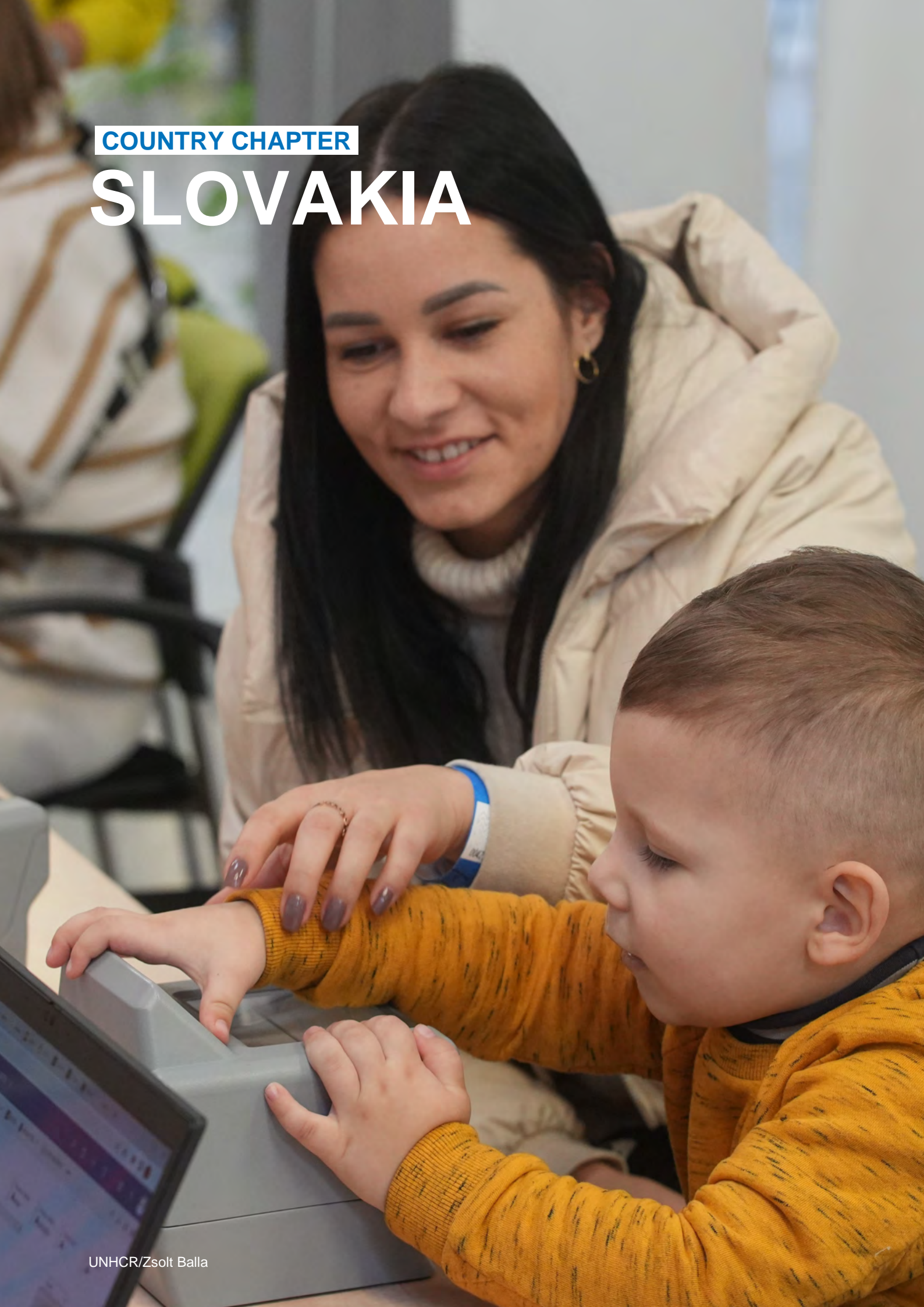
## By partner

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total USD
<b>UN Agencies</b>							
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
<b>National NGOs</b>							
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>74,952,246</b>	<b>12,097,737</b>	<b>8,028,143</b>	<b>23,161,543</b>	<b>33,764,231</b>	<b>1,600,000</b>	<b>\$153,603,900</b>

COUNTRY CHAPTER

# SLOVAKIA



# > At a Glance

## Slovakia Planned Response (January-December 2023)



**200,000**

targeted refugee population



**\$80.1 M**

total financial requirements in USD



**28**

partners involved





# SLOVAKIA

## Part 1: Current Situation

### Situation Overview

Since the escalation of the war in Ukraine, Slovakia has seen a rapid influx of persons fleeing hostilities and seeking protection. More than one million Ukrainian and third-country nationals (TCNs) in need of international protection have crossed the borders into Slovakia, 78 per cent of whom are women and children.<sup>112</sup> Refugees from Ukraine include older people, persons with disabilities, and those with urgent health care needs. The Government of Slovakia has generously kept the borders open, and national, district and local authorities have rapidly responded to the large numbers of arrivals. Local communities have taken a welcoming stance, with humanitarian actors, civil society, the private sector and community volunteers complementing the government-led efforts by providing significant support at border reception points and urban areas.

Temporary protection (TP) status has been accessible to refugees arriving from Ukraine and their families since 1 March 2022 and as of end December 2022 a total of 104,764 individuals have applied for temporary protection in Slovakia, with the Government estimating that an additional 10,000 Ukrainians are benefiting from tolerated stay, within the legal framework, and hence are not registered for protection in Slovakia.

On 30 March 2022, the Government adopted Act No. 92/2022 Coll (Lex Ukraine) introducing further measures to address the situation in Ukraine, amending in total 32 Acts, including the Asylum Act, Residence of Foreigners Act, and the Health Act. In particular, these amendments extended the validity of temporary stays, permanent stays, and tolerated stays already granted to Ukrainian citizens as well as third-country nationals until two months after the state of emergency - which has been declared in connection with the Ukrainian situation - concludes. The amendments also established the possibility for TP holders to be accommodated outside of humanitarian centres or asylum facilities. Additionally, TP holders are entitled to “urgent and necessary” health care as well as certain social benefits, including core relief items, childcare allowance for children up to three years of age, or up to six years of age for children with a long-term adverse health condition, subsidies for lunches in kindergartens and primary schools, and for school stationery.

Despite the favorable protection environment for refugees in the country, there remain major challenges in addressing areas such as access to longer-term accommodation, the labour market and quality health care, especially for persons with underlying serious health conditions. Such gaps

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<sup>112</sup> Based on data provided by the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Government

include comprehensive sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, preventative mother and childcare, including immunization, education, available social protection mechanisms, ensuring specialized services for GBV survivors, and access of persons with disabilities to existing assistance mechanisms.

The risk of further displacement from Ukraine remains high, and new arrivals of refugees in Slovakia are expected in the context of escalating attacks on and damage to civilian infrastructure and evacuation of civilians in areas affected by the conflict. The projected population in need of assistance in Slovakia over the course of 2023 may reach 200,000 individuals, due to additional people joining those from the first emergency wave, including those who may be moving due to particular winter needs, which could provide additional strains to overloaded services, such as for accommodation and health services. In addition, there are secondary movements of refugees from Ukraine to and from other countries in the region, which provides additional challenges for the authorities to plan services.

This inter-agency refugee response plan (RRP) for Slovakia brings together 28 partners in a coordinated multi-sectoral response with the aim to complement the government-led efforts and in particular by addressing any gaps in the provision of assistance and services to refugees. In addition, this multi-partner response plan will advance the socio-economic inclusion of refugees in the Slovak society, including by strengthening social cohesion between refugees and their host communities.

## Population Planning Figures

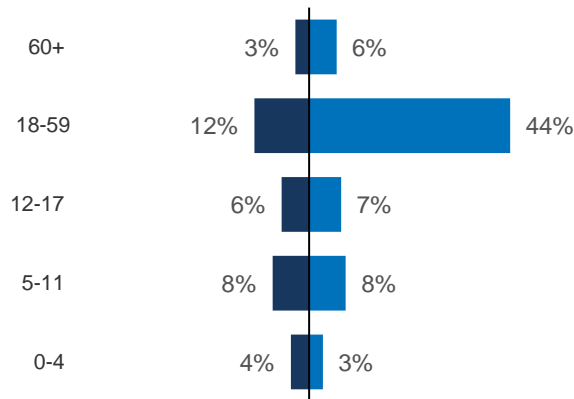
The RRP aims at providing protection and assistance to Ukrainian refugees, as well as to TCNs in need of international protection and people who are stateless or at risk of statelessness.<sup>113</sup> The RRP will continue to address the needs of impacted host communities, in areas of arrival as well as in areas of final destination of refugees, by strengthening the capacities of local institutions and ensuring access to services benefiting both refugees and local populations.

The projected planning figures are based on current trends and planning assumptions, considering refugees' intentions to remain in Slovakia or choosing to transit further to other countries. These figures allow for planning, programming and budgeting purposes.

Slovakia	Refugees registered for Temporary Protection as of end Dec 2022 <sup>114</sup>	Targeted population in 2023
Refugee Population	104,764	200,000

### Age and gender breakdown<sup>115</sup>

■ Female ■ Male



**68%**

Women and girls



**32%**

Men and boys

<sup>113</sup> Third-country nationals not in need of international protection are not included in target population figures, but may benefit, on par with host community members, from the support provided to community resources and services.

<sup>114</sup> 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.

<sup>115</sup> Based on Temporary Protection registration data and UNHCR's PROGRES database for child-specific disaggregation.

## Country Protection Needs, Vulnerabilities and Risks

The majority of those who have arrived in Slovakia from Ukraine are women, children, older people, and persons with disabilities, many of whom remain vulnerable. The multi-sectoral needs assessment (MSNA) and protection profiling and monitoring assessments highlight the needs of refugees from Ukraine, including on protection and access to the social safety net, health services, employment, education, housing and childcare.<sup>116</sup>

Gender-based violence (GBV) referral pathways are being strengthened in the country, however, currently there is one operational referral pathway covering one out of the eight regions of the country with a national general framework of services provision. In this regard, further support is required to strengthen and expand GBV direct response services adapted to the needs of refugees, as well as to coordinate actions amongst all involved partners. Targeted services are still required for people with heightened protection needs, including survivors of GBV, children at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation, including unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), and those facing intersecting vulnerabilities such as LGBTIQ+ individuals and Roma women.

Survivors of GBV face various challenges in accessing multi-sectoral services such as health, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and legal assistance. These challenges include limited access to information on services provided, limited availability of quality GBV prevention and response programming, and limited essential and time-sensitive services, such as clinical management of sexual violence and other sexual and reproductive health services. National protection systems require additional capacity development and support to scale-up much-needed GBV prevention and response services which are accessible to refugees, in particular refugee women and girls. While there are important GBV-related mechanisms in place in the Slovak national system, there is an opportunity for GBV prevention and mitigation to be mainstreamed into different sectors of the refugee response, while also ensuring that frontline workers are capacitated on GBV case management, including safe disclosures and referrals.

A key priority is strengthened access to and outreach by State child protection services, including to identify children at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children, and ensure their access to appropriate protection services starting from the point of entry to solutions. National laws and standard protocols are in line with international standards, and there are wide ranging State benefits regarding child protection issues, including support for legal guardians of children. However, given stretched capacities of the relevant national authorities, there is a need to ensure that children have access to the procedures consistently and as early as possible throughout Slovakia, and that the capacities of the key stakeholders to support the child protection system are strengthened. Refugees have strong capacities to achieve socio-economic resilience and access livelihoods opportunities, with much to contribute based on their professional and technical qualifications. However, employment opportunities remain low, hindered by barriers to recognition of their formal qualifications and expertise; around one-third of surveyed refugees face challenges to generate sufficient income to cover the household's monthly needs, primarily food, but also rent for households living outside collective centres. In addition, language and lack of childcare have

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<sup>116</sup> UNHCR-REACH, [Slovakia - Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment \(MSNA\)](#), October 2022.

been also reported as barriers to access employment opportunities. The majority of refugees report benefitting from cash and food assistance through humanitarian aid, followed by a lower share who have benefitted from shelter, clothes, as well as sanitation and hygiene products. However, the need for food assistance, accommodation options and employment opportunities still remains high. There is a need to make social protection systems more shock-responsive and ensure they can be expanded to additional beneficiaries if the need arises.

Almost one-quarter of household members among refugees from Ukraine were found to be in need of health care, with the most pressing needs cited being for preventive consultation, and access to health care in response to acute and chronic communicable and non-communicable diseases. In particular, the number of children who have not received or have missed some or all childhood vaccines remains unknown, and efforts to conduct mass vaccination in accommodation centres have proved difficult, including due to the significant vaccine hesitancy among mothers. Exposure to potentially traumatic and distressing events related to the conflict, displacement and family separation have given rise to needs related to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). Ensuring access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care by removing legal and policy barriers and strengthening the capacity of the health system is also important to better serve refugees.

Education appears to be one of the core priorities among refugees; however, only 8,739 children have been enrolled to pre-school, primary and secondary school programmes in Slovakia out of a total 33,827 refugee children granted with temporary protection.<sup>117</sup> There are systemic barriers to access education, including the lack of spots in preschool, primary and secondary school, and limited opportunities for informal learning and skills development for teenagers and youth. Further support to local and national stakeholders should be provided to expand services for children of up to three years of age, including early learning opportunities through alternative and diversified early childhood development services and early learning provisions. Moreover, further support is needed to strengthen the capacities of the education system, schools and teachers for quality learning and inclusion. There is also growing concern about Ukrainian children and adolescents who are following exclusively online education in the Ukrainian system, or have discontinued their studies, and have no contact with their peers. More needs to be done to ensure inclusion in the Slovak education system and to increase informal learning opportunities for those who may not yet have the language skills to join the public education system.

Efforts should continue towards minimizing and eliminating barriers to inclusion in the host society and to actively promote interactions that foster social cohesion between host and Ukrainian communities. In particular, adolescent and youth programming as well as targeted programmes to support women are areas not yet systematically addressed by stakeholders. Such programmes are key to social cohesion and positive attitudes towards all refugees, helping create avenues for young refugees and women to integrate in the Slovak society. In this regard, strengthening community-level structures will remain a key element to ensure an effective response to priority areas of the protection strategy and to promote the inclusion of refugees.

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<sup>117</sup> Data refers to school year 2022/2023 as of September 15, 2022, provided by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic.

As the Ukraine crisis persists, it is important for all actors who are involved in the response to the Ukrainian situation to have an understanding of the capacities, needs, risks, constraints, and future opportunities for Ukrainians in Slovakia to enhance their socio-economic inclusion and resilience.

## Part 2: Country Protection and Solutions Strategy

The inter-agency response builds on leveraging national and sub-national protection systems and strengthening and complementing the national response, with a view to mitigating protection risks and facilitating refugee inclusion. As the conflict continues, new arrivals will continue, as well as “pendular” movements due to the circumstances in areas of origin. Therefore, it is likely that a portion of the population will still be ‘on the move’ in 2023, and protection services and assistance will need to be delivered in a manner tailored to their needs and situation.

With more than 90 per cent of arrivals comprising women and children, the risks of GBV, trafficking and other forms of exploitation are high, in particular at border crossing points and in the context of private and informal transportation and emergency accommodation. Arriving populations are often highly distressed and in need of information to keep themselves safe. These risks will need to be mitigated in the context of providing protection services to the population on the move and ensuring that a protection-sensitive response is promoted and enhanced.

With regard to child protection, timely identification, assessment and targeted support for children at-risk and those affected by violence, abuse, and neglect – including at crossing and transit points and in private and collective accommodation options – requires strengthened case management/ best interests procedures and coordination among the State and humanitarian child protection actors. The capacity of national child protection agencies can benefit from further support in terms of availability and preparedness of the workforce to adequately respond to the scale and nature of the current and anticipated needs. Timely application of the best interest procedures for children at risk, to address child’s protection needs in accordance with their best interests, including placement in appropriate guardianship, family reunification and alternative care arrangements will remain a key priority. In addition, best interest procedures and child friendly procedures will be strengthened throughout the national protection systems to ensure dignified and sustainable return of children at heightened risk, in particular in situations of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) to Ukraine, when family reunification is seen as the best interest of the child.

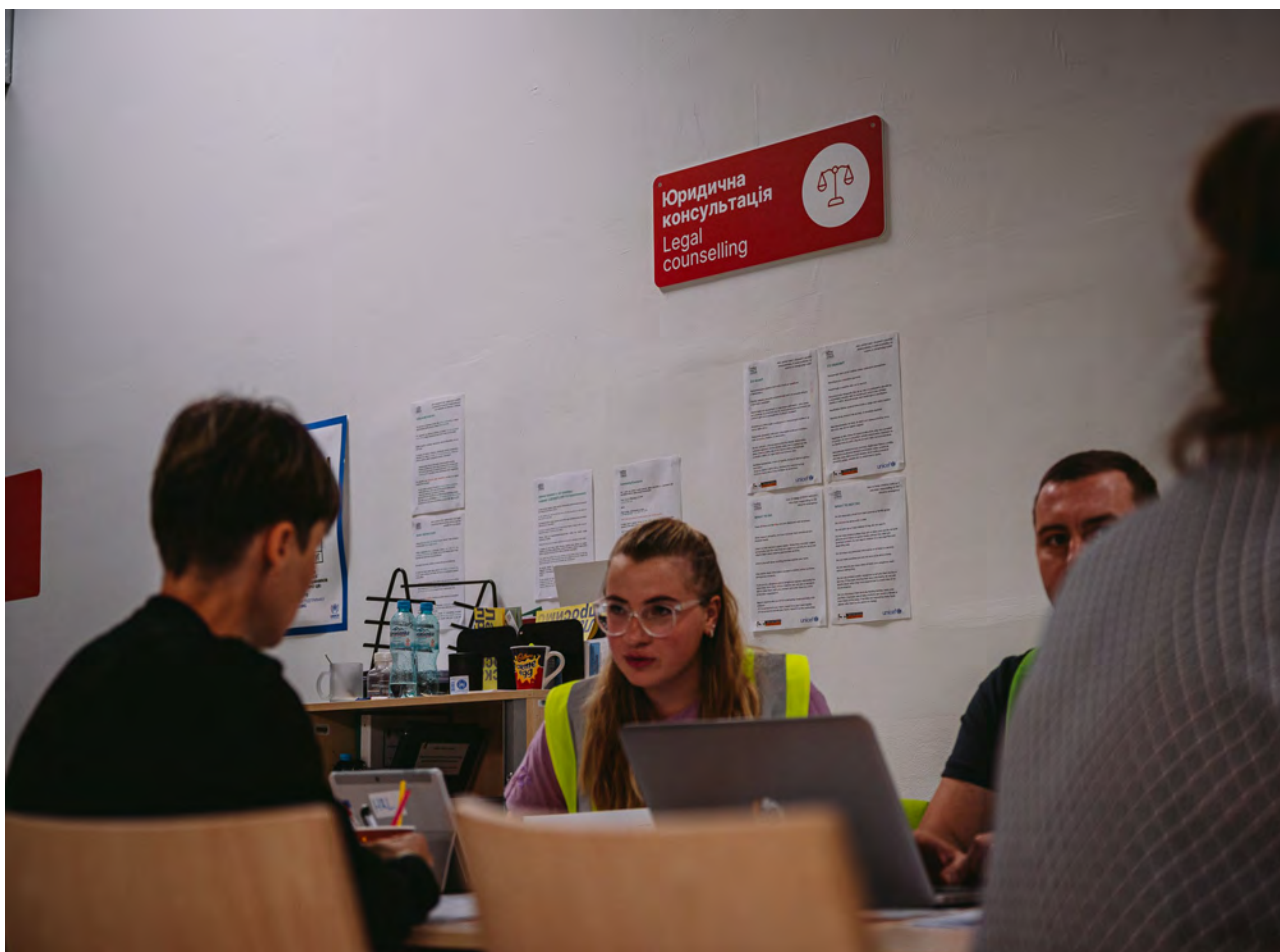
Protection interventions should support the inclusion of older persons and persons with disabilities, with a view to ensuring accessibility of reception facilities and information provision, in partnership with national organisations working for persons with disabilities.

Protection assessments have highlighted significant needs related to reliable and accurate information among refugees and others in need of international protection, including where and how to access humanitarian assistance and public services, and on how to stay safe from exploitation and abuse. Mis- and disinformation are significant concerns and can be used to take advantage of persons on the move, including in the context of trafficking in human beings. Without sufficient access to information, the ability of refugees to make informed decisions on how and

where they will settle in displacement is also compromised, ultimately jeopardizing their ability to access their rights through national protection systems, and potentially delaying their ability to reunite with family members.

At the same time and given the nature of the refugee situation, it is increasingly important to shift toward a more sustainable response model over the medium- to longer-term. While multi-sectoral support and assistance for the new arrivals will be ensured throughout the implementation of this annual plan, efforts will continue so that the livelihoods can be further supported and the socio-economic inclusion in the Slovak society and economy can be promoted. Together with the Government, regional and local authorities, and other key actors, including civil society, private sector and development entities, collective efforts will continue, including through advocacy, to streamline the legislative framework and create a favourable protection environment to enable refugees' socio-economic inclusion and integration, ensuring also alignment with other good practices within the European Union. In that regard, continuing vocational training, skills identification and the recognition of qualifications and previous learning experiences should be further promoted to support employment opportunities. Additional support will also be provided in terms of self-employment, including through self-reliance grants for enterprise development, among others.

In addition, the health response will transition from a focus on short-term emergency health to also supporting the primary health care system at the level of data collection, disease surveillance and service delivery. Needs-driven, equitable, and systematic access to health care and MHPSS will be essential to addressing health-related needs. MHPSS support is also required to support inclusion and integration of refugees, to effectively access and enjoy education and self-reliance opportunities. Efforts should continue to channel refugee children and youth into mainstream education systems, including higher education. This requires institutional changes to facilitate access to education programmes, including by hiring bilingual teachers, offering financial support and recognising credits from previous studies, as well as support to ensure participation in education continues longer-term. Language and inter-cultural communication activities, as well as support to community centres and other local institutions in urban areas will be pursued to strengthen social cohesion between refugees and their hosts.



*Slovakia. Refugees receiving legal assistance at the Assistance Center in Bratislava. © The Municipality of Bratislava*

The inter-agency response will be informed by continuous participatory assessments, intersectionality analyses and community-based approaches. The leadership and participation of refugee women and girls, as well as members of other vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities and the LGBTIQ+ community, will be further promoted, and advocacy will continue so that policies and programmes are designed in line with their priorities. Supporting the capacity of national and community-based institutions, national NGOs and other representatives of civil society, including local women-led and women's rights organizations, can have an important impact on the access of women, girls, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ persons and other groups with specific vulnerabilities to equal opportunities with a view to ensuring their integration in the Slovak society.



## Country Strategic Objectives

The overarching response strategy aims at protecting the rights of refugees from Ukraine, TCNs in need of international protection, and stateless persons or those at risk of stateless, who have fled the conflict in Ukraine. The immediate needs of new arrivals will be addressed throughout the year, while long-term solutions and improved opportunities will be promoted to empower refugees and ensure socio-economic inclusion, as well as to ensure social cohesion.

The response plan in Slovakia will be guided by the following strategic objectives (SO), which are in line with regional strategic objectives:

**SO1: Ensure that all refugees, and others in need such as third-country nationals in need of international protection, fleeing the war have access to safety, life-saving assistance and international protection in Slovakia.**

RRP partners, together with other actors involved in the refugee response, will continue to support the Government of Slovakia in ensuring that all refugees from Ukraine are aware of the benefits of registering for TP, while continuing advocacy efforts for strengthening the protection environment for TCNs, asylum-seekers and refugees from other countries and ensuring that they have access to life-saving humanitarian assistance, including among others cash assistance, health care and MHPSS, as required.

**SO2: Facilitate the identification of solutions and expand access to social and economic opportunities to reinforce 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 national and refugee-led NGOs and community structures, as well as other actors at regional level.**

RRP partners will support the Government of Slovakia in identifying the best solutions for the inclusion of refugees, in particular by working and advocating together with other actors involved in the refugee response such as regional and local authorities, as well as development actors and private sector, to facilitate activities as per identified needs including for strengthening skills and enhancing entrepreneurship, and ensuring social, economic and cultural empowerment.

**SO3: Ensure that refugees with specific needs, including vulnerable and unaccompanied and separated children, people at risk of and survivors of GBV and trauma, and people with diverse backgrounds and characteristics to have access to targeted support and assistance, while also engaging with and strengthening community-level protective mechanisms.**

RRP partners will continue complementing government-led efforts for the protection of and assistance to persons with specific needs and groups facing specific vulnerabilities ensuring access to quality, age-, gender-, and diversity-sensitive services for all, including by providing expertise and continuing advocacy.

#### **SO4: Promote social cohesion between refugee and Slovak communities through targeted interventions.**

RRP partners together with the Government of Slovakia and other actors, in particular regional and local authorities, will strengthen efforts to ensure social cohesion, including by supporting community centres and promoting enhanced service delivery.

##### **A whole-of-society approach: advocacy and support in action**

Since the full-scale war in Ukraine began, a network of national NGOs in Slovakia has mobilized and joined efforts with other actors, including local and regional authorities, to better respond to the needs of refugees from Ukraine. A central component of these efforts is advocacy for the rights of refugees, including for their socio-economic inclusion, and the provision of direct assistance, particularly for health services.

With a goal to better inform inclusion measures for persons with temporary protection from Ukraine, five national NGOs (CVEK, Nadácia Milana Šimečku, People in Need, Human Rights League and Mareena) worked on a policy paper, 'Integration of People from Ukraine'. The recommendations stemming from this policy paper suggest the importance of a multi-partner efforts, in particular by involving NGOs and municipalities; the coordination of inclusion activities; and focus on specific measures in relation to employment, self-employment, social services, financial aid, housing, access to information and legal aid, health care, education and vocational and language trainings.

An integration centre in Košice, the second largest city in Slovakia, has been established by nine local organizations (DEDO Foundation, Human Rights League, Mareena, People in Need, ETP Slovensko, Všetci pre rodinu, Dorka, Oáza, and the Archdiocese Charity Košice) and the Košice self-governing region. Through this unique collaboration the partners aimed at ensuring the best use of expertise and know-how specific to the needs of refugees from Ukraine, as well as other persons in need.

Given the increased needs for medical care among refugees, a collaboration between the Bratislava self-governing region and humanitarian actors (Equita, Care and UNICEF) resulted in increased access to health care through a dedicated clinic for adults and children. By employing Ukrainian health care workers from among the refugee population, in the form of a temporary professional internship regime under the supervision of a professionally qualified national staff, the clinic provides primary care to refugees who live in the Bratislava Region, including the prescription of chronic medications, easing the burden on Bratislava's first contact clinics.

## Sectoral Responses

### PROTECTION



RRP interventions will aim at minimizing protection risks faced by people on the move, including upon arrival from Ukraine, or as they transit Slovakia to seek protection in other countries, by supporting timely and rights-based individual access to protection, safety, psychosocial support and other life-saving assistance and information. Interventions in line with the RRP country objectives will be crucial in maintaining the protection space for current and future refugee arrivals, taking into account already stretched capacity and resources on the part of the government and Slovak society. Protection programming will focus on supporting and complementing national protection and public services, with specific attention to persons with specific circumstances or needs and without discrimination. Due to the demographic profile of refugees from Ukraine, child protection, prevention of and response to GBV and trafficking, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and women and girl's empowerment will form central pillars of the overall protection response. Age, gender, and diversity mainstreaming across sectors and inclusion-oriented approaches will also be key, including with a view to ensure that people with disabilities, as well as other vulnerable and marginalized groups such as LGBTIQ+ individuals and the Roma and other ethnic minority groups, have effective access to information and services.

Protection interventions should seek to create conducive conditions for the rapid integration and inclusion of refugees and other people in need of protection in national protection systems and social and economic systems. Protection actors will also support efforts to address and mitigate potential tensions between refugee and host communities and work with national authorities and partners in support of peaceful coexistence.

The following are priority outcomes of interventions within the overall protection framework:

- Facilitate individuals' access to territory, protection, and the enjoyment of rights without discrimination, in line with their rights and in compliance with the principle of non-refoulement.
- Reinforce protection-sensitive systems; identify persons with specific needs, including single women, female-headed households, unaccompanied and separated children, and other children at risk, older persons, LGBTIQ+ persons, people with serious medical conditions and persons with disabilities, and refer them to services adapted to their needs.
- Expand safe spaces, Protection and Support Hubs to provide life-saving information on specialized services for women, families and children, including those at risk of abuse and exploitation, and GBV survivors in the national system.
- Strengthen and mainstream GBV risk mitigation across all sectors and enhance dissemination of information on GBV services, and related health care services including SRH services, among frontline humanitarian workers and refugee communities, building on two-way communication with communities approaches to ensure women and girls and others at risk have access to information on GBV services.

- Support the national child protection system with a view of including refugee children in best interests procedures, alternative care arrangements and other relevant services in a timely and consistent manner, as well as strengthening referral pathways.
- Reinforce anti-trafficking measures and mechanisms across sectors.
- Strengthen PSEA capacity of organizations and institutions engaged in the refugee response across sectors.
- Promote accountability to affected people through communication with communities and a community-based approach, including through community outreach through strengthened refugee- and women-led organizations, and other community-based organizations.
- Support reception conditions and accommodation, including monitoring private accommodation arrangements, as well as expanding the availability of family- and community-based accommodation options for unaccompanied children.
- Facilitate solutions through conducive conditions for the rapid integration and inclusion of people fleeing Ukraine in national social and economic systems, including by reducing barriers to access social protection mechanisms and public services; and supporting them to access information, legal and social counselling and assistance.

### Sub-Sector: Child Protection



Children comprise approximately 36 per cent of the refugees in Slovakia. Children have been affected by the experiences of displacement, separation from families and peers, and a lost sense of normalcy. The availability of safe spaces that provide a protected environment to rest, play, receive basic psychosocial support and further response to identified child protection concerns is of key importance. Many children may have also been exposed to potentially traumatic events, violence and family separation during flight, transit and upon arrival, giving rise to a need for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). It is also acknowledged that protection of children starts at the point of entry into the country and continues throughout the transit or stay in the country. The inter-agency response will focus on complementing and strengthening national child protection systems and supporting the capacity of actors, including the frontline responders at borders, those responsible for social and legal protection, case management/best interests procedures, as well as community-based and specialized child protection and MHPSS services and other professionals working with children. The response will be further informed by the UNHCR-UNICEF Agenda for Action for Children Displaced from Ukraine.<sup>118</sup> Coordination with government agencies, local authorities and key stakeholders, including in establishing referral pathways and initiatives to bolster capacity and effectiveness in addressing refugee children's needs on the basis of their best interests will be key. Specific focus will be placed on supporting child protection programming for children at risk, including children with disabilities at risk, unaccompanied and separated children, Roma children, and others. The response will focus on strengthening national capacities on child-friendly procedures, implementation of best interests procedures and supporting family reunification or providing alternative care options during stay or possible return to the country of origin provided

<sup>118</sup> [UNHCR-UNICEF: Joint Advocacy Agenda For Action in Support of Children Fleeing Ukraine](#)

conditions for such returns are safe and in the child's best interests. The child protection response will also ensure linkages with the development of longer-term strategies for inclusion and integration of children into national social and protection systems, and their swift inclusion into quality national education system, without creating parallel systems.

### **Blue Dot Safe space, Protection and Support Hubs**

Responding to the critical need for safety, stability, updated and accurate information, and specialized protection services, UNHCR and UNICEF have jointly established Blue Dot Safe Space, Protection and Support Hubs in Bratislava, Bottova Centre, Kosice Train Station and Michalovce Sports Hall. Together with UNHCR and UNICEF, three national NGOs (Human Rights League, Slovak Humanitarian Council and Tenenet) and national services work within the Blue Dots to provide consolidated and reliable support to people forced to flee. Services available at Blue Dot hubs aim to assist all refugees, with a particular focus on children and those at greatest risk, people with disabilities, people who might have been trafficked, survivors of violence and refugees from the LGBTQI+ community.

### **Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**



Approximately 68 per cent per cent of refugees are women and girls. Capitalizing on the existing national systems for the prevention, risk mitigation and response to violence against women and girls, the national GBV response will be reinforced and supported. The strategy prioritizes three objectives: i) establish GBV referral pathways with a view to ensure access to information on GBV services and safe entry points to facilitate survivor-centred disclosure; ii) reinforce national capacity on GBV across all sectors, including with a view to expand and ensure safe access to case management and specialized services for GBV survivors, including related health care services such as sexual and reproductive health services; and iii) establish community outreach networks, engaging communities in GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response and enhancing partnerships with women-led organizations, in particular those led by refugee women. 'Safe from the Start' programmes, including through communication with communities, will support the safety of people on the move against GBV including sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation. Blue Dots and other additional centres will serve as safe spaces for women, girls, men and boys, including survivors of GBV, persons with disabilities and LGBTIQ+ persons, to facilitate survivor-centred disclosure and referral to appropriate services. Participatory assessments and GBV safety audits of reception and accommodation facilities will be mainstreamed, including for people in hosted accommodation. Outstanding GBV response needs and barriers impeding refugee access to GBV support services, including relevant health care services, will be addressed.

## Sub-sector: Prevention, Risk Mitigation of and Response to Human Trafficking



National authorities' efforts to prevent and respond to trafficking in persons will be complemented and supported through improved data on the risk and occurrence of trafficking, capacity-building programmes for authorities, civil society organizations, frontline workers and volunteers and the reinforcement of existing capacities to provide case management and support, such as MHPSS, shelter, and legal counselling and access to justice for victims of trafficking. Specific interventions promoting age and gender sensitive approaches towards the prevention, identification and response to trafficking of people on the move will be key to the strategy, in particular benefiting from linkages with strengthened child protection and GBV responses as well as reinforced SEA prevention.

Prevention interventions will constitute a core focus of activities through capacity-building of relevant stakeholders – including competent state authorities and implementing partners – and the design and distribution of information materials. Prevention and information sessions will be provided at the border, reception and information centres, and larger accommodation centres in all eight regions of the country to raise awareness of multi-sectoral risks exposing people on the move to trafficking, with a focus on labour exploitation. Interventions for mitigation of labour exploitation will be supplemented through the provision of legal and social counselling, including labour counselling. These efforts will be strengthened through enhanced cooperation with and strengthening the capacity of the Labour Inspectorate to identify potential cases of people exposed to the risk of trafficking. Protection focal points will be engaged in all eight regions or larger accommodation centres, with effective feedback and complaints mechanism established in line with the community's reporting preferences.

## EDUCATION



RRP interventions will prioritize the inclusion of refugee children in the formal national education system by supporting the Slovak national education system, which currently faces significant challenges as a result of the influx of refugee children and adolescents from Ukraine. Interventions will focus on strengthening the Slovak education system's capacity to host and provide quality education to refugee children, as well as addressing the learning (foundational skills), social (life skills) and emotional needs (through mental health and psychosocial interventions) across all stages of the child's life cycle.

In particular, inter-agency partners will continue to strengthen the national capacities in planning, monitoring and evaluation of ongoing interventions that support the inclusion of refugee children and adolescents, such as data collection, monitoring of learning, and identification of children at risk of dropout, among others. Partners will also support schools and teachers in improving refugee children's access to quality learning through, for instance, strengthened capacity and sensitivity to work with children who experienced adverse and distressing events and aggravated stress, anti-bias awareness, conflict resolution and constructive communication, and intercultural education, at pre-primary, primary and secondary levels. As the country moves towards ensuring legal entitlement in pre-primary education for all children from the age of three years by 2025,

collaboration with national institutions, municipalities and civil society will be strengthened to support diversified early learning provision.

Partners will keep supporting schools to create a favourable environment for the inclusion of refugee children, through Slovak language classes, provision of learning assistance and the engagement of additional pedagogical and non-pedagogical staff, including by integrating Ukrainian teachers, teacher assistants/Ukrainian cultural mediators and psychologists in the response. By accelerating collaboration and engagement with NGOs local responders and local communities working closely with children and young people the aim will be to expand non-formal learning opportunities, strengthen social inclusion and support parents, families and caregivers to create environments conducive to learning and development and to strengthen the family engagement in supporting the children's learning.

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## HEALTH AND NUTRITION



RRP partners will coordinate efforts to improve the accessibility of quality primary health care services and continuity of care. In coordination with national, regional and local health authorities and other relevant stakeholders, partners will provide assistance including directly to health clinics, to address specific needs of refugees.

Capacities of health actors, key stakeholders and volunteers providing health-related services to refugees and TCNs in need of international protection in Slovakia will be strengthened, with a particular focus on immunization, early detection and intervention for developmental delays and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Relatedly, advocacy efforts will focus on accelerating the recognition of medical diplomas of Ukrainian doctors, as well as other medical personnel, to facilitate their employment in the health sector. Tailored training will be delivered to relevant stakeholders – social workers, law enforcement, health professionals – to enable strengthened health provision, continuity of care, referral, and health promotion activities specific to early childhood development, immunization, non-communicable diseases and other health issues. In addition, awareness-raising and other communication campaigns will be tailored to the specific needs of refugees and other populations, including about their rights and pathways to access all types of vaccinations. Attention will be given to ensure that women and girls are aware of and have access to quality sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. SRH activities will include the strengthening of information on available services, outreach, capacity development, including for clinical management of rape, linkage to medical services, including for reproductive health services, technical support and building of local capacity, to support localization.

## LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION



With the aim to strengthen the personal development and supporting the socio-economic inclusion of refugees, as well as TCNs in international protection, partners will continue targeted interventions, including through the provision of tailored adult education. Partners will further work to ensure that refugees and can have access to market-oriented, certified technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes, including existing national TVET programmes and other training opportunities. Free and low-threshold online and live courses on the Slovak language will be delivered utilizing interactive teaching methods, during which the emphasis is mainly on conversation, with the aim of enabling social inclusion, with a particular focus on practical language. Childcare and other household solutions will be further explored to facilitate access to the labour market while ensuring safety and dignity for all family members.

Advocacy efforts will continue to address barriers refugees in Slovakia face in attaining jobs that match their qualifications, particularly those whose qualifications are not automatically recognized in Slovakia and who are underemployed. In addition, support will be offered for education and retraining courses and the recognition of foreign education. Dedicated courses will enable students to confirm their qualifications and/or to continue their university studies in Slovakia, thus enabling contributions to the Slovak economy as medium- and high-skilled workers, a higher standard of living, and greater opportunities for decent work and meaningful integration. Advocacy efforts will also continue in regard to enabling self-employment of refugees from Ukraine, ensuring self-sufficiency and strengthening social connections.

Socio-relational activities including cultural activities, sports and play, and art-based activities will be provided for refugees from Ukraine, in particular in community centres and other urban areas, with host community members invited to foster supportive interpersonal exchange and networks, facilitate integration, and strengthen social cohesion among refugee and host communities.

## BASIC NEEDS



RRP partners will join forces to support refugees in meeting their basic needs, including with interventions that directly benefit refugees, as well as by supporting private and public sectors in improving access to basic goods and services for the affected population according to identified specific needs. Improving disability accessibility and reasonable accommodations, including safe and dignified access to WASH facilities, is a gap that advocacy efforts will focus on.

With the Government in the lead in providing accommodation options, based on availability of resources, advocacy efforts will seek to ensure that accommodation assistance continues until the end of the TPD. Synergies and advocacy efforts should also continue with the municipalities to ensure additional solutions so that refugees have access to information for a safe transition from emergency accommodation in collective sites and hosted accommodation to longer-term accommodation, including social housing support for the most vulnerable refugees. Activities will include support to collective centres providing accommodation for refugees, including



reception/transit accommodation facilities, along with procurement of in-kind items, including for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), to ensure warm, safe and dignified living conditions.

Coordination among stakeholders and the humanitarian community will continue to ensure adequate provision of core relief items (CRIs), both for new arrivals and those already in the country, to enable people to meet their immediate basic needs and to rebuild their lives in dignity, considering specific needs among the population groups such as for children, women, persons with disabilities and older persons. In cooperation with the Government, partners will ensure that where applicable, multi-purpose cash grants, as well as targeted cash assistance, are provided to support the affected population in meeting their immediate basic needs, including for temporary accommodation, transition to more sustainable accommodation options, food and hygiene items, as well as for education purposes. At the same time, partners will continue working with the Government for their effective inclusion into national social protection programmes and social services. This approach will ensure an effective and timely way to provide assistance to refugees, especially to new arrivals, while at the same time, enabling refugees to remain at the centre of decision-making with regard to how to meet their most urgent needs and prioritize their expenditures. This said, a modality – cash or in-kind – can replace the other, or be combined, to ensure the response is the most effective, as well as protection- and gender-sensitive.

Given that many individuals as well as households among the refugee population are struggling to access complete food portions and cover specific dietary needs mainly because of increased living expenses, due to lack of employment opportunities, partners will ensure that necessary support is provided so that refugees can meet their basic food needs. Food security will be strengthened including through community interventions by serving ready-to-eat nourishing meals and organizing in-kind distributions, as well as assisting new arrivals and those in transit at border areas. In addition, innovative ways of ensuring food security will be explored, including through collaboration with the private sector.

## Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities

### Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



The RRP response should reinforce accountability to affected people through communication with communities and a community-based approach, increasing access to information and awareness-raising for refugees on their rights and access to assistance and services through the community's preferred and trusted channels.

Partners will also support the participation and capacity of community-based actors including refugee- and women-led organizations and other community-based organizations. This includes establishing community-based feedback and complaints systems, including for sensitive complaints, and adapting programming and interventions based on the feedback received from refugees themselves. Conducting systematic participatory assessments and establishing refugee advisory boards, as part of national coordination mechanisms, will be key to the accountability of the RRP partners. In addition to establishing consultative mechanisms that include refugees in solutions, ongoing and systematic mapping and empowerment of community-based structures and initiatives will be key to the strategy.

## Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



Protecting affected populations from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) is a key priority in the refugee response in Slovakia, and a cross-cutting component of the RRP. Refugees from Ukraine continue to be at high risk of SEA owing to the high prevalence of women, including single female-headed households, children, and older persons among the refugee population, and given their high levels of mobility. The response has triggered the engagement of a wide range of organizations that rapidly expanded their capacity in the course of 2022, including through the help of volunteers. The engagement of new actors requires a collective commitment to increase PSEA capacity, to establish and reinforce prevention and response measures, and to coordinate outreach and communication with communities on PSEA. The PSEA Task Force, composed of UN agencies, the IFRC, NGOs, refugee-led organizations and government actors, will continue to promote awareness and understanding of PSEA, and to function as the main forum for technical-level implementation and coordination of PSEA activities in Slovakia.

## Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)



With the objective to ensure the enhanced mental health and psychosocial well-being of refugees from Ukraine, partners will work to provide tailored MHPSS services as well as community-based psychosocial supports, including at border crossing points and during onward movement to regional transit/reception centres. MHPSS services will also be provided in collective accommodation centres, with referral to appropriate service providers for people in need of specialized mental health services. Capacity building will be provided for MHPSS actors, key stakeholders and volunteers providing services to refugees and TCNs.

### Localizing the global compact on refugees

The Government of Slovakia has affirmed the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), recognizing that a sustainable solution to refugee situations cannot be achieved without international cooperation. Slovakia made three pledges at the first- Global Refugee Forum in 2019 aiming to aid refugees and stateless persons and has since provided updates against these pledges. The response of the government to the Ukraine refugee situation has been complemented by local and regional authorities responsible for some of the most important needs of refugees in terms of access to housing, education, health care and employment, as well as inclusion in the Slovak society. In addition, national NGOs, civil society organizations, volunteer groups, development actors, the private sector, cultural and sport associations, and faith-based organizations have all been actively involved in the humanitarian response. With a whole-of-society approach, the implementation of pragmatic and people-centred activities has been central to advancing the objectives of the GCR, in particular where solutions to pressing challenges require strong partnerships and collaboration.

## Partnership and Coordination

The Government of Slovakia is leading the refugee response, with the support of the humanitarian community in the country, including civil society and a strong network of volunteers. The Ministry of Interior coordinates the refugee response, in cooperation with other line Ministries.

The 2023 inter-agency RRP, brings together 28 partners, including 13 national NGOs, 2 refugee-led organizations, 1 faith-based organization, 5 international NGOs, and 7 UN Agencies. RRP partners work closely with the civil society, volunteers, academia, cultural and sport associations to enhance synergies and complementarities, ensuring the best possible outcomes as outlined in this Plan. In addition, the RRP will broaden the scope of partnerships to mobilize resources and increase visibility for the needs of refugees from Ukraine, as well as other people we serve and their host communities. In 2023, cooperation with municipalities as the key actors in the long-term integration of refugees as well as coordinators of the response and services at the local level will be strengthened. The Global Compact on Refugees, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and the principle of "Leaving No One Behind" provide important frameworks for collaboration with partners, including national and bilateral actors, as well as international and multilateral humanitarian, development and peacebuilding organizations to ensure a nexus approach from the start. In particular, the engagement of women-led and women refugee-led organizations (WLOs/WROs) is critical for ensuring inclusiveness and effectiveness of interventions that adequately address the complexity and diversity of refugee needs. International and regional financial institutions and private sector engagement will also be critical to ensure sustainable solutions. The RRP aims at strengthening partnerships and providing opportunities for constructive linkages with regional bodies, including the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE).

Partners involved	28
UN Agencies	7
International NGOs	5
National NGOs	13
Refugee-led Organizations	2
Faith-based Organizations	1

*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.*

Operationalizing an inter-agency comprehensive refugee response in Slovakia required setting up a number of systems, workflows, and structures in support of the government that, in other countries nearby, already existed before the full-scale war broke out in Ukraine. Through the Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF), UNHCR helps coordinate this work in line with the refugee coordination model. The countrywide RCF meets alternatively in Bratislava and in eastern Slovakia, co-chaired by the government and UNHCR. At field-level, the RCF East serves as a platform for coordination of all partners operating in the regions of Kosice and Presov, in particular at the border crossing points. UNHCR is co-chairing the RCF East together with authorities of the two regions.

Within the RCF, at country-level, there are three working groups (Cash, Health, Protection and Inclusion WGs) and two sub-working groups (Child Protection Sub-WG under the Protection WG and MHPSS Sub-WG under Health), as well as an Information Management Sub-WG, a PSEA Task Force and an Anti-trafficking Task Force under the Protection WG. Within the Protection and Inclusion WG (PIWG) there are dedicated sessions on GBV, employment, accommodation and education and the PIWG and the MHPSS WGs maintain a common standing agenda item in relation to safe referral pathways for survivors of GBV in its distinct forms, including conflict-related



*Slovakia. Refugees attending a summer open garden event with the aim to enhance social connections in the receiving community.. © Mareena*

sexual violence. Accountability to Affected People (AAP) is mainstreamed across all sectors of the response and an RCF standing agenda item. UNHCR also convenes and chairs regular meetings of a RCF Humanitarian/Development Donor Group.

The Steering Committee for Migration, Integration and Inclusion of Foreigners led by the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior was reactivated in November 2022. Under this government-led platform sector, specific working groups will be created. UNHCR's coordination structure within the framework of the RRP will continue to support the government-led coordination arrangements following a multi-sectoral and multi-partner approach. The RCF, the inter-agency platform established by UNHCR in cooperation with the government, will merge with government-led coordination structures at a later stage. For now, the RCF serves as an open platform for all humanitarian actors and other entities in the country.

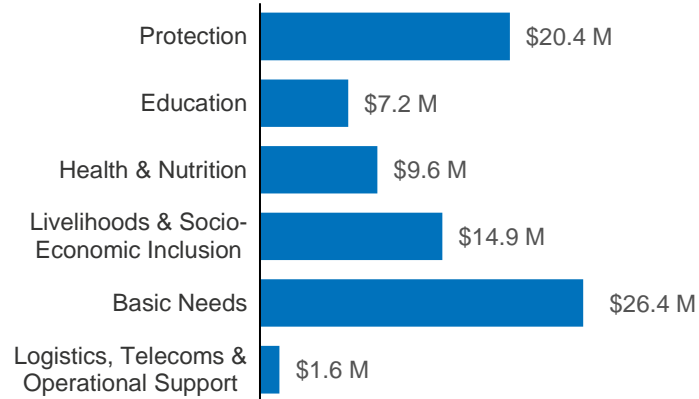
## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements

### Total financial requirements in USD



**\$80.1 M**

### By sector in million USD



Icon	Requirement Category	Amount
	Total Protection requirements	\$20,401,525
	Other protection activities	\$9,212,762
	GBV	\$2,931,571
	Child Protection	\$8,257,192

Icon	Requirement Category	Amount
	Total Cash Assistance requirements*	\$19,662,100
	Basic Needs	\$19,662,100

\* 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

Partner Type	Amount
<b>Partners involved</b>	<b>28</b>
UN Agencies	\$64,631,058
International NGOs	\$2,355,000
National NGOs	\$10,284,132
Refugee-led Organizations	\$542,400
Faith-based Organizations	\$2,313,483

## By partner

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total Partner Requirements in USD
<b>UN Agencies</b>							
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	400,000	600,000	2,750,000	500,000	4,450,000	300,000	9,000,000
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)						300,000	300,000
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)						150,000	150,000
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	525,000		425,000				950,000
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	7,444,596	4,911,342	1,568,363	8,822,050	9,000,000		31,746,351
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	6,971,797			4,171,995	10,330,915		21,474,707
World Health Organization (WHO)	10,000		1,000,000				1,010,000
<b>International NGOs</b>							
Center for Reproductive Rights	100,000		100,000				200,000
Doctors of the World - Belgium			1,500,000				1,500,000
Habitat for Humanity International					100,000		100,000
International Rescue Committee				375,000			375,000
VOICE Amplified	180,000						180,000
<b>National NGOs</b>							
Carpathian Foundation Slovakia		34,500	34,500	35,000	103,200	34,500	241,700
Darus is helping Ukraine		180,000			150,000		330,000
Equita	163,200		940,000				1,103,200
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Slovakia	12,500	8,360					20,860

Partner/Acronym	Protection	Education	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Socio-Inclusion	Basic Needs	Logistics, Telecoms & Operational Support	Total Partner Requirements in USD
League for Mental Health in Slovakia			200,000				200,000
Mareena	648,000	325,000		300,000			1,273,000
Our Way	2,500	15,000	10,500	2,000	157,400	99,600	287,000
People in Need Slovakia	400,000	150,000					550,000
Samaritan Slovakia			500		35,000		35,500
Scouting Slovakia		5,000					5,000
Slovak Humanitarian Council	1,236,757	32,000	32,000	127,500	475,842	669,323	2,573,422
TENENET (NGO)	1,152,000	480,000	768,000	576,000			2,976,000
The Human Rights League	688,450						688,450
Faith-based Organizations							
Caritas Slovakia	394,185	274,238			1,645,060		2,313,483
Refugee-led Organizations							
Ukrainians for Ukrainians			300,600				300,600
We are together	72,540	169,260					241,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,401,525</b>	<b>\$7,184,700</b>	<b>\$9,629,463</b>	<b>\$14,909,545</b>	<b>\$26,447,417</b>	<b>\$1,553,423</b>	<b>\$80,126,073</b>

**UKRAINE SITUATION**

# **REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN**

January – December 2023



**Regional Refugee Response  
for the Ukraine Situation**

UNHCR operational data portal  
[rbeext@unhcr.org](mailto:rbeext@unhcr.org)