



UKRAINE SITUATION FLASH UPDATE #1

8 March 2022

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TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS

<p>24 Feb Deterioration of situation, military offensive escalates - UNHCR deeply concerned.</p>	<p>23 Feb Russian Federation recognizes “independence” of Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine - UN</p>
<p>28 Feb Eleventh Emergency Special Session of the UN General Assembly</p> <p>UN High Commissioner for Refugees speaks at the UN Security Council</p>	<p>25 Feb UN Security Council fails to adopt Draft Resolution on Ending Ukraine Crisis – Russian veto.</p> <p>UNHCR declares L3 Emergency in Ukraine and L2 Emergency in the neighbouring countries.</p>
<p>1 Mar Launch of UN Flash Appeal seeking USD \$1.1B within Ukraine & UNHCR Regional Response Plan for neighbouring countries seeking \$550.6M USD</p>	<p>2 Mar The UN General Assembly resolution adopted demanding Russia immediately end its military operations in Ukraine</p>
<p>2 Mar UNHCR Position on Returns to Ukraine</p>	<p>3 Mar EU adopts decision to activate Temporary Protection Directive to Refugees Fleeing Ukraine</p>
<p>3 Mar One million refugees fled Ukraine in a week</p>	<p>8 Mar 2 million refugees fled Ukraine in less than 2 weeks</p>



REFUGEES FLEEING UKRAINE 2,011,312

Data as of 08 Mar 2022

More details: [UNHCR Operational Data Portal – Ukraine Refugee Situation](#)

BACKGROUND

The Russian Federation launched a military offensive in Ukraine on 24 February 2022. In the space of just 12 days, more than 2 million refugees have been forced to flee to neighbouring countries, while an additional estimated 1 million people have been displaced internally within Ukraine. UNHCR declared a Level 3 Emergency - the Agency’s highest - in Ukraine on 25 February and Level 2 Emergency in the neighbouring countries.

The escalation of conflict has triggered an immediate and steep rise in humanitarian needs, both within the country as well as in the neighbouring countries receiving refugees.

The UN estimates that 12 million people inside Ukraine will need relief and protection, while more than 4 million Ukrainian refugees may need protection and assistance in neighbouring countries in the coming months.

UNHCR has called for the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, respect for international humanitarian law, and appealed to neighbouring countries to keep their borders open to those fleeing.

UKRAINE

- As the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate, civilians and civilian infrastructure must be protected, and humanitarian access must be granted for those delivering aid to people impacted by war.
- UNHCR staff remain on the ground in Ukraine and – like the rest of the civilian population – are caught up in the military offensive. However, they are committed to stay and deliver assistance when and where access and security allow.
- Currently, the Office is scaling up presence and operations in central and western Ukraine, where conditions enable better humanitarian access and needs are rapidly growing as people evacuate toward the west and further abroad.
- It is estimated that at least 1 million people have been newly displaced inside Ukraine, though it is challenging to have accurate estimates due to the ongoing situation. Millions more people living in affected areas are stranded, unwilling or unable to leave, due to security risks, destruction of bridges and roads, as well as lack of resources or information on where to find safety and accommodation.
- The UNHCR-led Protection Cluster has rolled out the Protection Monitoring Tool, enabling partners to quickly identify key protection risks and needs of the affected population. The urgent needs identified include fuel, cash, food, medicines and shelter materials. UNHCR and protection partners also launched a Protection Service Mapping tool to

map the services currently available by partners and Ukrainian authorities.

- Snapshots of the current protection situation, needs and response within Ukraine are produced regularly. The 2-5 March snapshot can be found [here](#) and the protection monitoring dashboard is available [here](#).

Summary of key findings - Protection Snapshot:

- 72,000+ new arrivals of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in 14 locations, mostly in western Ukraine, and to a smaller extent in Kyiv and central regions. Most come from Dnipro, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Mykolaivska and Odesa oblasts. At least 21 per cent indicated intention to continue moving further.
- Key protection risks include exposure to shelling, landmines, restrictions on freedom of movement and family separation.
- Main reported issues in collective centres hosting IDPs include overcrowding, lack of separation by gender or space for family units providing necessary privacy.
- Women and girls forced to live in temporary or shared shelters and increased military presence heighten risks of gender-based violence (GBV). While specialized services, including GBV hotlines, remain partially functional, access is extremely difficult for both staff and survivors due to the security situation and movement restrictions.

UNHCR RESPONSE IN UKRAINE

In Eastern Ukraine:

- UNHCR is working with local authorities, partners and community-based organizations to provide critical supplies for displaced and conflict-affected populations, including food, water and shelter materials to reinforce damaged houses and other infrastructure in villages across the region. Folding beds and blankets were also distributed to people who have been staying for days in bomb shelters in Sievierodonetsk amid active shelling in eastern Ukraine.

In Central and Western Ukraine:

- UNHCR is supporting authorities to establish and expand reception capacity for IDPs, particularly in Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Vinnytsya and other cities serving as transit hubs for further movements abroad, and to coordinate the provision of assistance and protection services in these reception and transit centres. As part of this, the Office is helping authorities develop a referral roadmap for newly arriving IDPs to identify vulnerable groups and coordinate assistance with the local NGOs providing services.
- UNHCR has established operational presence in key locations in central and western Ukraine and relocated humanitarian supplies from Kyiv to a new warehouse in Vinnytsya to enable immediate dispatch to areas in need, including to Mariupol and Volnovakha once the safe passage operation is confirmed.
- The Office is also working on providing small-scale cash assistance to IDPs either in transit or staying in Vinnytsya while a larger cash assistance program is established.
- UNHCR is working with partners to provide immediate response activities at the border with Poland in Lviv oblast and in affected urban areas, focusing on distributing core relief items and food for IDPs, setting up heating points at the border, and providing information and legal counselling.
- On 5 March, food packages and water were provided for 500 people in Chop, Zakarpattia Oblast near Ukraine's border with Hungary and Slovakia, and on 6 March, UNHCR partner NEEKA supported more than 1,000 displaced persons in Chop and Uzhhorod cities with shelter, food and clothing.
- While security and humanitarian access continue to be major challenges in most parts of the country, UNHCR will continue to work on further delivery of protection assistance to other locations as soon as the situation allows.



A refugee from Ukraine hugs her son in a reception centre set up in the sports hall of a school in the Polish border town of Medyka.

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REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE

Access to territory and asylum

UNHCR commends the efforts of neighbouring countries who have, to date, kept their borders open to refugees fleeing Ukraine.

UNHCR welcomes the unprecedented decision on 3 March to extend temporary protection to people fleeing Ukraine under the European Union (EU) Temporary Protection Directive (TPD). It will provide much needed safety and help EU States support each other as they respond. UNHCR encourages its swift and broad application. The measure should also facilitate the sharing of responsibility for people fleeing Ukraine among European States.

UNHCR is present at borders and in key refugee-receiving areas in neighbouring countries to monitor new arrivals, identify needs and gaps, and support the national authorities with coordination, information provision, identification of persons with specific needs, including children at risk and their referral and access to appropriate services and assistance – the latter in close coordination with UNICEF.

- In **Hungary**, the Government is providing temporary protection to all new arrivals from Ukraine. Temporary residence permits are given to those with lawful stay in Ukraine, while those who wish to apply for temporary protection can do so with authorities stationed near border crossing points. Groups of third country national students arriving from Ukraine are receiving assistance

for accommodation and further travel from their respective embassies.

- In **Poland**, border checks are kept to a minimum to reduce the long wait times observed in the initial days of large-scale arrivals to Poland. Authorities have emphasized that all people are being allowed to enter; those without valid travel documents are given a document proving their entry.
- In **Romania**, it is reported that all arrivals without passports are required to apply for asylum to legalize their stay in Romania, creating administrative challenges and worry amongst those who intend to travel onwards.
- As of 1 March, **Slovakia** is also granting temporary protection for refugees from Ukraine and their family members until the end of the year. The Border and Aliens Police with the Fire and Rescue Service have opened large-capacity centres in Bratislava, Humenne and Michalovce to receive applications for temporary protection.
- In the **Republic of Moldova**, borders have remained open for all of those fleeing Ukraine. The Government has also published an information portal for refugees fleeing Ukraine providing detailed information on how to enter the country, how to access services, and legalizing their stay.
- **The Moldovan and Romanian Prime Ministers agreed to ensure a “green corridor”** to facilitate transit of Ukrainians through Moldova. Romania will provide transport and personnel at the Moldova-Romania

border, if necessary, to speed up border crossing procedures.

UNHCR has received reports of challenges faced by third country nationals attempting to cross at some border crossing points, with people being held for several days in reception or detention-like centres, some of which are sub-standard. UNHCR stresses that governments must continue to maintain access to territory for all those fleeing, including Ukrainians and third country nationals living in Ukraine, who are now forced to escape the violence. There must be no discrimination against any person or group. UNHCR continues to liaise directly with the relevant authorities and IOM on engagement with embassies to facilitate processing and release of third country nationals held for screenings at border crossing points where needed.

Reception

In all neighbouring countries, reception and assistance is being provided by State authorities, humanitarian organizations, civil society and volunteers.

There has been immense solidarity shown by local populations and volunteers in neighbouring countries, who have been providing support for accommodation, transport, food, financial and material donations.

- In **Hungary**, the authorities have established a system of Collection Points and Help Points to respectively register and provide assistance to refugee arrivals upon crossing the border. The Help Points are each managed by a different humanitarian organization responsible for providing food, medical and other support, and the extent of services and assistance provided varies among the six currently operational. Limited numbers of interpreters as well as information provision on how to apply for temporary protection are key gaps across border crossing points.
- The Government is providing temporary accommodation for arrivals in a public facility, while NGOs are coordinating a network of offers for private accommodation for refugees. The Directorate General of Disaster Management has also organized 5,400 longer-term accommodation places for refugee arrivals in various public facilities, which are not yet at capacity.
- Refugees have access to health care upon arrival in Hungary.
- In the **Republic of Moldova**, a transit centre has been established at the border, from where people are transported to a series of reception centres with capacity for over

21,000 persons. More than 40 temporary placement centres have been established in recent days, and the Moldovan Football Federation, in coordination with the Government, is housing some 500 refugees, and providing food.

- In **Poland**, which is receiving the highest number of refugee arrivals, food, water, blankets and heated tents are available at the border, as well as transport to reception centres. The number of new arrivals has seen a sharp increase since 4 March, with the number of refugees who have crossed the border into Poland surpassing 1 million on 6 March. Rapid processing has reduced wait times from initial days of the refugee arrivals but raised concerns due to a lack of systematic registration or identification of persons with specific needs, including children, many of whom arrive without documents.
- UNHCR is closely monitoring the potential impact on wait times, humanitarian conditions and protection risks associated with rapid processing at the border should arrival rates further surge in the coming days.
- Accommodation centres with capacity for around 280,000 people have been arranged by local authorities across Poland, though remain largely unoccupied as initial arrivals proceeded to privately arranged accommodation or travelled onward. In recent days however, the number of individuals without private arrangements post-arrival is rising, elevating vulnerability. Many indicate their intent to travel to Warsaw. The large reception-style facilities in Warsaw and other cities are correspondingly receiving many arrivals and need support with coordination and capacity. The Government launched an official website for NGOs to coordinate and appeal for funding, while volunteers continue to mobilize assistance for arrivals.
- In **Romania**, the authorities are registering new arrivals in tents at the border, where people can rest and receive information on asylum procedures. Local NGOs are providing food, core relief items and transport to government-run reception centres; however, these are approaching full capacity. Sixty accommodation tents and 10 service tents with maximum capacity of 480 people are available. Arrivals are not expected to stay more than 72 hours and are free to leave after registering.
- UNHCR is coordinating with authorities to provide information to arrivals at border crossing points and temporary accommodation centres. Coordination led by the authorities is improving, however



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some challenges in aid distribution remain. Border Police report that processing capacity is significantly reduced at night due to reliance on volunteers and interpreters, who mainly come during the day.

- In **Slovakia**, teams have been deployed to speed up administrative procedures, while NGOs are providing basic humanitarian assistance, under the leadership of the authorities. Arrivals receive food, temporary accommodation, access to asylum procedures, psychosocial support and information materials, including on risks of trafficking. Wait times at several border crossing points have increased with an increasing number of women with children arriving in recent days.
- The Ministry of Health has announced that refugees will have access to health care regardless of status, both at the border and in health facilities.
- The Ministry of Interior has produced leaflets in Slovak and Ukrainian, for distribution at the border with information on relevant contacts and hotline numbers and key protection risks, including for human trafficking.

Needs and Response

Access to information is a key priority. UNHCR and partners are providing information through dedicated 24-hour helplines, information leaflets, and 'Help' websites established in countries neighbouring Ukraine to ensure that refugees have access to information in their country of arrival.

Mental health and psychosocial support for new arrivals is also a key priority, as is the identification of, referral and provision of support for persons with specific needs.

UNHCR is working to enhance reception capacity of the various countries and has prepositioned core relief items in the region, including through establishment of a new warehouse in Poland.

- In **Hungary**, UNHCR continues monitoring the reception of new arrivals at the different border crossing points and facilities established by authorities to provide assistance and support.
- In the **Republic of Moldova**, UNHCR's first humanitarian airlift arrived on 2 March with some 8,000 thermal blankets, of which 2,400 were immediately transferred to the Palanca border crossing point for distribution to arriving refugees.
- On 5 March, a six-truck convoy with UNHCR relief items arrived in Moldova and delivered 250 family tents, 2,500 sleeping mats, 1,000 plastic tarpaulins as well as hygiene items, face masks, baby care kits, winterization kits and portable LED solar lamps to the authorities. Additional convoys and airlifts are scheduled for the coming days, and UNHCR is setting up warehousing and distribution capacities.
- UNHCR and a partner have started emergency cash distributions in temporary accommodation centres, while the mechanism for larger-scale assistance is being set up. A one-off cash grant for host families is also being set up in collaboration with the authorities. To this end, UNHCR is in discussions with financial service providers and relevant authorities on establishing

an electronic cash delivery system. A Cash Working Group, co-chaired by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and UNHCR, has been set up.

- UNHCR is providing information, counselling and psychosocial support to new arrivals in reception centres, including in Moldova and will provide emergency shelter solutions as required.
- In **Poland**, UNHCR continues to work on scaling up digital and print information resources as well as outreach to address a critical gap in access to information. The UNHCR office has introduced auto-reply messages that contain a comprehensive list of resources and will soon launch a dedicated information hotline.
- With respect to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as trafficking, UNHCR continues to monitor risks, develop and circulate communication materials, and identify additional partners to support with protection interventions in coordination with UNICEF.
- UNHCR continues to monitor the border area and interior cities and is developing a Rapid Needs Assessment tool to enhance screening at the border to identify persons with specific needs.
- UNHCR has noted a worrying number of unaccompanied and separated children arriving across borders who require specific support, including access to national child protection programmes and appropriate care arrangements. UNHCR is working with UNICEF to establish 'Blue Dot' hubs that provide a safe space for children and families, as well as basic assistance and protection services including counselling.
- The main needs at border crossing points include food, blankets, mattresses, sleeping bags, information and medical assistance. An airlift with 26,000 thermal blankets arrived in Poland on 7 March. A four-truck convoy was immediately dispatched to Ukraine to support the response within the country and arrived on the morning of 8 March to Lviv.
- UNHCR is working to set up a multi-purpose cash assistance program in Poland, with a pilot with a partner planned to roll out in the coming days. This will target 100,000 households.
- In **Romania**, UNHCR and partner staff are maintaining presence at all border crossing points and mobile centres and supporting with information, counselling and psychosocial support in coordination with the authorities. A UNHCR partner also provides 24/7 counseling by phone. UNHCR information leaflets on in-country support and resources are distributed at all border crossing points, mobile centres and through the Ukrainian Embassy's network.
- With women and children comprising the vast majority of refugees, protection from and response to gender-based violence (GBV) is a key priority. Women are at a heightened risk of GBV in situations of mass displacement. UNHCR worked with authorities in Romania to introduce a verification step for private offers of support to transport refugees from the border to address such protection concerns. Volunteers will now need to enrol with ID on the Government coordination platform before transporting refugees.

Coordination

Ukraine

UNHCR has been leading the Protection and Shelter Clusters since December 2014. As of 1 March 2022, the Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster was activated in Ukraine and UNHCR, as cluster lead, is working to establish the relevant coordination structure among potential CCCM partners. As part of the inter-agency response led by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, UNHCR will scale up its coordination capacity as needed to ensure an effective and inclusive response. In addition, as co-lead of the Logistics Working Group in Ukraine, UNHCR is facilitating the movement of humanitarian convoys in coordination with OCHA.

Regional Refugee Response

UNHCR has established a regional refugee coordination structure with relevant partners. A Regional Refugee Response Plan has been developed on the Ukraine Refugee Situation, currently involving 11 partners in addition to UNHCR: UNDP, WHO, Save the Children, HelpAge International, INTERSOS, Project Hope, UNFPA, NRC, UNICEF, WFP and IOM. The Plan is currently under revision and more partners will contribute.

FINANCIAL NEEDS

Links:

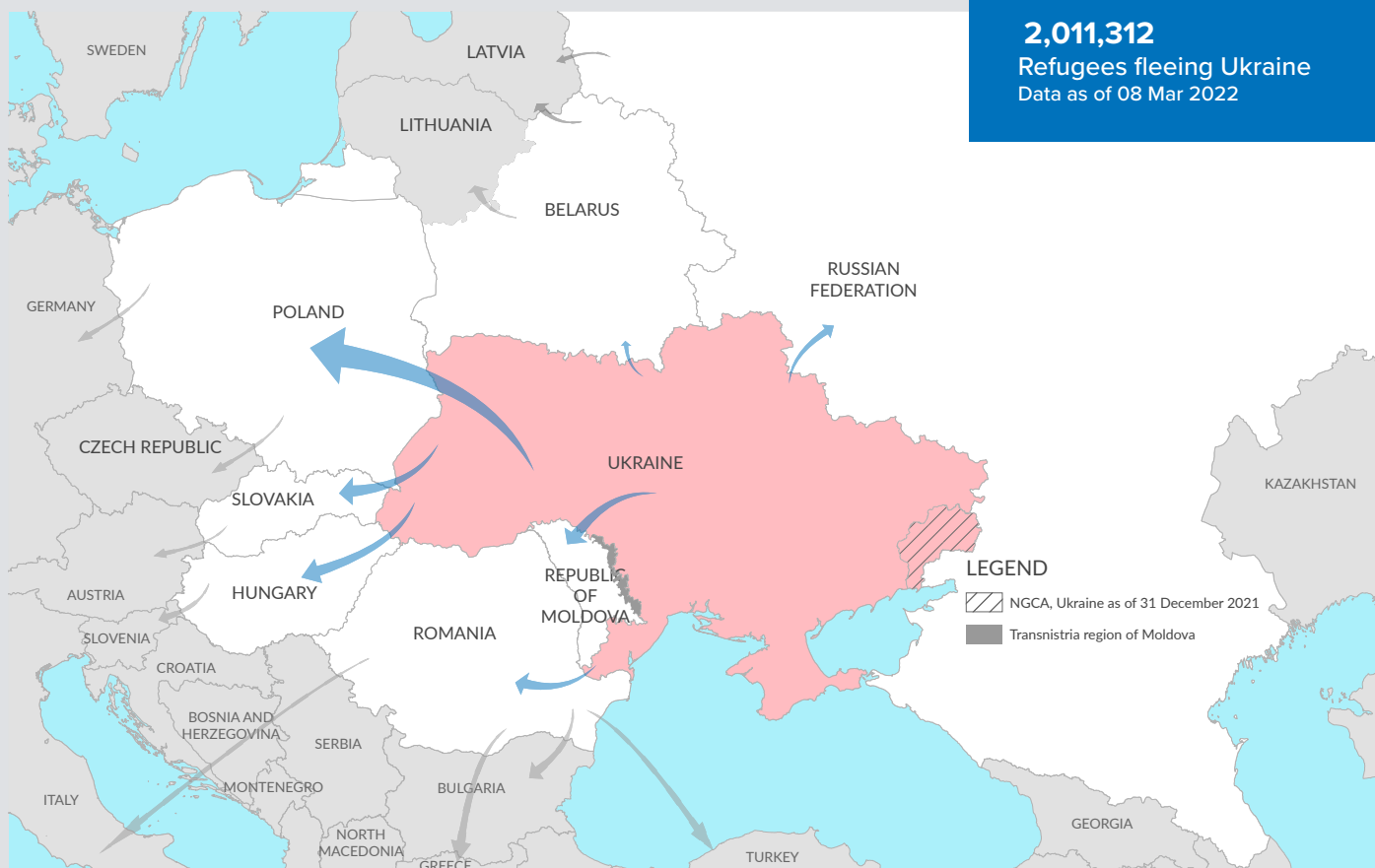
Ukraine Situation: [Regional Refugee Response Plan](#)

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▶ UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION



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