



UKRAINE SITUATION FLASH UPDATE #5

24 March 2022

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UNHCR PUBLICATIONS

(19-24 March)

22 March

Press Release: IOM, UNHCR welcome the first flights of refugees out of Moldova to EU Member States

21 March

Story: Blanket delivery offers some warmth for refugees waiting to cross Ukraine border

21 March

Statement: High Commissioner's message on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

18 March

Flash Update #4 available [here](#)

15 March

Flash Update #3 available [here](#)

11 March

Flash Update #2 available [here](#)

8 March

Flash Update #1 available [here](#)

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REFUGEES FLEEING UKRAINE

3,674,952

Data as of 23 March 2022

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



BACKGROUND

The Russian Federation launched a military offensive against Ukraine on 24 February 2022. **In the space of just one month, more than 3.6 million refugees** have been forced to flee Ukraine, making this the fastest growing refugee crisis since World War II.

An additional **6.5 million** people have been displaced internally within Ukraine and over **12 million** more have been affected in the areas hardest hit by the war. Humanitarian needs are increasing exponentially.

Many people remain trapped in areas of escalating conflict and, with essential services disrupted, are unable to meet their basic needs including food, water and medicines. The delivery of lifesaving aid remains challenging, with a lack of safe humanitarian access.

UNHCR continues to call for the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, respect for international humanitarian law, and appealed to neighbouring countries to continue keeping their borders open to those fleeing.

- **54** transit and reception centres visited and assessed
- **8,500** additional hosting spaces created in reception centres for internally displaced persons (IDPs) allowing them to host **85,000** people in transit per month
- **16,000** people received protection assistance at border crossing points, transit and reception centres and through hotlines
- **22,500** people reached with essential food and non-food items such as shelter materials, mattresses, blankets, kitchen sets, towels and hygiene items
- **3,669** families with damaged homes received emergency shelter kits
- **657** people enrolled for multipurpose cash assistance in first days

UKRAINE SITUATION UPDATE

- **The number of civilian casualties across Ukraine continues to rise.** As of 20 March, OHCHR reports 2,421 civilian casualties, including 925 killed; actual figures are likely much higher. Hundreds of thousands of people remain trapped in areas which are heavily impacted by fighting and shelling.
- The intensity of the fighting, and notably the **indiscriminate airstrikes hitting civilians and civilian infrastructure**, continues to trigger large-scale displacement, while simultaneously exacerbating the humanitarian needs of those who are internally displaced or remain in heavily affected areas.
- **The humanitarian situation in Mariupol remains dire.** From 18 to 20 March, over 13,000 people were evacuated. However, authorities in Donetsk Oblast say thousands who fled Mariupol now face starvation in Manhush and Melekine as they are once again trapped without safe passage out of locations where food and water are increasingly scarce.
- Mariupol's City Council reports that **50-100 artillery shells hit the city every day** and that some 80 per cent of the city's housing has been affected by ongoing hostilities, of which at least 30 per cent is damaged beyond repair.
- **Further evacuations took place from other areas heavily impacted by fighting.** On 18 March, some 500 civilians reportedly departed from Berdiansk, 85-km west of Mariupol, and some 4,000 civilians left Sumy Oblast. Local authorities reported that some 35,000 civilians managed to leave Mariupol over the last few days.
- On 19 March, some 700 people were evacuated from Rubizhne, Luhansk, following heavy shelling, among them many who were wounded and many with limited mobility. On 21 March, a further 175 people were evacuated from Hirske, Lysychansk and Sievierodonetsk, 40 from Rubizhne and 20 from Kreminna.
- The latest Global Protection Cluster 'Protection Snapshot' (10-16 March) is available [here](#).



UNHCR RESPONSE IN UKRAINE

Multipurpose Cash Assistance

- The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) inside Ukraine continues to increase exponentially. To enable IDPs to cover their immediate basic needs, a multipurpose cash assistance programme is being rolled-out in Lviv region and will be expanded to cover Chernivtsi, Dnipro, Ivano-Frankivska, Khmelnytskyi, Ternopil, Vinnytsia and Zakarpattia.
- Since enrolment began in Lviv on 17 March, **657 individuals** have been enrolled in UNHCR's multipurpose cash assistance programme. The first payment is being processed for 152 families, who will be able to collect their cash assistance on 24 March. Daily payments will take place as soon as new families are enrolled. **UNHCR aims to reach 360,000 people with multipurpose cash assistance** in the first three months.

Protection

- **UNHCR is scaling up programmes with NGO partners to provide integrated protection advice and services; at border points, inside and outside of reception centres**, targeting IDPs with specific needs including women at risk of gender-based violence (GBV) and trafficking, older persons, minorities, unaccompanied and separated children, and persons with disabilities.
- To date, some **16,000 people have received targeted protection assistance**, including **2,615 people** at border points, **2,383 people** in transit, registration and reception centres, 5,141 people in other places such as train stations, and **5,746 people** through hotlines which are being expanded. More than 82,000 people have received information through social media channels.
- As a priority, UNHCR is supporting national authorities to expand reception capacity of transit and reception centres. **Core relief items were distributed to 37 reception centres, expanding their daily reception capacity by 8,500 places**, bringing total capacity to 85,000 people per month.
- UNHCR has also **assessed 54 buildings for refurbishment to become transit and reception centres**. Nine centres are currently being prioritized for urgent refurbishment.

Core Relief Items

- UNHCR has **mobilized from its global stockpiles core relief items such as tarpaulin, blankets, hygiene kits and kitchen sets for 1.5 million people**, and is procuring tens of thousands of other items like mattresses, folding beds and sleeping bags. So far, around **95,000 items have arrived, and 450,000 items are due to arrive in the coming one to two weeks**.
- So far, despite the security challenges, more than 22,500 people received assistance, including **14,600 blankets, 2,930 mattresses, 1,100 folding beds and sleeping mats, 850 bedsheets and 6,500 assorted hygiene items**. More than **2,230 people** have also benefitted from **life-saving food assistance**.
- A further **3,369 families** - more than 10,000 people - received emergency shelter assistance to repair homes damaged by shelling.
- On 18 March, UNHCR delivered to Sumy the **first inter-agency convoy** under the humanitarian notification system, bringing urgent core relief items to some 2,000 people. In coordination with other UN agencies, UNHCR will continue contributing to such humanitarian convoys destined for people in hard-to-reach areas.

Protection

- UNHCR and UNICEF are moving forward with the roll-out of the Blue Dots in Hungary, which will provide additional information, identification of and referral to services for persons with specific needs. Eight potential locations have been mapped, mainly at information points and train stations.
- UNHCR and partners are working with authorities to improve identification and referral mechanisms for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), whilst coordinating with the national child protection authorities and police to reinforce monitoring and screening of UASC at the borders.
- UNHCR conducted a monitoring visit to the Hungary-Romania border on 20-21 March and noted a lack of ‘help points’ available, as exist at the border with Ukraine. Assistance including information provision is lacking. UNHCR is working with the authorities to respond to the need for additional information and awareness-raising.

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA



Key figures - REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

- **189** people have received multipurpose cash assistance so far
- **4,400** refugees assisted to move from Palanca border crossing in Moldova to Romania
- Over **300** refugees screened for vulnerabilities and supported to depart to Austria as part of the EU Solidarity Platform

Core relief items delivered to support over 8,000 people

- More than **2,500** people received winterization kits
- **2,500** people received sleeping mats
- Almost **2,000** emergency tents delivered
- **1,000** sheets of plastic tarpaulin delivered to reinforce shelters
- **80** laptops delivered to the authorities to aid in management of the refugee response

Protection

- **UNICEF and UNHCR continue to operate three Blue Dots at the Otaci and Palanca border crossing points, as well as at the Moldexpo reception centre in (Chisinau).** UNHCR has provided five containers to the Palanca bus station to serve as safe spaces, including two which will accommodate the Blue Dot Hub. UNHCR is also providing free internet for the station.
- **UNHCR has started a network of “community paralegals”**, working with members of the Ukrainian community who can help vulnerable refugees connect with the web-based information resources and other services. The paralegals will also help persons of concern navigate the array of options for accommodation and onward movement.
- **UNHCR continues to maintain a regular and consistent presence at border crossing points, accommodation centres and transportation hubs around the country, including at MoldExpo, the biggest reception site in Chisinau.** At Palanca border crossing point, UNHCR is providing legal counselling and transportation services through its partners LCA and ACTED.
- **On the western border**, UNHCR Moldova is working closely with UNHCR Romania and recently conducted a joint mission to gather accurate information about available services, entry procedures, and conditions. This information will be used to create counselling and information materials for distribution to refugees.
- **Almost 200 bus trips to support 4,400 refugees** to move from Palanca border crossing to Romania, have taken place, in support of Moldovan and Romanian authorities, and in order to reduce the pressure on border crossing points in Moldova.
- **In collaboration with UNHCR, IOM and EU+ Member States, the Republic of Moldova is organizing free air transportation directly from Moldova to some EU counties**, under the European Union Solidarity Platform. So far, six Member States have made concrete pledges to receive persons from Moldova.
- **On 19 March, the first of these flights departed Moldova for Austria. In the past days, more than 300 people (and five pets) have been transferred to Austria, from a**



UNHCR and UNICEF plan to establish some 30 Blue Dots in countries neighbouring Ukraine. Several are already operational while others are being established.

This includes ‘Light Blue’ Dots – with a basic set of services like information-sharing and basic identification of vulnerabilities normally in the vicinity of border crossing points, and Blue Dots with the full range of services in other locations.

total of 2,000 who will eventually travel there. Earlier in the week, UNHCR held a training for people on the screening and selection of persons for air transfer.

- The UNHCR **Moldova portal page**, with more detailed information on the overall response in Moldova, under the Ukraine situation data portal, is live and may be accessed [here](#).

Multipurpose Cash Assistance

- So far, **189 refugees** have received multipurpose cash assistance. This will be scaled up to reach some **150,000 refugees and host community members**, in collaboration with the Government of Moldova and WFP.

POLAND



Key figures - POLAND

1,212 refugees enrolled for multipurpose cash assistance from 21 to 23 March

Core relief items dispatched to warehouses in Ukraine to benefit more than 100,000 people

- **52,000** high thermal blankets
- **12,500** sheets of tarpaulin to repair shelters
- **10,000** solar lamps
- **8,400** sleeping bags
- **4,511** winter jackets
- **4,000** Jerry cans
- **3,025** mattresses
- **2,080** kitchen sets
- **1,134** boxes of winter clothes

Protection

- UNHCR and UNICEF launched the first Blue Dot site in Poland on 21 March, co-located in the new UNHCR Enrolment Point for multipurpose cash assistance. UNHCR and UNICEF also undertook joint assessment missions to identify locations and partners for Blue Dots, mainly at border crossing points and reception centres.
- UNHCR is disseminating protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) information materials and has conducted initial capacity-building trainings on PSEA at the border. UNHCR is also pursuing a partnership with a local NGO for a dedicated helpline.

- The UNHCR **Poland portal page**, with more detailed information on the overall response in Poland, under the Ukraine situation data portal, is live and may be accessed [here](#).
- A [UNHCR Reference Map of Poland](#) (updated 18 March) has been published, featuring 30 Reception Points and 8 Border Crossing Points between Poland and Ukraine.
- The **UNHCR Help Poland** page has reached almost 90,000 visits and more than 158,000 page views as of 21 March.

Multipurpose Cash Assistance

- On 21 March, UNHCR and partners began the roll-out of the multipurpose cash assistance programme in Warsaw. From 21-23 March, 1,212 people (504 families) were enrolled. This programme is planned to reach some 450,000 people.
- UNHCR identifies people with specific needs during cash enrolment and refers them directly to the Blue Dot co-located in the Warsaw facility. UNHCR will expand cash enrolment to other cities in the coming weeks.

Core Relief Items

- Tens of thousands of core relief items, including high thermal blankets, kitchen sets, solar lamps, winter jackets, sleeping bags, mattresses and other items, have been dispatched from Poland directly to warehouses in Lviv and Uzhhorod, Ukraine, for distribution to the increasing numbers of IDPs in need within Ukraine. **Thirty-five 40ft trucks have travelled from Poland to Ukraine to dispatch CRIs.**

ROMANIA



Key figures - ROMANIA

- More than **4,300** refugees received in-person counselling and assistance
- Almost **4,700** refugees provided with information and counselling over the phone
- **4,400** refugees received in Romania through fast-track transfers supported by UNHCR and IOM from Moldova
- **2** Blue Dot hubs established, **11** more locations for expansion identified

Protection

- UNHCR, UNICEF, and the Romanian authorities have agreed to set up a multi-stakeholder information centre and a Blue Dot at the Isaccea border crossing point,



UNHCR supports Austria's programme to admit refugees from Ukraine via Moldova, March 2022.
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including the placement of separate containers for mothers and babies. Two other Blue Dots (in Sighet and Siret) are already in place, while 11 additional locations have also been identified.

- UNHCR and its partner are following up on a request from the Romanian Department for Emergency Situations for Ukrainian/Russian interpretation support at the Husi border crossing point.
- To date, more than 4,328 refugees received in-person counselling and assistance related to accommodation, transport, rights and obligations, and special support services. Almost 4,700 more refugees were provided with information and counselling over the phone, related to medical services, school enrolment, accommodation, transportation, the asylum procedure, temporary protection and job opportunities.
- Some 4,400 refugees have been transported to Romania from Palanca border crossing point in Moldova through a fast-track programme jointly organized by the Romanian and Moldovan authorities, with the support of UNHCR and IOM.

SLOVAKIA

Protection

- UNHCR partner NGO Slovak Humanitarian Council is providing information and counselling services at all three border crossing points (Ubla, Velke Slemence and Vyšné Nemecké) and the Kosice train station.
- UNHCR and UNICEF are in the process of advancing the roll-out of the Blue Dot system in Slovakia. So far, four Blue Dot locations have been mapped at border crossing points and Kosice train stations.
- UNHCR has observed arrivals of many different profiles of persons with specific needs. UNHCR is assisting with the identification of persons with specific needs and advocating for their access to appropriate services and existing support mechanisms.
- UNHCR is working with partners to develop communication-with-community materials to provide basic information for persons arriving from Ukraine. UNHCR is also developing a mechanism to collect data on the outreach needs of persons of concerns and their preferred communication channels.

COORDINATION

Ukraine

UNHCR leads the Protection and Shelter Clusters. As of 1 March, the Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster was activated in Ukraine. 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 facilitated the establishment of coordination structures in line with the Refugee Coordination Model, in order to support the overall coordination of the relevant governments. A Regional Refugee Response Plan has been developed and is currently under adjustment; some 100 organizations will contribute for an initial period of 6 months. Inter-agency Refugee Coordination Forums (RCF), led by UNHCR, and specific sectoral groups, have been established at country level in **Hungary**, the **Republic of Moldova**, **Poland**, **Romania** and **Slovakia**, to support the efforts of the concerned governments. The structures are meant to be agile and shall be adjusted as the situation evolves.

UNHCR organized the third inter-agency coordination meeting of RRP partners in **Slovakia** on 21 March, co-chaired by the Ministry of Interior's Migration Office. Sub-working groups, including Protection sub-working groups, are due to be launched on 24 March.

In **Romania**, coordination between UNHCR's partner and the General Inspectorate for Immigration has been further

formalized through an SOP with countrywide applicability to ensure a more comprehensive, coordinated approach in providing protection and subsequent monitoring.

In **Moldova**, an Inter-Agency Coordination Group has been established with more than 100 participating members. Separate Sectoral Working Group meetings have also begun, including Protection, Child Protection and GBV, Education, PSEA, Gender Task Force, Accommodation, Health and Nutrition, Logistics and Supply, Durable Solutions and Resilience, and Information Management. The Government of Moldova has established a Single Emergency Management Centre under the Prime Minister's Officer, where UNHCR represents the Inter-Agency Coordination Group, ensuring coordination between the two.

In **Poland**, UNHCR has established an RCF that includes local and international actors across eight sectors and working groups. Specifically, UNHCR is currently leading the Protection Sector, GBV Sub-Sector, Technical Cash Working Group, Basic Needs Sector and the Logistics Sector. The Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Working Group, chaired by UNHCR, held its first meeting on 18 March. UNHCR has also established direct engagements and focal points with the Government of Poland for coordination. UNHCR publications (19 – 23 March)

FINANCIAL NEEDS

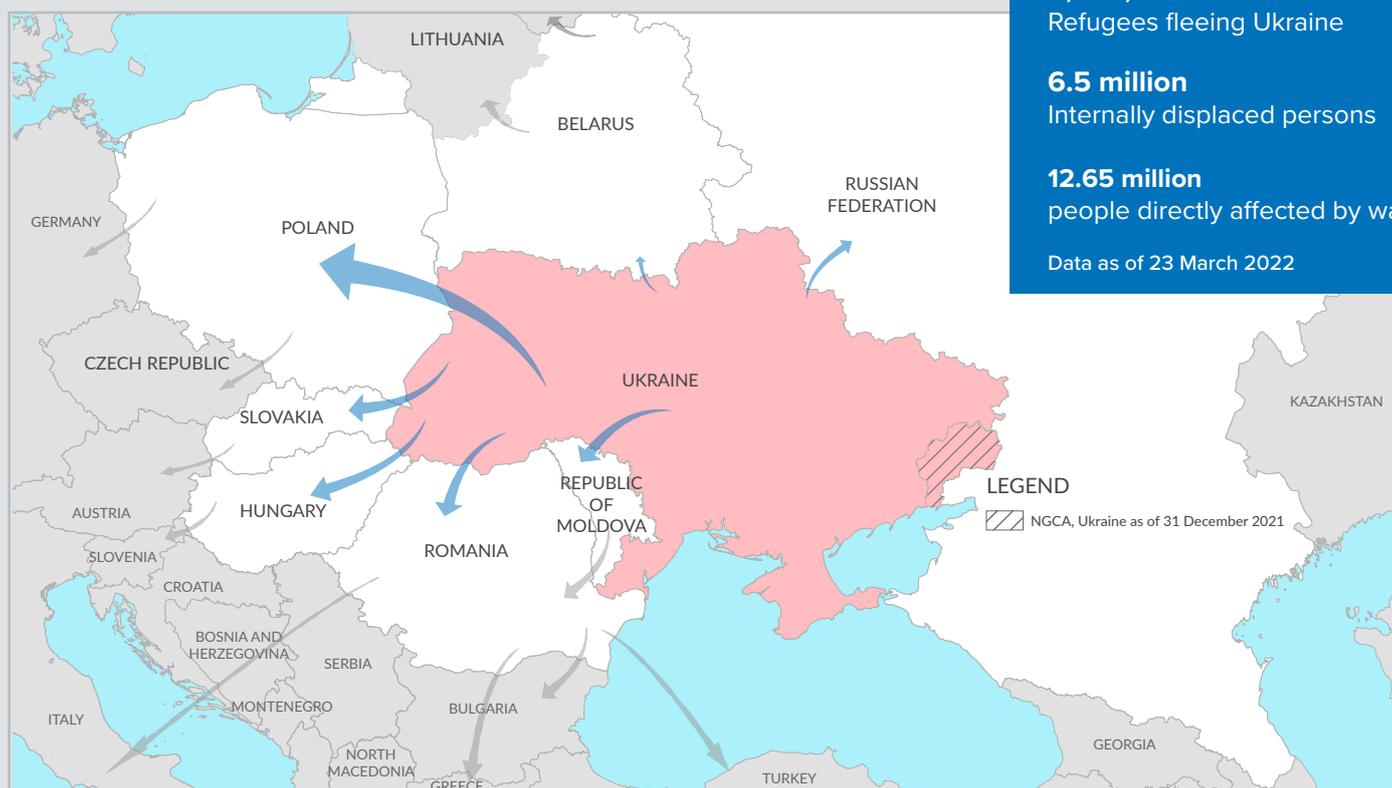
Links

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

UN: [Ukraine Flash Appeal](#)

UNCHR: [Supplementary Appeal](#)

▶ UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION



Disclaimer: The boundaries and names used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.