

# Poland

15 August 2022

There are over **1.3 million refugees** from Ukraine recorded in Poland, the **majority are women and children as well as older people and people with disabilities**.

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

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

## KEY FIGURES

**Over 1.3 million** refugees from Ukraine recorded in Poland.

**Over 5.4 million** views of the **Poland page** on UNHCR HELP website for refugees

**8** Blue Dots and **2** inclusive community centers providing protection services

**286,084** refugees enrolled for cash assistance

**Up to 11** cash enrolment centres opened across Poland over the first months of the crisis, now gradually transitioning to other purposes

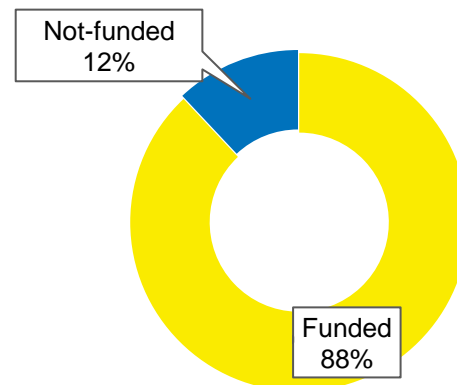
**336** trucks with emergency supplies sent to support internally displaced people in Ukraine

**52** truckloads with core relief items were provided to several municipalities across Poland for supporting refugees, including at reception and accommodation centres

## FUNDING (AS OF 9 AUGUST 2022)

# US\$ 211.3 M

requested for the Ukraine Emergency Situation for Poland



## STAFFING & OFFICES

**113** international and national staff

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

## Overview

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

Refugee arrivals are expected to continue as the situation remains uncertain with large displacement and destruction in Ukraine. While some refugees have moved on to other countries in Europe and elsewhere, the main receiving country has been Poland.

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



Two refugee women from Ukraine are being enrolled to receive cash assistance from UNHCR at the cash enrolment centre in Wroclaw, Poland. © UNHCR/Rafal Kostrzynski, 20 May 2022

## Main Activities

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



### Protection: Blue Dots and community centres

UNHCR supports government and local authorities so that refugees have accurate information and access to available services. **Blue Dots are support hubs that bring together critical protection services and information** for refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine, with a particular focus on helping those at greatest risk. These include unaccompanied and separated children, people with disabilities, older people, cases of suspected trafficking, survivors of gender-based violence and refugees from minority backgrounds. Established by UNHCR and UNICEF with local authorities and partners along major crossing points, reception sites, and urban centres, Blue Dots provide a safe space, support and referrals for health care, education, psychosocial support, legal aid provided by key legal actors and pro bono lawyers and more. In cities, UNHCR has set up Blue Dots linked to the cash enrolment centres, to identify persons at heightened risk. Building on this approach, **UNHCR has opened inclusive community centres** in Rzeszow and in Lublin together with a partner organization.



### Protection Information and Communication with Refugee Community

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



### Cash Assistance

**Cash assistance is one of the most efficient and effective ways to support people forced to flee, especially in fast-changing emergencies.** Cash assistance respects the dignity of choice of refugees, allowing them to decide what they need most to support their family. UNHCR cash programme has now transitioned to **focus on the most vulnerable refugees**. In partnership with Santander Bank, and using BLIK as a payment method, refugees from Ukraine in Poland can receive cash quickly and safely without the need to open a bank account or having a card. Families can purchase goods and services from local businesses, which boosts the economy and fosters integration.



### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and anti-trafficking

**UNHCR conducts awareness raising sessions on PSEA and anti-trafficking** with refugees, partners and government officials **through training and distribution of information, education and communication materials** in English, Ukrainian, and Polish languages. UNHCR is working with partners – including community-based organizations – to establish and run complaints and feedback mechanisms to prevent and end sexual exploitation and abuse, including through protection desks and protection monitoring. An updated referral pathway was **published** so that survivors of gender-based violence can get timely support.



### Supplies

UNHCR is supporting the government and local authorities in Poland with emergency supplies to strengthen reception capacities. **As of 15 August, 52 truckloads with core relief items such as bed linen, blankets, hygiene kits, towels and diapers have been sent from UNHCR's main warehouse in Grabica to the municipalities** in Bialystok, Gdansk, Jaroslaw, Katowice, Kielce, Krakow, Lubaczow, Poznan, Rzeszow, Szczecin, Tarnobrzeg, Warsaw and Wroclaw for supporting refugees, including at reception and accommodation centres. From the onset of the emergency, UNHCR established a **logistical hub in Rzeszow**, just 100km from the Ukrainian border in south-east Poland, to deliver supplies into Ukraine for the increasing number of internally displaced people. **336 trucks have been dispatched up to date**, to deliver most-needed kitchen sets, solar lamps, sleeping bags, mattresses, towels, clothes, winter jackets, high thermal blankets and other life-saving items to UNHCR's warehouses in Dnipro, Lviv and Uzhhorod in western and central Ukraine.



### Scale-up of capacity

UNHCR has been in Poland for 30 years, working with national authorities on refugee related matters. With the Ukraine emergency, UNHCR has substantially **scaled up its presence and operations across Poland**. UNHCR currently has a Country Office and Frontex Liaison Office in Warsaw and has opened two field offices in Warsaw and Lublin, in addition to sub-offices in Rzeszow and Krakow. UNHCR increased its workforce **from 8 staff members to 113 in Warsaw, Krakow, Lublin and Rzeszow and with more being deployed to support the response**.

## Working with partners

**UNHCR works with 6 international and national implementing partners** to respond to the most pressing needs of refugees in Poland. These include The Polish Centre for International Aid (PCPM), Premiere Urgence International, Halina Niec Legal Aid Centre, Association for Legal Intervention, Lutheran World Federation and ACTED/REACH.

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

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

## Donors

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.



And to organizations and private sector partners from:



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### LINKS

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