Poland

September 2024

Nearly one million refugees from Ukraine are currently recorded in Poland, the majority women and children, representing some 2.5 per cent of the total population of Poland.

UNHCR coordinates the response of 103 organizations under the Ukraine Situation **Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP)** chapter for Poland, the majority of which are local organizations.

UNHCR supports the Government of Poland to ensure refugees have **access to territory legal status and documentation,** and **rights.**

POPULATION STATISTICS (as of mid-2024)

Refugees	980,034
Asylum-seekers	9,266
Stateless people	1,487
Others of concern	1,328

Top three countries of origin**

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Ukraine	970,120	Russian Federation	2,837
Belarus	8,794	Ukraine	2,258
Russian Federation	2,845	Belarus	1,740

**UNHCR Mid-Year Statistical Report 2024 and UNHCR data finder*

UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION RESPONSE

As of 19 September 2024, 970,120 refugees from Ukraine were recorded in Poland.

Protection: Refugees from Ukraine are granted Temporary Protection status, which Poland extended until September 2025.

Support to the most vulnerable refugees: UNHCR is working on strengthening national systems and prioritizing government capacity-enhancement to support vulnerable refugees in Poland. Refugees can access information and support at community centres, through mobile teams visiting remote areas, and online via social media, with UNHCR supporting the development of digital information points.

Livelihoods and economic inclusion: UNHCR is dedicated to empowering refugees to become self-reliant, build skills and contribute meaningfully to their host community and back home once conditions allow. UNHCR collaborates with authorities, international organisations, and the private sector to connect refugees with jobs and address identified challenges, such as need for reskilling, access to Polish classes and childcare, etc.

Coordination: UNHCR leads and coordinates the refugee response in Poland, in support of the Government of Poland. The coordination architecture is built on five sectors and five main working groups. UNHCR co-leads the Protection and Economic Inclusion sectors, the Information Management Working Group, and the PSEA Working Group.

HIGHLIGHTS

Extension of Temporary Protection until Sept 2025

Poland amended its Special Act, with most changes effective 1 July. UNHCR shared recommendations to these recent amendments, welcoming extended Temporary Protection, access to longer term residence permits (not dependent on work or study), and compulsory education for refugee children. UNHCR expressed concerns on the potential impact of the requirement to have a valid travel document to prove identity, linking social benefits with school enrolment and discontinuation of financial support to private hosts. UNHCR continues to engage with authorities and civil society organizations on implementation.

Mandatory school attendance for Ukrainian children

Starting 2 September, school attendance became mandatory for Ukrainian refugee children in Poland, a positive development when over half of Ukrainian refugee children in Poland were not enrolled in the national school system last year. UNHCR and partners work to support refugee inclusion in schools, share resources and material and support the “Back to Learning” campaign developed by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF.

Deloitte. UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Study finds positive impact of refugees on Poland’s economy

Refugees from Ukraine have significantly contributed to the Polish economy over the past two years, according to a new study. It estimates that refugees from Ukraine contributed between 0.7 and 1.1 per cent to Poland’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2023. The size of their contribution is predicted to grow further, as highlighted by the study “Analysis of the impact of refugees from Ukraine on the economy of Poland”, which was conducted by Deloitte for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

📖 Read our press release and the study (English and Polish)

Key Priorities

- **Access to asylum:** In coordination with Polish authorities, UNHCR undertakes visits at border crossing points and in border areas, conducting 31 border monitoring visits so far in 2024. UNHCR also conducted 67 detention monitoring visits this year, and expanded its presence in reception centres, conducting 68 visits, notably to provide legal aid to asylum seekers. Together with Border Guards, UNHCR organized a workshop on child protection for 21 officers in May. In addition to advocating for access to territory and asylum, UNHCR promotes alternatives to detention. In May, UNHCR trained 58 Polish judges on alternatives to detention, jointly with the Polish Association of Judges, IOM and UNICEF. In a positive trend over the last years, the number of detained children decreased from 589 in 2022 to 46 as of June 2024.
- **Protecting and empowering the most vulnerable:** UNHCR and partners offer services and assistance to refugees in centres run by local authorities or local NGOs in Poland's largest cities, and via mobile teams reaching remote locations. By mid-2024, these centers and teams reached over 40,000 people, offering various services such as legal aid, mental health support, language classes, and group activities. UNHCR and legal partners also provided legal counselling on documentation, status and access to rights to over 8,100 refugees in the first half of 2024. In addition, UNHCR and partners strive to make reliable and updated information available online in appropriate languages.
- Mobile teams not only identify and refer individuals in need of specific assistance to relevant services, they also interviewed over 1,700 refugees as part of UNHCR's protection monitoring, providing useful protection analysis. The latest Protection Brief highlighted refugees' concerns regarding documentation and longer-term status, access to housing and accommodation and labour exploitation. This complements the needs assessment conducted in 2023, and this year again in 2024, with a focus on socio-economic inclusion. Joint analysis, based on data on refugee needs and service gaps, guide the humanitarian response to complement the government's efforts.
- **Inclusion and resilience of refugees:** UNHCR advocates for decent work and economic inclusion of refugees, collaborating with authorities and the private sector to analyse the impact of refugee inclusion into the Polish economy. Together with authorities and private actors, UNHCR is connecting refugees with job opportunities and supporting socio-economic inclusion, including access to social security benefits (education, health, social services). Overall, 17,879 individuals benefitted from livelihoods and economic inclusion interventions so far in 2024. This includes over 1,100 refugees participating in 20 job fairs UNHCR participated or co-organized in 2024, as well as some 70 participants living in collective shelters who enrolled in a pilot project on "employment activation", to receive individual support towards finding a job. UNHCR is working on a digital tool mapping services linked to skills development, qualification recognition, and access to the job market.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR works with the Prime Minister's office, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, the Border Guards, and the Office for Foreigners, among other central authorities. UNHCR also works closely with local and municipal authorities.
- UNHCR currently partners with ten partners, all Polish: Association for Legal Intervention (SIP), Halina Niec Legal Aid Center, Central Roma Council, Empowering Children Foundation (FDDS), Feminoteka, Habitat for Humanity, Caritas, Polish Migration Forum and four partner NGOs, the Immigrants Support Center (CWI) and Internationaler Bund Polska (IBP). Several work together with local NGOs, bringing the total to 26 local partners. In addition, UNHCR is supporting community-based and refugee-led organizations via 23 grants, as part of efforts to strengthen local capacities.
- **External engagement:** UNHCR engages with donors, media, partners, and civil society to amplify refugee voices and promote inclusion and peaceful coexistence with host communities.

Statelessness

- Poland has not acceded to the 1954 or 1961 UN Conventions on Statelessness and has no statelessness determination procedure in place. UNHCR is engaging Members of Parliament to take on UNHCR's recommendations made in its 2019 mapping to address gaps identified.

UNHCR Presence in Poland

Staff:
40 International Staff
79 National Staff

Offices:
1 Country Office in Warsaw
1 Field Office in Warsaw
1 Field Office in Lublin
1 Sub Office in Krakow
1 Field Office in Rzeszow

Financial Information (as of 30 September 2024)

Financial requirements in 2024:
$ 85 M

Funding gap 65%
$ 53 M

Funded 35%
$ 32 M

UNHCR is grateful for the support from our top government donors:

Australia | Belgium | Denmark | France | Germany | Ireland | New Zealand | Netherlands | Norway | Republic of Korea | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sweden | Switzerland | United States of America

UNHCR is also grateful for the generous contributions from the private sector and individuals.