FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Contribution to UNHCR's activities in Ukraine and neighbouring countries 2022

UNHCR staff assist refugees from Ukraine at UNHCR's cash enrolment centre in Krakow's Tauron Arena in Poland.

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Donor	Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
Funding	EUR 3,500,000
Title	Contribution to the UNHCR's activities in Ukraine and neighbouring countries 2022
Implementation period	1 March 2022 - 31 December 2022 (10 months)
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Overview

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has caused immense civilian casualties and destruction of infrastructure, forcing people to flee their homes to seek safety, protection, and assistance. Since the onset of the conflict, millions of refugees from Ukraine crossed borders into neighbouring countries and millions more have remained internally displaced.

Thanks to Austria's generous contribution of EUR 3.5 million, UNHCR could readily step up its humanitarian and protection assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine and refugees from Ukraine in Hungary, Poland, Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia. This essential contribution strengthened UNHCR's capacity to respond to the emergency within Ukraine and in refugee-hosting countries.

In Ukraine, working together with partners, UNHCR delivered urgent humanitarian assistance to IDPs, including through the distribution of emergency shelter kits, cash assistance and core relief items (CRI), such as thermal blankets, mattrasses, solar lamps, clothing, among others. UNHCR also assisted authorities with the registration of IDPs to promptly identify individuals with specific needs.

In refugee-hosting countries, UNHCR supported national authorities with the enhancement of temporary reception centres and transit centres, as well as with the creation of adequate registration systems. UNHCR set to advocate for refugees' access to territory as well as fair and fast border procedures. In collaboration with its partners, UNHCR also distributed urgently needed non-food items (NFI) and provided key protection assistance to refugees, including legal counselling and psychosocial assistance, with a special focus on minimizing gender-based violence (GBV) risks and reinforceing national child protection systems.

Finally, to help address refugees' most pressing basic needs, UNHCR set up multi-purpose cash assistance programmes.

Results achieved

Ukraine

UNHCR's response in Ukraine was coordinated closely with the Government at the central and local levels, with the aim of reinforcing the national response and systems.

In total, UNHCR dispersed USD 226 million (about EUR 243 million) through cash assistance to around 1 million persons inside Ukraine to meet their most urgent needs, such as health, clothes, utilities, rent and hygiene items.

UNHCR and its partners also assisted more than 1.3 million people with protection services, including legal assistance, information on rights and entitlements, psychosocial support, child protection and GBV prevention and response. Moreover, UNHCR trained over 1,100 staff of more than 110 humanitarian partners on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and supported 18 PSEA risk assessments to identify and seek to mitigate key risks, especially for women and children.

In view of the harsh winter months, UNHCR also assisted nearly 1.5 million people in Ukraine through winterization cash top-ups as well as winterized NFIs. In addition, UNHCR supported the improvement of reception facilities for displaced persons and assisted with the repair of individual homes, reaching over 164,000 people. Emergency shelter materials, including tarpaulins, wood, and nails, provided a quick solution to homes impacted by missile attacks. Over 5,400 families were assisted with house repairs, including roofs and windows, which allowed them to remain or return to their homes in areas without imminent threat of shelling. This shelter assistance has been a key aspect of UNHCR's winter assistance, helping to reduce thermal losses, and more substantially contributing to durable solutions.

Of the various types of assistance provided, Austria's contribution helped UNHCR reach 17,330 IDPs in Ukraine.

Regional refugee response

On 4 March 2022, the European Union (EU) triggered the application of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) to provide immediate protection from refoulement and access to rights for refugees from Ukraine on EU territory. In view of the regular consultations with UNHCR foreseen in the Directive, as well as UNHCR's mandate to provide international protection to refugees, UNHCR has carefully monitored the application and implementation of the TPD. Six months on from the activation of the TPD, UNHCR conducted research into the practical implementation of the Directive with a focus on refugees' access to rights. The subsequent report [“The Implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive - Six Months on”](#) presented the findings, including recommendations on enhancing access to rights and protection for refugees from Ukraine. UNHCR has also compiled a number of [promising practices](#) relating to EU Member States' application of the TPD, including enhanced registration, promoting access to information on procedures, expedited issuance of documentation and digitalization of systems.

On the more operational side, to respond to the large-scale influx of refugees from Ukraine in the neighbouring countries, UNHCR rapidly established coordination mechanisms with host governments and supported authorities to expand necessary infrastructure at border crossing points. In addition, UNHCR identified and trained partners to facilitate access to territory, registration, and documentation of those displaced from Ukraine, including information on protection, reception, documentation and refugee status determination procedures.

In refugee-hosting countries, UNHCR dispersed USD 202 million (around EUR 218 million) in multi-purpose and protection-specific cash assistance to nearly 500,000 refugees from Ukraine. UNHCR also directly assisted close to 500,000 refugees with protection services, including through 39 "Blue Dot hubs" established by UNHCR, UNICEF and other partners in eight refugee-hosting countries. Refugees received protection counselling and help with accessing accommodation, education, health care, livelihoods and assistance for specific needs, as well as safe and child friendly spaces.

From the onset of the emergency, UNHCR has worked closely with national child protection authorities in refugee hosting countries to ensure that children at risk, particularly unaccompanied and separated children, are registered with the national child protection

systems and have access to protection and services. This includes protection on the move and swift, effective and flexible family reunification procedures. To make this possible UNHCR rapidly deployed child protection professionals to refugee hosting countries and delivered specialized training to national stakeholders.

In addition, more than 1.7 million people were reached through the "Stay Safe" campaign, with key messages on protection risks during flight and onward movements. To support accountability to affected populations and implement feedback mechanisms, UNHCR established a Regional Contact Centre, and Help pages in the countries neighbouring Ukraine. UNHCR's Help pages were continuously updated with key information for refugees and received more than 2.5 million visits in 2022.

Finally, UNHCR and IOM jointly relocated over 2,000 vulnerable people by air to third countries through the EU+ Air Transfer Programme under the EU Solidarity Platform, including to Austria. Additionally, over 14,600 persons were supported by UNHCR and IOM with fast-track transfers to Romania from the Ukraine-Moldova border.

Of this multi-sector assistance provided to refugees in Ukraine's neighbouring countries, Austria's contribution helped UNHCR reach an additional 17,329 people.

Coordination and partnerships

UNHCR's response was closely coordinated with local authorities and priorities agreed with local actors, including national NGOs, and affected communities. In Ukraine and refugee-hosting countries, to implement its response, UNHCR worked in direct partnership with over 131 partners, including 101 local partners (national NGOs and community-based organizations), and 30 international NGOs.

Within the inter-agency response in Ukraine, including through the 2022 Flash Appeal and Humanitarian Response Plan, UNHCR led the Protection Cluster, the Shelter/NFI Cluster, and the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster and co-chaired the Durable Solutions Steering Committee with IOM, OCHA, and UNDP, under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator.

In its role as Refugee Coordinator, UNHCR launched the inter-agency 2022 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for the Ukraine Situation and coordinated its implementation, bringing together the activities of 142 partners across seven countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia). This process was led in a collaborative and consultative manner with Government authorities, aid agencies, civil society and affected populations, including women- and refugee-led organizations. Specific Working Groups for Protection, Education, Inclusion, Health, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, and Anti-Trafficking, among others, were activated at the regional and country levels to support the efforts of the concerned Governments.

UNHCR also established and coordinated protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) networks in Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia, bringing together over 170 entities in national networks co-chaired with national or local NGOs. More than 3,300 humanitarian workers were trained on PSEA and more than 46,000 refugees were

reached through awareness-raising activities. UNHCR and its partners conducted 19 PSEA risk assessments and launched five National Action Plans on PSEA in countries neighbouring Ukraine. A regional safeguarding and PSEA network was also established to support regional coherence, learning and exchange. Note UNHCR's coordination efforts with other UN entities, national authorities, and NGO partners in the implementation of the results.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To track implementation of UNHCR's Ukraine situation response across the region, UNHCR developed and executed monitoring plans at the regional and country levels. This involved tracking the results/performance of activities against standard performance indicators to ensure they were proceeding as planned and achieving the desired impact.

For UNHCR's response implemented with partners, UNHCR undertook direct or remote monitoring of over 130 partners against their targets and expenses through regular reporting, site visits, third party monitoring, speaking to displaced, and feedback mechanisms. Financial monitoring was also conducted through reports, verification of records, audits, and comparing results to expenses.

For the implementation of UNHCR's direct activities, UNHCR keeps records of events and seeks feedback from beneficiaries, including through post-distribution monitoring (PDM), for example, for cash assistance, CRI and warehousing, protection monitoring and inclusion strategies. In 2022, the UNHCR operations in Poland, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine conducted over 3,400 PDM surveys to receive feedback directly from cash recipients in order to better understand the impact of UNHCR's cash assistance programmes, as well as to improve the design of cash operations going forward. The PDM tool captures core indicators on areas such as the use of cash, the related challenges, and their overall situation vis-à-vis basic needs, allowing for a comparison of results across countries. A summary of findings from the PDM surveys for the Ukraine situation can be found [here](#).

Protection monitoring was also rolled out country-wide in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries. As Protection Cluster lead in Ukraine, UNHCR maintains a [Protection Monitoring Dashboard](#), which provides an overview of movements, protection risks, vulnerability groups, and access to and availability of services. The dashboard highlights children, persons with disabilities, and women as the specific groups more affected by the situation or unable to obtain support, as well the presence of vulnerable groups including older people and people with serious medical conditions. The tool also tracks movements trends and identifies key barriers to accessing services, helping to shape UNHCR and partners' response.

In refugee hosting countries, UNHCR and its' partners set up a regular presence at border crossing points with EU Member States and Moldova to provide support to those fleeing the war and seeking safety abroad. To strengthen and promote an evidence-based protection response, UNHCR and its partners in Belarus, Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia have been implementing Protection Profiling and Monitoring exercises to regularly collect and analyse data about the profiles, needs and

intentions of refugees from Ukraine and monitor changes over time. Over 43,500 interviews with refugees were conducted between May and November 2022, with findings published through the Regional Protection Analysis # 1 and Regional protection monitoring factsheet. This has informed priorities for UNHCR's programmes, and the broader regional refugee response, as results were shared and consulted on with national authorities, civil society, NGOs, development agencies, private sector actors and refugee communities.
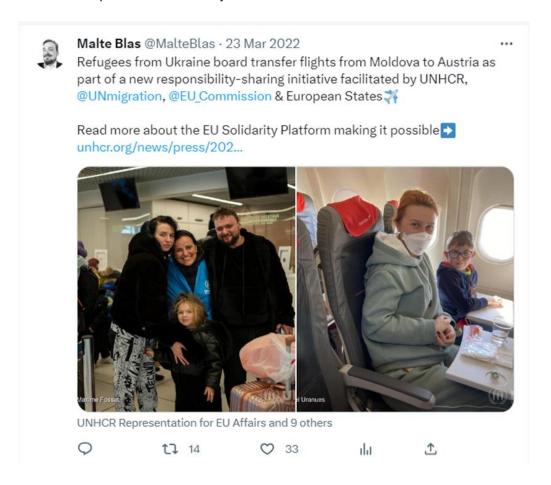
Visibility

UNHCR provided visibility to Austria's support in its external reports and updates, for example:

- UNHCR Hungary Operational Updates

- UNHCR Poland Operational Updates

- UNHCR Romania Operational Updates

- UNHCR Slovakia Operational Update

- Multi-donor banner at the RomExpo refugee reception hub in Bucharest (ADA logo second from the left):

Refugees from Ukraine register for Temporary Protection at the Romexpo Integrated Service Hub for refugees, established by UNHCR in Bucharest, 20 December 2022.© UNHCR/Mihai von Eremia

- Social media post about refugees from Ukraine arriving in Austria from Moldova through the humanitarian admission programme supported by UNHCR, as part of the European Union Solidarity Platform:

Conclusion

Through this vital contribution from Austria, UNHCR provided lifesaving humanitarian aid and urgent protection assistance to 34,659 IDPs inside Ukraine and refugees from Ukraine in the neighbouring region.

During the implementation period, UNHCR successfully managed a fast and large-scale operational response to the Ukraine situation in the region, simultaneously expanding its presence inside Ukraine and establishing or boosting its presence in refugee-hosting countries, while also establishing refugee coordination structures in seven host countries. This included quickly identifying suitable staff for immediate deployment, setting up office structures, shaping the humanitarian coordination architecture, and assessing needs during an emergency of vast proportions, while promoting inclusion from the onset. Some innovative processes introduced during the initial stages of the emergency, such as the regional cash hub and the centralization of payments that served to speed up delivery of protection and assistance, will be continued and replicated in other emergencies.

Together with its partners in Ukraine and the Region, UNHCR will continue to provide key protection assistance and humanitarian aid to those affected by the Ukraine conflict in 2023, with the generous support of UNHCR's government and private sector donors.