



A young girl child walks through Moldexpo "Blue Dot" centre in Chişinău, Moldova.

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## Europe and Central Asia Region (ECAR) – Ukraine Situation: Refugee Response in Neighbouring Countries

Humanitarian Situation Report  
No. 5 - 2022



31 March - 5 April 2022

### Highlights

- As of 5 April, nearly 4.3 million refugees have fled Ukraine (over 2.4 million to Poland, almost 655,000 to Romania, over 399,000 to Republic of Moldova, close to 399,000 to Hungary, and over 670,000 to other countries<sup>i</sup>).
- On 4 April, UNICEF in Slovakia initiated training of 287 border guard police and NGO partners on anti-trafficking, identification, and referral of vulnerable children and mothers. Leveraging UNICEF's experience, this model is being scaled up for surrounding countries.
- UNICEF has established close relations with Governments of refugee hosting countries and signed an agreement with the Municipality of Warsaw. 12 NGO partnership agreements are in place in the Republic of Moldova, Poland, and Slovak Republic, focusing on child protection, emergency response, and support services in Blue Dots.
- UNICEF established eleven "Blue Dots" (Romania, Moldova, Poland), reaching around 30,000 people. Establishment of 37 more is being accelerated for Bulgaria (5), Hungary (4), Italy (2), Moldova (4), Poland (13), Romania (4), and Slovak Republic (5), which will reach at least 18,500 people, including 7,400 children, per day.
- To scale up programme capacities, UNICEF has deployed 233 surge missions (child protection, WASH, social protection emergency coordination, operations, supply & logistics) to Poland (67), Moldova (16), Romania (18), Hungary (11), Slovakia (11), Czech Republic (5), and through the Regional Office (38).
- As of 6 April, UNICEF has USD 66.8 million available to respond to the urgent humanitarian and protection needs of refugee children and their families.

### Situation in Numbers



4,278,789<sup>ii</sup>

Refugees who have crossed borders from Ukraine into neighboring countries since 24 February 2022



7 neighboring countries covered under UNICEF's response in Europe<sup>iii</sup>

### UNICEF Appeal 2022

**US\$ 73.1 million\***

Funding Status as of 6 April  
(USD million)

### UNICEF Response Key areas



Establishment of 'Blue Dots' to provide critical support and protection services for children and families, provision of technical support for registration, screening, case management and referrals, including family tracing for unaccompanied children, psychosocial support and prevention and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.



Provision of education and recreational supplies for children and adolescents, facilitate access to temporary learning, recreational and early childhood development activities; support host-government in coordination and integration of children into national education systems.



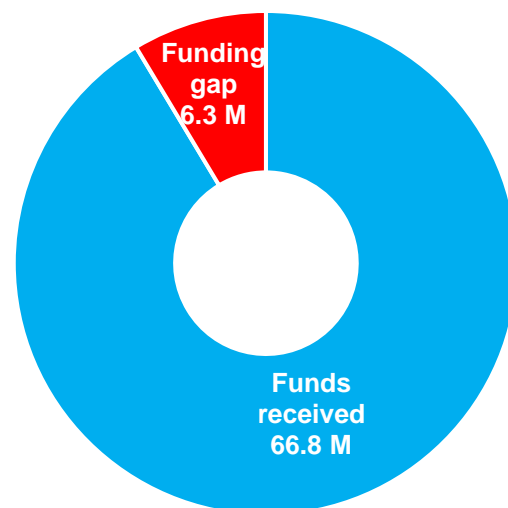
Provision of essential health services for mothers and children, promotion of vaccination, infant and young child feeding, provision of essential commodities, including vaccines, health supplies, medicines, and micronutrient supplements.



Provision of temporary water and sanitation services, distribution of critical hygiene and dignity products for families, women and children, support infection prevention and hygiene promotion.



Support multi-purpose cash interventions for vulnerable households with children, strengthen capacity of national social protection systems to integrate refugee children.



i&ii UNHCR. Operational Data Portal as of 5 April 2022.

<http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

iii Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Belarus, Hungary, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic

\* This reflects the current requirement under Pillar 2 (Refugee Outflow) of UNICEF's HAC appeal of USD 349 million which covers interventions in neighbouring countries

## Regional Funding Overview & Partnerships

UNICEF acknowledges the timely and generous commitments of public and private sector partners against the overall [2022 Ukraine Humanitarian Action for Children \(HAC\)](#), including from the Governments of Austria, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Ireland, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States of America, the European Commission, and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). Ongoing fundraising campaigns by UNICEF National Committees have generated significant, timely and flexible support from the private sector, including corporate partners and individual donors. For detailed information on all contributions received, please refer to the [HAC appeal funding update](#) as of 6 April. UNICEF appreciates the generous contributions and would like to [thank](#) its donors for their support during the first month of the response.

Under Pillar 2 of the overall HAC appeal and aligned with the interagency Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) (March to August 2022), UNICEF initially sought USD 73.1 million to respond to urgent humanitarian and protection needs of refugee children and their families fleeing to neighbouring countries in Europe. As of 6 April, UNICEF has USD 66.8 million available for the refugee response, of which almost 50% is fully flexible.

With the situation rapidly evolving, intensified fighting, continued displacements, and exponential increase in the number of refugees, UNICEF's humanitarian response and related financial requirements have been revised to reflect expanded needs until the end of 2022. A substantively revised HAC appeal, reflecting UNICEF's inputs to inter-agency appeal that is currently under revision, will be issued in the coming days. Continued, generous, flexible contributions will enable UNICEF and partners to act quickly and respond strategically to where the needs are greatest.

UNICEF works with governments, UNHCR, other UN agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs) and engages with national networks and youth to ensure humanitarian, programmatic and advocacy support for children and their families staying in refugee hosting countries. UNICEF co-chairs the Child Protection Sub-Working Group with UNHCR, under the umbrella of the Protection Working Group, and supports national authorities on child protection and safeguarding.

## Regional Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

As of 5 April, nearly 4.3 million refugees have crossed from Ukraine into Europe. Close to 60% (over 2.4 million people), arrived in Poland, with significant caseloads in Romania (654,825), Moldova (399,039), Hungary (398,932) and Slovakia (302,417).<sup>1</sup> UNICEF estimates that over 2 million refugees are children, many separated or unaccompanied. Over 91,000 children, many with disabilities, were in institutional care in Ukraine and have to be brought across borders to safety. All are vulnerable and at risk to violence, trafficking, sexual and labour exploitation and abuse. Preventing family separation, ensuring immediate identification, reunification registration, safe spaces embedded in national child protection systems, is an urgent priority.

Significant movements of people have put pressure on sanitation and hygiene services at border and reception points, strained national health and social protection systems, and expanded the potential for disease outbreak due to low vaccination rates for measles, polio, and COVID-19. Minority groups face increased risk of discrimination while people and children with disabilities face a lack of specialized support. Equitable access to quality services for refugee as well as host communities requires strengthening national systems capacity.

Many refugees are moving beyond countries of first arrival. In Belarus, Moldova, and Romania, over 85% of people arriving from Ukraine have moved on, while Italy, Greece, Bulgaria and Croatia received over 91,300 Ukrainian nationals in March<sup>2</sup>. Key needs in these countries include access to basic supplies, protection and care arrangements for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), support to children with disabilities, health care services, including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), continued education, provision of vaccinations, and social protection.

## Regional Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

Building relationships with national partners, UNICEF is strategically engaging existing European Union (EU) response systems through building alliances with municipalities in Poland, Hungary and a Eurocity network covering over 200 municipalities, volunteer networks, civil society and host communities. UNICEF acts as a catalyst to bring robust emergency response expertise to the existing response systems, with a focus on immediate needs in protection, health, education, and well-being of children and women.

In the mid-term, UNICEF aims to support Governments and civil society in Belarus, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovak Republic and beyond where UNICEF has established presence to cope with the increased demands on social sector services. In the long-run, UNICEF will foster and promote social cohesion of the refugee hosting communities through advice on integration of refugees and building capacity of national actors and systems – creating a safe and enabling environment for mothers and children.

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR. Operational Data Portal as of 5 April 2022. <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR; Government of Italy; Government of Greece.

UNICEF's regional health and nutrition response strategy focuses on outbreak prevention (COVID-19, measles, polio) and preparedness through immunization, infection prevention and control efforts, provision of essential maternal and child services, essential commodities and additional human resources, nutrition counselling and supplies support to mothers of infants and young children and strengthening health systems for equitable services delivery for children. Mapping of location of refugee children in bordering countries (transiting and settling) has been carried out to quantify immunization and health service needs. Regional partnerships are being established with Action Against Hunger, Save the Children and Rescue, and the Mother and Child Institute in Poland to train staff and operate Mother Baby Corners and with CUAMM, an international NGO providing health services in Poland, Moldova and Romania. With WHO and UNHCR, UNICEF is creating a regional multi-agency team to support the health response, focused on providing support on community engagement, maternal and child health and linkages with other sectors. In countries, UNICEF is providing technical assistance to develop health and immunization plans, conduct needs assessments, support advocacy and communication around access and immunization, and equip Blue Dots with services and supplies. UNICEF has also facilitated the establishment of a pipeline of Breastmilk Substitutes in Poland, Romania, and Moldova which already procured the equivalent of 60,000 liters of infant formula, enough for about 10,000 children for a week.

UNICEF is advising the EU on child protection concerns and solutions. UNICEF will introduce PRIMERO<sup>3</sup> as a tool to manage information about Ukrainian children in national child protection systems. UNICEF, the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (EUROPOL), and the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) conducted a webinar on child protection, training, and capacity building. Leveraging the child protection training of 287 border guard police in Slovak Republic, UNICEF is scaling up the model to all interested neighbouring countries.

UNICEF offered a training on 'Basic Psychosocial Support for Refugee Families' to Scouts, who are on the frontlines of the border response in several countries. The training provided an overview of basic principles in humanitarian action for supporting children and families' mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, with a focus on Psychological First Aid (PFA) adapted for those who work with refugee children and families in the Ukraine response. UNICEF is working on mainstreaming complaints and feedback mechanisms in Blue Dots and within national institutions and finalized guidance for frontline workers to promote vaccination and breastfeeding among refugees.

In the immediate interventions, partnering with local organizations representing women and girls, as well as recruiting women staff and volunteers for front-line support is critical to identify their specific protection-related priorities/needs, including Women and Girls' Safe Spaces and gender sensitive access to services. The Regional Refugee Response Plan and coordination will have a Regional Gender Task Force (RGTF) to provide wider support to the sector.

## Poland

### Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Poland remains the first asylum country for most of Ukrainian refugees. As of 5 April 2022, nearly 2.5 refugees have arrived, about half of them children. In addition, according to IOM, there are almost 100,000 registered Third Country Nationals (TCNs) who arrived in Poland from Ukraine. At this moment, 700,000 people registered for a social security number. On 1 April, there have been more returnees (21,100) than arrivals (20,830) in Poland from Ukraine. It is likely that this dynamic will continue as many people return to Ukraine to visit families or their homes, but plan to come back eventually if the situation continues to deteriorate in Ukraine.

### Summary Analysis of Programme Response

**Child Protection:** Since 14 March 2022, 199 women and 301 children benefited from MHPSS services provided by the partner ZHR Scouts (Związek Harcerstwa Rzeczypospolitej) through the Blue Dot area at Medyka border crossing point. Blue Dots in Warsaw, Krakow and Korchowa and Przemysl are ready to open next week, while recruiting of staff is ongoing in partnership with Addecco.

**Health and Nutrition:** Essential supplies were procured for maternal and child health to reach estimated 3,267 children per month, including nutrition high-quality commodities for breastfed and non-breastfed children, to be mobilized to ensure no stock out of supplies among partners providing health services in the reception centers or at referring facilities.



Establishment of the Blue Dot at the Medyka cross-border point. © UNICEF/2022/Poland/Chapcakova

<sup>3</sup> Primero™ is an open source software platform that helps social services, humanitarian and development workers manage protection-related data, with tools that facilitate case management, incident monitoring and family tracing and reunification.



**Education:** Approximately 50% of the 2.3 million refugees from Ukraine are children with 30% school-aged (6-18 years old), totalling around 700,000 children, and 19% (around 450,000), are 0-6 years old. According to the Polish Ministry of Education (MoE), by April some 160,000 children from Ukraine had enrolled in Polish schools, the majority in primary schools. The MoE has updated its national directive allowing Ukrainian teachers in Poland as refugees to be recruited and support the provision of education services and for Ukrainian refugee children to complete the current academic year based on the Ukrainian curriculum.

**Social and Behavior Change, Community Engagement, AAP:** Almost 12,000 refugees in Poland responded to the first UNICEF-supported poll conducted by Viber. 64% of the respondents want to stay in Poland and their main information needs are employment, financial support, accommodation, and health care. Key messages and useful links for further information addressing these needs were prepared to be promoted among refugees through Viber and the upcoming U-Report U-Connect. In a second wave of Viber polls, with around 16,000 responses in Poland, 69% do not know how and where to access health services. A social listening mechanism revealed new concerns, including how to prevent trafficking risks, how to join Ukrainian distance education sessions, healthcare services related to childbirth, and concerns on the translation of the vaccination certificates into Polish. In response, materials on immunization and on COVID-19 were adjusted with links to Polish regulations on vaccination for refugee children. The newly signed MoU with the city of Warsaw includes the support in the design and implementation of a communication campaign on Immunization.

## Republic of Moldova

### Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

As of 6 April 2022, roughly 93,836 individuals from Ukraine remain in Moldova. This figure has increased in the last twenty-four hours given military developments in Odessa. The number of individuals seeking asylum in Moldova has increased daily over the past week, reaching 6,071 in total arrivals over the past week. Women and children account for 81% of all refugees. Many women reported employment support as their most pressing issue, followed closely by the need to identify appropriate schooling/kindergarten services for their children.

### Summary Analysis of Programme Response

**Child Protection:** With UNICEF support, 1,562 people were reached through three Blue Dots over the past week, including 796 children (52% boys and 48% girls). Services were also provided to 30 children with disabilities, eight unaccompanied children, 30 cases of GBV, 19 cases of child parents (i.e., parents who are under the age of 18), and 18 cases of pregnant and lactating females. Furthermore, two undocumented children were identified through the Blue Dots this week who were referred to the guardianship authorities for further assistance. This brings the total beneficiaries to 5,261 people, including 2,912 children, since the set-up of the Blue Dots. UNICEF is working with the government and NGO partners to create a digitalized system for tracking unaccompanied minors.



Sivlana plays with her daughter Milana (3), staying with family friends in Moldova. © UNICEF/UN0608158/Modola

**Health and Nutrition:** UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to strengthen the capacity of 400 primary health care workers to vaccinate children – in line with the National Immunization Program – including refugee children. Communication materials on the importance of vaccination for parents/caregivers have been distributed. UNICEF has also procured medical equipment for ten regional perinatal centres.

**WASH:** UNICEF consolidated WASH sector interventions planned with UNHCR and the Government of Moldova under the National Inter-sectoral Refugee Coordination mechanism. A partnership with INGO Solidarite International is expected to provide WASH support to 131,000 refugees at border points, refugee accommodation centres (RACs), and host communities. Furthermore, given the proximity of Moldova to Odessa, UNICEF is preparing to scale up WASH support for increasing arrivals, ensuring support for an additional 10,000 people.

**Education:** UNICEF is conducting a cross-sectoral needs analysis, including education, for two districts, which will be expanded to national level in the coming weeks. With technical support of UNICEF, three child-friendly spaces (CFS) and three-day camps have been set up in Chisinau to address the socio-emotional learning and recreational needs of refugee children and adolescents. Furthermore, a national training of trainers to address individual needs of refugee children, particularly to prevent bullying and violence, will be scaled up to reach 900 school managers and teachers in the coming weeks.

**Social Protection:** UNICEF focused on co-funding and developing a multi-purpose cash assistance for refugees with UNHCR. In a little over one week, some 5,700 people, including 4,900 children, have been reached – with an average of 600 persons registered per day. UNICEF is coordinating with UNHCR and WFP to understand mid-term long-term development responses and linkages of the cash-based intervention to the national social protection system.

## Romania

### Situation Overview & Programme Response

Roughly 79,770 Ukrainian refugees are still in Romania. The vast majority are women and roughly 34,000 of them are children. The number of asylum seekers is relatively low, around 4,000.

**Child Protection:** Five Blue Dots are fully functional, in Sighet (Maramures County), Siret (Suceava County), Albita and Husi (Vaslui County) and Isaccea (Tulcea County). The Blue Dot in Albita will be twinned with Leuseni, Moldova, to provide refugees with protection, basic services, and information on both the sides of the border. Since their setup, the Blue Dots have served over 24,000 Ukrainians, mainly women and children. UNICEF is supporting the government with integrating child protection in its sectorial response plan. In partnership with UNHCR, a training of trainers on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) was carried out with all the implementing partners involved in the response.

**Education:** UNICEF provided school-in-a-box, backpacks, and early childhood development (ECD) kits to children at the 'Ostrivets' Ukrainian primary school, which offers classes to about 270 refugee children. UNICEF also provided recreation and ECD kits for the Blue Dot in Isaccea. UNICEF supported the development of the draft Education Response Plan that defines short-term and long-term solutions for refugee children on access to learning, recreational and ECD activities. The Education Response Plan addresses the challenges of hiring Ukrainian teachers for Romanian schools and is seeking to tackle the issue of integration into the Romanian Education System.

## Other Countries

### Situation Overview & Programme Response

In **Slovak Republic**, 62,334 refugees have applied for temporary protection out of 305,826 arrivals. Over 14,000 refugee households, comprising 42,787 people, have applied for government social protection support. On 4 April, UNICEF began training for 270 border police, 17 representatives of NGOs, and the Plenipotenciary Office for the Roma Community on anti-trafficking, identification and referral of vulnerable children and mothers, which will expand to cover police more generally, social work and social service providers. Partnerships have been agreed on with the NGO Tenenet to develop and set up two Blue Dots, in cooperation with the Municipality of Bratislava.

Over the past week, the number of people arriving in the **Czech Republic** has declined, with 270,000 refugees currently registered, including around 103,000 children. UNICEF initiated discussions with potential partners, including the Czech Chamber of Social Work, an entity responsible for setting social work standards, developing training curricula and providing training to social frontline workers. Jointly with UNHCR and following a discussion with the Czech Fire and Rescue Service, field visits are planned around the country to key registration sites on the borders to the Slovak Republic, Austria, Germany and Poland with a view to identify and assess strategic places for the establishment of several "Blue Dots".

In **Belarus**, an agreement to develop an interagency mechanism on the identification, referral, and humanitarian assistance to unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) was reached with the Ministry of Interior, non-state actors, and international organizations. 3,600 hygiene kits for individuals in transit and for families in collective accommodation were delivered. In addition, USD 70,000 worth of children's clothes, toys, hygienic items and 3,500 informational materials on how to speak to children in difficult situations, dealing with stress, and referral contacts were delivered to the Belarusian Red Cross for further distribution.

A total of 398,932 individuals have entered **Hungary** which reported a 10% decrease in new arrivals this past week compared to previous weeks. Temporary shelters have been set up and are managed by several state and non-state actors. Basic provisions of accommodation, food and hygiene are covered adequately, however, child protection, mental health and psycho-social services require additional support. UNICEF continues discussions with Hungarian Charity Council organizations to complement their services with child protection and MHPSS service elements under the "Blue Dot" approach.



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UNICEF supported training on the identification of victims of trafficking and child sensitive communication

Currently, 78,021 Ukrainian citizens have been registered in **Italy** at the end of March, out of which 30,158 are children, including high numbers of UASC and children with illnesses and disabilities. UNICEF partnered with UNHCR to support police border authorities and local child protection systems in family reunification. Two Blue Dots are established at the borders with Austria and Slovenia, which have already reached 300 people (164 women, 6 men, 65 girls and 64 boys) in need of protection, legal and health-related information.

In **Bulgaria**, 148,256 refugees have arrived, and 19,428 children are in temporary protection. UNICEF and UNHCR are partnering with national and local authorities to support children and families and ensure protection and access to basic services, such as relevant information, referrals, legal aid and psycho-social support.

## External Media

UNICEF ECARO Article: [UNICEF mobilizes world's largest plane to airlift supplies to Poland for children in Ukraine](#)

UNICEF Moldova Press Release: [Prime Minister Natalia Gavrilița at the BLUE DOT centre in Otaci: 'One in two Ukrainian refugees is a child in need of special assistance'](#)

UNICEF HQ Press Release: [Two million refugee children flee war in Ukraine in search of safety across borders](#)

UNICEF Romania Article: [Romania extends a warm welcome to refugee Ukrainian mothers and their children](#)

Next Sitrep: 15 April 2022

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