

Ukraine

December 2021

In Ukraine, UNHCR responds for three population groups: refugees and asylum-seekers, stateless persons and persons with undetermined nationality, as well as internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other conflict-affected persons.

Since the beginning of the conflict in eastern Ukraine and the temporary occupation of Crimea in 2014, UNHCR has provided protection and humanitarian assistance and support, including shelter repairs, to IDPs and conflict-affected persons on both sides of the contact line.

Stateless persons in Ukraine can now apply for naturalization after three years upon their recognition as stateless instead of the previous seven-year waiting period. The changes were signed into the law in December 2021 following sustained advocacy by UNHCR and partners.

KEY INDICATORS

252

refugees and asylum-seekers **were assisted in accessing healthcare** in December.

162

Undocumented persons **received advice on the acquisition or confirmation of nationality** in December.

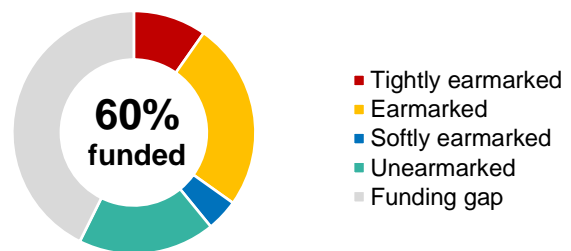
210

Internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons **were provided with social accompaniment** in December.

FUNDING (AS OF 29 DECEMBER 2021)

USD 28.9 million

UNHCR's financial requirements 2021



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A theatre play "I Want to Live" based on true refugee stories premiered at the Kyiv Theater in Lypky. It calls for acceptance and tolerance towards refugees and forcibly displaced persons in Ukraine. The performance was supported by UNHCR and implemented by the NGO "Youth Integration Club" that unites young refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, Ukrainians, and second-generation immigrants in Ukraine. Read more [here](#).

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)*

734,000**

OTHER CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS***

1,62 million****

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN UKRAINE

4,931*****

STATELESS PERSONS AND PERSONS WITH UNDETERMINED NATIONALITY

35,875*****

*Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA)

**Source: 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)

***Vulnerable, conflict-affected persons living along the 'contact line' in GCA and in non-government controlled areas (NGCA)

****Sources: Protection Cluster, UNHCR, December 2020

*****Source: UNHCR's Refugee Population Statistics Database, mid-year 2021

Updates on Context

- Following sustained UNHCR and partner advocacy, the President of Ukraine signed amendment #5630 to the citizenship law on 20 December, allowing stateless persons to apply for naturalization three years after their recognition as stateless instead of after seven years.
- As of 9 December, the Government of Ukraine allows IDPs to change their place of factual residence (indicated in an IDP e-certificate) remotely through the governmental *Diya* online portal. This simplifies the procedure as IDPs no longer need to go to the state social protection departments to update their information. However, IDPs who are not IT literate – often older persons- are still compelled to use the paper format of the certificate and visit the state social protection services to update their information.
- Some barriers to freedom of movement across the contact line related to Covid-19 restrictions were removed. On 29 December, the Government of Ukraine simplified the process for crossing the contact line in eastern Ukraine and the administrative boundary with Crimea through the Entry-Exit Crossing Points (EECPs). Travellers are no longer required to install the *Vdoma* app or undergo self-isolation/observation. Since the start of the pandemic, UNHCR and other humanitarian actors have advocated for abolishing this requirement as such restrictions have not been imposed for other internal movements in Ukraine and have had a disproportionate effect on older persons. Persons who do not have smartphones, mostly older persons, cannot install the *Vdoma* app and were thus limited in visiting GCA to visit family members and collect pensions and other social benefits.

Working in Partnership

The humanitarian response to displacement in Ukraine is a coordinated effort by the Government of Ukraine, international organizations, national and international NGOs. UNHCR works closely with the Government, including its line ministries and central and local administrations and authorities to ensure the protection of and durable solutions for persons of concern to UNHCR. In relation to IDPs, UNHCR has signed a Letter of Understanding with the Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories. In relation to refugees and stateless persons, UNHCR cooperates closely with the State Migration Service (SMS) of Ukraine. In 2021, UNHCR has agreements with eight local NGO project partners. UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and Shelter/Non-food Items (NFI) Cluster under the Humanitarian Response Plan. UNHCR together with OCHA co-leads the Logistics Working Group responsible for facilitating humanitarian convoys to eastern Ukraine.

Refugees and Asylum-Seekers



Capacity Building and Institutional Support

- UNHCR and its NGO partner Right to Protection (R2P) worked to raise awareness and share best practices on access to justice for asylum-seekers held in custody centres through a round table on 3 December in Chernihiv. It was organized in cooperation with local authorities, Free Legal Aid Centres (FLACs) and civil society. The participants, which included judges, representatives of the State Migration Service (SMS), Migrant Custody Centres, State Border Guard Services (SBGS) and FLACs, discussed access to justice by people who were apprehended by SBGS officers and placed in custody centres, in particular their access to receiving the services of state attorneys and interpreters, access to the asylum procedure and access to information on their legal situation.

UNHCR's NGO partner the Tenth of April (TTA), jointly with the National School of Judges of Ukraine, held an online training on 14 December for 22 judges from the courts of general jurisdiction on the importance of respecting the principle of non-refoulement when dealing with asylum cases.



Community Engagement

- The theatre play "I Want to Live" based on true refugee and IDP stories premiered at the Kyiv Theater in Lypky on 1 December. It calls for acceptance and tolerance towards refugees and forcibly displaced persons in Ukraine. The performance was supported by UNHCR and implemented by the NGO "Youth Integration Club" that unites young refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, Ukrainians, and second-generation immigrants in Ukraine. The Republic of Ireland, who is an important contributor to UNHCR, was also represented at the premiere by Ambassador Healy, who lent her words of support to refugee youth.
- With the aim of promoting community empowerment, UNHCR's NGO partner TTA organized an event management training for 17 asylum seekers and refugees in Odesa on 10 December. The participants gained new skills in events planning, volunteer engagement, teamwork, cooperation with local authorities, programming and time management, which will help them and their communities advocate for access to rights, services and durable solutions.
- On 23 December, UNHCR's NGO partner TTA hosted the annual Hugo de Groot award ceremony in Odesa which honored contributions to the protection of human rights in Ukraine. The ceremony was followed by panel discussions with community representatives who shared their best practices and examples of successful youth activities and campaigns.
- On 25 December, UNHCR's NGO partner TTA organized the final stage of the annual [mini-football tournament 'Respect 21'](#) among the forcibly displaced communities in Odesa with the aim of promoting peaceful coexistence.
- A community of Afghan women in Kyiv together with Kyiv city libraries launched a UNHCR-supported project which will provide free Ukrainian, English, Persian, IT and drawing classes for Afghan women and children, thus equipping them with skills for integration into local society, accessing further education, and enhancing their future career prospects.



Basic Needs and Self Reliance

- To support refugees and asylum-seekers in the most vulnerable situations, UNHCR provided supplementary food assistance to 26 households and reimbursed the regular medical expenses of individuals in 32 households.
- UNHCR provided 15 Livelihoods Support and Self Reliance Grants to refugees and asylum-seekers (12 business grants and 3 vocational training grants) to start their own business or attend vocational training to achieve greater self-reliance.



Education

- UNHCR provided cash for education to 188 refugee and asylum-seeker households. This allows them to purchase purchase laptops or alternative distance learning devices to enable their childrens' access to online schooling during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- UNHCR provided 19 vocational education students from refugee and asylum-seeker communities

with one-time DAFI support for educational purposes, such as study materials and travel expenses.

Key Figures

Result achieved in December 2021



Stateless Persons and Persons with Undetermined Nationality



Capacity Building and Institutional Support

- In line with UNHCR's advocacy and technical advice, the 2023 Census is likely to include a question on citizenship formulated to capture the scale of statelessness in Ukraine. The question will collect information on the number of persons who consider themselves stateless or with their citizenship not determined, and their demographics, socio-economic background and place of residence. On 8 December, the joint session of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine Collegium and the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences approved the 2023 Ukraine Census questionnaire, which contains more than 50 questions and defines a list of demographic and socio-economic characteristics of individuals, households and the population living conditions. The questionnaire is still pending review by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.
- On 2 December, UNHCR's NGO partner R2P conducted an online round table with the specialists from Kyiv city and the regional Migration Service to discuss shortcomings in and ways to improve the statelessness determination procedure (SDP). Another roundtable training on SDP implementation was organized on 9 December by UNHCR's NGO partner TTA for SMS officers from Odesa oblast.
- Considering that many undocumented people in Ukraine live in small villages, on 21 December, UNHCR's NGO partner R2P conducted a webinar for representatives of amalgamated territorial communities and social services in Kyiv and Kharkiv oblasts who work directly with people at the local level on SDP and ways of identifying stateless persons.
- On 22 December, UNHCR's NGO partner TTA held a round table in Odesa with representatives of local SMS units, civil registry offices, children services and others to share challenges and potential solutions in documenting persons with undetermined nationality, also reflecting on achievements and results achieved in 2021.
- On 22 December, UNHCR's NGO partner R2P conducted an online training on statelessness issues for 60 students from Mariupol in Donetsk oblast.

Key Figures

Result achieved in December 2021

 **18**

Persons with undetermined nationality **obtained a passport or other document certifying nationality**

 **162**

Undocumented persons **received advice on the acquisition or confirmation of nationality**

 **14**

Persons **obtained birth certificates**

 **16**

Persons **assisted with applying to the statelessness determination procedures**

Internally Displaced and Other Conflict-Affected Persons



Coordination

- On 27 December, UNHCR facilitated the delivery of a humanitarian convoy to Luhansk non-government-controlled area (NGCA), consisting of four trucks with medical and hygiene items, equipment and construction materials.



Advocacy

- Following UNHCR advocacy, access to housing compensation procedures was widened. On 9 December, the Ukrainian Government adopted resolution [#1301](#) introducing amendments to the procedure on compensation for fully destroyed housing to simplify the application process and widen eligibility for compensation. This positive development, which UNHCR and its partners have been promoting, is expected to increase the number of conflict-affected persons who will receive compensation. In addition, the requirement to relinquish property rights for the destroyed or damaged housing can now be carried out after the procedures are completed, therefore eliminating the risk of losing the property and not eventually receiving compensation.
- On 21 December, UNHCR and its NGO partners TTA and R2P co-hosted a round table on challenges related to birth and death registrations of persons from NGCAs in eastern Ukraine and Crimea, which was attended by representatives of state authorities. TTA presented its research on access to justice for Crimean residents while R2P informed that the usage of *eMalyatko*, a state online service for obtaining birth certificates and benefits linked to giving birth, remains low among residents of NGCAs and Crimea (only eight births from 31 applications were registered as of mid-November 2021). Additionally, UNHCR informed that the exemption from court fees in cases on birth/death registration is not granted in most cases. As a result of the event, participants developed recommendations on the elaboration and adoption of administrative procedures for birth and death registration as well as the need to clarify the rules on court fee exemptions in such cases.
- On 22 December, UNHCR's NGO partner TTA presented a [video](#) (in Ukrainian) advocating for the provision of social housing for IDPs. The video tells a story of a person who was forcibly displaced twice in his life, first as refugee and then as an IDP in Ukraine. The presentation took place in Odesa and was followed by discussions with local authorities and journalists on facilitating access to social housing for IDPs in Odesa oblast.



Capacity Building and Institutional Support

- UNHCR supported the capacity of rural medical centres (Feldsher Points or FAPs) to provide medical services through the delivery of laptops in villages along the contact line in Luhansk oblast.

- UNHCR supported the regional centre for psychosocial assistance in Druzhkivka, Donetsk oblast, GCA, with mattresses and bed linens to increase its reception capacity and improve sanitary conditions. The centre provides assistance for people in challenging life circumstances, for example it serves as a last resort for survivors of domestic violence and provides temporary shelter to those affected by conflict-related emergencies, among other things
- The UNHCR-funded rehabilitation of premises of the State Migration Service in Toretsk, Donetsk oblast, GCA, was completed. The renovations and equipment provided will improve access to civil documents and administrative services for IDPs, conflict-affected people and people with limited mobility or other vulnerabilities.
- UNHCR refurbished the premises of a community centre in one of the districts of Toretsk, Donetsk oblast, GCA. This facility provides space for local civil society activities and will host mobile branches of the Pension Fund, the State Migration Service of Ukraine, the Department of Social Protection and other administrative and NGO services to the population of the district. This way low mobile and senior citizens will be able to receive social and administrative services closer to their homes, in their district, and avoid tiresome travel and queuing in the central offices of these state service providers.
- UNHCR provided two new electric carts for transporting persons with specific needs across the Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. The electro-carts are run by UNHCR's NGO partner Proliska and replace the previous ones that are now out of order.
- In December, UNHCR donated medical and WASH equipment to the Red Cross Society of Luhansk which provides medical services to persons with specific vulnerabilities on the NGCA-side of Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. The donated medical equipment includes, amongst others, wheelchairs, first aid kits, portable pulse oximeters, tonometers and glucometers. The WASH equipment consists of one water storage tank, two high pressure washers and two watering hoses will be used for disinfecting the areas where people gather at the EECP to cross, and thus help prevent the spread of Covid-19.



Community Engagement

- UNHCR delivered handicraft supplies to support activities in the community centre of Krymske village, Luhansk oblast, GCA, located close to the contact line. This will enable the centre to organize various social activities for different groups of the local population, namely small children, teenagers and older people.
- On 14 December, a community project for the restoration of a martial arts club was concluded in Chermalyk, Donetsk oblast, GCA. UNHCR and its NGO partner Proliska supported the initiative of the

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