Lithuania

September 2022

Since the end of February 2022, Lithuania has received large numbers of refugees from Ukraine, currently **amounting to 2 percent of its population**.

Shortly after the start of the war in Ukraine, legislative changes were adopted to **provide access to services and support for Ukrainian refugees in Lithuania.**

The authorities have **gradually started granting freedom of movement** to applicants who had entered Lithuania through the border with Belarus.

POPULATION OF CONCERN as of 30 June 2022*

Refugees	**49,535**
Asylum-seekers	**381**
Stateless persons	**2,720**

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN*

Refugees

Ukraine	47,569
Russian Federation	698
Syrian Arab Rep.	479

Asylum-seekers

Belarus	210
Russian Federation	67
Syrian Arab Rep.	35

*Source: UNHCR provisional mid-year 2022 data

UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION RESPONSE

As of 30 September, 66,368 refugees from Ukraine are currently present in Lithuania and registered for temporary protection.

UNHCR response: protection monitoring and assessment, including of implementation of temporary protection framework and dialogue with refugees from Ukraine.

Essential items and services, such as housing, food, social assistance, health care and education are effectively provided by the Government and through the NGO sector to newly arrived refugees from Ukraine.

Support to the most vulnerable: UNHCR scaled up its support in protecting children, preventing gender-based violence and communicating with refugee communities.

Coordination: UNHCR is a part of inter-agency coordination and participates in the assessment of needs of Ukrainian refugees.

HIGHLIGHTS

Housing solutions by civil society

The initiative "Stronger Together" (in Lithuanian "Stiprūs kartu") has provided housing support for more than 30,000 Ukrainian refugees in private accommodation in Lithuania. Half of them are children.
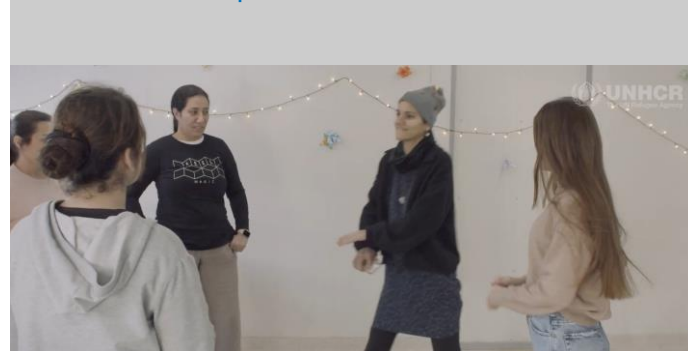
Emergency response

Under the leadership of the authorities and in close coordination, NGOs successfully contribute to the emergency response and effectively provide essential humanitarian aid and services to asylum-seekers, migrants, and Ukrainian refugees in Lithuania.

Reception conditions

In 2022, Lithuania gradually improved reception conditions for asylum-seekers and migrants: container sites in Medininkai and Rukla were closed and conditions in Kybartai site are improving, though some concerns remain.

Creative workshops **FOR INTEGRATION**

UNHCR's partner Artscape celebrates the role of art and creativity in building connections for refugees and asylum-seekers in Lithuania. Learn more about Artscape and their integration work in this video, where you will meet Dharshan, a former asylum-seeker from Sri Lanka, Farah from Syria, and Rojin from Iraq.

Key Priorities

- **Protection monitoring:** UNHCR and its partners closely monitor the protection situation of refugees and asylum-seekers at borders and at reception facilities, coordinating with relevant stakeholders, and providing technical advice as necessary on all refugee protection matters and adherence to the 1951 Convention.

- **Access to territory:** UNHCR advocates for changes to the current legislation and works to ensure that asylum-seekers have access to territory including in times of emergency.

- **Asylum procedures:** UNHCR monitors asylum procedures and advocates for fair asylum processing and procedural safeguards.

- **Solutions:** UNHCR supports Lithuania's comprehensive approach to integration and further capacitates national and local authorities in providing support for refugees. UNHCR promotes local level integration and labour market inclusion. UNHCR also works with partners to improve regulations and remove practical obstacles related to family reunification.

- **Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance:** UNHCR supports the refugee-led organisation "Refugee Council" to become a voice for refugees

- **Capacity building:** UNHCR assists with capacity building support for various interlocutors, including staff of the appeals instance.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR works with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support asylum, integration, and statelessness legal and policy development, and with the Migration Department and the State Border Guard Service to ensure access to the territory asylum procedures and reception conditions. With the Lithuanian Red Cross, Caritas

Vilnius, Artscape, the Diversity Development Group, Diversity Charter, the Refugee Council and international organizations WHO and IOM, UNHCR helps the Government to address emergency-related challenges and to foster local integration of refugees.

- **External engagement:** UNHCR works with partners to raise awareness on asylum. During key events, UNHCR promotes the inclusion of refugee voices in national public debates.

Statelessness

- Lithuania is a party to the Statelessness Conventions and UNHCR promotes the establishment of a statelessness determination procedure. Stateless persons in Lithuania predominantly have long-term (permanent) residence permits and enjoy access to a wide range of rights.

- Lithuania has made efforts to decrease the number of stateless persons. UNHCR legal partner, Lithuanian Red Cross provides counselling and advice to stateless persons on procedures for acquiring citizenship.

UNHCR Presence in Nordic and Baltic Countries*

Staff:

19 National Staff

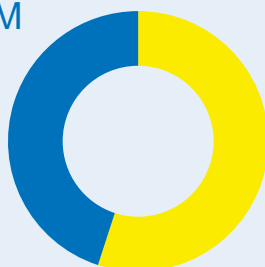13 International Staff

Offices:

1 MCO in Stockholm

1 Liaison Office in Vilnius

1 Sub Office in Tallinn

1 Sub Office in Riga

Financial information* (September 2022)

Financial requirements

USD 11.6 M

Funding gap 45% 5.3 M

Funded 55% 6.3 M

*Information relates to the Representation for the Nordic and Baltic countries, which includes Representation for Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, and Sweden