

Kazakhstan

UNHCR National Office

Ensuring national laws **protect** and are **inclusive** of people forced to flee, and **support local integration** of refugees

Supporting authorities to better **identify and protect** people without a nationality, and **prevent statelessness** from occurring

Promoting alignment of national citizenship and refugee laws with **international standards**



Photo: UNHCR/ Kazakhstan

The DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarship program enables refugee students like Fariza to study at local universities and realize their potential by becoming qualified professionals who will contribute to the development of their host communities.

Key Figures (as of 1 January 2023)



1,150

Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

From Afghanistan (520), Ukraine (551) and other countries.



8,569

known Stateless people

including 7,706 Stateless people registered by the Government, and 863 people with undetermined nationality registered by UNHCR.



The Kazakhstan operation is coordinated by the UNHCR Representation to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In 2023, UNHCR requires \$6.4 million to protect refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people across the four countries. As of 28 February 2023, the operation is 17% funded.

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Protecting Refugees

Most refugees have been living in Kazakhstan for years, or even decades. They speak local languages, and many have family ties with citizens. Without permanent residency status, however, they do not have access to most socio-economic rights, including naturalisation.

Kazakhstan is a State Party to the [1951 Refugee Convention](#) and its [1967 Protocol](#). Reaffirming its commitment to the Refugee Convention, at the 2019 [Global Refugee Forum](#) Kazakhstan pledged to provide ICAO-standard Machine-Readable Convention Travel Documents to refugees.

UNHCR works with the government to strengthen asylum procedures and establish a fair and effective referral mechanism from border to responsible authorities, so that refugees and asylum-seekers can safely access territory and their rights as people forced to flee.

UNHCR advocates for improvements in national legislation to ensure that all refugees have access to the rights and services stipulated in these treaties, including education, healthcare, and local integration.

Addressing Statelessness

Without legal identity, stateless people often have difficulty accessing basic rights and services such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement. Together with partners, UNHCR supports the government to identify and document people of undetermined nationality and to prevent statelessness from occurring.

Since the 2014 launch of the global [#IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness](#), Kazakhstan has introduced Statelessness Determination Procedures, amended legislation to ensure all children are registered at birth and issued birth certificates – irrespective of their parents' legal status – and granted citizenship to nearly 13,000 stateless people.

UNHCR promotes further alignment of national citizenship and statelessness laws with international standards, and advocates for Kazakhstan to accede to the [1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions](#).



Read the UNHCR Analysis of Kazakhstan National Legislation on Refugees and Statelessness

Working with Partners

Government partners include the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs, Justice, Healthcare, Labour and Social Protection of Population, and Education and Science, as well as the Border Guards Service, Kazakhstan Commission on Human Rights, and the Office of the Commissioner on Human Rights.

UNHCR works in close partnership with civil society – including the Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and the Rule of Law, Kazakhstan Red Crescent Society, and the Legal Centre for Women's Initiatives Sana Sezim – and as well as academia and the private sector in Kazakhstan.

As a member of the UN Country Team and the [UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework of Kazakhstan](#), UNHCR actively engages with UN and development partners, international financial institutions and other stakeholders to ensure refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people are not left behind in Kazakhstan's achievement of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

With thanks to our donors

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UNHCR maintains email and phone 'hotlines' for anyone in need of information or consultation on refugee and asylum issues. People forced to flee can find key contacts and updated information on help.unhcr.org/centralasia.