

Eastern Europe



Armenia
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Georgia
Republic of Moldova
Russian Federation
Turkey
Ukraine

Displaced women in Qizil Gum work on sewing machines at the new rehabilitation centre in a former sanatorium in Azerbaijan.



| OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS |

- The governments of Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine strengthened their efforts to integrate refugees locally. Though access to employment continues to be a challenge, refugees are increasing their chances of getting jobs through language classes, vocational training, business grants and, in Belarus and the Republic of Moldova, housing support.
- A prolonged Government transition limited the effectiveness of the asylum authority in Ukraine. Many asylum-seekers were unable to access the asylum procedure and decision-making fell short of international standards. UNHCR provided legal and material assistance to people of concern, particularly those with specific needs, and provided solutions to people in need of international protection.
- Using the 10-Point Plan of Action as a framework, UNHCR's protection and border monitoring staff and partners compiled reports showing instances of people being unable to apply for asylum in some Central European countries. Some remain at risk of being detained and returned to their country of origin.
- In Azerbaijan, the Government has allowed the development of small livelihood initiatives for refugees, helping them to become more self-reliant.
- In Eastern Europe, UNHCR continued to seek solutions for displaced people and refugees, including for those who may wish to integrate locally in their country of asylum. Surveys have helped to design mechanisms to support resettlement submissions and voluntary-return packages.
- UNHCR worked with development counterparts on self-reliance strategies which should permit a gradual reduction in the need for monthly basic assistance.

| Working environment |

Over 4,000 people sought asylum in Eastern Europe in 2010, a slight increase from 2009. However, many others chose not to submit applications for asylum for a myriad of reasons. These included a wish to seek protection in Western Europe; the perception that Eastern European countries do not provide sufficient protection; or even that local-integration schemes in the subregion are limited. There are also credible reports that would-be applicants have difficulty in accessing territory or that their applications are not registered by authorities when approached.

The refugee recognition rate remains low, with only 1,500 asylum-seekers recognized as refugees by the respective authorities. Moreover, many of those recognized fall under temporary or complementary protection schemes, which often must be renewed annually or which may not offer the same level of rights and social protection as refugee status.

Statelessness, particularly as a result of the dissolution of the former Soviet Union, remains an issue of concern throughout the subregion. The precise number of people who are stateless in Eastern Europe is not known, though UNHCR's initial estimate puts the figure at some 120,000. UNHCR assists countries in Eastern Europe to identify stateless people as well as those at risk of statelessness and encourages them to collect relevant data, keep a central registry and introduce a centralized, fair and efficient procedure for the determination of statelessness. Studies on statelessness, including gap analyses, have been discussed with governments in the subregion.

EASTERN EUROPE

Eastern European countries continue to host several hundred thousand displaced persons, mostly in the southern Caucasus. Many of the displaced have been uprooted for nearly two decades, and long-term solutions to their problems are dependent on the eradication of root causes of conflict. Life is also difficult owing to the absence of national local-integration policies.

| Achievements and impact |

The modest number of asylum-seekers, problems in accessing territory and low recognition rates are indicators of generally precarious asylum systems in Eastern Europe. UNHCR strives to strengthen national asylum systems, ensuring that legislation and procedures create conditions for fair and transparent processes to recognize and provide protection to those who need it.

While many countries have put in place new asylum legislation, or are in the process of doing so, there are a number of cases where practices and procedures do not meet international standards. Asylum systems are particularly vulnerable during times of government reform, which can lead to a vacuum in administrative structures.

As a result, in many countries in Eastern Europe UNHCR increasingly intervenes on behalf of individuals or groups to ensure access to territory, procedures and appeal processes. The aim is to identify and support individuals and help policy-makers and governments improve systems. If no other solutions are available, UNHCR facilitates resettlement. Nearly 435 people were resettled from the region (not including Turkey) in 2010.

During the year, UNHCR prioritized the implementation of solutions. Nearly 5,000 refugees have been profiled and consulted with a view to strengthening their local-integration prospects. Increasingly, UNHCR is looking to development actors to ensure that the needs of refugees, and in many cases internally displaced persons, are integrated into national development frameworks.

| Constraints |

Throughout the subregion, UNHCR helped governments to identify and assist people in need of international protection. However, where the political consensus to support international protection is lacking, UNHCR is compelled to pursue protection activities directly.

Local integration of recognized refugees in Eastern European countries remained a challenge, due to restrictive government policies; lack of adequate housing and access to livelihood activities; and increasing xenophobia targeting foreigners. There is a pressing need for social-integration schemes to ensure the sustainability of local integration of refugees.

| Operations |

Operations in **Georgia**, the **Russian Federation** and **Turkey** are described in separate chapters.

In **Armenia**, the Office carried out a number of capacity-building activities geared towards strengthening legislation and policies to ensure the proper handling of



refugee and asylum issues, the reception and care of refugees and the search for durable solutions.

UNHCR continued to promote the naturalization of the remaining refugees and their effective integration into the economic, cultural and social fabric of society. It advocated for the refugees' inclusion in the state welfare system and other available services for disadvantaged groups and acted as a catalyst to mobilize development partners to support their integration.

For those unable to meet their most basic needs, UNHCR provided targeted assistance geared towards self-reliance and self-sufficiency. For instance, the construction of social housing units for some 45 vulnerable refugee families, and a school was completed and inaugurated in Syunik province. UNHCR supported the resettlement of four refugees unable to avail themselves of national protection. The Office also worked closely with UNFPA to raise awareness within the refugee community of the need to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

In **Azerbaijan**, UNHCR provided an allowance to refugees to help them meet basic needs, with an average of 2,450 people benefiting each month. In addition, more than 2,400 visits to provide counselling and support were made, and almost 1,800 people were assisted with basic medical care. To promote local integration, 10 families received grants to help establish small businesses, and 60 refugee women were trained in beading, embroidery, hairdressing and knitting.

The Office continued to advocate with the Government of Azerbaijan to strengthen its asylum mechanism and

ensure fair processes, as well as to grant long-staying refugees the right to employment. Although some 85 asylum-seekers lodged applications, the Government did not recognize any refugees during the year. UNHCR funded legal assistance for 335 refugees and over 7,000 IDPs, and 95 refugees were accepted for resettlement. Around 30 refugees returned voluntarily to their countries of origin, supported by a repatriation grant. UNHCR distributed clothing to vulnerable refugees and displaced people.

The Regional Office in Kyiv, which covers **Belarus**, the **Republic of Moldova** and **Ukraine**, worked to strengthen protection standards, meet basic needs, improve local integration and promote accession to the Statelessness Conventions. UNHCR's legal counselling projects in Ukraine, Belarus and the Republic of Moldova helped to identify and address protection challenges among more than 1,000 people. Though the overall recognition rate compared to applications in the subregion was low, nearly 170 refugees were resettled, 12 voluntarily repatriated and some 60 legally naturalized. In Ukraine, some 2,100 stateless people were naturalized.

Capacity-building support was provided to the respective governments and civil-society organizations. Basic assistance helped nearly 1,000 people to meet their material, health and social needs.

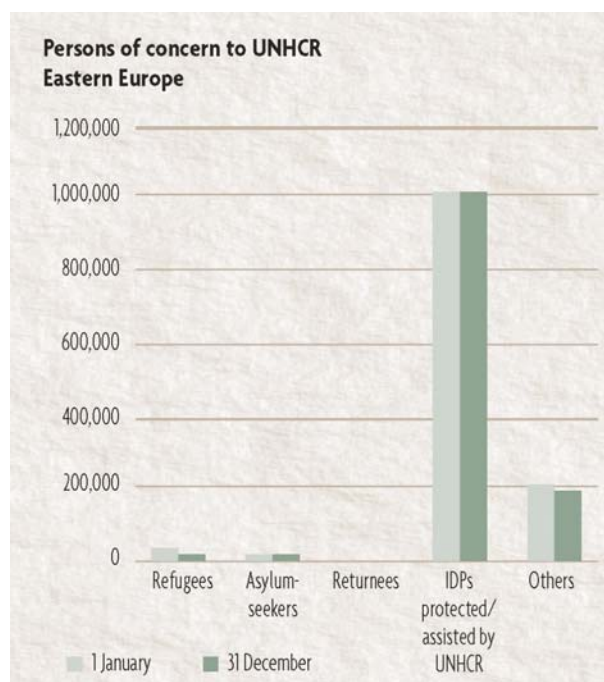
UNHCR and its partners worked to promote local integration in the subregion. In the three countries, more than 200 refugees attended classes in the three respective official languages, while 40 persons benefited from vocational training. In Belarus, refugees received integration assistance and counselling on self-reliance and employment, as well as training in vocational skills.

A project on social entrepreneurship was undertaken and a sewing workshop created 10 new jobs. To address shelter needs, more than 60 families were assisted to improve their housing in Belarus and the Republic of Moldova. Three residential buildings which will house 10 refugee families in the Republic of Moldova will soon be repaired.

Financial information

Budgets for Eastern European countries have largely been stable over the last five years, with strong donor support for Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine for local integration and protection. Nonetheless, many protection challenges remain, especially where UNHCR is forced to intervene directly to provide protection and solutions in the absence of national structures and procedures.

Moreover, and especially in protracted displacement and refugee situations, housing and livelihoods projects are both expensive and complex, yet they are the ones for which there is the greatest demand. However, such projects yield solutions, and may serve as a catalyst for action by governments and other development actors.



Budget and expenditure in Eastern Europe | USD

| Country | | PILLAR 1 Refugee programme | PILLAR 2 Stateless programme | PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects | PILLAR 4 IDP projects | Total |
|--|-------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Armenia | Budget | 2,874,443 | | 1,246,777 | 0 | 4,121,220 |
| | Expenditure | 1,374,670 | | 322,346 | 0 | 1,697,016 |
| Azerbaijan | Budget | 5,289,929 | 215,000 | 0 | 1,048,106 | 6,553,035 |
| | Expenditure | 2,789,741 | 211,809 | 0 | 490,097 | 3,491,647 |
| Georgia | Budget | 7,035,775 | 810,000 | 0 | 52,953,822 | 60,799,597 |
| | Expenditure | 3,374,494 | 796,183 | 0 | 11,112,001 | 15,282,678 |
| Russian Federation | Budget | 8,922,557 | 792,241 | 2,570,429 | 12,364,486 | 24,649,713 |
| | Expenditure | 6,972,694 | 776,115 | 927,086 | 4,824,691 | 13,500,586 |
| Turkey | Budget | 17,023,965 | 250,000 | 310,000 | 110,000 | 17,693,965 |
| | Expenditure | 7,844,485 | 247,346 | 309,428 | 109,945 | 8,511,204 |
| Ukraine Regional Office¹ | Budget | 11,341,282 | 580,050 | 0 | 0 | 11,921,332 |
| | Expenditure | 6,753,400 | 528,552 | 0 | 0 | 7,281,952 |
| Total budget | | 52,487,951 | 2,647,291 | 4,127,206 | 66,476,414 | 125,738,862 |
| Total expenditure | | 29,109,484 | 2,560,005 | 1,558,860 | 16,536,734 | 49,765,083 |

¹ Includes activities in Belarus and the Republic of Moldova.

Voluntary contributions to Eastern Europe | USD

| Earmarking / Donor | PILLAR 1 Refugee programme | PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects | PILLAR 4 IDP projects | All pillars | Total |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| EASTERN EUROPE SUBREGION | | | | | |
| United States of America | | | | 12,470,000 | 12,470,000 |
| Eastern Europe subtotal | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12,470,000 | 12,470,000 |
| ARMENIA | | | | | |
| UN Trust Fund for Human Security | | 73,906 | | | 73,906 |
| Russian Federation | | | | 83,333 | 83,333 |
| Armenia subtotal | 0 | 73,906 | 0 | 83,333 | 157,240 |
| AZERBAIJAN | | | | | |
| European Commission | 360,750 | | | | 360,750 |
| Statoil Azerbaijan | | | 50,000 | | 50,000 |
| Azerbaijan subtotal | 360,750 | 0 | 50,000 | 0 | 410,750 |
| BELARUS | | | | | |
| European Commission | 815,596 | | | | 815,596 |
| Russian Federation | | | | 83,333 | 83,333 |
| Belarus subtotal | 815,596 | 0 | 0 | 83,333 | 898,929 |
| GEORGIA | | | | | |
| Australia for UNHCR | | | 29 | | 29 |
| <i>España con ACNUR</i> (Spain) | | | 108,563 | | 108,563 |
| European Commission | 272,752 | | 3,181,439 | | 3,454,191 |
| Japan | | | | 215,285 | 215,285 |
| Private donors in USA | 2,275 | | | | 2,275 |
| Switzerland | | | 470,810 | | 470,810 |
| United States of America | 131,667 | | 10,175,866 | | 10,307,533 |
| Georgia subtotal | 406,694 | 0 | 13,936,706 | 215,285 | 14,558,686 |
| REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA | | | | | |
| European Commission | 464,954 | | | | 464,954 |
| Republic of Moldova subtotal | 464,954 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 464,954 |
| RUSSIAN FEDERATION | | | | | |
| European Commission | | 204,822 | 539,802 | | 744,624 |
| Switzerland | | | 706,215 | | 706,215 |
| UN Trust Fund for Human Security | 50,000 | | 324,500 | | 374,500 |
| Russian Federation | | | | 83,333 | 83,333 |
| Russian Federation subtotal | 50,000 | 204,822 | 1,570,517 | 83,333 | 1,908,672 |
| TURKEY | | | | | |
| Netherlands | 49,513 | | | | 49,513 |
| United Kingdom | 56,979 | | | | 56,979 |
| United States of America | 700,208 | | | | 700,208 |
| Turkey subtotal | 806,700 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 806,700 |
| UKRAINE | | | | | |
| European Commission | 1,106,277 | | | | 1,106,277 |
| Sweden | 129,171 | | | | 129,171 |
| Ukraine subtotal | 1,235,448 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,235,448 |
| Total | 4,140,143 | 278,729 | 15,557,223 | 12,935,285 | 32,911,380 |

Note: Includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the "New or additional activities - mandate-related" (NAM) reserve.