

Russian Federation

September 2023

Presence: The UN Refugee Agency has been working in the Russian Federation since 1992. It currently operates through a Country Office located in Moscow.

Legal Framework: The Russian Federation is party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. The national refugee law was adopted in 1993.

As of 30 June 2023, **248 refugees, 36,524 temporary asylum status holders** and **4,851 asylum-seekers** from 76 countries are registered by the Russian Ministry of the Interior (Mol).

KEY FIGURES

1,275,315*

refugees and displaced persons from Donetsk, Luhansk and other regions of Ukraine recorded in Russia as of 31 December 2022

2,852,395*

border crossings from Ukraine to Russia through Russia–Ukraine border from 24 February to 4 October 2022

70,735

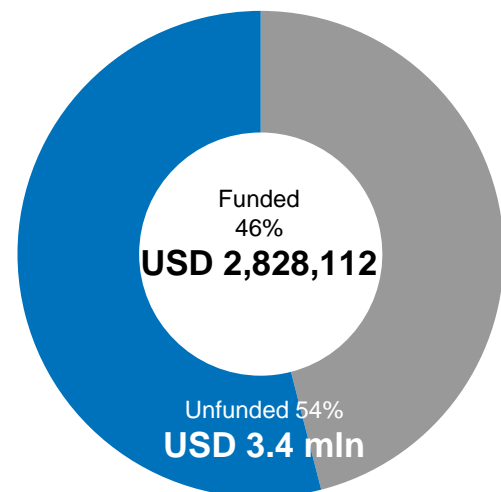
refugees and displaced persons from Donetsk, Luhansk and other regions of Ukraine were provided with counselling by UNHCR and its partners, either in person or over the phone since January 2023

**Data sources: UNHCR collation of statistics made available by the authorities*

FUNDING (AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER 2023)

USD 6.2 million

requested for the operation in Russia in 2023



UNHCR visiting a Temporary Accommodation Point in Ryazan
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UNHCR and the Russian Red Cross meeting with Ukrainian refugees living outside of TAPs in Vologda © Russian Red Cross

- **Mission to Vologda.** From September 4-7, UNHCR in cooperation with the Russian Red Cross (RRC) visited 2 Temporary Accommodation Points (TAPs), which hosted 42 Ukrainian refugees in Vologda. Most residents arrived in the spring-summer of 2022 from Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv regions. Meetings were also held with 22 Ukrainian refugees living outside of the TAPs. Refugees outside of TAPs tend to be officially employed, while their main concern is insufficient wages. The issue of finding affordable and decent housing is a key concern for both urban refugees and those in TAPs. Insufficient pension payments are also a major concern for refugees who do not have documents proving the number of years of active service. All refugees appreciated the access they have to state-sponsored medical services, while many refugees expressed appreciation for the assistance provided by RRC, including psychological assistance, food supplies, school stationery, and financial aid. Most issues raised during the visit were promptly addressed while others will be reviewed by the central authorities in Moscow.
- **Mission to Ryazan.** From September 18-21, UNHCR and RRC visited Ryazan and met with Ukrainian refugees living in and outside of TAPs. There are 12 operational TAPs in the Ryazan region, hosting 957 refugees, including 269 children. UNHCR and RRC visited two TAPs and met with 96 refugees. TAPs provide refugees with well-equipped rooms, food, and medical assistance. 15 refugees living outside of TAPs took part in a meeting at the RRC branch office. They reported having access to education, healthcare, and employment from the moment of their arrival in the country. Challenges faced by refugees include not receiving pensions due to lack of proof of work experience in Ukraine, difficulties in claiming child benefits, and the lack of free public transport for people with disabilities. Many were concerned about the difficulty in acquiring housing. Some refugees expressed concerns about non compensation for their destroyed housing. UNHCR and RRC will continue to inform beneficiaries about available government and NGO support programs.
- **Online course for exam preparation for refugee youth.** UNHCR's partner, Home is Nearby Foundation, has developed an online course for high school refugee students, which will enable them to prepare for the graduation exams. This will provide them with better opportunities for enrolment in local professional and higher education institutions. Some 33 adolescents (including 30 from Ukraine and 3 from Afghanistan) are receiving training in major school subjects.
- **Back-to-school assistance.** UNHCR and partners provided back-to-school grants, stationary and other essentials for school children to start the new academic year. Some 221 children (mainly from Afghanistan and Syria) received back-to-school support, including 127 in Moscow and Moscow region, 18 in St. Petersburg and 76 in other regions of Russia.
- **Judicial engagement.** UNHCR legal partners represented 4 cases of asylum-seekers from Afghanistan, Syria and other countries before the domestic courts. Higher instance courts overturned decisions from lower courts and ruled in favour of granting asylum in view of relevant country-of-origin information, including UNHCR position papers, provided by the lawyers.
- **Local Integration.** Through the intervention of UNHCR legal partners, 4 Afghan refugees were granted Russian citizenship. Another 6 Afghans received residence permits, while 9 more Afghan nationals have been granted temporary asylum.
- **Announcement of Human Rights Day contests for Russian students.** In September, the Offices of the Human Rights Commissioner in St. Petersburg and Tambov, in partnership with UNHCR Russia, announced the launch of contests for students dedicated to Human Rights Day:
 - In St. Petersburg, [students](#) are encouraged to submit articles, essays, posters, video clips, animations on the topic of the realization of rights and freedoms, respect for human dignity, and the place and role of a citizen in the legal system. A special theme from UNHCR this year is "Peculiarities of the legal status of stateless persons and measures to prevent, reduce and end statelessness." UNHCR partner, the RRC put forward the topic "Proposals for the development of a regional plan for the integration of refugees from different countries in St. Petersburg." Entries are accepted until 11 November 2023.
 - UNHCR Russia acts as one of its organizers of the [contest in Tambov](#). One of the competition's focus areas is dedicated to the observance and protection of the rights of asylum-seekers, refugees and/or stateless persons. Entries are accepted until 20 November 2023, the winners of the contest will be announced on Human Rights Day (10 December).

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