

Latvia

September 2022

Since the end of February 2022, Latvia has received a large number of refugees from Ukraine, **amounting to 2 percent of the Latvian population**.

Due to the continued irregular arrival of asylum-seekers and migrants via Belarus, **the state of emergency was extended** until November 2022, limiting access to asylum.

The Latvian authorities are **boosting their contingency preparedness** to have more accommodation places for new arrivals from Ukraine.

POPULATION OF CONCERN as of 30 June 2022*

Refugees	35,081
Asylum-seekers	170
Stateless persons	195,354

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Ukraine	34,256	Afghanistan	46
Syrian Arab Rep.	317	Russian Federation	38
Afghanistan	147	Belarus	23

*Source: UNHCR provisional mid-year 2022 data

UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION RESPONSE

As of 30 September, 38,915 refugees from Ukraine are currently present in Latvia.

40,666 refugees from Ukraine were registered for temporary protection in Latvia.

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 to newly arrived refugees from Ukraine.

Support to the most vulnerable: UNHCR scaled up 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

Registration and assistance

Latvian authorities have established a one-stop shop support centre in Riga to ensure timely registration and effective assistance to refugees from Ukraine.

Law on Assistance

A special law for the protection of refugees from Ukraine was adopted in Latvia shortly after the start of the war in Ukraine to ensure effective legal status, efficient protection and facilitated access to rights and services without delay.

Statelessness

according to the Latvian authorities, since the adoption of amendments to the citizenship legislation in January 2020, there are no newborn children in Latvia who are stateless; all newborn children have been granted Latvian citizenship if they do not have another citizenship.

ONE-STOP RECEPTION CENTER IN RIGA HELPS AND WELCOMES REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE



Shortly after refugees from Ukraine started arriving in Latvia, a one-stop center was set up in the capital Riga to provide refugees with all relevant services in one place. Video [here](#).

Key Priorities

- **Advocacy:** UNHCR and partners advocate for support for legal and policy developments and implementation in accordance with EU standards and international obligations, including in times of emergency.
- **Protection Sensitive Entry Systems:** UNHCR conducts border monitoring activities to ensure that asylum-seekers have access to territory and asylum and assists with capacitation of border guards in terms of pro-active identification of asylum requests and their efficient referral to the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs.
- **Detention:** UNHCR advocates for the use of detention as a measure of last resort, promotes alternatives to detention, and encourages the authorities to refrain from detention of children.
- **Asylum procedures:** UNHCR works with counterparts to ensure the quality and efficiency of asylum procedures, supports the contingency preparedness and dignified reception arrangements with due regard to special needs.
- **Resettlement and Complementary Pathways:** UNHCR advocates for Latvia to re-engage in resettlement and consider sustainable programmes, including complimentary education and employment pathways for admission of refugees.
- **Integration:** UNHCR encourages the development of a holistic integration strategy focusing on all beneficiaries of international protection to ensure mainstreaming of services into social assistance programmes and provision of targeted support (language, housing, and employment). UNHCR also supports regular public campaigns and awareness raising activities to promote the diversity and prevent intolerance and xenophobia against refugees and migrants.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR works with the MFA, the MOI, the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, and the State Border Guard as the main governmental bodies responsible for policy/planning on asylum issues, “non-citizens” and stateless persons. UNHCR also cooperates with the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Culture and the Society Integration Foundation. UNHCR closely collaborates with [the Ombudsman’s Office](#), the Latvian Diversity Charter and NGOs.
- **External engagement:** UNHCR works with partners to raise awareness on asylum and statelessness issues. UNHCR promotes inclusion of refugee voices in national public debates.

Statelessness

- Latvia is a state party to both the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions and is a strong supporter of the UNHCR’s #Ibelong campaign to End Statelessness.
- There are two groups of concern to UNHCR: the “non-citizens”, and stateless persons determined in the Statelessness Determination Procedure. While the “non-citizens” in Latvia are entitled to rights generally beyond the minimum rights prescribed by the 1954 Convention, in comparison with the situation of citizens of Latvia, differences exist in access to employment, purchasing property, political rights and retirement grants.

UNHCR Presence in Nordic and Baltic Countries*

Staff:

19 National Staff
 13 International Staff

Offices:

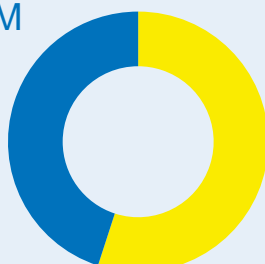
1 Regional Office in Stockholm
 1 Liaison Office in Vilnius
 1 Sub Office in Tallinn
 1 Sub Office in Riga

Financial information* (September 2022)

Financial requirements

USD 11.6 M

Funding gap
 45%
 5.3 M



Funded
 55%
 6.3 M

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As well as for the generous contributions from private individuals and the private sector.

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