

# North Macedonia

February 2023

UNHCR works closely with the government and various stakeholders to **ensure protection of refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless people** in line with the mixed movement [strategy](#).

UNHCR developed a **Roadmap for ending statelessness**, supported by the Council of Europe, the EU and the OSCE which defines actions to end statelessness by 2024.

UNHCR is committed to **developing capacities** of relevant stakeholders in statelessness, refugee and asylum-seekers protection, and, forward-looking migration management.

## UNHCR POPULATION STATISTICS AS OF MID-2022\*

Refugees	<b>1430</b>
Asylum-seekers	<b>15</b>
Stateless persons	<b>521</b>
Others of concern	<b>57</b>

### Top three countries of origin\*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Ukraine	<b>1,174</b>	Iraq	<b>5</b>
Kosovo	<b>251</b>	Morocco	<b>5</b>
Congo	<b>5</b>	Türkiye	<b>5</b>

\*UNHCR 2022 Mid-Year Trends and UNHCR [data finder](#)

## UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION RESPONSE

As of mid-February, **6,410** refugees from Ukraine were registered in North Macedonia.

**TPD not activated in North Macedonia:** Ukrainian nationals entering North Macedonia are allowed a 90 day visa free of charge. Following that period, they can apply for a one-year temporary residence for humanitarian reasons, which allows them to stay in the country legally but without access to, inter alia, health, education or employment.

**Help page and brief:** UNHCR created and populated a Help page with up-to-date information, and the Legal Aid Partner produced an information brief, which both provide information on access to rights.

**Coordination:** Through a UNHCR initiative, a Protection Sector Working group was formed related to the needs and responses to refugees from Ukraine. UNHCR, UNFPA, IOM, UN RCO, UN WOMEN, CRC, Legis, and MK Caritas are part of the group and coordinate their efforts and share information.

**Joint effort:** UNHCR partnered with a local Ukrainian NGO in North Macedonia and donated computers for the persons in the country that needed this equipment, particularly children attending online schools.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Administrative Court's jurisprudence

As a result of UNHCR work and advocacy with judiciary and legal assistance provided through its NGO partner, the Administrative Court has decided for the first time on merits in an asylum case, while in another case it ordered the Ministry of Interior to pay compensation to the asylum applicant to cover the legal fees for the asylum procedure.

### Statelessness

Through the continued advocacy of UNHCR and partners, the statelessness population in the country has decreased by 15 per cent since the 2021 amendments to the Law on Citizenship.



Everyone has the right to say **#IBelong**  
Let's end statelessness, now!  
Drawing courtesy of **Elena Vchkovska!**

**#IBelong**



## MARKING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Children and youth joined UNHCR's campaign to illustrate the problem of statelessness in North Macedonia on the occasion of International Human Rights Day. The campaign featured drawings, digital illustrations, etc. Click on the [link](#) to read more.

## Key Priorities

- Establish protection-sensitive entry systems:** UNHCR advocates for improved registration and referral of persons seeking international protection and for returning people not in need of international protection in safety, dignity, and full respect of international, regional, and national legislation.
- Improve the quality of the asylum procedure:** UNHCR advocates for prioritized decision-making of manifestly well-founded applications and granting international protection based on merits to increase the efficiency of the asylum procedure and make available state-financed quality interpretation services and quality and free-of-charge legal aid, throughout the asylum procedure.
- Foster solutions:** UNHCR advocates for sustainable legal solutions for the remaining Kosovo\* refugees, in line with the country's 2019 Global Refugee Forum pledge, and providing integration services for people with international protection status to improve self-reliance and inclusion as well as simplified naturalization procedures for refugees.
- Support preparedness for humanitarian protection response:** UNHCR works to improve preparedness for adequate humanitarian and protection response, in case of an influx of refugees by supporting national authorities and other partners. UNHCR conducts regular risk analysis and monitoring and helps develop a contingency plan.
- Foster anticipatory governance:** Support capacities and systems for strategic and anticipatory migration governance to enable the transition to long-term, participatory planning, and policymaking, and generate a more conducive protection and integration environment.
- Communicate for social change:** UNHCR aims to improve the narrative about refugees by fostering new attitudes and behaviours in host communities,

leading towards a more conducive protection environment to support protection and broaden the platform of stakeholders to combat misinformation.

- Strategic engagement:** UNHCR aims to engage and mobilize a coalition of stakeholders among civil society, private sector, academia, non-traditional partners and international organizations to advocate for the rights of people UNHCR serves.

## Working with Partners

- UNHCR co-organized the **2nd Advanced Thematic Forum on International Refugee Protection: Protection of Women and Children Displaced by Armed Conflict**, jointly with the Refugee Law and Migration Center at the Justinianus Primus Law Faculty, and IIHL Sanremo-Department of International Refugee Law and Migration Law.
- UNHCR implemented **two projects** funded by the UNHCR Innovation Service as part of the 2022 **Digital Inclusion Fund** call. The two projects, Ref Jam and **REFurbish**, cover two different aspects of digital inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless, such as digital leisure and digital access.

## Statelessness

- North Macedonia is a signatory to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on Reduction of Statelessness. However, a systemic solution for ending statelessness is still to be adopted.

## UNHCR Presence in North Macedonia

### Personnel:

22 National Staff \*  
 2 International Staff  
 7 UNOPS, 2 TA

### Offices:

1 Representation Office in Skopje  
 1 Field Unit in Gevgelija

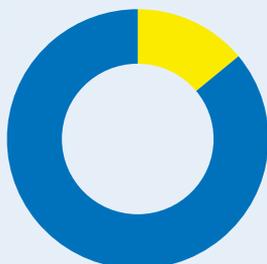
\*References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

## Financial information (February 2023)

### Financial requirements

USD 3.8 M

Funding gap  
 87%  
 3.3 M



Funded  
 13%  
 0.5 M

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