

# Switzerland

February 2023

Switzerland is **an important donor and a strategic partner** to UNHCR. This close cooperation will continue with the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, which will be **co-hosted** by UNHCR and Switzerland.

The large influx of refugees in 2022 is **putting a strain on the Swiss asylum system**. In addition, Switzerland activated the temporary protection status (S Status) for refugees from Ukraine in March 2022.

UNHCR advocates with government and non-government partners to **mainstream refugees** into their regular planning and projects.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN as of 30 June 2022\*

Refugees	<b>112,835</b>
Asylum-seekers	<b>8,122</b>
Stateless persons	<b>891</b>

## Top three countries of origin\*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Ukraine	<b>57,697</b>	Afghanistan	<b>1,768</b>
Eritrea	<b>14,726</b>	Türkiye	<b>1,623</b>
Afghanistan	<b>11,441</b>	Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	<b>661</b>

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

## UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION RESPONSE

As of 15 February 2023, **80,300 refugees from Ukraine** have been granted temporary protection in Switzerland.

**Monitoring:** To further identify issues of concern to refugees from Ukraine, UNHCR is continuously exchanging with relevant stakeholders and refugees themselves.

**Reception / accommodation:** UNHCR regularly monitors registration facilities for refugees from Ukraine during visits of Federal Asylum Centers.

**Access to education:** UNHCR maintains a dialogue with the government and universities on access to education.

**Child protection:** UNHCR exchanges with relevant stakeholders to address the situation of children from Ukrainian institutions who had been evacuated to Switzerland.

**Advocacy:** In November 2022, UNHCR published [recommendations](#) (available only in German) on the implementation of Status S and issued a press release [in French](#) and [in German](#).

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Cooperation in strategic litigation

UNHCR and the NGO humanrights.ch will establish a coordination and knowledge management platform for strategic litigation in Switzerland and in Liechtenstein, as agreed in December 2022, when UNHCR participated in a second strategic network meeting on litigation.

### Statelessness recognition procedure

Swiss authorities are discussing the introduction of a statelessness recognition procedure. Up until now, there is no such procedure in Switzerland, which entails a range of problems, such as a high standard of proof, which does not take into account some specific circumstances.

### New thematic postcards

UNHCR released in January 2023 a new series of seven postcards [in French](#) and [in German](#), in addition to the existing 15 postcards, explaining in simple terms international protection and related issues.



### MAPPING OF REFUGEE COMMUNITIES

UNHCR launched in February 2023 its mapping of refugee communities active in Switzerland and Liechtenstein. UNHCR surveyed 40 communities about their strengths, needs and work. The mapping shows that refugee communities play an important role for the integration of refugees by providing information about the life in Liechtenstein and organizing a wide range of activities, such as language courses.

## Key Priorities

- **Protection (monitoring):** UNHCR visited in November two Federal Asylum Centers in the canton of Obwalden and Ticino.
- **Complementary pathways:** In October, the Swiss State Secretary for Migration presented its study on existing complementary pathways in Switzerland. UNHCR provided [comments](#) and issued [a press release](#), welcoming the study and encouraging a more critical analysis of the obstacles in the implementation of complementary pathways. **Complementary pathways:** In October, the Swiss State Secretary for Migration presented its study on existing complementary pathways in Switzerland. UNHCR provided [comments](#) and issued [a press release](#), welcoming the study and encouraging a more critical analysis of the obstacles in the implementation of complementary pathways.
- **Access to education:** UNHCR facilitated in November an exchange around higher education access to refugees in Geneva with representatives of Swiss higher education institutions. UNHCR presented its activities in the field of education, including education complementary pathways, such as the [European Qualification Passport for Refugees project](#).
- **External relations:** The second edition of UNHCR newsletter was sent in November. This newsletter covers several topics related to Switzerland, such as the extension of temporary protection and publication of a position paper on complementary pathways, as well as international refugee issues, such as the Mid-Year Trends and the IBelong Campaign. The newsletter is published [in French](#) and [in German](#).
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## Working with Partners

- **Refugee participation:** In November, UNHCR participated in the Strategy Day organized by the Refugee Parliament and the NCBI association, aiming to outline 2023 priorities and advocacy work. UNHCR facilitated discussion workshops on the freedom of movement in the Schengen zone for provisionally admitted foreigners (F-permit holders), and on access to education.

## Statelessness

- Switzerland acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons in 1972 and has a statelessness determination procedure in place. The relevant procedure is governed by general principles of the Federal Administrative Procedure Act and has no special provisions suitable for the specificities of statelessness determination.
- Since December 2021, the Swiss Federal Administrative Court adjusted its case law regarding statelessness recognition procedures by allowing refugees to be recognized as stateless persons – in line with UNHCR advocacy.

## UNHCR Presence in Switzerland

### Staff:

7 National Positions  
1 International Staff

### Offices:

1 Country Office in Bern

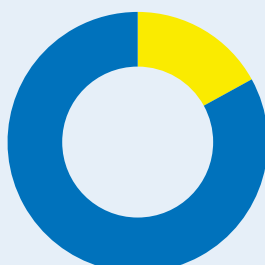
## Financial information\* (February 2023)

\*Information relates to the Representations for Austria and to the European Institutions in Strasbourg, to the Office for Switzerland and Liechtenstein (OSL), the Liaison Office in Vienna and the presence in Portugal.

### Financial requirements

USD 5.4 M

**Funding gap**  
83%  
4.5 M



**Funded**  
17%  
0.9 M

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