SLOVAKIA
February 2022

Asylum-seekers have access to the country’s territory and asylum procedure, but many continue to move onwards. Slovakia supports the Global Compact on Refugees. Slovakia is party to all relevant asylum and statelessness instruments. Rights of refugees are on a par with citizens, except for certain voting rights.

The level of funding for UNHCR has significantly increased last year compared to previous years. The latest contribution is mostly directed at the Afghan situation.

**POPULATION OF CONCERN***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugees</td>
<td>1,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asylum-seekers</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stateless people</td>
<td>1,532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>2,597</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Refugees</th>
<th>Asylum-seekers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data source: UNHCR 2021 Mid-Year Statistical Report and UNHCR data finder platform

**COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

**Advocacy:** UNHCR advocated to ensure that all persons of concern, including asylum-seekers, are included in the national vaccination roll-out. UNHCR advocated for refugees to have access to all available social protection measures.

**Inclusion:** Refugees and subsidiary protection holders have access to all COVID-19-related health services. They also have access to social protection measures. Asylum-seekers are finally included in the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out.

**Communication with Communities:** Two-way communication with the refugee community in Slovakia is ensured through UNHCR’s partner, the Slovak Humanitarian Council. UNHCR staff also conducted participatory assessment with asylum-seekers and refugees in 2021 in person despite the COVID-19 challenges.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

**354,000 USD**
Slovakia contributed 354,000 USD for the Afghanistan Situation Regional Refugee Preparedness and Response Plan in September, 2021.

**Asylum legislation**
As part of UNHCR’s advocacy to promote international refugee law standards, UNHCR commented on amendments to the asylum law in November 2021, resulting in strengthening the role of legal counsel in asylum procedure.

**3 refugee-themed movies**
were produced in collaboration with partners in Slovakia and promoted at One World Film Festival in November 2021.

**Memorandum of Understanding**
was signed with the Art Faculty of the Comenius University in December 2021 strengthening UNHCR’s engagement with academia.

**VIRTUAL REALITY HELP FILMGOERS SEE THE REALITY FOR REFUGEES**

With goggles provided by UNHCR, visitors of the Jeden Svet film festival in Slovakia on November 6, 2021 had the opportunity to experience the refugee world in 3D.
Key Priorities

- **Access to territory:** UNHCR monitors the situation of people in need of international protection seeking access to the territory and the asylum procedure at Slovakia's external Schengen border with Ukraine.

- **Asylum procedures:** UNHCR advocates for fair and efficient asylum procedures and provides the Government with comments to draft laws and policies to strengthen the legislative framework, inter alia by recent comments to the asylum law amendments. UNHCR also works with Government authorities on improving the information provision for asylum-seekers and refugees.

- **Legal assistance:** UNHCR, through its partner, the Slovak Humanitarian Council, provides legal counselling for asylum-seekers in detention to ensure they have access to information and legal representation at the first instance. The provision of quality legal assistance from the start of their application helps asylum-seekers navigate the complexities of the asylum procedure.

- **Resettlement and Complementary Pathways:** UNHCR advocates for the expansion of safe pathways to admission, including student scholarships, humanitarian corridors and labour mobility schemes.

- **Integration:** UNHCR advocates for the adjustment of integration-related policies so that the legal framework and public policies promote long-term integration. UNHCR works with partners to promote positive attitudes towards refugees, to combat xenophobia and racism and foster welcoming communities.

- **Education:** To improve the integration of refugee children in schools, UNHCR launched “Teaching about Refugees,” a programme for primary schools to raise awareness on refugee issues. The programme will be extended to secondary schools as soon as the COVID-19 situation allows for it.

Working with Partners

- **Slovak Humanitarian Council:** Slovak Humanitarian Council, an UNHCR-supported NGO provides legal counselling and legal representation to detained asylum-seekers at first instance and organises community-based events to raise awareness on rights among persons of concern.

- **External engagement:** UNHCR engaged with People in Need and the Film Faculty in Bratislava to produce three refugee-themed movies by young filmmakers. The films were promoted at the One World Film Festival in November 2021.

- **Comenius University:** UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding on collaboration with the Art Faculty of the Comenius University.

- UNHCR supported the mobile game 'Aaron’s dilemma’ which has been developed as an education tool for young students by the civic association, Impact Games.

Statelessness

- Slovakia is a party to both Statelessness Conventions but does not have a statelessness determination procedure in place.

- The text of the mapping study on statelessness in Slovakia is to be finalized and respective findings will inform UNHCR’s advocacy and activities in Slovakia.

UNHCR Presence in Slovakia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff:</th>
<th>Offices:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 National Staff (liaison)</td>
<td>0 Offices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNHCR’s operations in Slovakia are managed by the UNHCR Representation for Central Europe in Hungary.

Financial information (as of 2 February 2022)

Information relates to the Representation for Central Europe, which covers the Czech Republic, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Slovakia, Slovenia

Financial requirements

| USD | 6.3 M |

- **Funding gap:** 95% (5.99 M)
- **Funded:** 5% (0.31 M)

UNHCR is grateful to the donors of unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions to the 2022 global programmes. Donors of USD 10 million or more are:

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