

## Slovakia

September 2024

Since the start of the full-scale invasion in Ukraine, over 2.5 million people have crossed the border into Slovakia. UNHCR provides **protection and assistance** to refugees from Ukraine, as well as other forcibly displaced and stateless people in Slovakia.

UNHCR aims to strengthen **socio-economic inclusion** and livelihoods of refugees through job counselling, vocational training, language courses and workplace access activities. These efforts increase self-reliance, empowerment and integration of refugees in Slovakia.

UNHCR is leading the coordination of the **Refugee Response Plan** (RRP) in support of refugees from Ukraine, supporting government-led efforts and working together with a wide range of partners.

### POPULATION STATISTICS (as of mid-2024)\*

Refugees	<b>124,116</b>
Asylum-seekers	<b>123</b>
Stateless people	<b>49</b>

### Top three countries of origin\*

Refugees	Asylum-seekers
Ukraine <b>122,242</b>	Afghanistan <b>21</b>
Russian Federation <b>428</b>	Ukraine <b>15</b>
Afghanistan <b>398</b>	Morocco <b>13</b>

\*UNHCR Mid-Year Statistical Report 2024 and UNHCR [data finder](#)

### UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION RESPONSE

As of 29 September 2024, **122,242 refugees from Ukraine** were recorded in Slovakia.

**Protection assistance:** UNHCR provides **legal counselling** to Temporary Protection (TP) holders and asylum-seekers, ensuring **access to information** and **legal support** while strengthening national protection services. UNHCR addresses the needs of persons with specific vulnerabilities, including children and persons with disabilities, as well as survivors/persons at risk of gender-based violence (GBV), including through **counselling**, **psychosocial support**, and **GBV risk prevention**. UNHCR also engages in advocacy for the inclusion of refugees into national systems.

**Cash assistance:** To complement the national social protection system, UNHCR's Cash for Protection supports persons at high risk of violence, abuse, exploitation, coercion, or deprivation as well as survivors of protection incidents. To address economic vulnerabilities that can exacerbate GBV risks, UNHCR has distributed cash support as an integral part of GBV case management since 2023.

**Coordination:** To further support government-led efforts, UNHCR leads and coordinates humanitarian actors through the Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF).

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Launch of 2024 RRP in Slovakia

On 19 March 2024, the Slovak Ministry of Interior (MoI) launched the 2024 **Refugee Response Plan (RRP)** for Slovakia. State Secretary Lucia Kurilovská opened the event, with remarks from Peter Hulényi, Director General for International Organizations and Human Rights of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFA). The MoI State Secretary thanked humanitarian organizations for complementing the government efforts, and the MFA Director highlighted the role of UN agencies. UNHCR presented the RRP on behalf of the 25 RRP partners. A panel discussion included government officials, UN representatives, and a Ukrainian refugee student. The event, featuring a cultural performance by a Ukrainian refugee guitarist, was attended by 70 participants, including government and diplomatic representatives.



On 14 May, UNHCR and the **Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs**, with the support of the Ministry of Interior, co-organized an event in Bratislava to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UNHCR in Slovakia. ©UNHCR/Martina Matejová

#### UNHCR Slovakia's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In May 2024, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic hosted a ceremony marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNHCR in Slovakia. The event celebrated the work of UNHCR in supporting forcibly displaced people in Slovakia over the past three decades, in collaboration with the Government and partner organizations. During the event, Slovak Post presented a commemorative UNHCR stamp.

To learn more about the commemoration, [click here](#).

## Key Priorities

- **Access to territory and protection:** UNHCR monitors the situation of people in need of international protection seeking access to the territory and to asylum at Slovakia's border with Ukraine.
- **Community-based protection:** UNHCR conducts **participatory assessments**, including **focus group discussions**, with refugees about their needs and capacities to inform UNHCR and partners' programming and activities, promoting **two-way communication** with refugee communities, and supporting refugee-led organizations and community structures.
- **Inclusion:** UNHCR supports community-based approaches, promotes social cohesion and integration objectives through projects and community activities that involve refugee and local communities, and advocates with national and local authorities—including municipalities and self-governing regions—for access of refugees to local services. UNHCR and partners facilitate **employment counselling**, **skills trainings**, and courses for refugees in areas where there are gaps and opportunities in the job market.
- **Blue Dots Hubs:** Blue Dots serve as a safe space to provide critical protection services and information for refugees, with a particular focus on identifying and supporting those at greatest risk. UNHCR in collaboration with UNICEF, local authorities, and partners have established six **Blue Dots** in Slovakia (in Bratislava, Košice, Nitra, Dunajská Streda Trenčín and Michalovce), including mobile teams that reach out to more remote locations and those most vulnerable.

## Working with Partners

- UNHCR works with national partners to respond to the needs of refugees under temporary protection in Slovakia: **Slovak Humanitarian Council**, **Human Rights League**, **People in Peril**, **Mareena**, **Sme Spolu** ("We are together"), **League for Mental Health**, **Platform for families with children with disabilities** and **CVEK** (Centre for Research on Ethnicity and Culture).

- UNHCR leads the refugee coordination structure in Slovakia and coordinates the RRP with the participation of 25 partners, including national and international NGOs, refugee-led organizations and other UN agencies. UNHCR has formalized partnerships through Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with **Center for Legal Aid**, **Comenius University**, **Judicial Academy**, **Slovak National Center for Human Rights** and **Slovak Olympic and Sports Committee**. UNHCR also works closely with municipalities and self-governing regions to ensure inclusion of refugees in local services and community structures, and further support social cohesion.

## Statelessness

- Slovakia has acceded to both the 1954 and 1961 UN Conventions on Statelessness. Slovakia retains its reservation to Article 27 of the 1954 Convention and issues the 1954 Convention Travel Documents only to stateless people who have been granted permanent residence in the territory of the Slovak Republic.
- In February 2024, UNHCR submitted comments on the draft amendments to the Act on the Residence of Foreigners to advocate, among other things, the introduction of different procedural safeguards to strengthen the existing procedure related to granting permanent residence to stateless persons (Article 45a). While the comment was not ultimately accepted, the Ministry of Interior is amenable to discuss the proposal in future amendments if the application of the provision in question proves to be a problem in practice. In this regard, UNHCR is encouraged to continue monitoring and informing the Ministry of Interior in case of any identified deficiencies.

## UNHCR Presence in Slovakia

### Staff:

29 National Staff

16 International Staff

### Offices:

1 National Office in Bratislava

1 Field Office in Košice

## Financial Information\* (as of 30 September 2024)

### Financial requirements for 2024

\$ 20.3 M

 Funding  
gap 53%  
\$ 10.8 M

 Funded 47%  
\$ 9.5 M

UNHCR is grateful for the support from our top government donors:

**Australia | Belgium | Denmark | France | Germany | Ireland | New Zealand | Netherlands | Norway | Republic of Korea | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sweden | Switzerland | United States of America**

UNHCR is also grateful for the generous contributions from the private sector and individuals.