



UKRAINE SITUATION

GREECE UPDATE | #1

13 April 2022

Evacuees board a train at a railway station before leaving eastern Ukraine © Reuters/Alexander Ermochenko

BACKGROUND

Over 19,000 refugees from Ukraine have arrived in Greece. The great majority are women and children, coming through the Greek-Bulgarian land border and the international airports of Athens and Thessaloniki. For many, their journey continues to Athens, Thessaloniki and other parts of Greece where they have friends and family.

The refugees worry primarily about long-term housing, finding work, accessing healthcare and covering their basic needs like food and medicine. Many left behind loved ones and had traumatic experiences before coming to Greece. They need urgent psychosocial support. As the majority of refugees are women and children, it is very important to help address dangers like trafficking and sexual violence for them.

The Government of Greece is coordinating the response to refugees from Ukraine. UN agencies, NGOs, local authorities, civil society organizations, volunteers and the private sector are all providing support.

In line with the European Union decision, Greece provides Temporary Protection to refugees from Ukraine. The Ministry of Migration and Asylum (MMA) has a [platform](#) for those wishing to register for Temporary Protection. A dedicated [website](#) provides information on accommodation options, temporary protection and arrival procedures. The MMA has also launched [an online platform](#) for those wishing to request State accommodation, while a second platform, [Help Ukraine](#) collects offers of help.

Cumulative # of arrivals in Greece:

19,275

refugee arrivals in Greece from Ukraine

1 in 3

are children



Source: Ministry of Citizen's Protection

UNHCR RESPONSE

UNHCR supports the Government, and helps coordinate the efforts of UN agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations. UNHCR is offering concrete proposals to address issues that are likely to arise in the implementation of Temporary Protection. The Office is helping refugees from Ukraine by expanding its regular programmes, providing Ukrainian and Russian speakers and interpreters, and by stepping up its support to the authorities where required, such as on child protection, in the prevention of sexual violence and in communicating with Ukrainian communities to understand their needs.

RECEPTION

At the northern border, UNHCR staff and interpreters help the authorities communicate with arrivals and register their information. They also provide information to refugees on the procedures in Greece, how to find accommodation and other help they need. UNHCR coordinates with municipalities, NGOs, volunteer groups and Ukrainian communities in Northern Greece to map the services and offers of support available to refugees and to monitor the situation of Ukrainian refugees and better understand their needs. Organizations can use this information to direct people to the help they need.

CHILD PROTECTION

UNHCR is strengthening the National Emergency Response Mechanism (NERM) – the State body assigned to help unaccompanied and separated children from Ukraine. UNHCR is funding three additional staff to be located at the main border point of arrivals from Ukraine. NERM, through NGOs Arsis and the Network of Children's Rights, identifies unaccompanied and separated children, takes them to accommodation and informs the Public Prosecutors to assess the children's best interests and family links.

COMMUNICATION WITH COMMUNITIES

UNHCR meets regularly Ukrainian and Russian communities in Greece who are helping the recently arrived refugees find a home, food, and other support. This helps UNHCR and other

agencies understand the problems that refugees face, and can help the Government, UNHCR and other actors respond most appropriately to their needs. UNHCR also assists the work of refugee community and volunteer organizations by providing them with computers and other technical equipment, training and other types of support.

To ensure that refugees have access to useful information and know where to get help, UNHCR is translating into Ukrainian its [HELP website](#), information leaflets and the Mini-Lexicon Booklet with key Greek phrases. UNHCR is also adding Ukrainian-speaking staff to its helpline, to provide information but also identify very vulnerable cases that need dedicated assistance.

PREVENTION & RESPONSE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

UNHCR is working with the Ministry of Labour, NGO partner A21, and Ukrainian communities in Athens and Thessaloniki to help identify potential cases of sexual violence and trafficking. UNHCR is also raising awareness by disseminating information material on this very important issue, which affects disproportionately this population – in their majority women and children.

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

UNHCR is expanding its programme with NGO Epapsy that offers psychosocial support to refugees, including by hiring a Ukrainian-speaking staff.

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