



Mapping and rapid assessment of existing national NGO coordination mechanisms focusing on Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova



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Content

Acronyms	04
Executive Summary	05
01 Introduction and objective	07
02 Methodology	08
03 Mapping and rapid assessment of existing national NGO coordination mechanisms in Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova	09
3.1 Hungary	09
3.2 Poland	14
3.3 Romania	18
3.4 The Republic of Moldova	23
04 Key Findings	28
4.1 Engagement in the coordination structures and processes	28
4.2 Interaction between NNGOs and LNGOs and the international community	30
4.3 Funding opportunities	31
4.4 Training and volunteer management	31
4.5 Enhancing diversity, inclusion and accountability	32
05 Recommendations	33
5.1 State	33
5.2 Supporting existing NNGO and LNGO coordination mechanisms	33
5.3 Improving participation and functioning of existing WGs	33
5.4 Acknowledgement and share of merits	33
5.5 Funding and simplifying partnership processes and procedures	34
5.6 Training	34
5.7 Mapping of refugee locations and situations, and of services and service providers	34
5.8 Enhancing diversity, inclusion and accountability	34
Annex	35
A.1 List of interview respondents and other partners in the country	35
A.2 Interview questions	42

Acronyms

BBM	Budapest Bike Mafia
CCR	Charity Centre for Refugees in Moldova
CNNR	Romanian National Council for Refugees
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
FONSS	Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations working in the Social Sector
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HHC	Hungarian Helsinki Committee
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IO	International Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual +
LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organization
MEOSZ	National Federation of Organizations of People with a Physical Disability
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PSEAH	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
RCF	Refugee Coordination Forum
RLO	Refugee-Led Organization
RRP	Refugee Response Plan
SNSPA	Romanian National School of Political and Administrative Studies
TF	Task Force
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WG	Working Group
WHO	World Health Organization
WLO	Women-Led Organization

Since the international armed conflict started in Ukraine on 24 February 2022, 7,278,696 people – mainly women, children, elderly people and people with disabilities – fled to other European countries or even beyond the continent.¹

According to unverified statistics, approximately 2.9 million people have applied for temporary protection in the EU+ countries, and 21,000 of them have lodged an asylum claim.² The unprecedented and rapidly increasing number of people in need of international protection triggered an enormous scale of solidarity, starting from neighbouring countries – such as Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and the Republic of Moldova. Local and national non-governmental organizations (LNGOs and NNGOs) intervened in support of authorities and became the first responders. Many individuals and communities in these countries put on hold their regular activities, invested their own resources and mobilized support for refugees coming from Ukraine, including with the private sector. International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) that were active in the neighbouring countries, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and United Nations (UN) agencies scaled up their work to protect and support refugees. Many new actors started operations in these countries in response to the crisis, working in support of national organizations and groups, while UNHCR and the respective governments set up the required coordination mechanisms.

One of the core elements of this refugee response is the solidarity that the host population has provided, immediately supported by other volunteers from Europe and beyond. Self-organized social media channels and online communication platforms have been extensively utilized as a vehicle of coordination of humanitarian aid and management of volunteers. Members of the Ukrainian diaspora and refugees also mobilized themselves in order to assist their compatriots.

This report aims to provide a snapshot analysis and mapping of existing NGO coordination structures and responses in four neighbouring countries to Ukraine, namely Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova. Interviews were conducted with representatives of LNGOs and NNGOs, INGOs and UN agencies, including humanitarian, legal and psychosocial service organizations, organizations working with people living with disabilities and mental health conditions, women-led organizations (WLOs), migrant-led organizations, refugee-led organizations (RLOs), youth organizations, and diaspora.

Notes

¹ Operational Data Portal Ukraine Refugee Situation, UNHCR. Last accessed: 16 September 2022. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

² Analysis on Asylum and Temporary Protection in the EU+ in the Context of the Ukraine Crisis Week 20 (16 – 22 May) 2022, European Union for Agency Asylum, 25 May 2022. https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2022-05/2022_05_Ukraine_Asylum_TPD_Issue_8_EN_Public.pdf

The semi-structured interviews focused on the current responses of these organizations, their collaboration and partnerships with international organizations and the challenges faced, including in pursuing constructive solutions. There was a strong acknowledgement of the importance of partnerships, the contribution given by international actors in responding to the ongoing humanitarian crisis, and the benefits of investing in coordination and complementarity. Both national and international organizations shared examples on how they have been working hand in hand from the very first days of the crisis, bringing solutions to the many challenging refugee situations. LNGOs and NNGOs showed great ownership of the humanitarian response and established their role as frontline service providers, together with national authorities – supported by the international community.

One of the key messages that emerged from the LNGOs and NNGOs involved in the response is the need for improved communication, with partners listening to each other in a spirit of collaboration and equal partnership. Continued efforts should be made to strongly involve LNGOs and NNGOs in the coordination of the response to ensure that international actors understand the existing local expertise and possible solutions before developing new interventions and approaches.

Clear expectations were articulated towards the international community to strengthen engagement with and support for State structures, while jointly aligning existing coordination processes for enhanced efficiency in the response, in line also with the Global Compact on Refugees.³



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Romania Ukrainian refugees at the UNHCR Registration Center for financial assistance in Bucharest. Once registered they will receive a pin to their phone which allows them to withdraw the cash at a local store.

Notes

3. Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR, 2018, p.7.
<https://www.unhcr.org/5c658aed4>

The “NGO Consultancy to Support Collaboration with Local Civil Society Actors in the Ukraine Refugee Response” is a joint project of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The main objectives of the project are to:

1. Map LNGO and NNGO coalitions, consortia, networks, federations, initiatives and platforms, linking together humanitarian and social service organizations led by refugees, diaspora communities, women, people living with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual + (LGBTQIA+) people based in Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova who are actively involved in responding to the needs of refugees from Ukraine.
2. Understand the capacities and needs of LNGOs and NNGOs and existing NGO coordination mechanisms, the way in which they share information and workload in order to fill in the gaps in service provision and to avoid duplication of humanitarian efforts.
3. Explore barriers and potential engagement opportunities between LNGOs and NNGOs and existing NGO coordination mechanisms and the UNHCR-led Inter-Agency Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF).
4. Provide recommendations on how LNGOs, NNGOs and existing NGO coordination mechanisms could be further linked to the UNHCR-led Inter-Agency RCF.
5. Provide recommendations on how UNHCR, other UN agencies and INGOs could support LNGOs, NNGOs, and existing NGO coordination mechanisms.

The aim of this report is to serve as a tool to promote discussions among actors involved in the humanitarian response in Ukraine’s neighbouring countries on how to coordinate and build on the existing national capacities.

The report also aims to honour the large-scale efforts and self-sacrificing contributions of all actors involved, especially local civil-society actors by amplifying their voice and magnifying their role in the response to the current refugee crisis.

This report was produced by Adrienn Kiss, NGO Support Consultant, upon request of ICVA and UNHCR. The research was conducted independently from these organizations; findings and recommendations may not represent the official views of UNHCR or ICVA. Any omissions or inaccuracies are the sole responsibility of the author. LNGOs, NNGOs and NGO coordination mechanisms included in this report were selected based on lists of local partners provided by UNHCR Moldova, UNHCR Poland, and UNHCR Romania. Further organizations were identified upon referral from NGO and INGO respondents and also by Google search. Hungarian LNGOs and NNGOs were selected from the professional network of the author.⁴

Research was carried out between 1 April and 31 May 2022. During this period, email requests were sent to over 140 LNGOs, NNGOs, INGOs and UN agencies based in Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova. To ensure alignment with the age, gender, and diversity (AGD) approach, a variety of organizations were invited to participate in the research, particularly those focusing on children, the elderly, people living with disabilities and mental health conditions, LGBTQIA+ people, Roma communities, women, migrants and Ukrainian diaspora.

Short country visits were carried out in Bucharest, Romania (4-8 April 2022), Warsaw, Poland (11-15 April 2022) and Chisinau, Republic of Moldova (9-13 May 2022). Special thanks go to Ms. Mirela Shuteriqi, Director of Policy at ICVA, and Ms. Stella Ogunlade, Chief of Section, NGO and Civil Society Section, Partnership and Coordination Service, UNHCR Geneva, who provided guidance and support throughout the assignment.

In total 50, 30-60 minutes long semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of LNGOs and NNGOs based in the four focus countries. 18 other interviews were carried out, including representatives of INGOs, UN and other agencies. Half of the interviews were conducted in-person and the other half virtually.

A few working group and task force meetings were attended in each focus country, in sectors such as child protection, disability (under the "protection" working group), cash assistance, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). Inter-sector meetings of the RCF were also attended.

Unfortunately – due to time constraints and unavailability of the organizations working non-stop in the response – visits to the borders were not conducted, which represents a limitation of the current research. Organizations working with or led by Roma communities did not respond to interview requests. Moreover, this consultancy only managed to interview representatives of one Ukrainian diaspora NGO. National authorities were not included in the research, with the exception of the Municipality of Budapest, as this would have required more time and resources. This is an important area to engage in the future through a specific study.

The respondents' expertise, insights, dedication and recommendations are highly valued and appreciated. This research report is based almost fully on their contributions.

Notes

4 The author of this report has background in providing psychosocial services for asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants at Hungarian NGOs and is based in Budapest. For further information please visit: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/adrienn-k/>

5 The interview questions can be found in the second part of the Annex (please see pages 46 and 47).

Mapping and rapid assessment of existing national NGO coordination mechanisms in Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova

3.1 Hungary

1,241,852 people arrived in Hungary from Ukraine as of 30 May 2022.⁶ The Government issued a decree allowing Ukrainian citizens and third country nationals to enter Hungary on 24 February already. As of 27 May 2022, 23,347 people have applied for the temporary protection status, 14,569 of them have already been recognized by the National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing.⁷

In the first days of the crisis, humanitarian assistance was mainly provided by LNGOs, NNGOs, volunteers, Ukrainian diaspora, and local authorities in the rural area near the border crossing points. First responders organized themselves through different online platforms and social media channels.

The Hungarian Government established the National Humanitarian Coordination Council led by the Head of the Prime Minister's Office.⁸ The Council includes the members of the Charity Council and representatives from ministries related to a variety of sectors, including education, social and child protection, health, employment and transportation. The Charity Board was established in 2000 and its six members are Caritas Hungary, Hungarian Baptist Aid, Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta, Hungarian Interchurch Aid, Hungarian Red Cross, and Hungarian Reformed Church Aid.⁹ The National Directorate General for

Disaster Management under the Ministry of the Interior set up emergency cells at the central and county levels to coordinate operational activities.¹⁰ It organizes the reception of newcomers and their transfer to shelters across the country. According to some NGO respondents, the Charity Board focuses mainly on coordination among its own members.

In the second week of March, the Government launched a 24/7 hotline in multiple languages and provided an email address available for information requests. However, no official website was set up by the Government in relation to the Ukraine refugee response. In order to facilitate much needed information, a Facebook group called "Hungary Refugee Help Digital Network (Ukraine, Zakarpattia)" was created at the beginning of the crisis. Since then, it has become the main social media platform with 140,000 members connecting refugees in need of support with locals mobilizing their resources. To ensure effective and principled group moderation, internal protocols are applied and administered by a large group of dedicated volunteers and experts. Thematic validated information packages related to access to legal and social rights, psychological and medical assistance, shelters, employment and onward travel options are published in the group on a regular basis.

Notes

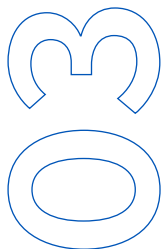
6 Hungary Population Figures. Operational Data Portal - Ukraine Refugee Situation, UNHCR, 30 May 2022. Last accessed: 31 May 2022. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/229?sv=54&geo=10783>

7 Daily updates related to the applicants coming from Ukraine provided by the National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing, 27 May 2022. http://www.bmbah.hu/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1857:az-orszagos-idegenrendeszeti-foigazgatosag-napi-tajekoztatasa-az-ukrajnabol-erkezo-kerelmezokkel-kapcsolatosan&lang=hu

8 178/2013. (VI. 4.) Governmental Decree about the National Humanitarian Coordination Council. Last accessed: 30 May 2022. <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=a1300178.kor>

9 Members of the Charity Board, Hungary. <https://karitativtanacs.kormany.hu/tagszervezetek>

10 More than 11,000 refugees have been sheltered by the National Directorate General for Disaster Management <https://www.katasztrofavedelem.hu/197/kozlemenyek/264656/tobb-mint-11-ezer-menekultet-helyezett-el-a-katasztrofavedelem>



Volunteers accompanied and welcomed refugees arriving at Budapest train stations from the border, provided them with information, food and non-food items, hygiene kits, set up children's space, and purchased bus tickets for those transiting to other countries.

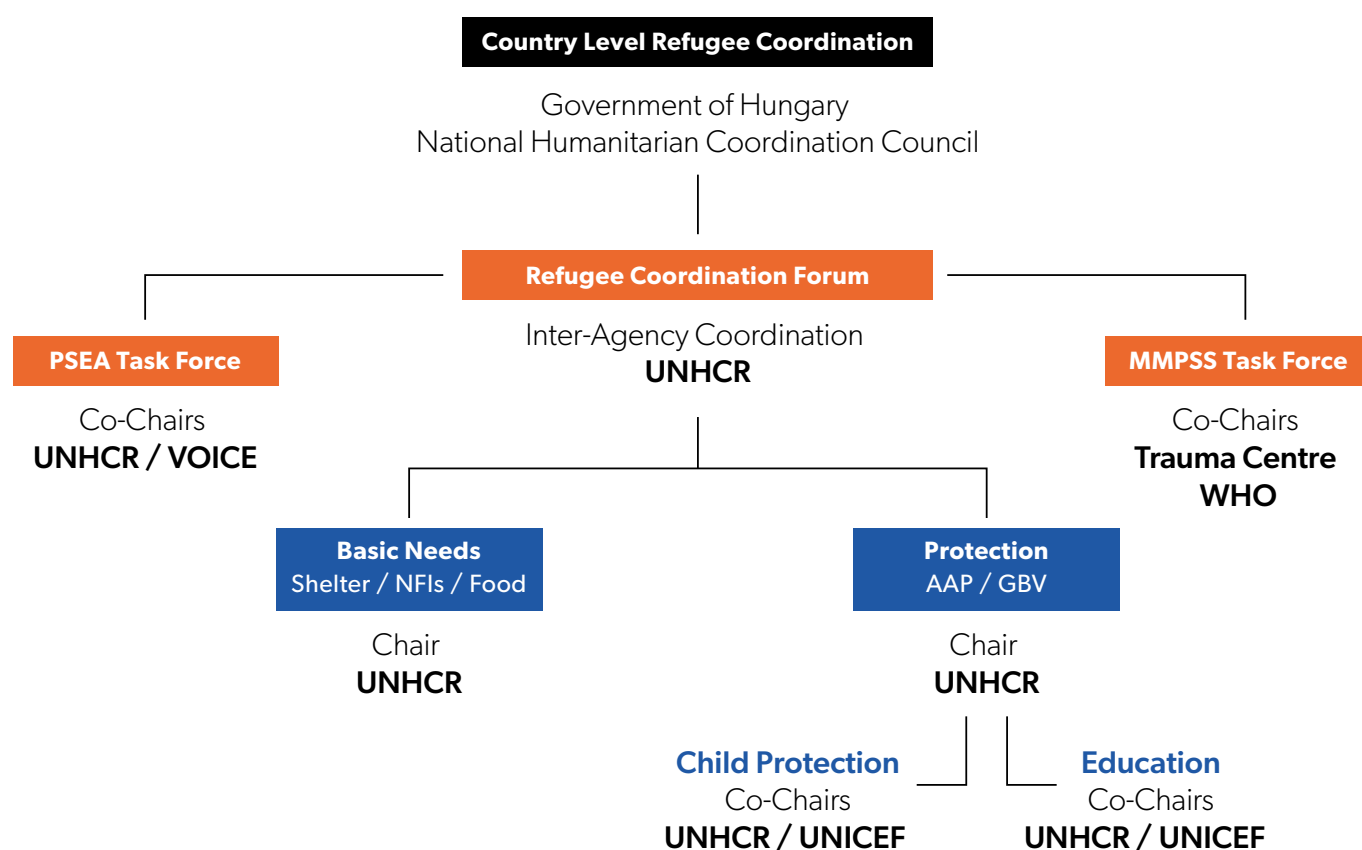
In mid-March, the Government decided to set up a humanitarian transit centre in the **BOK sports hall**, where people can sleep before they continue their journey and get access to food, medical assistance, showers, children's space, Internet connection, international train tickets, information and assistance in finding long-term accommodation. Refugees are referred to the newly opened refugee shelter at the outskirts of Budapest, which is run by the volunteers of **Migration Aid**. Due to the decrease in the number of new arrivals, the BOK centre switched to a stand-by mode by the end of May.¹¹

Years of systematic downsizing of the asylum reception and refugee integration system had an impact on the services and reception conditions currently provided in Hungary to people fleeing the armed conflict in Ukraine. LNGOs and NNGOs ask for a more meaningful engagement with the Government, based on existing good practices, particularly at the municipal level. There is no specific coordination structure among the LNGOs and NNGOs in the country. NGOs working traditionally in the field of asylum and migration share the workload and coordinate activities among themselves. Some of the NGO interviewees noted that they have created new referral mechanisms and informal partnerships with other local NGOs, and they try to align their activities with individual cases.

Coordination structure

At the beginning of March, UNHCR created the coordination structures under the Inter-Agency RCF in Hungary (see organigramme below).¹²

Diagram 1 Coordination structure in Hungary



Notes

¹¹ Ukrainian War: Number of Refugees Fleeing to Hungary Shows Sharp Decline, Hungary Today, 25 May 2022. <https://hungarytoday.hu/fewer-less-russian-ukrainian-war-refugees-budapest-hungary-border-bok-hall/?fbclid=IwAR1mwulJMKenQO72qtnLjTEPj2LjllnMPM3lnQDdUIAwTUWUARo8Uq80jQ>

¹² Operational Data Portal Refugee Situations, Inter-Agency Coordination Structure – Hungary, UNHCR, 22 March 2022. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/91521>

“NGOs and LNGOs are engaged in WGs and co-chair a few of them. The PSEA TF is co-chaired by Voice and mental health and psychosocial support task force is co-led by the Trauma Centre.^[2] UNHCR made significant efforts and successfully engaged the members of the Charity Board. Thus, LNGOs and NGOs involved in the Inter-Agency RCF could interact with them at the WG meetings. Out of the 60 partners attending the meetings, 15 of them are LNGOs and NGOs.”

Some NGO respondents mentioned that the refugee coordination meetings established by the **Municipality of Budapest** provided an effective platform for exchanging practical information and strengthening referral mechanisms. Online meetings open to the general public were held on a weekly basis, with approximately 30 organizations joining regularly.¹³ The Municipality also set up the help.budapest.hu website for those in need of shelter. As the Office of the Mayor of Budapest held a risk assessment meeting already on 22 February, the Municipality already opened a shelter on 24 February. The Municipality requested the Dispatcher Service of the Shelter Foundation to assist with shelter mapping.

The RRP for Hungary counts 22 partners; out of them 8 are UN agencies and 3 are INGOs. The Red Cross, 6 FBOs and 4 NNGOs are also part of the RRP. It is thus important to continue to reach out and engage further with LNGOs and NNGOs who are actively helping refugees from Ukraine in Hungary.

Services provided

Hungarian LNGOs and NNGOs who were interviewed for this research focus on the following areas: psychosocial services, community programmes, legal assistance, psychiatric and trauma care, shelter, hot meals, donations and advocacy. Most of them actively participate in the RCF meetings.

NGO interviewees concentrate on the following categories of people:

- asylum-seekers, refugees, migrants;
- torture survivors and traumatized people;
- homeless people;
- people affected by poverty;
- people with physical disabilities;
- LGBTQIA+ people.

Budapest Bike Maffia (BBM) prepares and delivers food and collects donations for homeless people and other vulnerable groups. BBM coordinated an extremely large amount of donations in relation to the Ukraine refugee response and managed to refer an extraordinary number of messages, as well as information requests, to other organizations. BBM allocated a huge amount of financial donations received from private donors to small NGOs. The organization supports 100-150 refugee families sheltering at Migration Aid with non-perishable food on a weekly basis and brings donations to the BOK sports hall. BBM has a volunteer management system in place.

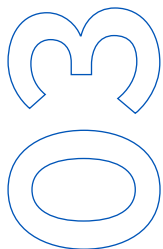
Budapest Pride opened a community centre for LGBTQIA+ refugees, where they can get food and participate in community programmes. Volunteers accompany refugees to safe shelters that Budapest Pride sets up through personal networks. Budapest Pride assists LGBTQIA+ people and promotes their human rights. The organization hired a refugee to take care of the gardening programme in the community space. Budapest Pride had a few meetings with UNHCR and participated in the working groups related to basic needs.

Cordelia Foundation for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims provides free psychiatric and psychological help for asylum-seekers and refugees. Cordelia collaborates with the Hungarian Reformed Church Aid and the Hungarian Unitarian Church. They are part of the mental health and psychosocial support sub working group led by WHO. Cordelia is an implementing partner of UNHCR. Its mobile team, set up to respond to the crisis, visits places where refugees are placed in the countryside. Cordelia provides psychiatric assistance for Roma communities fleeing the Zakarpatska Oblast and are sheltered in Fonyód. Cordelia's mobile team also visits a shelter in Győr and delivers training in Záhony (Hungarian-Ukrainian border). The team also trains child psychiatrists of the Heim Pál Children's Hospital and provides services at shelters in Budapest. In order to better respond to the needs of Ukrainian refugees, Cordelia hired three Ukrainian-speaking psychologists and cooperates with NGOs with similar profiles, such as MedSpot Foundation. It also refers patients to the Semmelweis University Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy.

Notes

[2] Next Step Association: <https://nextstepeu.org/> and Trauma Center: <https://traumakozpont.hu/>

13 As the number of new arrivals had decreased by the end of May, the coordinator sent out newsletters and the meeting was put on hold.



Legal aid has been provided for more than 4,000 people fleeing Ukraine by the **Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC)**, a local NGO traditionally working with asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants.¹⁴ Since 24 February, they have assisted people in getting access to the temporary protection status at the border and via various communication channels. As implementing partners, they immediately strategized with UNHCR on how to respond to the needs of refugees. The HHC has organized numerous training sessions for volunteers, NGOs and students and developed information notes on temporary protection available in four languages.¹⁵ They engage with the protection Working Group under the RCF. The Hungarian Helsinki Committee closely collaborates with Menedek – Hungarian Association for Migrants and Cordelia Foundation for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims. They share workload and refer cases to each other on a regular basis.

The **Hungarian Society for Krishna Consciousness** prepared thousands of portions of hot meals to Indian students fleeing Ukraine. It also provided food at the Budapest airport, train stations, registration points, shelters and at the Ukrainian-Hungarian border. The Society supported refugee accommodation centres run by the Hungarian Red Cross, a shelter run by the Municipality of Budapest, a refugee shelter run by Migration Aid, and a parish sheltering Ecuadorians.

Menedek – Hungarian Association for Migrants focuses on psychosocial assistance and community programmes for asylum-

seekers, refugees and migrants. They set up a mobile team that aims to reach out to and assess the needs of people accommodated at different shelters across Budapest. It consists of a social worker, a lawyer and a translator. Menedek also provides capacity building and webinars for various actors actively involved in the refugee response. They hired a social worker and a dispatcher assistant. They are implementing partners of UNHCR and participate in the integration, child protection and community sub working groups of the RCF.

Migration Aid has opened two accommodation centres for refugees in Budapest and in Győr. They deliver services exclusively with the help of private donors and engage a large group of volunteers. Migration Aid assisted refugees with relocation, mainly to Austria, and focuses on integration issues. It receives referrals mainly from the BOK sports hall.

The National Federation of Organizations of People with a Physical Disability (MEOSZ) is a national organization comprising 89 member organizations, which provide services to people with physical disabilities. MEOSZ assists its members and advocates for de-institutionalization and human rights-based policy development. In order to respond to the needs of refugees, MEOSZ organized transportation of people living in Ukrainian residential homes by specialized, barrier-free vans. MEOSZ offers information, translation and interpretation related to the complex disability assessment that is mandatory for getting access to disability-related social supports in Hungary.

Notes

¹⁴ Facebook page of the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, 22 May 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/helsinkibizottsag/photos/a.148536888500904/5307584259262782/>

¹⁵ Facebook page of the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, 22 May 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/helsinkibizottsag/photos/a.148536888500904/5307584259262782/>

Next Step Hungary Association, a refugee-led NGO, supports asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants during their integration process through educational and community programmes. On a weekly basis, the Association provides hot meals for 150-200 refugees fleeing the armed conflict in Ukraine. It set up a donation centre for collecting hygiene kits and non-perishable food. The crisis overstretched capacities and the Association had to increase the number of staff in order to keep up both with their regular activities and humanitarian work. The Association also runs a legal assistance and a mental health programme, and refers cases to the Hungarian Helsinki Committee and Menedek – Hungarian Association for Migrants. They collaborate with other migrant-led NGOs, exchange information and recruit participants to each other's programmes. Because the organization is led by refugees, it is strongly embedded in the local migrant community. It maintains a pool of volunteers with migrant backgrounds, who are actively involved in assisting newcomers. Although volunteers are regarded as part of the organization, they have safeguarding and training protocols in place and professionals are always present at programmes organized for children. The Association receives funding from UNHCR and attends working group meetings related to MHPSS, basic needs and PSEA related to the RCF.

Shelter Foundation, an NGO providing multiple social services to homeless people in Budapest, runs a dispatcher service concentrating on the central region of Hungary. If local people detect a homeless person in a particularly vulnerable situation, they can call the Shelter Foundation's hotline, which runs 24/7. The Shelter Foundation extended its services to respond to the Ukrainian emergency situation. With 900 places in 28 different shelters in the region, the Foundation has become a regional focal point for the coordination of accommodation for refugees and provided advice via phone to other social service providers and volunteers assisting refugees.

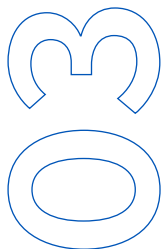
Shelter House Foundation is a local NGO providing temporary accommodation for homeless individuals and families, currently hosting Roma refugee families fleeing the Zakarpattia Oblast. The Foundation hired a social worker to assist them with bureaucracy. The organization participated in the coordination meetings organized by the Municipality of Budapest and received training from the Hungarian Helsinki Committee and Menedek – Hungarian Association for Migrants. The Foundation has received donations from individuals, businesses and Budapest Bike Maffia. The Shelter House Foundation receives referrals from the dispatcher service of the Shelter Foundation.

The **Transvanilla Transgender Association Hungary** is an NGO promoting trans rights. It organizes volunteers and arranges safe shelters for transgender refugees. The Association is part of Transgender Europe and other LGBTQIA+ organizations based in neighbouring countries, and has received requests for help mainly through LGBTQIA+ forums.

These are only a few examples of the services delivered by the many LNGOs and NNGOs supporting refugees from Ukraine in Hungary. These organizations have been working in partnership with international NGOs. Some good examples of partnership were highlighted, such as partnerships between UNHCR and large NNGOs like the Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC), Menedek, and Cordelia. Budapest Pride is receiving support to hire new coordinators and staff from the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the Forbidden Colours, and OutRight Action International. MEOSZ is a member of the European Disability Forum (EDF), the Disabled People's Federation (DPI) and the European Association of Disabled Persons (FIMITIC). The Trauma Centre, in partnership with Terre des hommes and UNICEF, provides services in the Blue Dot.¹⁶

Notes

¹⁶ These organizations have not been interviewed for this consultancy.



NGOs feedback

LNGOs and NNGOs supporting refugees in Hungary have identified the following areas for improvement, to be implemented in partnership and coordination with international actors:

- more focus on the operational aspects of coordination;
- increased collaboration to improve available information for refugees on the Temporary Protection status and related social rights and entitlements;
- further coordinated efforts in mapping the whereabouts of refugees and available services, particularly outside the cities;
- access to more flexible and direct funding;
- support by international actors to further meaningful engagement with child and family care State structures;
- joint efforts and enhanced coordination in integrating the needs of LGBTQIA+ and Roma communities in the response;
- joint advocacy for de-institutionalized homecare for refugees with disabilities.

3.2 Poland

Poland has welcomed a staggering number of people coming from Ukraine with enormous generosity and solidarity.¹⁷ There are no exact statistics on how many of them stay in the country, but approximately one million people had registered for Temporary Protection by 2 May 2022.¹⁸ A large part of the response so far in Poland has been mainly carried out by LNGOs, NNGOs and volunteers. Many of the organizations spoke about how challenging the situation was. According to them, volunteers had started to feel overwhelmed and would soon risk not coping anymore, while it was difficult to replace volunteers with professional workforce. All actors are finding it difficult to scale up, particularly because of lack of funding, challenges in recruitment (Poland has a very low unemployment rate) and organizational absorption capacities.

The humanitarian response is mainly organized and delivered at the municipal and local level. As each municipality and city council is different, the humanitarian infrastructure and coordination mechanisms depend on the region and the local actors. Housing and social support is often arranged by local governments, and they generally have positive approaches to collaborating with LNGOs and NNGOs.

Coordination structure

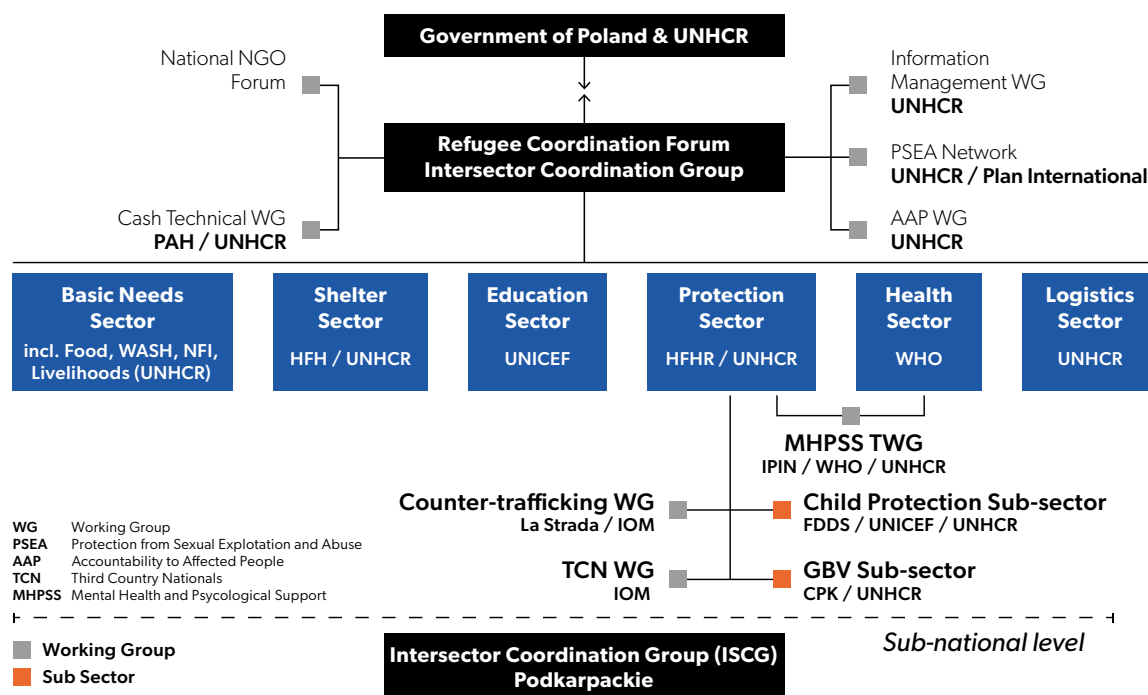
The **UNHCR-led Inter-Agency RCF** is structured as represented in the organigramme (see opposite).¹⁹

Notes

¹⁷ Poland, Ukraine Refugee Situation, Operational Data Portal. UNHCR, 29 May 2022. Last accessed: 31 May 2022. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10781>

¹⁸ Poland Protection Analysis (May 2022). Operational Data Portal Ukraine Refugee Response, UNHCR, 10 May 2022. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/92598>

¹⁹ Ukraine situation: Poland: Refugee Coordination Architecture (23 May 2022), UNHCR. Last accessed: 31 May 2022. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/91531>



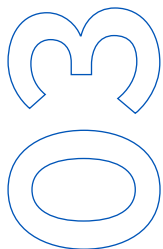
National actors are part of the coordination structure. When research was being conducted, they were co-leading WGs on cash, education and protection; as well as sub-groups on gender-based violence, child protection, and mental health and psychosocial support. The technical information sharing and coordination work done within the WGs was appreciated by NNGOs, especially since some of their meetings were online with platforms ensuring translation in Polish. Equally valued was UNHCR's investment in making information available online, with regular updates and facilitated access to all actors, regardless of whether they were members of the WGs or not.

However, NNGOs also raised concerns about the high number of WGs and recommended more targeted and solution-oriented discussions. In general, they wanted to be more engaged in co-designing the WG agendas and how the discussions were held. They found the use of humanitarian jargon and abbreviations as a barrier to participating to some of the discussions. In addition, they felt that further improvements were needed in sharing information about the coordination structure and the ongoing work at the level of the municipalities, as well as in bringing central and local governments on board.

The NNGOs and LNGOs had also their own coordination mechanisms in place.

The **Poland NGO Forum** is an informal coordination structure established on the second day of the war by the Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH) and Ashoka. It coordinates approximately 200 organizations actively involved in the Ukraine refugee response without the mandate to formally represent them. The NGO Forum supports its LNGO and NNGO members to partner with international actors and invites them to participate in the meetings organized by the Inter-Agency RCF. Furthermore, it assists UN agencies and INGOs on how to engage NNGOs and LNGOs. Apart from humanitarian action, the NGO Forum aims to achieve long-term systemic solutions in terms of the use of the capacity of NNGOs and LNGOs, multi-stakeholder cooperation and collective impact, by matching and connecting different actors. The **Poland NGO Forum** provides operational support to its members, and acts as a liaison between its members and international actors. Together with Ashoka and the Polish National NGO Federation (OFOP), the Forum plans to fully map – at different levels – the Polish organizations responding to the needs of people fleeing the armed conflict in Ukraine.

The high engagement of civil society in Poland is reflected in the Refugee Response Plan (RRP), which includes 87 partners, among which are 40 NNGOs, 36 INGOs, 7 UN agencies, IFRC and 3 faith-based organizations (FBOs).



Services provided

During the mission to Poland, various NGOs and LNGOs were met. Their activities are briefly described below:

Bonum Vitae is a Lublin non-governmental organization working for the elderly. The organization collected data on older refugees during visits to border crossing points, compiled a list of the needs of elderly and disabled people, and organized financial and material assistance. The organization cooperates with local governments, companies and other non-governmental organizations throughout the country and abroad; is a member of the AGE Platform Europe and Help Age International networks.

FEDERA Foundation for Women and Family Planning is a leading sexual and reproductive health and rights organization in Poland. FEDERA advocates for reproductive justice, improvements in the quality of reproductive health care for women and availability of family planning services. The Foundation adapted its service to the needs of Ukrainian women and girls. At the beginning of the war, FEDERA launched a gynecological, later the legal hotline and prepared information materials and leaflets on services translated into Ukrainian and Russian. FEDERA participates in the gender-based violence and health sub-sector meetings providing its expertise about the SRHR and GBV context in Poland.

FDDS – Empowering Children Foundation is a national organization providing comprehensive support for children who are victims of violence and sexual abuse. The Foundation runs child advocacy centres designed according to the Barnahus model, which consists in assisting children who are victims of crime with psychosocial and legal aid. Empowering Children Foundation has four centres for vulnerable families in Warsaw, runs a child helpline and a programme for the safety of children on the Internet. It co-leads the child protection sub-sector, together with UNICEF.

Happy Kids Foundation is a Łódź-based organization providing family-type foster care in Poland since 2001. Its core mission is to act and advocate for the de-institutionalization of orphanages and creating family-type foster care homes. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs in Ukraine and local authorities, Happy Kids Foundation launched evacuation programmes and organized transfers of children without parental care and their caregivers to safe accommodation sites in Poland.

The sites are supported with material supplies, healthcare, psychological and educational & developmental needs. The Foundation created a medical team, including a psychologist who visits these sites. As coordination is more challenging in rural areas, the Foundation hired local coordinators who understand and address the needs of Ukrainian groups, local populations and government representatives on the ground. Based on location-specific need assessments the Foundation hired additional staff at sites. To ensure cooperation, coordination and effectiveness of the support, the Foundation engages local, national and international NGOs, private sector and other partners and the child protection sub-sector group.

The **Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights** is an organization that works in the field of litigation, advocacy, human rights monitoring and education, both in Poland and abroad. It provides legal assistance to refugees. The Foundation collaborates with the national bars and has trained 3,000 attorneys, as well as NGO workers, in relation to the refugee response. The Foundation is a co-lead of the protection sector meetings.



Hungary Refugees from Ukraine arrive at the railway station in the Hungarian border town of Záhony on 16 March.

La Strada Poland – Foundation against Trafficking in Human Beings and Slavery

is a national NGO focusing on combatting and preventing human trafficking and forced labour. It provides training for volunteers, police and border guards. As there was a huge demand for its hotline service, the Foundation hired Russian and Ukrainian speaking consultants to be able to respond to the needs. La Strada Poland runs the National Consulting and Intervention Centre for the Victims of Trafficking (KCIK), which is financed by the state budget. The Foundation engages with the RCF. La Strada Poland established and leads the National Network of NGOs Against Human Trafficking, which includes ITAKA Foundation, FDDS - Empowering Children Foundation, Halina Nieć Legal Aid Centre, and Association for Legal Intervention (SIP).

Ocalenie Foundation is an NGO providing integration services to migrants in its Help Centres for Foreigners in Łódź, Łomża, and Warsaw. Services include legal, psychosocial, psychotherapy, counselling and intercultural assistance; in kind support; activation on the labor market (also in cooperation with companies such as Ikea); tutoring programmes for children; education, community and housing programmes; and polish language classes; day-care centers for refugee children in Łomża, Warsaw, Chełm and in accommodation centers in smaller towns in Mazowieckie voivodships. The Foundation provides child-friendly spaces in reception centers near border crossing points.

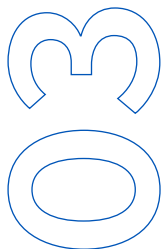
The Halina Nieć Legal Aid Centre is a Krakow-based NGO providing legal services for asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons. The Centre has been receiving an extremely huge number of requests for information related to legal rights and the temporary protection status. At the time of the interview, the Centre was scaling up its operations and recruiting new lawyers. It is part of a local coordination mechanism called Open Krakow Coalition, comprising 70 local NGOs and local authorities. The coalition exchanges information in thematic groups, focusing on relocation, transportation, donation, education, legal and psychological assistance, coordination of safety procedures, and children and women. The centre has good relationships with the local municipality.

Women's Rights Centre Women's Rights Centre is an NGO promoting gender equality and women's rights. It provides legal, psychosocial assistance, therapy, cultural and community events. Thanks to the Ukrainian diaspora, the Centre has experience working with Ukrainian women and has now adjusted its activities even more to the needs of refugees. The Centre provides training on sexual and gender-based violence to other organizations and to the authorities. Its offices are located in Gdańsk, Krakow, Łódź, Poznań, Warsaw, Żyrardów and Wrocław. The Centre participates in the gender-based violence sub-sector meetings.

The interventions of these organizations represent only a few examples of LNGO and NNGO efforts to support refugees coming from Ukraine. Positive partnerships with international actors were highlighted by LNGOs and NNGOs. For example, Habitat for Humanity Poland leads the work on housing in Poland together with Habitat for Humanity International. HelpAge has successfully partnered with a national NGO to conduct an assessment on the situation of the elderly. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is closely working with NNGOs in various border points. UNHCR and CARE are closely supporting Poland NGO Forum in its role of coordinating NNGOs and LNGOs. Different international actors are working with national partners on safeguarding. IOM is stepping up activities in anti-trafficking hand in hand with La Strada Poland. Plan International is setting up a fund for community initiatives for and with children.



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NGOs Feedback

When asked on further support needed by the international community, LNGOs and NNGOs responding to the needs of refugees in Poland mentioned the following:

- Developing partnerships that better reflect the equality between partners and respect the principles of partnership.
- Co-creating interventions with LNGOs and NNGOs, as those organizations would like to have an active role, instead of being an implementing partner only.
- Increasing funds to further invest in human resources.
- Developing expertise and capacity sharing on monitoring and evaluation, humanitarian standards, volunteer management, psychological first aid and counselling.
- Stronger recognition of the role played by the national civil society and more support for its coordination mechanisms.
- Support to advocacy to address gender-based violence, reproductive rights and health, and emergency psychological services.
- Developing partnerships whereby the international actors pay more attention to and acquire more knowledge about the local context before drafting the response.
- Better coordinated and simplified due diligence processes by international actors.
- Developing partnerships which incorporate the long-term integration needs of refugees in the humanitarian response strategies, as the two dimensions are intertwined.
- More transparency and accountability from international actors regarding their available funding, planned interventions, partners and progress.

3.3 Romania

To respond to the large number of refugees arriving in the country, the **Romanian Government** reactivated the decision-making and emergency-coordination structure that was previously established in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic on 1 March 2022. The Government set up a decision-making task force led by the Prime Minister.²⁰ Operations under the first emergency response were coordinated by the Department of Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (DSU). Humanitarian infrastructure at the border crossing points, food, transportation and shelters were arranged by this crisis cell. The efforts of various ministries and local authorities to facilitate the humanitarian response were complemented by volunteers, LNGOs, NNGOs, Ukrainian diaspora, INGOs, UN agencies and private companies.²¹ The operational task force is the second layer of the

coordination structure and is led by the Chief of the Prime Minister's Chancellery.²² The second layer of the coordination mechanism serves as the second protection response aiming to oversee integration policies and measures. Six working groups were established to focus on thematic areas – namely health, education, labour, housing, vulnerable persons, and children and youth. The working groups collaborate with UN agencies, as well as LNGOs and NNGOs. The Romanian Government set up a website (<https://dopomocha.ro/ro>) in partnership with UNHCR, IOM and the Romanian National Council for Refugees to share updated information related to available services.

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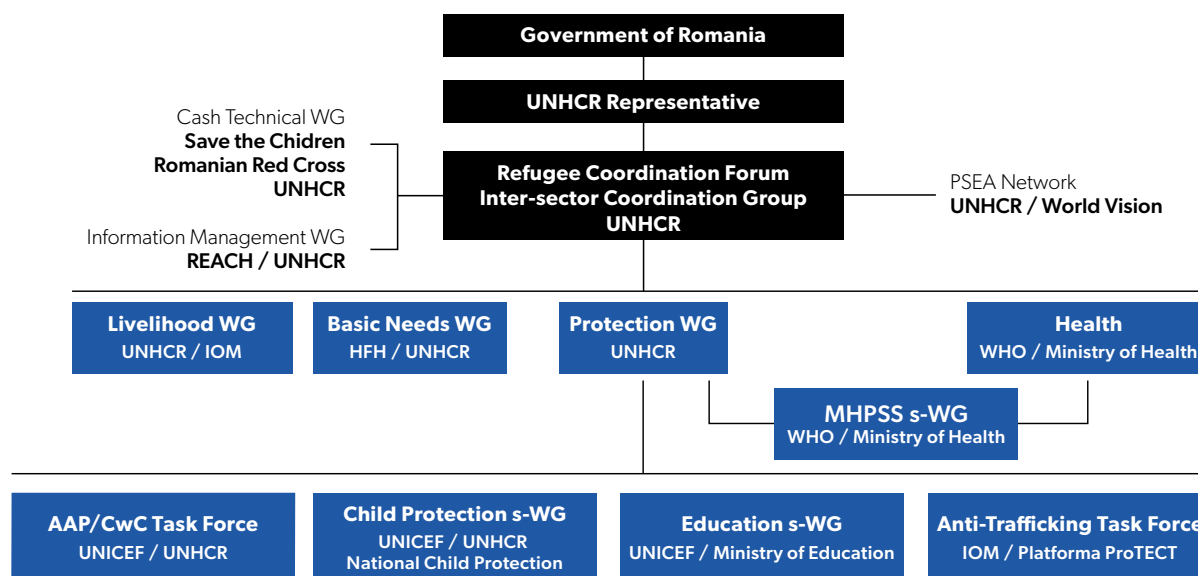
20 Ukraine – Together we help more. Romania's response to the humanitarian refugees' crisis – summary country report. 14 April 2022. Website of the Romanian Government. <https://www.gov.ro/ro/pagina/ukraine-together-we-help-more#null>

21 By the second day of the crisis, 300 organizations joined the WhatsApp group set up by the Government to exchange information on what was happening at the border. In the second week, they moved to thematic working groups organized on Teams.

22 Ukraine – Together we help more. Romania's response to the humanitarian refugees' crisis – summary country report. 14 April 2022. Website of the Romanian Government. <https://www.gov.ro/ro/pagina/ukraine-together-we-help-more#null>

In order to support the humanitarian efforts of the Romanian Government, UNHCR set up the Inter-Agency Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) with different working groups (WGs) – (see organigramme below).²³

Diagram 3 - Coordination structure in Romania



The RCF in Romania consists of different UN agencies, INGOs, LNGOs, NNGOs and ministries.²⁴ A few LNGOs and NNGOs are co-leading some of the working groups or task forces. For example, the anti-trafficking task force is co-led by Platforma ProTECT and the Romanian National Red Cross Society co-chairs the cash technical working group.²⁵ The PSEA WG is co-led by World Vision, which coaches an LNGO to take over the role after the initial six months.

In general, LNGOs and NNGOs are engaged with the sub working groups on protection, child protection, mental health and psychosocial support, basic needs, health and the PSEA network. There was close coordination among NGOs interviewed for this research, the Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations working in the Social Sector (FONSS), local municipalities, ministries, UN agencies, INGOs, and the private sector. For example, the Association Social Activ, an Arad-based NGO, is in direct contact with

emergency networks, comprising more than 1,000 organizations that provide help and arrange transfers in Arad, Bucharest, Giurgiu, Oradea, Siret, Suceava, and Timisoara.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Education are also part of these online communication channels. Others coordinate with municipalities and state institutions, such as the General Directorate of Social Assistance of the Municipality of Bucharest (DGASMB) and the Department for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (DSU).

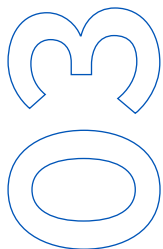
The Romanian social sector was already well-organized in February 2022. In order to increase their advocacy capacity, social service providers had gathered into coalitions and federations in recent years, which is crucial for the response to the current refugee crisis. FONSS is a concrete example. FONSS is a network of 44 social service providers established in 2014, which

Notes

23 Romania, Ukraine Refugee Situation, Operational Data Portal. UNHCR. Last accessed: 30 May 2022. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10782>

24 Refugee Coordination Structure in Romania, UNHCR internal document, 15 June 2022.

25 Platforma ProTECT: <https://traficdepersoane.ro/> and Romanian National Red Cross Society: <https://crucearosie.ro/>



focus on quality improvement of the social sector and strengthening of NGO advocacy. FONSS negotiates with the Government about issues related to social work standards, funding mechanisms and workforce in the social sector. Thanks to the well-organized structure that FONSS set up before the war in Ukraine, 300 organizations were mobilized to coordinate the efforts by the second day of the refugee crisis. Professional service providers closely collaborate with volunteers of the Federation of the Youth and jointly arrange the humanitarian assistance, shelter, transportation at the border crossing points and in transit centres. In cities, member organizations of FONSS provide services for those staying on the long term. Out of their 44 member organizations, 31 are actively involved in the refugee response.

Professional service providers closely collaborate with volunteers of the Federation of the Youth and jointly arrange the humanitarian assistance, shelter, transportation at the border crossing points and in transit centres. In cities, member organizations of FONSS provide services for those staying on the long term. Out of their 44 member organizations, 31 are actively involved in the refugee response. FONSS plays a key role in communicating with the Government, UN agencies and INGOs to ease the efforts of its member organizations and to let them solely focus on service provision. FONSS forwards relevant information and facilitates training opportunities offered by UN agencies and INGOs related to humanitarian assistance. FONSS negotiates with donors and allocates financial resources through small grants to its members who have their own funding structures. Four member organizations of FONSS were interviewed for this research: Association Four Change, Autism Voice Association, Estuar Foundation, SOS Children's Villages Romania.

The Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for Romania includes 23 partners, among which are 13 INGOs, 7 UN agencies, and 3 national NGOs. Further efforts might be needed to increase the number of NNGOs and enhance visibility of the diversity of actors engaged in the response.

Service provision

Romanian NGOs that contributed to this study have diverse service-provision profiles. They offer psychosocial services; outreach programmes; housing, crisis intervention, educational and community programmes; as well as advocacy for the following group of people and in the thematic areas of:

- vulnerable and marginalized communities;
- asylum-seekers, refugees, migrants;

- homeless people;
- people with disabilities, autism and mental health conditions;
- elderly people;
- children in alternative care;
- LGBTQIA+ people;
- unemployed youth;
- victims of human trafficking
- democratic values and countering disinformation.

Most of them put their regular activities and projects aside and rushed to the border to assist refugees with humanitarian assistance as first responders. They also collected and delivered donations, including essential relief items, and assisted with transportation.

ACCEPT Association promotes and defends the rights of LGBTQIA+ people. It provides transportation, relocation support, essential relief items, and arranges safe shelter for LGBTQIA+ refugees. The Association supports refugees with legal and psychological counselling.

Association Four Change is based in Bucharest and delivers social services for elderly people across the country. The Association provides shelter, hygiene kits, meals and transportation from the border for refugees. It collects and sends sanitary items, clothes, food, diapers, medicine and surgery supplies to Ukraine. The Association also provides breakfast, beverages, clothes and hygiene kits to a Bucharest-based university sheltering refugees, and organizes Romanian language classes, charity events and community programmes for children. Association Four Change is active in raising awareness about the risks of human trafficking

Association Social Activ is an Arad-based NGO that provides donations, psychosocial assistance, integration services and educational programmes for refugees. It actively collaborates with other NGOs, state and private entities via online platforms and social media. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Education are also part of these communication channels. Social Activ is in direct contact with emergency networks, comprising more than 1,000 organizations which provide help and arrange transfers in Arad, Bucharest, Giurgiu, Oradea, Siret, Suceava, and Timisoara. Social Activ has a volunteer management system in place.

Autism Voice Association set up a call centre through which it responds to questions related to the refugee crisis and receives referrals from public authorities

and other NGOs based across the country. The association also opened a shelter for mothers with autistic children, as specialized accommodation is not provided by the Government. Autism Voice Association actively engaged with different working groups of the Inter-Agency RCF.

Carusel is a local NGO working with the most vulnerable and marginalized people, including homeless people and people living in extreme poverty. It runs social centres, a community kitchen and a night outreach programme for those living rough in Bucharest. Carusel provides psychosocial services, essential relief items and medicines.

In collaboration with the City Hall of Bucharest and the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Carusel opened a temporary accommodation centre for 40 Ukrainian refugees. The NGO also helps with food, transportation, counselling, permanent social assistance, as well as community programmes. Carusel closely collaborates with other NGOs, especially those with similar profiles. It also coordinates with municipalities and State institutions, such as the General Directorate of Social Assistance of the Municipality of Bucharest (DGASMB) and the Department for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (DSU). In addition, it has a volunteer management system in place. The refugee crisis stretched the capacities of the NGO and placed extra pressure on its human and financial resources.

Copacul cu Fapte Bune supports disadvantaged and homeless people. It runs an educational and social centre in Bucharest, where food and community activities for children are offered. The organization is currently planning to organize Romanian and English language courses for refugees and to assist them with finding employment and education opportunities.

Curaj Înainte is a local NGO promoting democratic values and countering disinformation. It runs a small warehouse, delivers essential relief items to the border for Ukrainian refugees and assists people with onward travel to other countries. The NGO arranges supplies to the refugee centre of the National School of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA), to one of Carusel's refugee centres in Bucharest and in the central

Bucharest train station.²⁶ Curaj Înainte also established a psychological assistance service for Romanian volunteers and translators.²⁷

eLiberare is an anti-trafficking NGO that raises awareness about the heightened risks of human trafficking of refugees and promotes prevention and education. The organization collaborates with 22 other NGOs and refers cases to residential services. eLiberare closely cooperates with authorities and the Directorate General of Social Work.

Estuar Foundation provides psychosocial support to people living with mental health problems in order to facilitate their reintegration into the community. The webinars of the Foundation on crisis intervention have been attended by 600-700 participants, mainly psychologists, social workers, police forces and volunteers. Estuar Foundation has a formal partnership with the city hall of the second district,



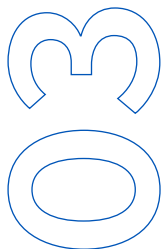
Romania New clothes are distributed to Ukrainian mothers at Zi de BINE, at a community center designed for the Ukrainian community. The center offers art therapy for children, language classes for adults and the distribution of essential items for those in need.

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26 On 6 April 2022, a field visit was conducted to the dormitory of the National School of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA) that was transformed to a refugee shelter for women and children. It is run by the employees and coordinated by the general administrative director. They provide essential relief items and laundry, with the support of private companies and personal

contacts. Curaj Înainte, Copacul cu fapte bune, Social Activ and Social Incubator (and other NGOs) also provided hot meals, non-perishable food, hygiene products and clothes.

27 Donor report, Curaj Înainte, 22 March 2022.
<https://curajinainte.org/2022/03/22/donor-report/>



the Municipality of Bucharest, and strategizes with the Ministry of Health on developing psychosocial programmes for refugees.

The **Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNNR)** provides legal assistance for asylum-seekers and promotes the integration of refugees and migrants. CNNR has a partnership agreement with UNHCR. It assists asylum-seekers in getting access to the territory and to fair asylum procedures. CNNR has scaled up its operations to provide legal assistance to Ukrainian refugees across the country. It operates a 24/7 phone line and manages volunteers.

The Social Incubator works in the field of labour market integration of young people. It focuses on finding jobs for refugees and works with children and teenagers, including unaccompanied minors. The organization assists with medical support, legal assistance and onward travel. The Social Incubator has a separate team focusing on Ukrainian refugees, including a Ukrainian-speaking employee. The NGO also engages volunteers.

SOS Children's Villages Romania focuses on child protection, alternative care and shelters. They support children and young people, among others, with educational programmes, counselling and community programmes. The NGO accommodates refugee families with children across the country and receives referrals from state authorities in this regard.

NGOs feedback

LNGOs and NNGOs explained that they received training and other assistance from various international organizations. For example, emergency management training was provided by the Norwegian Refugee Council in Bacău. Kinderdorf International and the SOS Children's Villages network, particularly SOS Children's Villages Canada and Denmark, provide refugee-related guidance and help their Romanian members and partners to get access to grants. CARE International provided grants for training related to mental health and psychosocial support work and staff well-being through FONSS. UNHCR provided funding for legal counselling, in addition to training on the coordination mechanisms and on how to get engaged, UNHCR's role and mandate, etc. However, LNGOs and NNGOs respondents actively involved in the Ukraine refugee response in Romania explained that they would need further support from the international community. They specifically asked for:

- Financial resources to hire new staff to scale up interventions and respond to the multifaceted needs of refugees.
- Training on how to become an implementing partner for UN agencies and INGOs, on emergency response management, staff well-being and counselling.

Both international and local actors interviewed recognize that further efforts are needed to reach out and support LNGOs and NNGOs, especially in more remote areas. One recommendation that emerged was the need to work in consortia between international actors and the main national NGOs, while bringing on board also smaller LNGOs.

3.4 The Republic of Moldova

By 29 May 2022, 479,513 border crossings from Ukraine to neighboring Moldova were registered.²⁸ Due to the low number of asylum applications in the past (77 in 2020), only very few local NGOs are specialized in asylum and refugee-related services.²⁹ Prior to the crisis, there were no humanitarian aid organizations in Moldova. Nonetheless, the Moldovan civil society and public authorities have been highly efficient and well-organized while responding to the needs of refugees.

The Government set up a crisis management structure and launched the **Dopomoga website**, which provides information on medical assistance, social services, housing and education.³⁰ Refugees

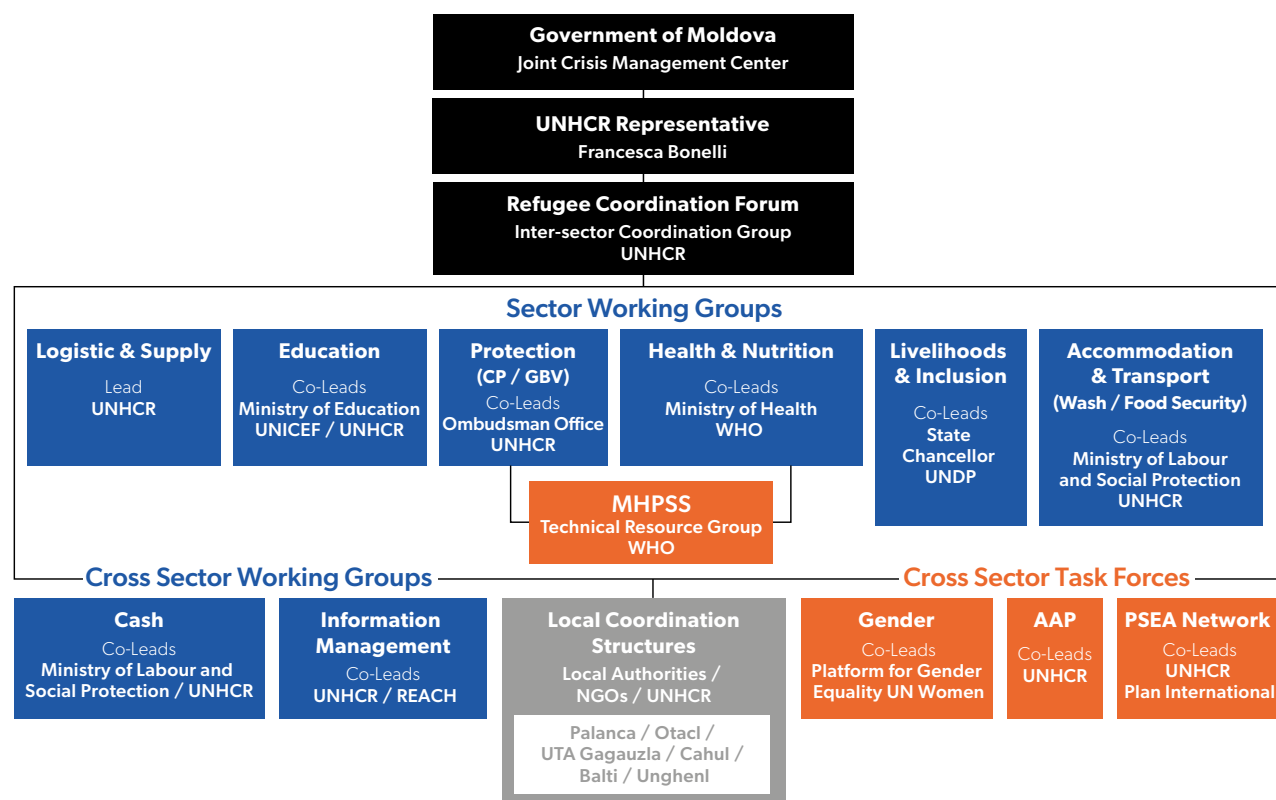
can also register their needs and volunteers can arrange their response accordingly. Both the state emergency cell and the online platform are regarded useful and effective by most of the respondents. One-third of the interviewees mentioned that access to accommodation and food is well-coordinated by the Government. State actors also arrange transportation of refugees from the border area to Chisinau in an efficient way. One NGO respondent highlighted that the humanitarian infrastructure (tent camps, bus station, medical assistance and services available for children) at the Palanca border crossing point was set up in a well-organized way. This is the result of the joint effort made by UNHCR, IOM, Helvetas and local authorities.

Coordination structure

RRCF has been established by UNHCR and the Government of Moldova with the current architecture, as shown in the organigramme (see below).³¹ LNGOs and NNGOs are part of the structure and are contributing to

the various WGs. For example, Keystone Moldova – a LNGO that was interviewed for this research – co-leads the disability task force that engages local NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies and public authorities.

Diagram 4 Coordination structure in Moldova



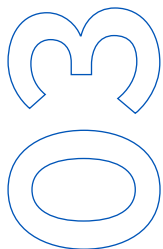
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28 Operational Data Portal Ukraine Refugee Situation, Republic of Moldova, UNHCR, 29 May 2022. Last accessed: 31 May 2022. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10784>

29 Asylum applications of foreign refugees in Moldova, WorldData.info. Last accessed: 31 May 2020. <https://www.worlddata.info/europe/moldova/asylum.php>

30 The website can be accessed at: <https://dopomoga.gov.md/>

31 Ukraine Situation: Moldova: Refugee Coordination Forum Structure (20.06.2022), Operational Data Portal, Refugee Situations, UNHCR. Last accessed: 22 June 2022. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/93448>



The Moldovan RRP counts 40 partners, including 22 INGOs, 14 UN agencies, 3 NNGOs, and 1 FBO. Considering the large number of NNGOs and LNGOs active in the refugee response, it would be essential to actively reach out and further support the engagement of the local civil society

Services provided

LNGOs and NNGOs who took part in this rapid mapping exercise, work with the following groups and subjects:

- asylum-seekers, refugees, migrants;
- LGBTQIA+ people;
- children and families;
- victims of human trafficking;
- people with disabilities and mental health conditions;
- survivors of torture;
- participatory democracy.

Activities that support refugees from Ukraine of some of the NNGOs and LNGOs interviewed are described below:

AO Institutum Virtutes Civilis (AO IVC)

is a local NGO focusing on the development of participatory democracy in Moldova. It assists public authorities in increasing the governance of social protection and gender equality. Due to the refugee crisis, the NGO stopped its activities and moved to provide donations to refugees in a refugee centre in Chisinau. AO IVC provides essential relief items, as well as activities for families and children, and lunch for the volunteers of the Moldova for Peace platform. AO IVC supports a centre for people with disabilities in a village that also accommodates elderly refugees. The NGO pays coordinators responsible for arranging transports of refugees from the border and onward. It is part of the gender task force under the RCF.

The **Alliance of Active NGOs in the field of Child and Family Social Protection** (APSCF) is a network of 62 NGOs, both locals and nationals, across Moldova – including Transnistria.³² The Alliance supports their members working in the field of social protection of children and families with capacity building and advocacy. They have tried to map services provided for refugees and to coordinate among service providers.

The Alliance also organized meetings for partners to exchange information on needs and service gaps. Although APSCF does not provide direct support to vulnerable people, the crisis affected their work, as half of their members are very actively involved in responding to the needs of refugees and are now less available for their regular activities. APSCF would like to find new ways to support their members, who often lack sufficient human and financial resources. APSCF is engaged with the Inter-Agency Coordination Forum. Four of their members were included in this research, namely CCF Moldova - Copil Comunitate Familie, Keystone Moldova, La Strada Moldova, and The Moldova Project.

CCF Moldova - Copil Comunitate Familie

is an NGO advocating for policy changes in the field of prevention of family separation, closure of orphanages and promotion of family-type alternatives. It supported the setup of the Blue Dot at the northern border. CCF provides information, food and non-food items and refers cases to other services. CCF scaled up its work mainly related to the Blue Dot system and hired 20 additional staff (teachers, psychologists, social workers, case managers, attorneys). They would need to employ 42 more in order to respond to the refugee crisis. CCF participates in the child protection working group and the task force on unaccompanied minors.

The **Charity Centre for Refugees in Moldova (CCR)**, a local NGO providing psychosocial assistance for refugees, was set up by a former refugee. CCR collaborates with a local university to provide Romanian language classes. Refugees can pick up food items, clothing and hygiene kits at their office.

LGBTQIA+ refugees are receiving specialized support from **GENDERDOC-M**, the only local NGO providing psychosocial services, support groups and advocacy for the community. The organization created a 24/7 hotline and opened a shelter for refugees while running its regular activities. GENDERDOC-M provided food items, medical supplies, psychological help and legal counselling. It is part of the Moldova for Peace movement, ILGA Europe, Eastern European Coalition for LGBT Equality, Non-Discrimination Coalition,

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³² Their website can be accessed at:
<https://aliantacf.md/en/home-page-en/>

and an informal feminist initiative. Although the LGBTQIA+ coalitions do not focus on refugees, GENDERDOC-M prefers to coordinate with them to create transnational referral mechanisms among member organizations. Thus, they can provide reliable information on support available in other countries for LGBTQIA+ refugees travelling onward.

Keystone Moldova is a national NGO advocating for the de-institutionalization of and the development of community services for people living with disabilities and mental health conditions. The organization supports the Government in developing inclusive social policies and new legislation on social inclusion. Keystone Moldova directly assists persons with disabilities and extended its hotline service to refugees with disabilities, referring cases to other service providers. Cases are also referred to Keystone Moldova by UNHCR. To make disability more visible in the refugee response, Keystone Moldova advocated for the creation of a task force on disability within the Inter-Agency RCF, which it co-leads. Keystone Moldova also participates in the protection working group and the task force on women and children. The NGO promoted the integration of disability into health and cash programmes and plans to include this area of work into the livelihood programme as well.

La Strada Moldova, a local anti-trafficking NGO, focuses on the prevention of domestic and sexual abuse, and online threat and abuse. The organization has restructured its helpline to provide information about services for refugees. La Strada Moldova is part of the national coordination mechanism set up by the Government and refers cases to shelters. In partnership with IOM, La Strada Moldova developed information materials which are distributed at the border and in accommodation centres. In addition, it created a video related to the prevention of sexual violence and abuse for refugees. La Strada Moldova is involved in the working and sub-working groups on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, gender-based violence, as well as protection and child protection.

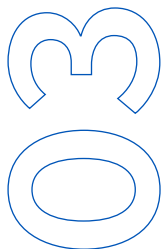
Legal assistance is provided by the **Law Centre of Advocates (CDA)**, which is the only local NGO with an asylum and refugee law profile in Moldova and is an implementing partner of UNHCR. By scaling up its activities, the Centre could assist approximately 10,000 refugees by mid-April (700-800 counselling sessions per day). It also trained border police

and monitored their activities. The Centre hired new staff, but would need support to continue with recruitment.

The **Moldova for Peace** initiative provides a platform for coordinating emergency response. The grassroots and non-formalized group consists of activists, volunteers, private companies and professionals from LNGOs and NNGOs. Their community organization skills strengthened by the COVID-19 pandemic were now utilized to mobilize volunteers. Following the Government's call for support, they started matching the needs of refugees with offers from various actors, delivering donations, and managing volunteers. Although they are not formally part of the governmental coordination structure, they advocate for closer collaboration between the Government and the UN agencies and INGOs. Plan International helped them to purchase food and Danish Refugee Council pays some of their coordinators. They have limited capacity to engage with the Inter-Agency Refugee Coordination Mechanism. The Moldova for Peace initiative is now creating a compensation system for their volunteers, with the support of UNHCR.

The **Moldova Project** is an NGO working with vulnerable families and children to strengthen their self-sufficiency. The NGO organized transportation from the border and provided sanitation and food. To fill in service gaps, it switched to working in refugee centres in five districts and with people living in the community. The Moldova Project is part of the Moldova for Peace initiative and hired new colleagues to respond to the needs of refugees, for example a Roma psychologist to better assist Roma refugees. Due to active engagement with the refugee response, the NGOS is less frequently able to visit its Moldovan service users. To avoid service duplication, The Moldova Project cooperates with NGOs, as well as with the Directorate of Social Welfare, other public authorities, and the Inter-Agency RCF.

The **National Congress of Ukrainians of Moldova** is a diaspora organization focusing on cultural events, educational activities and rural area development for Ukrainians. They have been actively helping refugees and are struggling to continue their regular projects. They accommodated more than 1,000 refugees in the shelter they opened, where people receive essential relief items. They evacuated more than 1,000 people from Odessa and Mykolaiv. The Congress also



helps people to travel to other countries and sent medical humanitarian aid to five Ukrainian hospitals. They are partnering with 38 local and international NGOs and commercial companies. They participate in the work of the cash assistance working group.

The **National Youth Council Moldova** is a youth organization consisting of 38 member organizations. The Council promotes youth empowerment and capacity building in decision-making processes. They mobilized their volunteers to provide food and guidance for refugees at the Palanca border crossing point until UNHCR took over the management of the area. The Council has a well-established volunteer management system. The Council collaborates with the Moldova for Peace initiative and receives support from the Danish Refugee Council and People in Need.

The **Platform for Gender Equality** is an informal network promoting gender equality, which consists of 44 members, including 33 LNGOs and NNGOs and individual experts. They suspended their regular activities and are now assisting refugees with donations, as well as psychological, medical and legal services. They organized safe accommodation to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. One of their members opened a centre for refugees, another one is engaged in advocacy. They co-chair the gender task force with UN Women under the Inter-Agency RCF and share all relevant information with their network members. One of their members, the Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims "Memoria", was interviewed for this research.

Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims "Memoria" is an NGO providing complex rehabilitation services for victims of political repression, torture, gender-based and domestic violence. Their emergency team – which includes a psychologist, a general practitioner and a psychotherapist – delivers humanitarian aid in accommodation centres and works with refugees sheltering in private

accommodations. "Memoria" provides multi-purpose cash assistance, medicine and medical devices. It is engaged with the Inter-Agency RCF and cooperates with Caritas Moldova and Casa Providenței. "Memoria" would need to recruit a psychologist, an accountant, as well as medical and legal staff. It refers people with diabetes to a group of volunteers, who collect specific test kits. "Memoria" has also partnerships with different medical services.

Trimbos Moldova (MENSANA) is a project implementation unit of „Support for the Reform of Mental Health Services in Moldova” financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. It concentrates on reforming psychological and psychiatric services and community mental health care in Moldova. Trimbos Moldova organized training for teachers and psychologists to be able to help with psychological first aid for refugees, and assisted volunteers. The organization cooperates with the Moldova for Peace initiative and coordinates with WHO. It also engages with the Inter-Agency RCF.

Partnerships with international organizations have supported the work of the local and national actors from the very first days of intervention. The Law Centre of Advocates has an excellent long-standing collaboration with UNHCR. UN Women and IOM support anti-trafficking activities in Moldova, working closely with the Moldovan authorities, La Strada and other local and national actors. UN Women has been strongly supporting the Moldovan Platform for Gender Equality. In similar lines, UNICEF is supporting various Moldovan child rights organizations in scaling up their services to refugee children, especially through the Blue Dots, while also investing in the work of the Alliance APSCF. CCR is supported by International Medical Corps to scale up its psychosocial programme to refugees, while Plan is

supporting the Moldova Project for its work with refugee children.

NGOs Feedback

LNGOs and NNGOs mentioned the following areas in which partnerships with international actors could further improve their work:

- Strengthening referral systems that focus on everyday practicalities, along with individual cases and exchange of information, with the view of preparing for another large number of new arrivals. Increased access to long-term flexible and rapid funding.
- Increased access to long-term flexible and rapid funding.
- Expertise on how to work with and respond effectively to the needs of Roma refugees..
- Increased partnerships to support Moldovan citizens, who are also in vulnerable situations.
- Creating a community centre where refugees could get information related to labour market integration, further education opportunities and participate in cultural and community events.
- Training in fundraising, crisis management, volunteer management, principles of humanitarian assistance, sexual and gender-based violence in conflict situations, development of negotiation and communications skills in conflict situations.
- Support in organizational development and learning new ways to improve the efficiency of their services.



© UNHCR/Caroline Bach

Moldova UNHCR staff assist more than 200 refugees from Mykolaiv in southern Ukraine who arrived by bus at the Palanca crossing on Moldova's border with Ukraine on 23 April 2022. UNHCR, Moldovan officials and partner organisations provided support, information and transportation.

Key findings

All actors involved in the Ukraine refugee response have been investing enormous efforts to respond to the needs of those fleeing. Volunteers, diaspora and national actors have been at the forefront of the crisis from the very first hour. International actors scaled up and deployed a large number of their employees to neighbouring countries. Despite delays and areas for improvement, all actors are convinced that efforts for an effective coordination are needed. There is a general gratitude towards the large-scale humanitarian assistance provided by UNHCR, other UN agencies and INGOs in Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova. The expertise, know-how, commitment and efforts were genuinely acknowledged by the respondents. There is also a wide-scale awareness and understanding of the unique role that UNHCR plays in the field of international refugee protection. Many interviewees thanked ICVA and UNHCR for initiating the NGO Support Consultancy and being offered the opportunity to share their experiences and feedback.

This research focused on LNGOs and NNGOs that are the first responders to the current refugee crisis. They are embedded in and have unique expertise in relation to their respective local contexts. They provided profound insights both into the needs of people fleeing Ukraine and the social environment in which they operate. Most of the NGOs interviewed have been working on human rights and have no experience in humanitarian assistance. Therefore, for some of them it was not easy to adjust and scale up interventions to respond to the large number of refugees arriving on a daily basis. The international community supported their efforts in this direction. All interviewees mentioned that such support is still needed, considering that the crisis continues, and – although the number of refugees arriving on daily basis is decreasing – their situation upon arrival is highly vulnerable.

Looking at partnerships with and participation of NNGOs and LNGOs in the RCF, the study highlights a number of areas in need of further attention, which are outlined below.

4.1 Engagement in the coordination structures and processes

Various efforts towards coordination were undertaken from the first day of the crisis, and sometimes different structures serving coordination were established. Currently, UNHCR and government-led coordination mechanisms are in place in all four countries, although dynamics remain different from country to country. NNGOs and LNGOs are part of these coordination mechanisms, but not all of them are familiar with these coordination mechanisms, especially those organizations that are operating in small towns away from the capitals.

Approximately 70% of the respondents had attended at least one WG meeting related to the Inter-Agency RCF in Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova. However, some NGOs were concerned about not being involved in co-creating and co-designing the coordination mechanism and felt that they needed more practical-level coordination of their activities and less focus on humanitarian standards and principles.

The majority of the respondents in all focus countries mentioned that they wish the coordination to become more operational

and focused more on finding joint solutions for the challenges identified. Moreover, as NNGOs and LNGOs are sometimes called also at coordination meetings by local authorities and/or by the national crisis governmental structures, there is unclarity among some of the actors on the role of each of these structures and the complementarity between them. As the responsibility of refugee protection and integration primarily lies with the State, there is an expectation that UNHCR and governments align coordination processes more actively.

LNGOs and NNGOs look forward to seeing a refugee response that contributes more profoundly to building on already existing State structures. They expect more engagement with and empowerment of the governmental structures as UN agencies and INGOs will eventually move away from the focus countries.

Accessibility in terms of the **language** that is used at the meetings came up regularly in the interviews. Acronyms and humanitarian jargon are alienating for those who are not part of the humanitarian aid industry. LNGOs and NNGOs do not necessarily use English as the everyday

work language. The lack of English-speaking professionals is common in all focus countries. This issue had started to be addressed, and – as a result – translation is now provided in more and more virtual meetings.

The large number of WG meetings were mentioned as one of the top issues related to the Inter-Agency RCF by the majority of those respondents who had attended them.

***“I can be invited to this platform, then to the other one, then to the third meeting... this is too much, too much coordination. At the beginning there was nothing and now it is too much”.**³³*

According to one of the Moldovan interviewees, participation at the coordination meetings took an additional 18 hours per week at the beginning of the crisis on top of their regular work. That became more sustainable with six and eight meetings on a weekly basis by the first half of May. A Romanian respondent had not slept

for 36 hours at the time of the interview, due to her key role in the refugee response and participation in both government and UNHCR-led coordination meetings.

Some Hungarian respondents mentioned that due to the lack of capacity they cannot provide data to feed into the 5W reporting system. Two of them mentioned that they did not know whether the 5W could provide cumulated data in a visualized format as they did not find the spreadsheet legible and useful for their own work. Few of the Hungarian NGO representatives mentioned that they did not see the relevance of reporting to UNHCR, as they do not receive support and have their own channels to coordinate with their partner organizations.

However, the increased ability to use different communication platforms and participate in online meetings is seen as a positive outcome of the crisis. One Moldovan respondent mentioned that NGOs are now more experienced in communicating with stakeholders and professionals with various backgrounds and outside of their regular network. Due to the huge pressure on identifying new methods to deal with the crisis, NGOs are forced to become more efficient.

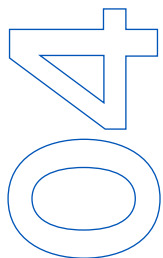
© UNHCR/Caroline Bach



Moldova A warm welcome greets refugees from Ukraine at Moldovan border

Notes

³³ Quotation from one of the Moldovan respondents.



4.2 Interaction between NNGOs and LNGOs and the international community

The majority of the respondents mentioned that they were contacted by a **great number of UN agencies and INGOs**. One of the Moldovan participants of this research spoke about being interviewed by at least seven UN agencies and INGOs separately. She claimed that:

“[a]ll of them wanted the same from us. We had various meetings with each of them on the same topics, they asked the same questions and had the same requests: concept note and proposal for collaboration”.³⁴

One of the Hungarian NGO respondents alleged that her organization had been contacted by a hundred of international actors. Although this is an exaggerated number, this expression of being overwhelmed and seriously exhausted illustrates the atmosphere in which local NGOs work.

Some respondents noted that they do not always have a good understanding of which international actors are operating in their respective countries, their response plans, the resources they have and what they plan to do. A few respondents mentioned that it was challenging for them to understand the blurred lines between the mandate of UNHCR and IOM or among other UN agencies. Many NGO representatives in all focus countries claimed that some INGOs disappeared without providing any feedback or follow-up after their consultations. This has generated resentment, disappointment and the feeling of being treated unfairly.

According to some interviewees in all focus countries, UN agencies and INGOs do not always have the necessary understanding of the **local political context, social environment, legislative framework and institutional structure**. Many NGO respondents identified

the short-term deployment of international staff as a barrier to medium and long-term engagement with local structures. It is challenging for them to keep track of the rapidly changing UN and INGO personnel.

A few interviewees noted that the current crisis situation could have a positive impact on the regular activities of LNGOs and NNGOs by creating new partnerships with different stakeholders from the public and private sectors. Stakeholders in different sectors became more open towards forming new alliances, as they realized that they could not cope with a large-scale emergency alone. An NGO representative expressed her hope that this might be a long-term positive change also in the local authority's attitude towards partnerships with NGOs.

A Moldovan respondent noted that the current refugee crisis could also be seen as a chance to improve the local social protection system, as it gives impetus to formulate new partnerships, to incorporate new ways of working, and to absorb new resources. Some local NGOs who were not particularly active before the crisis have now become more energized, which is an opportunity to refresh their organization. Moldovan NGOs in particular seem to be very open towards participating in training arranged by the international community. LNGOs get to know more national and international donor organizations, which might be transformed into long-term partnerships. The increased number of partners and potential partners could be also helpful in getting access to additional funding related to other thematic issues. A respondent noted that their organization became stronger by acquiring new knowledge in the field of humanitarian assistance. Increased partnerships with UN agencies and INGOs are seen as a positive element of the crisis situation.

Notes

³⁴ Quotation from one of the Moldovan respondents.

4.3 Funding opportunities

NGO respondents in all focus countries appreciated the efforts of international organizations and donor agencies in providing support to local actors. However, most of the interviewees mentioned that the **partnership agreement procedure** of UNHCR and other UN agencies is too complicated for them, especially in the current emergency situation. NGO representatives from all focus countries mentioned that at a certain point of the crisis response they had to put their regular activities on hold or significantly rearrange them. In the meantime, they had to undergo various due diligence processes by international actors, which often take too much of their time and, in some cases, they are still waiting for a final answer. Some NGO representatives mentioned that their organization decided not to apply for the financial support provided by UN agencies and INGOs, due to the heavy bureaucracy. However, the majority of the interviewees said

that their organization would have needed and still need access to direct and flexible funding with reasonable administrative requirements.

Most of the interviewees mentioned that there is an urgent need to fund programmes focusing on **both refugees and the local population**. The Ukrainian crisis has increased pressure on already scarce resources in some specific communities, further exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. The capacity of local NGOs is hugely affected by the refugee crisis and hiring new professionals with foreign language skills is challenging almost everywhere at the moment. There are already signs of concerns about the situation and the future in the local population. Funding is an issue for LNGOs and NNGOs based in rural areas and it is even more difficult for them to hire. This hampers efforts to scale up as needed and places extra pressure on existing staff.

4.4 Training and volunteer management

On **training** needs there was not a coherent approach among NNGOs and LNGOs. Some of the respondents noted that their organization does not need training. Others would welcome training opportunities and the following areas were mentioned: humanitarian principles, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, addressing gender-based violence in conflict and emergency situations, negotiation and communication skills in conflict and emergency situations, organizational development, and application for partnership agreements and management.

The need for further focus and training on safeguarding and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) was the object of some controversy. Some of the respondents in all focus countries mentioned that their national legislation requires NGOs to have internal policies and protocols in place related to **volunteer management**, which – in their view – sufficiently covers also safeguarding and PSEAH. Several respondents also mentioned that they engage their friends and acquaintances as volunteers and their

relationship with the organization is based on mutual trust. Some organizations work with long-term volunteers and a migrant-led organization noted that its volunteers are migrants themselves and are deeply embedded in the local migrant communities. Bringing up the issue of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse might be sensitive to some organizations. Some respondents referred to their own colleagues as volunteers because they dedicated their expertise, time, energy and often private resources on a voluntary basis to deliver services to refugees on top of or instead of their regular work within their respective organizations. However, a number of organizations had already stepped up efforts on safeguarding and PSEA and the issue continues to be high on the agenda of the protection WGs throughout the countries. Training on the subject was already being provided and material made available in national language. Many of the stakeholders interviewed recognized the need for further training and mechanisms to enhance safeguarding and PSEAH.

4.5 Enhancing diversity, inclusion and accountability

Refugee-led, Roma, diaspora and LGBTQIA+ organizations have significantly scaled up their activities in order to respond to the needs of people fleeing Ukraine. Two (former) refugee-led NGOs were interviewed in this research, one based in Hungary and the other operating in the Republic of Moldova. Both NGOs stated that they were satisfied with the support received from UNHCR as implementing partners. The latter highlighted that it has received every support needed since its creation, with the help of UNHCR. Both organizations attend various meetings of the Inter-Agency RCF which they find beneficial for their work, and the Hungarian refugee-led NGO co-chairs the basic needs WG.

An Ukrainian diaspora NGO based in the Republic of Moldova was involved in the research. Four LGBTQIA+ NGOs from Hungary, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova were involved in the research. They have well-established transnational support systems in place with other local, national or international LGBTQIA+ organizations, and have created referral mechanisms with them. Several Roma organizations were contacted during the research, but unfortunately, they did not respond to the request, most likely due to time constraints.



© UNHCR/Zoran Stevanovic

Hungary Refugees from Ukraine arrive at the railway station in the Hungarian border town of Záhony on 16 March.

5.1 State

Scaling up engagement efforts with governments and State structures is essential in all focus countries. This includes stronger collaboration with municipality-led coordination structures and further alignment of coordination processes.

5.2 Supporting existing NNGO and LNGO coordination mechanisms

The study showed that, in some contexts, NNGOs and LNGOs already had coordination mechanisms in place on various topics that became relevant also in the Ukraine refugee response. In other contexts, for example in Poland, such a mechanism was created specifically for the response. A few international actors are already supporting such coordination mechanisms, but more needs to be done. As those organizations will continue to operate in the country, the investment would be beneficial for the countries' stakeholders beyond the Ukraine refugee response.

5.3 Improving participation and functioning of existing WGs

A number of concrete recommendations were made by NNGOs and LNGOs regarding the functioning of the WGs. One of them was to reduce the frequency of the meetings. Throughout the research period, some WGs switched from weekly to biweekly meetings, which was generally considered as a positive development by NGO respondents.

LNGOs and NNGOs also asked to have coordination meetings that are as operational as possible, avoiding use of jargon and providing more space for local and national NGOs to also share their experience and practice.

Language barriers could be avoided by providing simultaneous interpretation to the local language/English by the various virtual platforms. The format of the Polish child protection sub-sector and the Moldova

disability task force is a good example of meetings more accessible to local NGOs.³⁵ If there are no professional interpreters available, a one-page summary of the working group and task force meetings could be translated into the local language. Investing further in the accessibility and utility of the coordination mechanisms is considered crucial from the perspective of LNGOs and NNGOs.

Various tools, factsheets, documents, maps, presentations, press releases and reports were produced by the Inter-Agency RCF, which are publicly available on UNHCR's Operational Data Portal focusing on the Ukraine refugee situation. In order to enhance transparency and accessibility, minutes of each WG and task force meetings should be regularly uploaded and contact information should be more often updated. In this regard, the Poland and Moldova sub-pages could serve as good practice examples.

5.4 Acknowledgement and share of merits

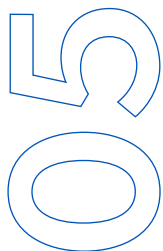
Further coordinated efforts are needed to make the interaction with local NGOs more principled, effective and respectful to their needs, capacities and expertise. As some of the profiles of international actors overlap with each other, a more transparent communication on the mandate of each UN agency and INGO would be helpful for LNGOs to understand their scope of work, objectives and what could be expected from each of them.

The work, expertise and commitment of LNGOs and NNGOs should be better highlighted and acknowledged in all four countries. UN agencies and INGOs are asked to better communicate on their partnerships and acknowledge that results achieved are also due to the work done by local and national actors.

A Moldovan NGO respondent referred to the crisis as an opportunity for NGOs to become well-known in their community and increase their visibility. She mentioned that the NGO already has new social media followers, which is helpful for advocacy purposes. The international community could promote the work of local NGOs by giving them visibility on their own social media channels. Increasing reference to the work and efforts done by the LNGOs and NNGOs in the RRP would also be needed.

Notes

³⁵ Attended online on 13 April 2022.



5.5 Funding and simplifying partnership processes and procedures

More flexible funding schemes with less bureaucratic requirements should be made available to LNGOs and NNGOs. Funding for core activities is essential for Moldovan NGOs, as Moldova is not an EU Member State.

NGOs and LNGOs throughout the four countries also asked for more funding to work on thematic issues which affect not only the refugee population, but also local communities. Vulnerable migrants from other countries should not be left behind either.

The due diligence process can be better coordinated among international actors to increase efficiency and avoid that the same national NGOs go through the same process with different organizations, which is time consuming. One of the Hungarian NGOs allocated a large amount of money received from private donors to micro-sized NGOs and required a simple receipt only from the beneficiaries that it has arrived at their bank account. More examples of direct and flexible funding opportunities are essential for small-scale organizations.

5.6 Training

Although not requested by all respondents, many recognized the need for training on subjects such as:

- partnership agreement; grant application and management;
- for translators, training on how to work with people in need of international protection is also essential;
- humanitarian principles and standards;
- safeguarding and PSEAH.

5.7 Mapping of refugee locations and situations, and of services and service providers

Regularly conducted rapid service mapping of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) – such as services coordinated by the MHPSS Inter-Agency Coordinator covering Hungary, Romania and Slovakia – provides

valuable information for service planning.

In order to develop effective integration measures, an urgent country-wide mapping of the whereabouts of refugees would be pivotal.

The use of IT technologies, collection of cell phone data and outreach campaigns on social media would be helpful to identify those outside the scope of the service providers. Social or humanitarian hackathon events to co-develop solutions could be organized with the involvement of UN agencies, INGOs, LNGOs and NNGOs, public authorities, volunteer groups, the IT sector and data analysts.³⁶

A full mapping of NGO and public service providers would be crucial. Standardized data collection procedures resulting in structured, searchable databases is much needed.

A better understanding of the local context and existing referral systems would make the coordination response also more effective.

5.8 Enhancing diversity, inclusion and accountability

Further communication is needed to highlight the diversity of groups affected by the Ukrainian crisis and a firmer commitment should be made to ensure that no one is left behind, including in the refugee coordination mechanisms.

A concrete recommendation made by some of the people interviewed was to further support work in consortia between international actors and the main national NGOs, while bringing on board also smaller LNGOs operating in more remote areas of the country.

Enhanced support should also be provided to refugee-led, diaspora, women-led, Roma and LGBTQIA+ organizations, and others, that directly represent various groups among the refugees coming from Ukraine. Such support could benefit not only their programmes, but also their advocacy work. There was not much evidence on support provided to these organizations to increase coordination among themselves and advocate jointly against institutionalized racism, culturally-rooted stereotypes related to “deserving” versus “undeserving” status. Their voice and contribution to refugee coordination mechanisms should also be further encouraged.

Furthermore, as vulnerability exists also in the local communities, LNGOs and NNGOs also ask for international support to expand their services to all vulnerable and marginalized people, especially in a context like Moldova.

Notes

36 For further information on the methodology on how to organize social hackathon events can be found at: Bugarszki, Zs. – Lepik, K.-L. – Kangro, K. – Medar, M. – Amor, K. – Medar, M. – Saia, K.: Guidelines for Social Hackathon Events, 2021.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351374080-Guidelines_for_Social_Hackathon_events_Guidelines_for_Social_Hackathon_Events

A.1 List of interview respondents and other partners in the country

Romania

Interview respondents in Romania

Romanian NGOs

ACCEPT Association / Asociația ACCEPT
Website: <https://www.acceptromania.ro/>

Autism Voice Association / Asociația Autism Voice
Website: <https://autismvoice.ro/>

Carusel Association / Asociația Carusel
Website: <https://carusel.org/>

Copacul cu fapte bune
Website: <https://copaculcufaptebune.ro/>

Courage Romania / Curaj Înainte
Website: <https://curajinainte.org/en/>

eLiberare Association / Asociația eLiberare
Website: <https://www.eliberare.com/>

Estuar Foundation / Fundatia Estuar
Website: <https://www.estuar.org/>

FONSS - Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations for Social Services / FONSS - Federația Organizațiilor Nегovernmentale pentru Servicii Sociale
Website: <https://fonss.ro/>

Four Change Association / Asociația Four Change
Website: <https://www.4change.ro/>

Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) / Fundația Consiliul National Roman pentru Refugiați (CNRR)
Website: <https://cnrr.ro/index.php/ro/>

Social Activ Association / Asociația Social Activ
Website: <https://asociatiasocialactiv.com/>

SOS Children's Villages Romania / SOS Satele Copiilor Romania
Website: <https://www.sos-satelecopiilor.ro/>

The Social Incubator / Asociația The Social Incubator
Website: <https://asociatiasocialincubator.org/>

INGOs

Danish Refugee Council
Website: <https://drc.ngo/>

IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation
Website: <https://ihh.org.tr/en>

Norwegian Refugee Council
Website: <https://www.nrc.no/>

UN Agencies

UNHCR Romania
Website: <https://www.unhcr.org/ro/> and <https://help.unhcr.org/romania/>

UNICEF Romania
Website: <https://www.unicef.org/romania/>

Public Institution

Refugee shelter at the dormitory of National School of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA)
Website: <https://snspsa.ro/en/>

Other Partners in Romania

Academic Society of Romania (SAR)
 Accept -Asociația ACCEPT
 ACTEDO
 ADPARE
 Agentia Nationala Pentru Egalitate de Sanse pentru Femei si Barbati
 AidRom
 Alternative Sociale Association
 ANAIS Asociația ANAIS
 ANOFM
 ANSOR
 Asociația Anaid
 Asociația de Ajutor AMURTEL
 Asociația de Microfinantare
 Asociația FREE
 Asociația IZA
 Asociația LOGS - Grup de Initiative Sociale
 Asociația Necuvinte
 Asociația Pacientilor cu Afecțiuni Hepatice din Romania
 Asociația Sanatate pentru Comunitate
 Asociația The Social Incubator
 ASSOC
 Association for Supporting Ukrainian Community
 Association of ideas and Projects for Active Youth (IPTA)
 Association PAVEL
 Ateliere Fara Frontiere
 Autism Voice Romania
 Betania/Dorcas AID
 Bucovina Institute
 CARUSEL (The voice of homeless citizens)
 CCD
 Centrul de integrare pentru migranti in Brasov
 Centrul de Proiecte Educationale si Sportive Bucuresti- PROEDUS
 Centrul FILIA
 Centrul pentru Studiul Comparat al Migratiei (CSCM)
 Centrul Step by Step
 civicnet.ro
 Civil Society Development Foundation (Fundatia pentru Dezvoltarea Societatii Civile)
 Cluj Parents Foundation
 CNRED
 Code4Romania
 Concordia - Confederația Patronală
 Concordia
 Consiliul Economic Si Social (CES)
 Eastern European Resource and Support Hub
 eLiberare
 Enable Romania Foundation
 Estuar Foundation
 FDP - Protagonists in Education
 FDSC
 Federation for Social Services (FONSS)
 FILIA Center
 Fond Romania
 Foundation HEKS/EPER
 Four Change Association, Bucharest
 Fundatia Comunitara Sibiu
 Fundatia Inovatiei Sociale Regina Maria
 Fundatia Romanian Angel Appeal
 Hospice Hope
 ICAR Foundation
 IMPACT Acasă - Impact România
 INCA Romania
 Inima de Copil
 JRS Romania
 LOGS Association - Social Initiatives Group
 MAME Association
 Microfinance Center
 Migrant Integration Center Brasov
 National Institute of Mental Health
 National Youth Foundation (FNT)
 Necuvinte Association
 Open Fields Foundation
 ParentIS
 PATRIR Romanian Peace Institute
 Project Voyager - Jobs 4 Ukraine
 RiseOUT
 Romania Red Cross
 Romanian Diversity Chamber of Commerce
 Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR)
 Salvation Army Romania
 Save The Children Romania (Salvați Copiii România)
 SERA
 She Is Mom Club
 SOS SATELE COPIILOR
 Step By Step
 The Association for Victims of Sexual Crimes/VIS Asociation
 The Făgăraș Research Institute/ FOND / ARCADIA/ FFCR
 The ONedu Romania community
 Asociata The Social Incubator
 Tineri pentru Tineri
 Traficul de persoane
 Youth for Youth
 Zi de Bine

Interview respondents in Poland

Polish NGOs

Bonum Vitae Foundation / Fundacja na Rzecz Seniorów "Bonum Vitae"

Website: <https://bonumvitae.org.pl/>

Caritas Poland

Website: <https://www.caritas.eu/caritas-poland/>

Empowering Children Foundation (FDDS) / Fundacja Dajemy Dzieciom Siłę (FDDS)

Website: <https://fdds.pl/>

FEDERA Foundation for Women and Family Planning / Federacja na rzecz Kobiet i Planowania Rodziny

Website: <https://federa.org.pl/>

Halina Nieć Legal Aid Center / Centrum Pomocy Prawnej im. Haliny Nieć

Website: <https://www.pomocprawna.org/>

Happy Kids Foundation / Fundacja Happy Kids

Website: <https://www.happykids.org.pl/>

Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights / Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka

Website: <https://www.hfhr.pl/en/foundation/>

La Strada Poland – Foundation against Trafficking in Human Beings and Slavery / La Strada – Fundacja Przeciwko Handlowi Ludźmi i Niewolnictwu

Website: <https://www.strada.org.pl/>

Ocalenie Foundation / Fundacja Ocalenie

Website: <https://ocalenie.org.pl/>

Polish Humanitarian Forum / Polska Akcja Humanitarna

Website: <https://www.pah.org.pl/>

Women's Rights Centre / Fundacja Centrum Praw Kobiet

Website: <https://cpk.org.pl/>

INGOs

Centre for Reproductive Rights

Website: <https://reproductiverights.org/>

Habitat for Humanity International

Website: <https://www.habitat.org>

Norwegian Refugee Council

Website: <https://www.nrc.no/>

Plan International

Website: <https://plan-international.org/>

UN Agencies

UNHCR Poland

Website: <https://www.unhcr.org/poland.html>

IOM Poland

Website: <https://eea.iom.int/poland>

Other Partners in Poland

NGO - Ashoka

NGO - Association for Legal Intervention

NGO - CCE Center for Citizenship Education

NGO - CultureLab Foundation

NGO - Foundation for Somalia

NGO - Foundation Towards Dialogue

NGO - Fundacja ADRA Polska

NGO - Fundacja Atid

NGO - Fundacja Autonomia

NGO - Fundacja Dobrej Edukacji

NGO - Fundacja Dokładam Się

NGO - Fundacja Feminoteka

NGO - Fundacja HumanDoc

NGO - Fundacja Inna Przestrzeń (FIP)

NGO - Fundacja Nativated

NGO - Fundacja Polska od Nowa

NGO - Fundacja Think Tank Miasto

NGO - Fundacja Truskawkowe Pola

NGO - Fundacja Ukraina

NGO - Fundacja Uniwersytet Dzieci

NGO - Help.NGO

NGO - Humanosh Sława i Iżek Wołosianski Foundation

NGO - Information Society Development Foundation

NGO - Kalejdoskop Kultur

NGO - MAITRI Movement Association

NGO - Małopolskie Towarzystwo Oświatowe

NGO - NORMA Europejska Fundacja na Rzecz Edukacji, Profilaktyki i Wychowania

NGO - PCPM Polish Center for International Aid

NGO - PLZ Cooperative (CoopTech Hub)

NGO - Polish Migration Forum Foundation

NGO - Salam Lab | Laboratory of Peace

NGO - Stowarzyszenie Wspólne Podwórko

NGO - Tech To The Rescue Foundation

NGO - Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego, Hufiec

Uroczysko Konstancin

Hungary

Interview respondents in Hungary

Hungarian NGOs

Budapest Bike Maffia

Website: <https://bikemaffia.com/>

Budapest Pride

Website: <https://budapestpride.hu/>

Cordelia Foundation for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims / Cordelia Alapítvány a Szervezett Erőszak Áldozataiért

Website: <https://cordelia.hu/>

Hungarian Helsinki Committee / Magyar Helsinki Bizottság

Website: <https://helsinki.hu/>

Hungarian Society for Krishna Consciousness / Magyarországi Krisna-tudatú Hívők Közössége

Website: <https://krisna.hu/>

Hungarian Helsinki Committee / Magyar Helsinki Bizottság

Website: <https://helsinki.hu/>

Hungarian Society for Krishna Consciousness / Magyarországi Krisna-tudatú Hívők Közössége

Website: <https://krisna.hu/>

Menedek – Hungarian Association for Migrants / Menedék – Migránsokat Segítő Egyesület

Website: <https://menedek.hu/>

Migration Aid

Website: <https://migrationaid.org/>

National Federation of Organizations of People with a Physical Disability (MEOSZ) / Mozgáskorlátozottak Egyesületeinek Országos Szövetsége (MEOSZ)

Website: <http://www.meosz.hu/>

Next Step Hungary Association / Next Step Magyarország Egyesület

Website: <https://nextstepeu.org/>

Shelter House Foundation / Menedékház Alapítvány

Website: <http://menhely.hu/>

Transvanilla Transgender Association Hungary / Transvanilla Transznemű Egyesület

Website: <https://transvanilla.hu/>

UN Agencies

UNHCR Hungary

Website: <https://www.unhcr.org/hu/>

Public institution

Municipality of Budapest

Website: www.budapest.hu

Volunteer initiative

"Hungary Refugee Help Digital Network (Ukraine, Zakarpattia)" Facebook group / Segítségnyújtás (Ukrajna, Kárpátalja) Допомога українцям Facebook csoport
Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/994143548136400>

Other Partners in Hungary

Age of Hope	Jesuit Refugee Service
AISB	Kalunba
Ami	Lexis Segitsege Alapitvany
Artemisszio	Mandak House
Carpathian Foundation-Hungary	Medecins du Monde
Caritas	Medecins Sans Frontieres
Center for Reproductive Rights	Mission East
CESVI	NaNe
Christian Aid	Oltalom
ELTE PPK	Patent
EMMA	Project HOPE
Evangelical Diakonia	Roma Versitas
From Street to Homes	Segitsegyujtas FB group
Helping Hands for Ukraine Foundation	SOS Children's Villages
Hungarian Baptist Aid	TASZ
Hungarian EMDR Association	Terre des Hommes
Hungarian Interchurch Aid	Transvanilla
Hungarian Lawyers for Ukraine	Trauma Kozpont (Cordelia)
Hungarian Maltese Aid	United Way
Hungarian Red Cross	Varda Cultural Association in Kisvarda
Hungarian Reformed Church Aid	VOICE Amplified
HunHelp	Zero Hub
IRC	

Republic of Moldova

Interview respondents in Moldova

Moldovan NGOs

Alliance of Active NGOs in the field of Child and Family Social Protection (APSCF) / Alianța ONG-urilor active în domeniul Protecției Sociale a Copilului și Familiei (APSCF)

Website: <https://aliantacf.md/>

CCF Moldova / CCF Moldova - Copil Comunitate Familie

Website: <https://ccfmoldova.org/>

Charity Centre For Refugees in Moldova (CCR) / Centrul de Caritate pentru Refugiați (CCR)

Website: <https://ccr.md/>

GENDERDOC-M

Website: <https://www.gdm.md/en>

Institutum Virtutes Civilis Moldova (IVC Moldova) / Asociația Obștească „Institutum Virtutes Civilis” (AO IVC)

Website: <http://ivcmoldova.org/>

International Center “La Strada Moldova” / Centrul Internațional „La Strada Moldova”

Website: <http://lastrada.md/>

Keystone Moldova

Website: <https://www.keystonemoldova.md/en/>

Law Center of Advocates / Centrul de Drept al Avocaților

Website: <https://cda.md/>

National Congress of Ukrainians of Moldova / Congresului Național al Ucrainenilor din Moldova National Youth Council Moldova (CNTM) / Consiliul Național al Tineretului din Moldova (CNTM)

Website: <https://cntm.md/>

Platform for Gender Equality / Platforma pentru Egalitate de Gen

Website: <https://egalitadedegen.md/>

Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims “Memoria” (RCTV “Memoria”) / Centrul de Reabilitare a Victimelor Torturii “Memoria” (RCTV “Memoria”)

Website: <https://www.memoria.md/>

The Moldova Project

Website: <https://www.themoldovaproject.org/>

Trimbos Moldova (MENSANA)

Website: <http://trimbos.md/>

INGOs

Catholic Relief Services

Website: <https://www.crs.org/>

UN Agencies

UNHCR Moldova

Website: <https://help.unhcr.org/moldova/>

Volunteer initiative

Moldova for Peace / Moldova pentru Pace

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/moldova4peace/>

Other Partners in Moldova

ADRA Moldova
 Afina
 Ajuta un om
 Alliance of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities
 AO BiazGul Regional Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Family Violence
 AO Camera Tinerilor Antreprenori si Lideri, JCI Ungheni
 AO Centrul de Drept al Avocatilor/ Law Center of Advocates
 Artemida
 Asociatia de Educatie Civica " Viitorul incepe azi"
 Asociatia Obsteasca "Tineretul Gagauziei"
 Asociația Obștească Internațională de Binefacere „Timpul Speranței” (AOIB)
 Association of Entrepreneurs with Disabilities of the Republic of Moldova
 Ave Copiii
 Azi Cahul
 Biaz Gul
 Caritas Moldova
 Casa Marioare
 CASMED
 CCS (Centru de cooperare sud) - South Cooperation Centre
 Center for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 Center Partnership for Development
 Center Trinity
 Centre for Policy and Reforms (CPR)
 Centrul Național de Formare, Asistență, Consiliere și Educație din Moldova
 Centrul National de Prevenire a Abuzului fata de Copil (CNPAC)
 Child and Family Empowerment Association "AVE Copiii"
 Children's Emergency Relief International
 Clinica Juridica Nord
 Coalition "Vocea Romilor"
 Cohen Law
 Communitas
 Concordia. Proiecte sociale
 Femei pentru Femei
 Fiecare contribuie cu o schimbare
 Foreign Policy Association in Moldova
 Foundation for Advancement of Moldova
 Gender-Centru
 GlobalMedic
 Medico-Social Rehabilitation Centre for persons with low vision "LOW VISION" Center
 Moldova for Peace/Laolalta
 Moms Action
 Motivatie
 National Center for Child Abuse Prevention
 National Coalition "Life Without Violence"
 Ophelia
 OSORC
 Palladium
 Partnership for every child
 Pas cu Pas
 Perspectiva
 Platforma Femeilor Rome "ROMNI" din Moldova
 Pro Europa in Comrat
 Pro-Lumina
 Refugee Support Europe
 Regina Pacis Foundation
 Roma Awareness Foundation
 Roma Women and Girls Network "Moldsolidaritate"
 SOS AUTISM Association
 Speranța pentru copiii Moldovei
 Stimul
 TEKEDU
 Uniunea pentru echitate si sanatate
 Vivere
 Women Law Centre

A.2 Interview questions

I. Technical part

1. What is the general scope of your organization's activities?
2. What kind of services do you provide?
3. Did you have to shift the focus of your activities after 24 February 2022? If yes, how?
4. What is the geographical coverage of your activities?
5. How many staff are involved in the Ukrainian refugee response?
6. Did you have to hire new staff because of your response to the refugee crisis?
7. What categories of people in need of international protection does your organization focus on?
8. What is the estimated number of people in need of international protection your organization has assisted?
9. What age group do the people in need of international protection you have assisted belong to?

II. Narrative part

1. If your organization has a partnership with UNHCR, what are the main elements of the partnership?
2. How would you assess the partnership in overall terms? What works well (three points)? What is missing (three points)?
3. Is your organization part of any working group or task force related to the Inter-Agency RCF?
4. How would you assess the coordination mechanism? What works well (three points)? What is missing (three points)?
5. Does your organization receive any funding from UNHCR, other UN agencies or INGOs related to your response to the Ukrainian refugee response? If yes, with whom and what does that entail?
6. How would you assess the partnership in overall terms? What works well (three points)? What is missing (three points)?
7. Could you provide three points where you would expect better support from UNHCR, other UN agencies and INGOs?
8. How could the international community support your organization (three priorities)?
9. How do you collaborate with State structures?
10. Are you involved in the first emergency response?
11. Is your organization part of any government-led working groups in the second protection response?
12. How do you collaborate with other INGOs and NNGOs? Formally or informally? How do you share the workload to avoid duplication and gaps in service provision?
13. Is your organization a member of any national NGO consortia, coalition, federation or network? Is your organization registered as an NGO consortia, coalition, federation or network?
14. Who are the other members and what is their service profile?
15. Does your organization focus on service provision or advocacy, or both?
16. Could you provide three examples of ongoing work regarding the Ukrainian refugee response by the NGO coalitions?

III. Internal policies

43

1. Do you have any formal volunteer management policy in place (recruiting, screening, coordination, training, etc.)?
2. Which safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse measures do you currently have in place within the organization?

IV. Information management

1. How does the current NGO coordination mechanism look like in your country (if there is any)?
2. How do the various actors involved in the Ukrainian refugee response communicate with each other?
3. What are the main difficulties in information sharing?
4. What kind of communication channels do you use (e.g.: Facebook groups, WhatsApp, Slack, website dedicated to the response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis, governmental information platform, coordination meetings, phone, email, etc.)?

September 2022

A Short Analysis under the “NGO Consultancy to Support Collaboration with Local Civil Society Actors in the Ukraine Refugee Response” project

Written by Adrienn Kiss

Commissioned by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE
HUMANITARIAN ACTION