

INTRODUCTION

Since the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, more than 11 million people have had to flee their homes internally or by crossing borders (UNHCR accessed 12/07/2023; IOM accessed 12/07/2023). As at 1 August 2023, 6.2 million refugees from Ukraine were recorded globally, with half in three countries: Russia (1.3 million),¹ Germany (1.1 million), and Poland (1 million) (UNHCR accessed 08/08/2023). Other border countries also host smaller numbers of refugees: 116,835 in Moldova; 105,600 in Slovakia; 95,035 in Romania; and 49,375 in Hungary (UNHCR accessed 08/08/2023). The Czech Republic, while not sharing a border with Ukraine, hosted 358,225 refugees or 3.4% of the country's population as at 1 August (UNHCR accessed 08/08/2023; ACAPS 07/2023).

In response to the unprecedented inflow of refugees, host countries mobilised efforts at the local, national, and regional levels. This comes with the engagement of local municipal authorities and civil society responders, in particular local NGOs, including the ones established by host communities and refugees (UNHCR 28/03/2023). With the rapid implementation and enforcement of the EU's Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) in five of the six analysed countries (except Moldova), refugees from Ukraine have received rights to stay legally in host countries and access accommodation, healthcare, education, employment, and social assistance (EC accessed 26/07/2023 a). The level of access varies per country given differing national regulations in implementing the directive and the varied capacities of each country to host unexpectedly large numbers of people in need.

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¹ The number includes 65,400 Ukrainians granted refugee or temporary asylum status and those recorded in the country in 2022 under other forms of stay (UNHCR accessed 08/08/2023).

Countries hosting refugees from Ukraine selected to the analysis



Source: ACAPS

Disclaimer: The boundaries, names, and designations used in this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by ACAPS.

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About the report

Aim: this report provides an overview of the situation of refugees from Ukraine in six host countries: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. The report aims to compare the scale of displacement in each country and their response capacity, with a focus on the specific situation of refugees in terms of rights and access to essential services.

Methodology: indicators from the [ACAPS Regional Dataset](#) were selected to present an overview of how the refugee crisis is affecting host countries and to analyse their capacities to provide services for refugees. The countries were selected based on a high number of refugees from Ukraine, a shared border with Ukraine (Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia), or a population of refugees that is a large proportion relative to the country's overall population (the Czech Republic, Moldova, Poland). The data is complemented by a review of secondary data, including reports from international organisations, scientific publications, and news articles.

Limitations: both the [ACAPS Regional Dataset](#) and this report rely on publicly available data. As such, despite meeting the criteria, Russia and Belarus were excluded given the lack of reliable and accessible data. Russia, as a party to the conflict, is also engaged in the forcible deportation of people from Ukraine to Russia, preventing a clear understanding of the legal situation of Ukrainians in Russia ([ICC 17/03/2023](#)). Another limitation stems from the non-representativeness of some indicators in the regional dataset. To overcome this, information was triangulated.

KEY FINDINGS

- In the EU countries analysed (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia), most refugees from Ukraine have applied for and received temporary protection status. As at June 2023, only 7% of registered refugees had received temporary protection status in Moldova, likely because it only introduced its temporary protection mechanism in March 2023.
- The scope of available financial assistance under temporary protection status varies depending on national regulations and the capacity of each country ([UNHCR 17/10/2022](#); [UNHCR accessed 25/07/2023 a](#)). Recipients of temporary protection in the Czech Republic (up to 150 days), Hungary and Romania are entitled to monthly financial allowances provided by the State. In Poland, they receive only one-time benefit and then rely on social benefits,

if they meet the criteria. In Slovakia, special monthly allowance was created only for TP holders with disabilities. In Moldova, temporary protection holders do not receive any special allowance from the State, but those with specific vulnerabilities can access social welfare.

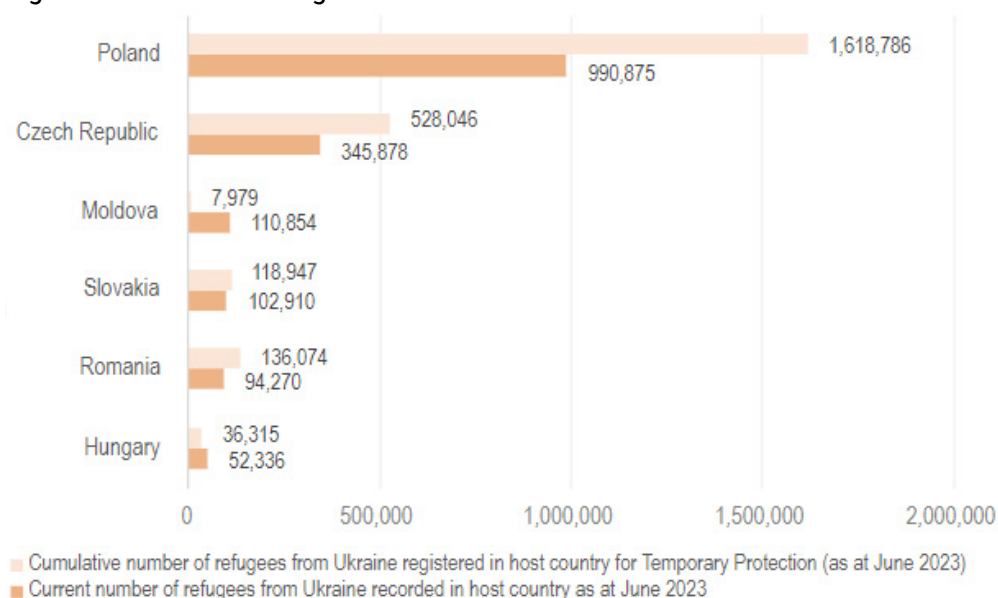
- Despite the implementation of temporary protection mechanisms in all six countries, refugees from Ukraine still face barriers accessing the services to which they have been granted rights. A lack of information about these services and language differences are the most frequently reported challenges.
- Approximately 20% of all refugee households from Ukraine has at least one member belonging to a group with specific needs. These groups include people with disabilities, those with chronic or serious medical needs, the elderly, and separated or unaccompanied children. These households face heightened challenges meeting their needs and require increased support from state and humanitarian responders ([UNHCR 19/04/2023](#)). If support decreases, many of their needs will be left unmet.
- Finding affordable accommodation has been very challenging for refugees from Ukraine. In Poland and the Czech Republic, authorities recently imposed fees for refugees extending their stay in collective centres beyond 120 days (Poland) and 150 days (the Czech Republic).
- Despite entitlement to most healthcare services, Ukrainian refugees struggle to access healthcare due to a lack of information on how to use the healthcare system, language barriers, shortages of specific treatments or medications, and long wait times for services. In Moldova, refugees have limited healthcare access overall; they are only entitled to primary and emergency health services.
- Although all refugee children from Ukraine have guaranteed access to education in all six countries, enrolment rates remain low and do not exceed 60%. The rates are especially low in Moldova (4%), Romania (11%), and Hungary (28%) (Figure 12), largely because many refugee children participate in online Ukrainian education platforms instead. Lack of knowledge of the host country languages and shortages of available slots in schools also pose significant challenges.
- Despite temporary protection regulations granting Ukrainian refugees the right to work in the host countries, many still struggle to find jobs. Barriers to employment include a lack of knowledge of the host country language, a lack of childcare, and a shortage of employment opportunities corresponding to their qualifications ([IOM 08/06/2023](#); [OECD 06/01/2023](#)). Care duties for family members also limit their opportunities for regular employment ([IOM 08/06/2023](#)). In Moldova, most refugees (those without temporary protection status) have limited access to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. There is a scarcity of jobs in Moldova, and most of those available provide minimal remuneration for the low skills required ([IOM 08/06/2023](#) and [18/05/2023](#)).

POPULATION FIGURES

Demographic overview

After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, there was a rapid influx of refugees from Ukraine into the surrounding region. This peaked in December 2022, when UNHCR recorded almost eight million refugees from Ukraine globally (as per the national authorities in each country) (UNHCR accessed 11/08/2023). The numbers have since decreased, mainly due to progressive returns to Ukraine. As at August 2023, there were 6.2 million refugees recorded globally, 5.9 million of whom were in Europe (UNHCR accessed 08/08/2023). This decrease in refugee numbers is seen in the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia, where the cumulative number of those who received temporary protection status until June 2023 was higher than the number of refugees recorded in the country that month (Figure 1). The exceptions are Hungary and Moldova. Hungary because many refugees use it as a transit country given difficulties accessing adequate support from the system, and Moldova because it only implemented its temporary protection mechanism in March 2023, which explains the low number of registrations compared to other countries in the region (Euractiv 28/04/2023).

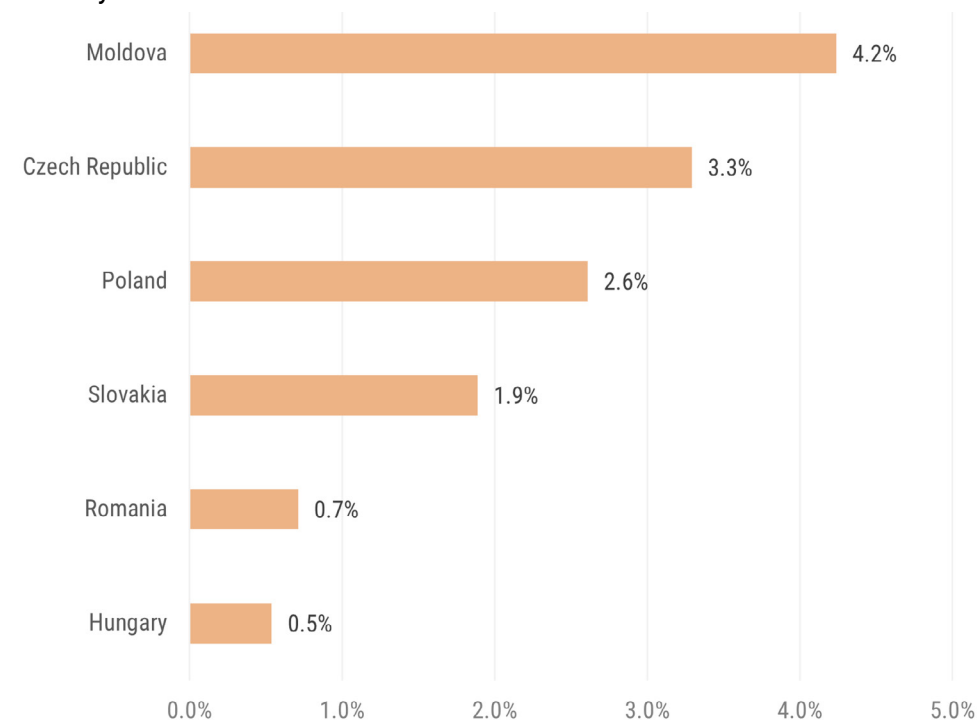
Figure 1. Number of refugees from Ukraine



Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

The scale of refugees from Ukraine in each country is better understood by examining the ratio of refugees to the total population per country, as demonstrated in Figure 2. While Moldova only hosts 116,835 refugees, it has the highest refugee-to-host population ratio (4.2%) because of its small population (2.5 million). Relatively high ratios of refugees are also recorded in the Czech Republic (3.3%), Poland (2.6%), and Slovakia (1.9%) (Figure 2). These three countries, along with Hungary, do not have policies conducive to facilitating the integration of refugees (MIPEX accessed 08/08/2023; Pędziwiatr and Magdziarz 15/05/2023; NIEM 19/06/2019).

Figure 2. Ratio of refugees from Ukraine to the total population in each host country



Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

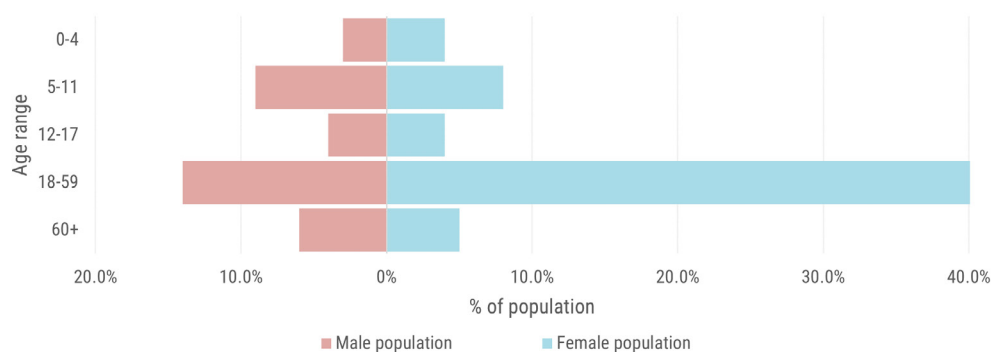
Recent assessments show a high level of willingness among Ukrainian refugees to eventually return to Ukraine (81%), but only 13% planned to do so in the next three months. Among the indicated reasons for returning were perceived improved safety and security conditions and the lack of access to basic services and adequate living conditions in host countries (UNHCR 19/04/2023).

Profile of refugees from Ukraine

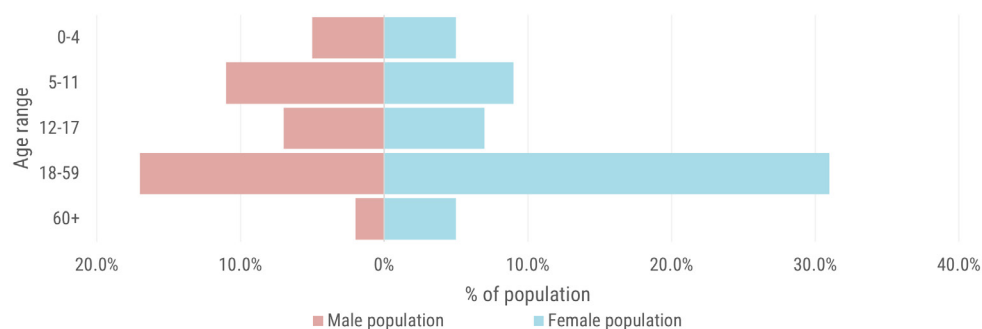
Because Ukraine banned men of conscription age (between 18–60) from leaving the country in February 2022, external displacement from Ukraine has been highly feminised (GOU accessed 14/07/2023; UNHCR 15/02/2023). Approximately 85% of refugees from Ukraine across the six countries are women and children, resulting in many women becoming heads of households (UNHCR 15/02/2023). As shown in Figure 3, women and girls account for 60–68% of the refugee population, children comprise between 27% (in Moldova) and 42% (in Hungary), and older people (aged 60+) represent between 11% (in Hungary) and 21% (in Moldova).

Figure 3. Age and gender structure of refugees from Ukraine

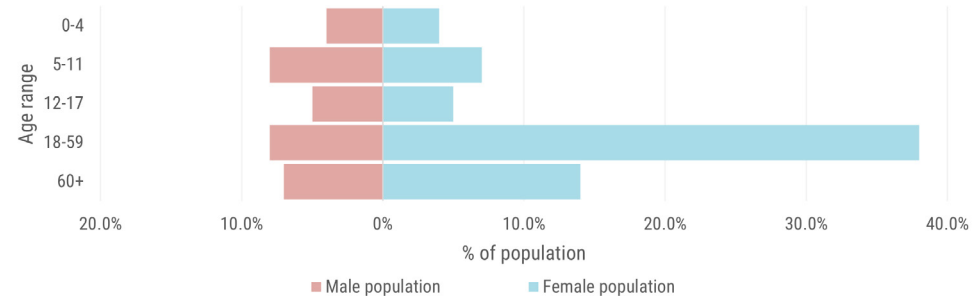
Czech Republic



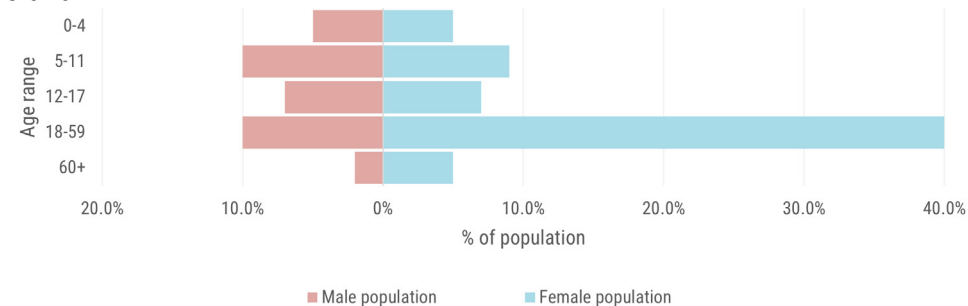
Hungary



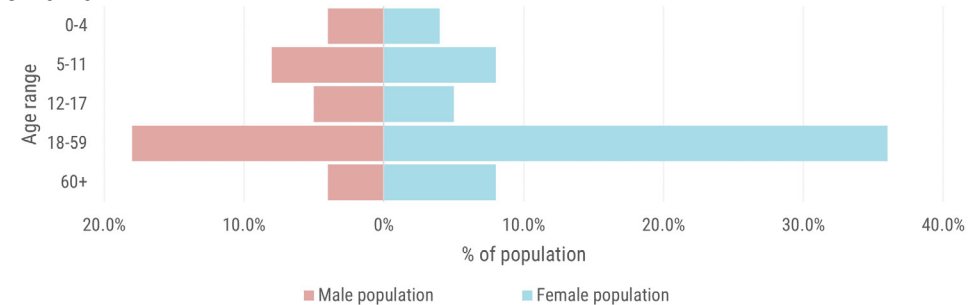
Moldova



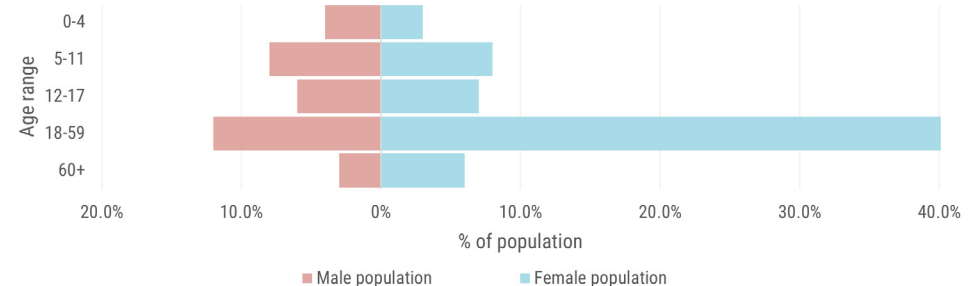
Poland



Romania



Slovakia



Source: UNHCR 15/02/2023

Legal frameworks and refugee rights

As a response to the large and rapid flow of people fleeing war in Ukraine into neighbouring countries, the EU activated the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) in March 2022 to guarantee appropriate protection and assistance for refugees (EC accessed 26/07/2023 a).

European Temporary Protection Directive

The TPD is an exceptional measure adopted by the EU in 2001 following conflicts in former Yugoslavia. It aims to provide immediate and temporary protection to refugees in the event of a mass influx or imminent mass influx of people from non-EU countries unable to return to their countries of origin. The measure is also meant to ensure the efficient operation of asylum systems.

The Council of the EU activated the TPD for the first time in March 2022 to offer quick and effective assistance to people fleeing the war in Ukraine after Russia's 24 February 2022 invasion. For the TPD to be effective, EU member states had to transpose it in their national legislation (EC accessed 26/07/2023 a; EU Monitor accessed 27/07/2023).

The directive lists the following rights for recipients of temporary protection:

- a residence permit for the duration of the protection (which can last from one to three years)
- appropriate information on temporary protection
- guarantees for access to the asylum procedure
- access to employment, subject to rules applicable to the profession and to national labour market policies and general employment conditions
- access to suitable accommodation or housing
- access to social welfare or means of subsistence, if necessary
- access to medical care
- access to state education for people under the age of 18
- opportunities for families to reunite given certain circumstances
- access to banking services, such as opening a basic bank account
- ability to move to another EU country before the residence permit is issued
- free movement among EU countries other than the member state of residence for 90 days within a 180-day period after a residence permit in the host EU country is issued (EC accessed 26/07/2023 a; Council of the EU 20/07/2001).

The TPD applies to the following individuals (EC accessed 26/07/2023 b):

- Ukrainian nationals residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 and their family members displaced on or after 24 February 2022
- Stateless people and people who benefited from international or equivalent protection in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 and their family members displaced from Ukraine on or after 24 February 2022
- Non-Ukrainian third-country nationals (TCN) and stateless people who can prove legal residence in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 on the basis of a valid permanent residence permit issued in accordance with Ukrainian law and who cannot return in safe and durable conditions to their country of origin.

Poland and Hungary do not comply with the TPD in granting temporary protection rights to non-Ukrainian nationals (FRA 31/10/2022). Similarly, the temporary protection mechanism in Moldova, which is not an EU member, applies only to the first two groups and does not include non-Ukrainian nationals (UNHCR accessed 26/07/2023).

Moldova, which is not an EU member, activated its own temporary protection mechanism in March 2023, granting a limited range of rights to refugees (Table 1) compared to the EU TPD activated in March 2022 (ICMPD 04/07/2023; WB 28/04/2023). Refugees from Ukraine with temporary protection status can legally stay in the EU host country that has granted them that status until 4 March 2024, which is when current temporary protection mechanisms are set to expire (EC accessed 26/07/2023 a; Council of the EU 20/07/2001). In September 2023, EU Member States agreed to extend the temporary protection mechanism for a further year, until March 2025, but as of November 8, a formal decision had not yet been adopted (CoEU 28/09/2023). In Moldova, the status will last until at least 1 March 2024 and could be extended (ICMPD 04/07/2023; WB 28/04/2023).

Table 1. Overview of the rights of refugees from Ukraine in the analysed countries derived from their temporary protection status

RIGHTS	COUNTRIES					
	CZECH REPUBLIC	HUNGARY	MOLDOVA	POLAND	ROMANIA	SLOVAKIA
EU member state	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Current validity of temporary protection status	Until 31 March 2024	Until 4 March 2024	Until 1 March 2024	Until 4 March 2024 (in some cases, until 31 August or 30 September 2024)	Until 4 March 2024	Until 4 March 2024
Working without a work permit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to accommodation in a state-provided shelter	Free of charge for all for a maximum of 150 days after the granting of temporary protection; free of charge for certain groups after the first 150 days	✓	Free of charge only for certain groups or individuals with special needs	Free of charge for all for a period of 120 days from first arrival (fees apply if prolonged); fee exemption available for certain groups	✓	✓
Access to healthcare	✓	✓	Primary and emergency	✓	✓	✓
Access to education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Social assistance services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Financial support from the Government	✓ From 1 July 2023, calculated individually at the household level	✓ USD 67 per month per adult USD 40 per month per child	-	✓ One-time cash benefit of USD 75 per person	-	-
Solidarity allowance for hosts	- Available between March 2022 and July 2023	-	-	✓ USD 10 per day per refugee hosted for maximum 3 months	-	✓ USD 8 per adult refugee and USD 4 per child hosted per day

Sources: EUAA (07/2022 a); EC (23/06/2023); UNHCR (accessed 01/08/2023); UNHCR (accessed 01/08/2023); SIP (accessed 01/08/2023); UNHCR (accessed 01/08/2023); UNHCR (accessed 01/08/2023); EC (accessed 25/07/2023)

Theoretically, refugees should have the same rights in each country bound by the EU TPD. In practice, their ability to access what they are entitled to depends on how each country implements the directive and on existing regulations. **The most impactful legal discrepancies involve access to state-provided accommodation, financial assistance, and solidarity allowances.**

Recent legislative changes in Poland (since 1 March 2023) and the Czech Republic (since 1 July 2023) require refugees to pay fees for staying in collective accommodation beyond 120 and 150 days, respectively, from the date they were originally granted temporary protection.

In both cases, certain people can apply for payment exemptions. In Poland, these include people with disabilities, older people, pregnant women and mothers of children up to one year old, single parents taking care of three or more children, and unaccompanied minors (AIDA accessed 25/07/2023). In the Czech Republic, these include children under 18, students under 26, carers of children under six, pregnant women, people older than 65, people with disabilities, and carers of people with disabilities (EC 23/06/2023). In Moldova, only individuals who fit into particular categories of vulnerability have been able to access free state shelter (UNHCR accessed 25/07/2023 a).

The Polish and Slovakian governments provide a solidarity allowance to families hosting Ukrainian refugees. In response to the massive mobilisation of communities to assist Ukrainians fleeing the war, including hosting them in private homes, the governments of the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia introduced a solidarity allowance for private hosts. In Poland, this is approximately USD 300 per month (USD 10 per refugee per day); in Slovakia, it is approximately USD 230 per month (8 USD per adult refugee and USD 4 per child per day) (UNHCR 24/05/2022; SIP accessed 25/07/2023). In the Czech Republic, the solidarity allowance amounted to approximately USD 230 per month, but the scheme ended in July 2023 after legislative changes (UNHCR 24/05/2022; BRNO Daily 30/05/2023; Expats.cz 25/07/2023).

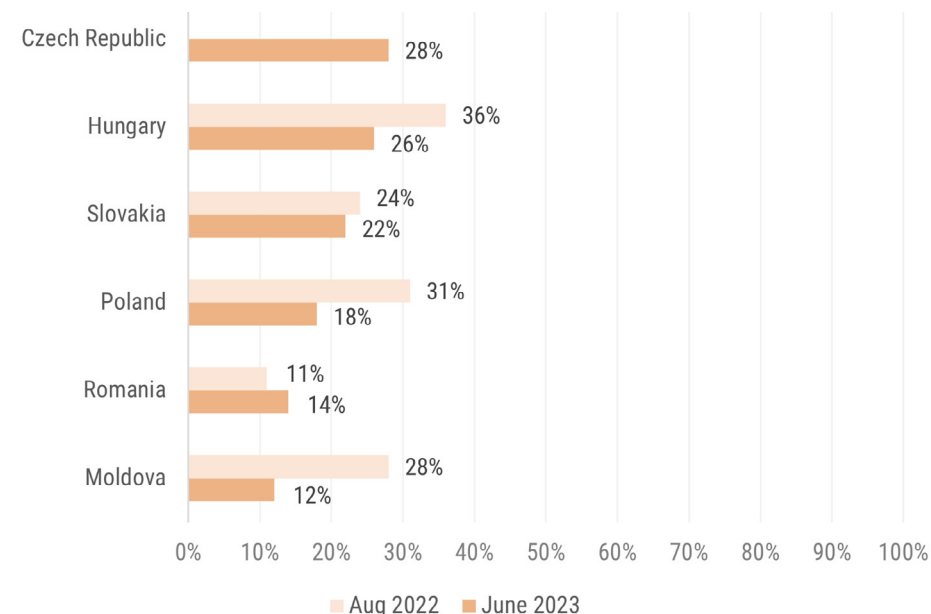
State financial support to refugees also differs by country. In Moldova, and Ukrainian refugees rely either on cash assistance from international organisations or on limited social benefits from social assistance institutions (UNHCR accessed 25/07/2023 b; UNHCR accessed 25/07/2023 c; UNHCR accessed 25/07/2023 d). The Polish Government provides refugees with a one-time cash benefit of USD 75. In Hungary, temporary protection status holders are entitled to a regular subsistence allowance of USD 67 per adult and USD 40 per child per month if the household does not have income from employment or pension (AIDA accessed 25/07/2023). Since July 2023, financial support for refugees in the Czech Republic, has been calculated by household, taking into account the household's employment income, bank account balance, the subsistence minimum, and the lump-sum housing allowance received (EC 23/07/2023).

The scope of social welfare benefits available to refugees also varies per country. In some countries (Poland, Slovakia, and Romania), refugees have similar entitlements as citizens in applying for social welfare benefits. In others, they are limited to applying for selected benefits (Hungary and Slovakia) or only those who fit the category of a specific vulnerable group can apply (Moldova) (EUAA 07/2022 a, 06/2022 a, 06/2022 b, 06/2022 c, and 07/2022 b) The Czech government created a parallel system of benefits for people under temporary protection (MPSV accessed 08/11/2023).

Although the Czech Republic, Moldova, Poland and Romania have dedicated governmental websites providing information about temporary protection status in Ukrainian, many refugees struggle to access this information and rely instead on information provided by family members, wider networks, civil society organisations, or social media, which not always is complete or fully accurate (UNHCR 17/10/2022).

Knowledge about refugee status and rights is central to the ability to exercise those rights. A comparison of the findings of UNHCR Protection Profiling reports conducted in each country in August 2022 and in June 2023 clearly indicates that **it takes time for refugees to acquire knowledge about their legal status and related rights**. In five of the six countries analysed, the gap in awareness levels of refugee respondents decreased over time. That said, in Romania, the gap has slightly increased (Figure 4). Despite increased awareness, between 12% (Moldova) and 28% (Czech Republic) of **refugees still lack sufficient information about their status and rights**.

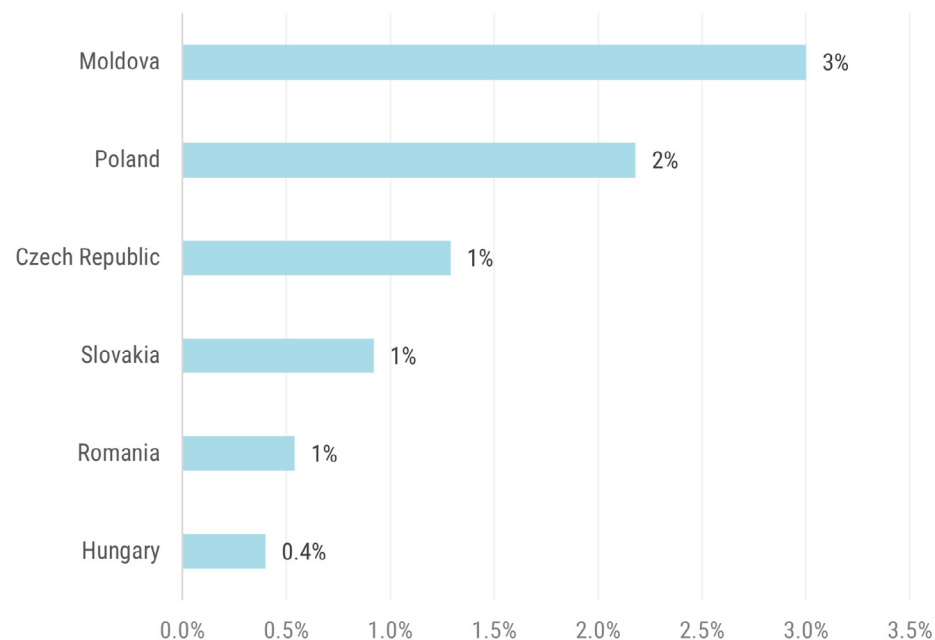
Figure 4. Percentage of refugees from Ukraine reporting gaps in their awareness of their legal situation and rights in the host country



HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE CAPACITY

Central and eastern European countries welcomed Ukrainian refugees after February 2022, offering them critical humanitarian assistance, particularly food and housing, by rapidly established collective centres (Migration Consortium accessed 01/08/2023). Although both state and civil society responders responded quickly, the inflow of refugees required additional financial resources. As at June 2023, according to estimates, Poland had spent the largest amount on refugees (USD 17 billion), followed by the Czech Republic (USD 4.2 billion), Romania (USD 1.8 billion), Slovakia (USD 1.3 billion), and Hungary (USD 0.9 billion) (Kiel Institute accessed 14/07/2023). There is no exact figure for Moldova's spending, but estimates from Moldovan think tanks suggest that the country's total spending on refugees from Ukraine during the same period has reached USD 490 million (Business Insider 27/04/2022). The scale of these costs is most clearly indicated by the share of each country's GDP allocated for refugee support. For example, although Poland's overall spending on Ukrainian refugees was higher than Moldova's GDP for 2022, Moldova spent a higher proportion of its GDP (3%) than Poland (2.2%) did, as at April 2023.

Figure 5. Percentage of host country GDP allocated for refugee support between January 2022 and February 2023

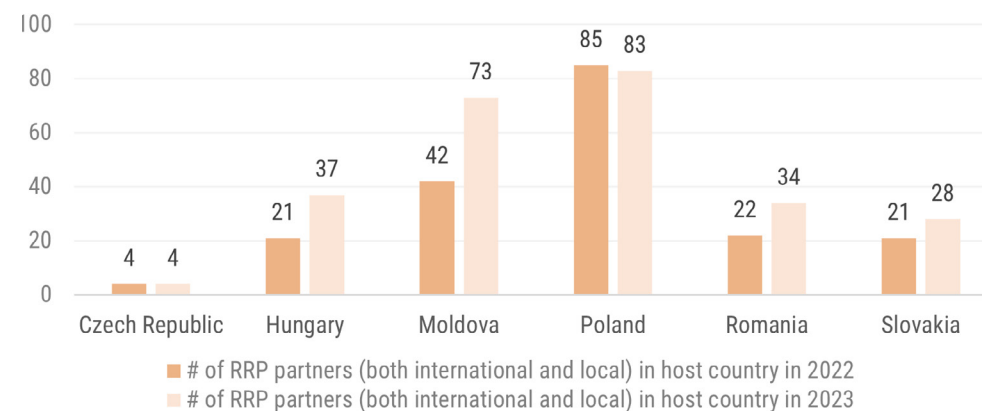


Note: given the lack of available data, only an approximate was given for Moldova.

Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

The scale of the refugee influx has required the coordination and cooperation of many entities: national and municipal authorities, national and local NGOs, civil society, Ukrainian diaspora communities, and volunteers from both host and refugee communities. International humanitarian organisations have supported and complemented the national response. UNHCR developed Regional Refugee Response Plans (RRPs) for seven countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia) in 2022 and ten (adding Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) in 2023. By August 2023, two such plans had been launched: the first one covering March–December 2022 (adopted in March 2022, revised in April, and recalibrated in October) and the second for all of 2023 (UNHCR 15/02/2023). In 2022, 195 organisations were engaged in the RRP for the six analysed countries; in RRP 2023, this number had increased to 259 (UNHCR 15/02/2023 and 28/03/2023). As shown in Figure 6, the biggest nominal increase occurred in Moldova (73 in 2023 compared to 42 in 2022). As Europe's second poorest country (right after Ukraine), Moldova has needed the most external support to host refugees (UNHCR 15/02/2023).

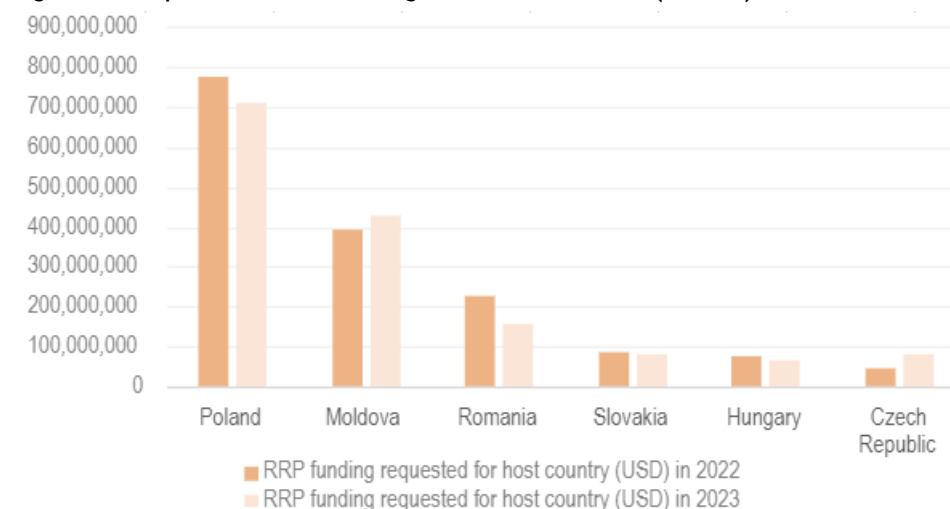
Figure 6. Regional Refugee Response Plan organisations



Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

In 2022, the requested RRP funding for the analysed countries amounted to USD 1.6 billion, with the highest requirements for Poland (USD 778 million), Moldova (USD 392 million), and Romania (USD 227 million). The received funding covered 73% (USD 1.2 billion) of the request (UNHCR 03/10/2022; UNHCR 28/03/2023). The total requested 2023 RRP funding for the six countries is slightly lower, but the amount has increased for Moldova and the Czech Republic (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Requested RRP funding in 2022 and 2023 (in USD)



Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

REFUGEE NEEDS AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

Barriers to accessing public services

Although all the countries except Moldova rapidly adopted temporary protection regulations after Russia's full-scale invasion, refugees from Ukraine have consistently faced barriers accessing public services. Two key factors are the lack of information about their rights to access public services, and language. Other challenges relate to the lack of documentation, permanent addresses, and childcare, as well as bureaucracy further prolonging wait times (UNHCR 17/10/2022; Pędziwiatr and Magdziarz 15/05/2023). Barriers to access are worse for people with specific needs, namely people with disabilities, those with serious medical needs, older people, and separated or unaccompanied children (UNHCR 17/10/2022). Some refugees, especially members of the Roma minority group, stateless people, and non-Ukrainian nationals, also struggle to access services due to discrimination (UNHCR 19/04/2023; Pędziwiatr and Magdziarz 15/05/2023).

Accommodation

Refugees fleeing Ukraine have found it very challenging to find affordable accommodation. Even before the Ukraine refugee crisis, central and eastern European countries suffered shortages in affordable housing due to the combination of insufficient social housing supply, housing regulations not beneficial to people in need of housing, increasing real estate prices, and rapidly increasing mortgage rates resulting from inflation (OECD 21/07/2022; Habitat 01/2023; World Bank 2018). The refugee influx after Russia's February 2022 invasion contributed to a further increase in rental prices (UNECE 07/10/2022; Trojanek and Gluszak 05/08/2022).

As rental costs and energy prices continue to increase, the ability of refugees to access affordable accommodation is likely to worsen (UNHCR 15/02/2023). Although the TPD is meant to ensure that all European countries provide refugees from Ukraine with accommodation or housing subsidies, the assistance available in each country varies. The three most common housing options available for refugees are collective centres (run by the state or humanitarian organisations), rented flats (either with rental subsidies, as available in the Czech Republic, or privately), and private accommodation with individuals (UNHCR 17/10/2022; OECD 27/07/2022).

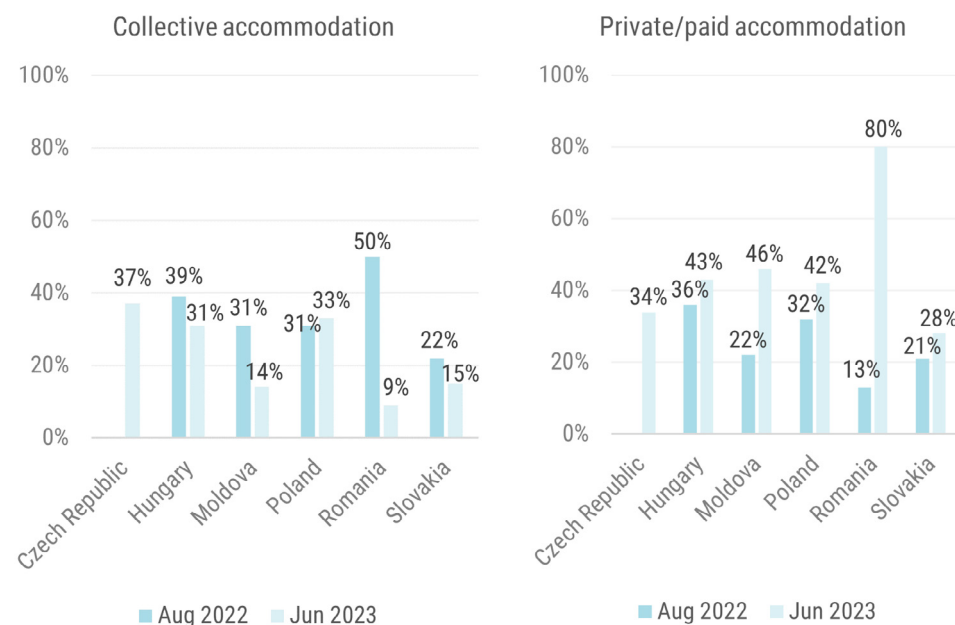
In all the analysed countries, collective accommodation centres established immediately after the invasion are currently facing consolidation or closure. Others struggle to continue operations with limited funding. This reduces housing options for refugees who already face housing precarity. That said, the protracted use of collective and temporary centres also poses challenges to privacy, personal safety, and human dignity because they were not

designed for long-term accommodation. As government support diminishes and savings dwindle, the need for sustainable medium- to long-term housing options is becoming increasingly urgent (IOM 12/07/2023).

Between August 2022 and June 2023, the proportion of refugees staying in collective centres declined while the share of refugees staying in private/paid accommodation increased (Figure 8). This may be because:

- Use of collective accommodation is considered a short-term solution for refugees and after several weeks or months many refugees found private (rented) accommodation (Habitat for Humanity International accessed 1/8/2023).
- Many refugees stayed in collective centres as a transit point before moving on to other destinations (including Germany, Canada, or Spain).
- Authorities reduced how long refugees can receive free accommodation in Poland and the Czech Republic, driving people not eligible for exemptions out of collective centres despite a lack of affordable alternatives (AIDA accessed 25/07/2023).

Figure 8. Percentages of refugees from Ukraine who declared residing in collective and private accommodation



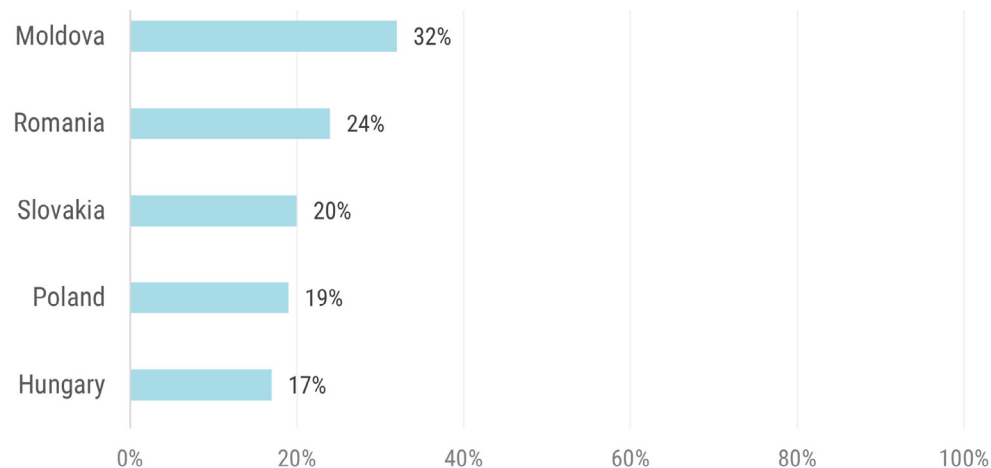
Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

In July 2023, the implementation of the Lex Ukraine V law² in the Czech Republic meant many refugees no longer met the criteria to stay in state-run collective centres. An estimated 35,000 Ukrainians whose timelines are expiring (approximately half of those currently residing in collective accommodation) will need to find alternative housing solutions (IOM 12/07/2023; Labour Office of the Czech Republic accessed 1/8/2023).

In Poland, refugees who have been in the country for more than 120 days and do not meet the criteria for vulnerability can still use collective accommodations if they contribute to 50% of the cost, not exceeding PLN 40 (USD 10) per person per day. After 180 days, refugees are required to contribute 75% of accommodation costs, not exceeding PLN 60 (USD 15) per person per day (SIP accessed 25/07/2023). This may have affected 15,000 refugees or more living in collective centres in Poland (ISAP 12/03/2022, RMF24 30/03/2023, Radio Opole 29/04/2023, UNHCR 20/01/2023, PCPM 18/01/2023). Rising utility costs and the protracted nature of the crisis may lead Polish authorities to shift even more of the housing costs onto Ukrainian refugees, worsening existing challenges refugees face in meeting basic household needs (UNHCR 23/11/2022).

Health

Figure 9. Percentage of surveyed refugees from Ukraine who reported not accessing healthcare when needed in the analysed countries*



*No data for the Czech Republic
Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

In all the countries analysed for this report, temporary protection recipients had access to primary and emergency healthcare. In the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, temporary protection holders were entitled to almost the same range of free medical services as citizens of these countries (EUAA 07/2022 a; UNHCR accessed 25/07/2023; SIP accessed 25/07/2023; UNHCR accessed 25/07/2023 e; Pędziwiatr and Magdziarz 15/05/2023). However, refugees from Ukraine struggle to access healthcare because of lack of information on how to use the healthcare system, language barriers, shortages of specific treatments or medications, and long wait times (WHO 04/04/2023; REACH et al. 12/9/2022).

A high percentage of refugees (between 19% in Poland and 32% in Moldova) did not seek healthcare despite needing it (Figure 9). The high number for Moldova (32%) may be because specialised health services are not provided for refugees as temporary protection holders are only entitled to primary and emergency healthcare (UNHCR accessed 25/07/2023 a; Centre for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 05/07/2023).

Education

All refugee children from Ukraine have guaranteed access to education in the six countries. However, enrolment rates remain low. In the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia, the percentage of Ukrainian refugee children enrolled in schools varies between 54–59%. The rates are much lower in Hungary (28%), Romania (11%), and Moldova (4%) (Figure 10). This may be because Ukrainian is more similar to Czech, Polish, and Slovakian than it is to Hungarian and Romanian, making it easier for children adjusting to new schools (ICMPD 08/03/2022; IOM accessed 08/03/2023).

The language barrier may be a factor in Ukrainian refugee parents deciding to continue their children's education through the All-Ukrainian Online School. As at March 2023, 71% of school-aged Ukrainian children in Romania used this platform and 62% used it in Moldova (UNESCO accessed 01/08/2023; UNESCO accessed 01/08/2023 a). In Hungary, Ukrainian refugee parents said the option enrol their children in the Ukrainian education system online was a major reason for not enrolling their children in Hungarian schools. This is compounded by the lack of available spaces for refugee children in nearby schools (UNESCO accessed 01/08/2023 b).

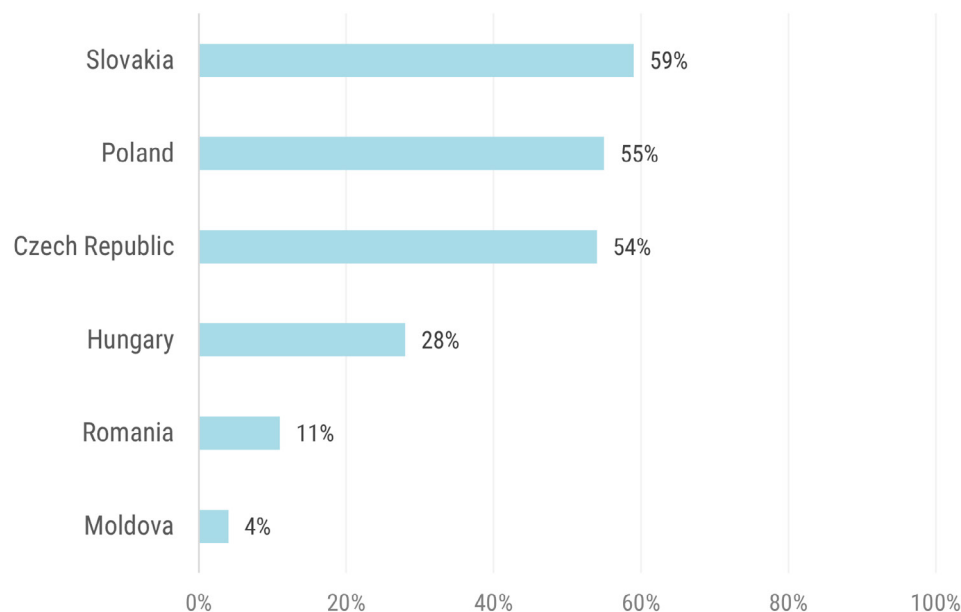
In Poland, challenges to accessing education include shortages of teachers, a lack of available slots, and insufficient institutional support for the inclusion of refugees in schools (UNICEF 10/07/2023; UNESCO accessed 01/08/2023 c; Humanium 14/03/2023; MFA 08/04/2022). In the Czech Republic, the law requires students to pass Czech language and mathematics exams before entering secondary school (grades 10–11). While refugees can receive a waiver for

2 A package of three government bills related to the introduction of temporary protection status for people from Ukraine.

passing this language exam, school reports with the results from the last two years need to be attached to it. This is an impediment to enrolment because of a lack of documents (Radio Svoboda 08/05/2023; Cermat accessed 1/8/2023).

While online learning is a short-term substitute for face-to-face education, enrolling refugee children in physical schools is important as it allows them to socialise with other children, which is key to a child's wellbeing (UNICEF 24/01/2023).

Figure 10. Percentage of Ukrainian refugee children enrolled in schools in the analysed countries

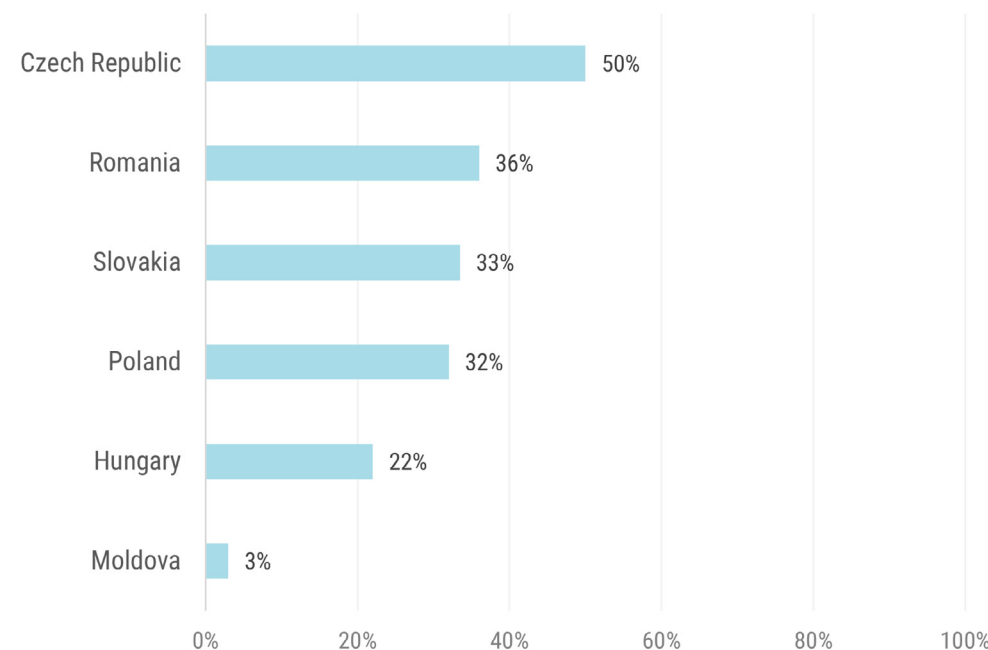


Sources: UNESCO (accessed 01/08/2023); UNESCO (accessed 01/08/2023); UNESCO (accessed 01/08/2023); UNESCO (accessed 01/08/2023); UNESCO (accessed 01/08/2023); UNESCO (accessed 01/08/2023)

Employment

While temporary protection regulations grant Ukrainian refugees the right to work in their host countries, many struggle to find jobs. According to country-level statistics, in March 2023, 50% of refugees were employed in the Czech Republic and 32% in Poland. In the second half of 2022, 35% of refugees worked in Slovakia and 36% in Romania. In Hungary, the figure was lower, at 22% (Figure 11). In Moldova, only 3% of refugees were employed in 2022, even though the Moldovan Government simplified employment procedures for Ukrainians in March 2022 (Interfax 02/03/2022).

Figure 11. Percentage of Ukrainian refugees employed in the host countries



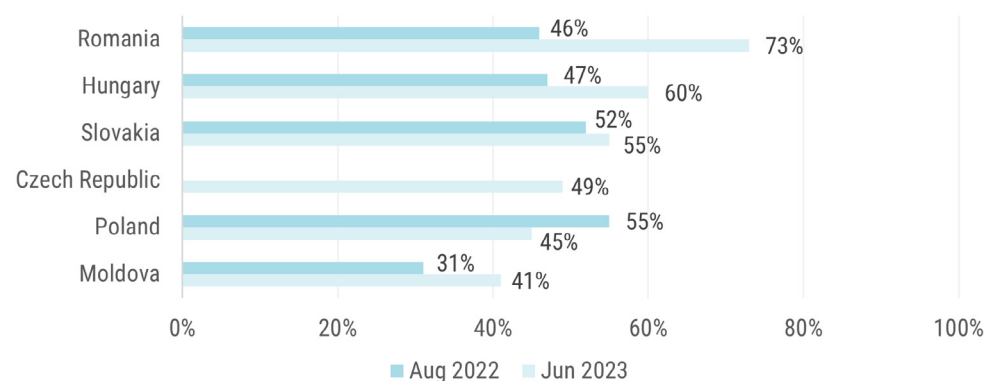
Note: data for the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland were current as at March 2023. Data for Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia were from the second half of 2022.

Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

Many refugees from Ukraine struggle to find a job corresponding to their qualifications despite being well educated, forcing them to accept jobs below their skills (OECD 06/01/2023). Refugees from Ukraine have high educational attainment rates. The percentage of people with at least a bachelor's degree varies from 31% in Moldova to 73% in Romania (Figure 12). In all cases, the numbers were higher than the tertiary educational attainment rate in the host countries (Eurostat 07/07/2023; WB accessed 25/07/2023).

According to a regional UNHCR survey in Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia, 9% of those who reported being employed said they worked informally, leaving them vulnerable to protection risks such as a lack of insurance in case of on-the-job accidents, sickness, or pregnancy; exploitation and unlawful employment practices; and no guarantee of regular payments (UNHCR 19/4/2023 and 03/2023). Performing underskilled jobs often for minimal wages has led 82% of employed refugees to report urgent humanitarian needs, mostly for material assistance (47%) and food (27) (UNHCR 19/04/2023).

Figure 12. Percentage of refugees from Ukraine with university or post-university education



Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

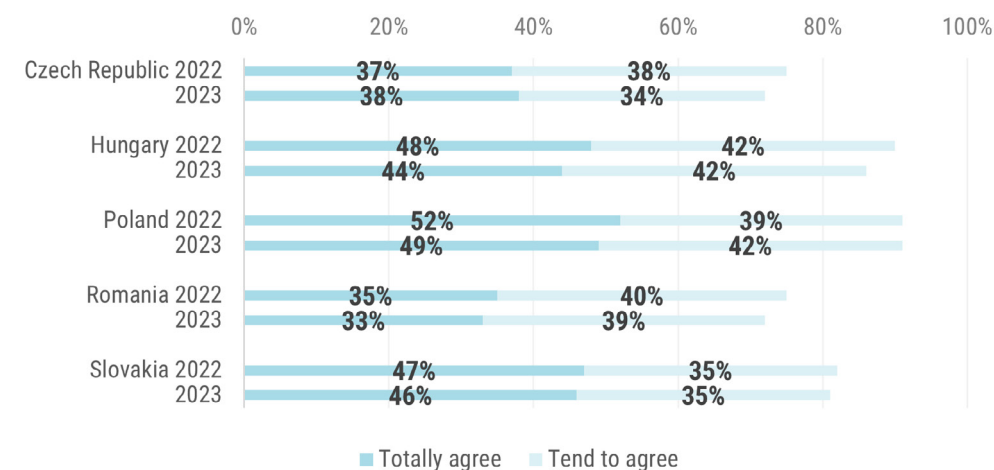
Barriers to employment include a lack of knowledge of the host country language, a lack of childcare, and a shortage of employment opportunities corresponding to a refugee's qualifications (IOM 08/06/2023; OECD 06/01/2023). In all six countries, at least 70% of adult refugees are women and over a third of all refugees are children (Figure 3), meaning most refugees are mothers who have fled Ukraine with their children (OECD 06/01/2023). Care duties for family members of refugees limit their opportunities for regular employment (IOM 08/06/2023). These duties may also include taking care of family members with specific needs, such as people with disabilities, those with serious medical needs, older people, and separated or unaccompanied children (UNHCR 19/04/2023).

Barriers in Moldova differ from those in the other analysed countries as most refugees do not have temporary protection status and thus do not have the same right to employment or entrepreneurship opportunities. There is also a scarcity of available jobs in Moldova, and most of those available offer minimal remuneration (IOM 08/06/2023 and 18/05/2023).

SOCIAL COHESION: ATTITUDES OF HOST COMMUNITIES TOWARDS REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE

While there was initially a large-scale mobilisation to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine, levels of support are dropping, as mirrored by the relevant legal changes in Poland and the Czech Republic (SIP accessed 25/7/2023; EC 23/6/2023; Visit Ukraine 23/3/2023; Action Contre la Faim accessed 11/08/2023). Eurobarometer surveys conducted in July 2022 and February 2023 show a slight decrease in levels of support in each country (Eurobarometer accessed 1/8/2023; Figure 13).

Figure 13. Percentage of the host community expressing a positive attitude towards Ukrainian refugees in July 2022 and February 2023**



** Respondents answered a question: 'Do you agree or disagree with welcoming at the EU people fleeing the war after Russia's invasion of Ukraine?'

Source: ACAPS accessed 01/08/2023

While levels of general support are diminishing only slightly, support for aid or assistance is decreasing in some countries. In Poland, the percentage of people who strongly support assistance to refugees decreased from 49% in January 2023 to 28% in June. 60% of respondents were opposed to refugees having the same access to social benefits as Polish citizens, and over half were against providing benefits (compared to 37% in June 2022) and food and accommodation to Ukrainians (compared to 20% in June 2022) (Euractiv 15/6/2022; Staniszewski 06/2023).

In the Czech Republic, only 56% of Czechs supported temporary acceptance of Ukrainian refugees in the country in June 2023, comparing to 75% in June the previous year (Expats.cz 28/06/2023). In Slovakia, 25% of Slovaks were against granting Ukrainian refugees the same rights as citizens in December 2022, compared to 15% in March 2022 (SAS 24/02/2023). This reflects the worsening economic situation in these countries, resulting mainly from inflation.

Surprisingly, people in Hungary expressed the highest levels of support for Ukrainian refugees despite the government's openly pro-Russian policy. 90% of Hungarians agreed with the statement that "we must continue to support refugees from Ukraine, because they are fleeing the war" (GLOBSEC 05/2023). However, other surveys show that expressed support for refugees from Ukraine directly related to country's economic condition; as the economy worsens, fewer people support ongoing benefits for refugees from Ukraine (Kyriazi 28/12/2022).