

Poland Fact Sheet

April 2024



Welcome the stranger.
Protect the refugee.

Introduction

Nearly 5 million people crossed into Poland following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and about 1 million people are projected to remain. Approximately 90% of the refugees who arrived in the country were women and children, and Poland expects to continue receiving and hosting a considerable number of refugees for some time to come.

In partnership with local organizations, and alongside host communities, HIAS Poland is committed to reaching vulnerable populations who experience serious protection risks, including gender-based violence (GBV) and barriers to safe shelter, medical services, and employment. We work to ensure forcibly displaced people can fully access their rights, improve their mental health and wellbeing, live free from GBV, and earn sustainable income through safe economic opportunities.

HIAS Programs and Focus

Our work in Poland promotes the well-being, recognition of rights, and comprehensive inclusion of refugees, migrants, and the host community. Additionally, HIAS Poland focuses on building the capacity of local organizations supporting displaced populations, with a specific emphasis on women, children, the elderly, survivors of GBV, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disabilities.

Community-Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (CB-MHPSS)

Refugees and forcibly displaced people face adversity, extreme stress, and high levels of trauma associated with conflict and family separation. HIAS Poland's CB-MHPSS programs train community members to recognize acute psychological and emotional

distress in refugee adults and children, and how to respond appropriately. Our team of psychologists and community outreach workers collaborate with refugees to assess, design, and implement suitable and culturally appropriate interventions, such as education sessions that promote the development of healthy coping



Oksana Bezkorovaina and her daughter Mariia wait at a home in Warsaw before shifting to an Airbnb where they are staying with help from Our Choice and HIAS on June 4, 2022, in Warsaw, Poland. (Betsy Joles for HIAS)

mechanisms, group sessions on stress management, and art and sports-based activities. HIAS Poland is focused on increasing the capacity of local partners in delivering safe mental health programs to affected populations by providing tailor-made training, exchanging best practices, and creating communities of practice.

Economic Inclusion

Access to dignified, sustainable, and safe livelihoods is at the core of HIAS Poland's economic inclusion interventions. We help young female Ukrainian



Economic Inclusion

We promote entrepreneurship among Ukrainian refugee women.



CB-MHPSS Support

We train community members to recognize acute psychological stress in refugees and to respond appropriately.

refugees improve their marketing, public relations, and fundraising skills through social media and vocational skills programs. The Ukrainian Youth Tech Accelerator Program, in partnership with the Noosphere Engineering School in Ukraine, connects Ukrainian youth in multiple locations in Poland and Ukraine with research institutions, potential investors, and start-ups in the sectors of aerospace, robotics, artificial intelligence, geo-imaging, and natural language processing. HIAS Poland also promotes entrepreneurship amongst Ukrainian refugee women, including mothers of children with disabilities and refugees residing in collective centres, through activities designed to increase participants' understanding of accounting, tax, and legal compliance in Poland. These activities enhance the knowledge and skills of refugees, enabling them to access the Polish labour market, establish their own businesses, and obtain crucial information for their economic independence. With this approach, HIAS Poland enables refugees, migrants, and host communities to identify opportunities that will increase resilience, restore dignity, and provide avenues for building an independent and meaningful future.

Partnerships with Local Partners

To increase its reach and support to refugees and displaced populations, HIAS Poland partnered with local organizations providing GBV prevention and response services, MHPSS, economic inclusion activities, and legal aid. HIAS Poland's local partners support vulnerable and marginalized population from the refugee community, such as people with mental and physical disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, the Roma community, women, and young girls. Local

partners in Poland include [Dobry Start](#), [Dom Otwarty](#), [Jedność](#), [Jewish Community Center Warsaw](#), [Kuchnia Konfliktu](#), [Lambda Warszawa](#), [Patchwork Association for Immigrant Families of Persons with Disabilities](#), [Right to Protection \(R2P\)](#), [Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej](#) and [Ukraiński Dom](#).

HIAS in Africa and Eurasia

HIAS advocates for the protection of refugees, asylum seekers, other displaced populations, and local host communities in Africa and Eurasia. As part of a comprehensive regional response to meet the urgent needs of these populations, HIAS' programming in the region is focused on protection, gender-based violence prevention and response, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and economic integration and community engagement.

HIAS currently has programs in three countries in Africa (Chad, Kenya, and South Africa) and six countries in Eurasia (Greece, Israel, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Ukraine). Across the region, HIAS partners with a wide range of government agencies (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State Bureau for Populations, Refugees and Migration), UN entities (UNHCR, World Health Organization), the private sector (Moderna), and other non-governmental organizations and local partners.

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