

WHO and IOM are partnering with the EU for better health of refugees and displaced people from Ukraine

The World Health Organization (WHO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the European Union (EU) are partnering to support countries in improving the access to health care services for refugees and displaced people from Ukraine under the Temporary Protection Directive activated by the EU on 4 March 2022 following the onset of the war in Ukraine.

The project **Improving access to healthcare for refugees and people displaced from Ukraine benefitting of temporary protection in Member States** is funded by the EU under the 2023 EU4Health Work Programme. It will be implemented in 10 European countries from 2023 to 2025: Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia.

Background

Since the war began, millions of people have been forced to leave their homes. More than 5.9 million people from Ukraine are displaced across Europe (as of November 2023)¹. The arrival of large numbers of refugees and displaced people has placed significant strain on the national health systems of many refugee-receiving countries. To assist countries in managing the situation, WHO, IOM and EU are working with national health authorities to support and strengthen their health systems.

IOM, WHO and EU will jointly:

-  analyse and address the barriers and gaps that hinder refugees' and displaced people's access to health services;
-  support health authorities to expand the health coverage and meet the health needs of refugees and displaced people from Ukraine;
-  provide and strengthen the capacities of health mediators to support refugees and displaced people in navigating the health system in the host country;
-  establish and strengthen networks of health workers and support their education needs to strengthen their capacities in the provision of refugee-sensitive health services;
-  empower displaced health workers from Ukraine to continue their professional development;
-  increase the vaccination coverage among refugees and displaced people from Ukraine; and
-  establish health promotion programmes adapted to the realities in which refugees and displaced people from Ukraine live in.

¹ Source: UNHCR data portal. Ukraine refugee situation. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>; accessed 30 November 2023.

