



# WARSAW IN THE REFUGEE CRISIS

Report for the first three months  
JUNE 2022



From February 24th to May 31st 2022:

Almost  
**800**  
K

refugees  
„passed”  
through  
the city

**170**  
K

refugees registered  
in Warsaw  
and in the  
metropolitan area

Over  
**300**  
K

refugees stayed for  
more than 3 days  
in Warsaw  
and its vicinity  
at the peak of the  
crisis in March

Around  
**30%**

of refugees are  
still unregistered  
**51%** are adult women  
versus **8%** of men  
**41%** are children  
aged 0-18

**160**  
K

accommodations  
were provided by  
municipal points  
of stay

**146**

children  
were born  
in Warsaw  
hospitals

Over  
**14**  
K

volunteers  
were involved  
in helping the city

Over  
**10**  
K

Ukrainian children  
found a place  
in Warsaw  
primary schools

**74%**

of Warsaw residents  
got involved  
in helping refugees

**36%**

of Ukrainian women  
at working age  
registered in Warsaw  
have already found  
employment

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On February 24, Russia commenced its military aggression in Ukraine, and the first refugees crossed the Polish border with Ukraine. At the beginning of March, the number of daily border crossings towards Poland reached 130,000. Back in 2021, on average, about 11,000 people entered Poland every day.

The first bigger wave of refugees reached the capital a few days after the opening of the border. Between February 28 and March 9 over 300,000 refugees arrived in the city. In the following weeks, it was already almost 600,000 people who needed help: from information to hospital care. For comparison: the migration crisis in Europe in 2015 was caused by a wave of 1 million refugees who were coming to Europe for almost the whole year.

In total, almost 800,000 people "passed" through the city by the end of May, which corresponds to approx. 40% of the entire population of Warsaw.

At the peak of the crisis, about 300,000 people stayed in and around Warsaw for more than a few days. Since May, however, we can observe a gradual trend of leaving the city: to other places in Poland or abroad, including returns to Ukraine. A realistic estimate of the number of new residents will be possible after the summer break. The main factor in deciding whether to leave or stay will be the progress of the military situation in Ukraine and the chances of finding work and housing in Poland.

The overall assessment of the help provided to hundreds of thousands of people, mainly women and children, seems positive. The vast majority of the residents of Warsaw became involved in helping refugees. In a survey commissioned by the City Hall during the first month of the crisis, 74% of women and men in Warsaw declared their commitment to helping refugees. The most common forms of support were participation in public collections of food, clothes, medicines, etc., and financial support. Residents also perceived very positively the city's decision to admit Ukrainian children to schools and kindergartens, and to provide them with free transport.

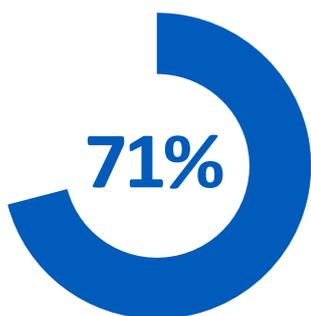
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**74%**

of Warsaw residents were involved in helping refugees from Ukraine - the most common forms of help were financial support and participation in public collections

**62%**

of them planned to get involved in helping in the next 30 days



**of Warsaw residents positively assess the reaction of the City of Warsaw to the flood of refugees from Ukraine**

#### **TOP 5 well known actions of the City (% of people who know it)**

Admitting children from Ukraine to nurseries, kindergartens and schools **89%**

Guaranteeing free public transport **87%**

Organization of help for people arriving at the West and East railway stations **83%**

Organization of information points and hotlines **80%**

Organization of goods or money collections **78%**

#### **Best rated actions of the City (% of people assessing positively)**

Guaranteeing free public transport **89%**

Shipment of gifts in kind to Ukraine **85%**

Admitting children from Ukraine to nurseries, kindergartens and schools **80%**

Running medical help points **79%**

Organization of goods or money collections **76%**

**86%** support the continuation of admitting children from Ukraine to nurseries, kindergartens and schools

**76%** support the continuation of free public transport for Ukrainian citizens

#### Methodology

The survey was carried out using the telephone interviewing technique (CATI) among Warsaw residents aged 18 and over.

The study sample was representative in terms of gender, age, district of residence and level of education.

Sample size: N=502. The research was carried out on 7-13 April 2022.



## City assistance to refugees

From the early days of the crisis the Warsaw City Hall focused its actions on the organization and coordination of support for refugees, as well as for thousands of volunteers who directly provided aid or supported city officials in their activities.

Since the aid came from the grassroots, it is difficult to estimate its full scale. Support was provided by private persons, NGOs, companies and universities. The numbers below refer to activities in which the municipal services were directly involved offices, districts, units subordinate to the city, including the Municipal Police, and municipal companies in the period from February 24th to May 31st.

By the end of May, 338 000 refugees received help in three reception points at the Eastern and Western Railway Stations and the Multicultural Center. Over 14,000 volunteers were involved in those points. **On Monday, March 7, at the Western Railway Station, a record of 20,000 refugees were assisted.**

As the railway infrastructure, including stations and their immediate surroundings (e.g. parking lots), are not under the supervision of municipal institutions, but companies belonging to the PKP Group, the possibilities and scale of the city's operation at these points depended on the consent of the owners of the facilities and areas.

A similar situation concerned the possibility of mobilizing the resources of the police, state fire brigade or voluntary labour corp because they services are subordinate to government bodies and the voivode (a gov representative).

The Public Transport Authority performed almost 3,800 special journeys between reception points and accommodation points, carrying 94,000 people: 919 journeys (28,000 people) commissioned by the City Hall, and 2,878 journeys (66,000 people) commissioned by the Mazowieckie Voivode. In the most intense period, between 6 and 17 March, city buses performed 774 journeys for 28,000 people.

City accommodation points provided a total of almost 160,000 places in 33 locations. At the peak of the crisis, the city had 3,201 places a day.

The residents of Warsaw submitted 5,301 housing offers for refugees to the municipal database. After verification, refugees were located in over 1,000 of those houses/flats.

The small number of accommodation points provided the city, compared to the number of refugees, shows how great was the scale of help from private individuals and Ukrainian families and friends who were in the city before February 24.

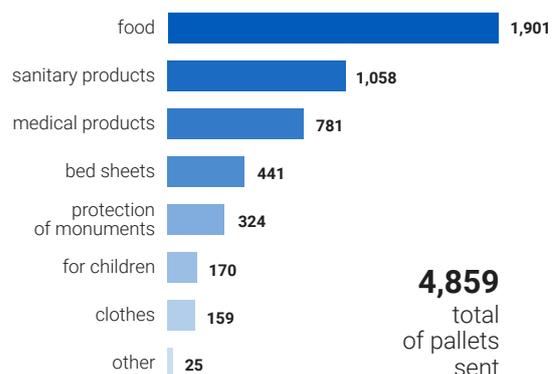
From the very beginning, the city organized medical points where almost 4,000 people were provided assistance. Over 1,000 people were hospitalized in municipal hospitals.

Over 4,000 adults and 5,600 children benefited from the open health care in Warsaw. The Warsaw Children's Hospital was the leader in admitting children.

146 children were born in municipal hospitals. Most in the Żelazna Medical Center – 55.

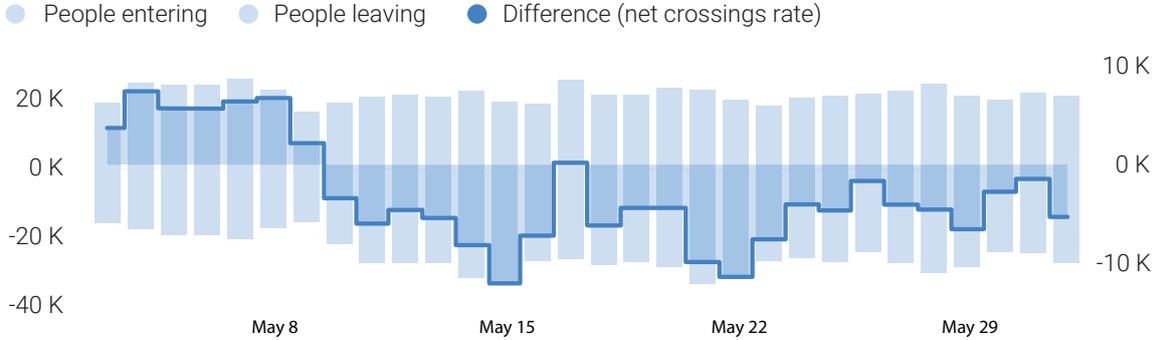
The city, in cooperation with municipal companies, primarily MPWiK, also organized transports with humanitarian aid. In total, almost 54,000 pallets of food, hygiene products and other products were shipped to Ukraine, mainly to Kiev. They came from collections and donations of residents, companies and aid organizations from Warsaw, as well as other Polish and European cities.

**Number of pallets with humanitarian aid shipped by Warsaw to Ukraine**



# How many refugees are in Warsaw?

The difference in crossing the PL UA border during the last 30 days (May)



After three since the beginning of the war, the Polish border with Ukraine has been crossed by over 3.7 million people. At the beginning of May, we could observe a clear reverse trend. According to the data of the Border Guard, there are more crossings towards Ukraine than towards Poland. The net traffic (the difference between people entering and people leaving) at the end of May amounted to 2 million people. Therefore, we assume that about 2 million people crossed the land border with Ukraine and did not return. This does not mean, however, that 2 million refugees are permanently in Poland. Some of them went further towards the west of Europe using the Schengen borders of the EU.

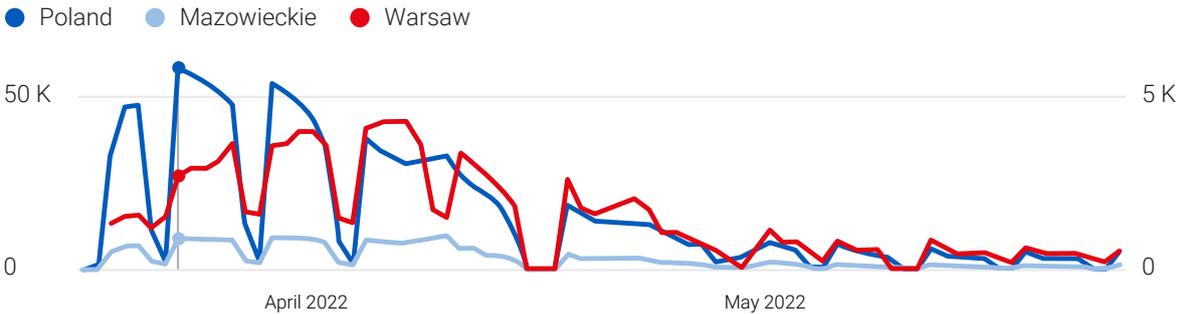
The number of people who stayed in Poland for a longer period is most likely in the range of about 1.1 million. This is the number of people who registered, i.e. applied for the social security number (PESEL). About 400,000 people, i.e. the 30%, are probably still unregistered.

This number is continuously changing. Due to the end of the school year in Ukraine on May 31, children who have remained in the Ukrainian education system went on summer holiday back to Ukraine or to other places. The end of August and September will bring a new, more complete picture of the situation.

The nationwide statistics showed a sharp decline in refugee registration in May. While in March it was an average of around 50,000 registrations a day, in April this number dropped to around 30,000, and since May it is around 5,000 a day. The declining dynamics of registration suggests that the vast majority of those who considered staying in Poland for a longer period had already obtained a PESEL number.

The number of people who have registered in Warsaw until May 31st is 111,000. It is 10% of nationwide registrations and 50% of registrations in the entire Mazowieckie region. Another 60,000 people are registered in the nine

Dynamics of granting PESEL numbers to refugees in Poland, the Mazowieckie voivodeship and in Warsaw



counties of the Warsaw metropolitan area. It can therefore be assumed that 170,000 people are somehow related with the city. Another tens of thousands (approx 30% more than registrations) remain without registration, waiting for the development of the situation in Ukraine.

The record day in terms of registration was Wednesday, April 6 when 4,300 applications were accepted throughout Warsaw.

Most people registered at the National Stadium: 61,000 people. Among the district offices, the first place belonged to Mokotów over 7,000 applications - and the least people submitted an application to the district office of Rembertów - 1237.

Based on the registration data, we can get to know better who the new residents of Warsaw and its vicinity are. However, we must remember that the mere fact of registration does not always have to mean permanent residence in Warsaw, just as the lack of a PESEL number is not the same as not staying in the city. However, it must be assumed that the fact of registration is, to a large extent, an indicator of the intention to stay in the city, at least for some time. The registration process took place all over Poland and people who stayed in other voivodships did not have to come to Warsaw.

Analyzing the register of applications submitted in Warsaw, adult women dominate in the entire group of new residents of the city with a number over 56,000. Over 30,000 of them (60%) are people aged 25-45. Together with 22,000 girls, the female gender constitutes over 70% of the entire group registered in Warsaw.

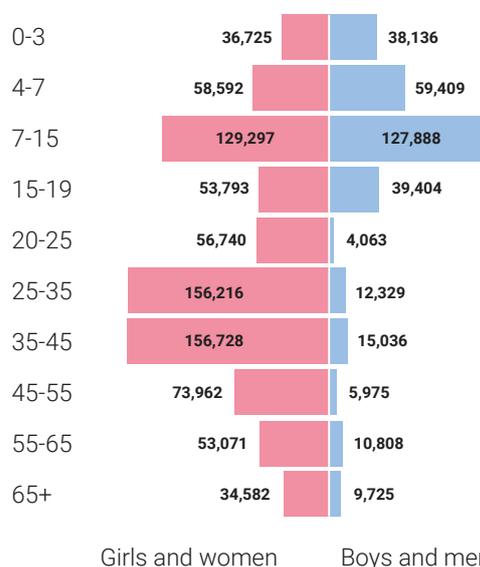
There are 22,000 boys and just over 8,000 adult men. This is due to legal regulations in Ukraine men aged 18-65 are of recruitable age and are forbidden to leave Ukraine. Those who are in Poland are mainly seniors, whom we have over 1103, or students.

who had the right to return and complete their studies

The oldest person registered in Warsaw was born in 1924 (female) and 1925 (male).

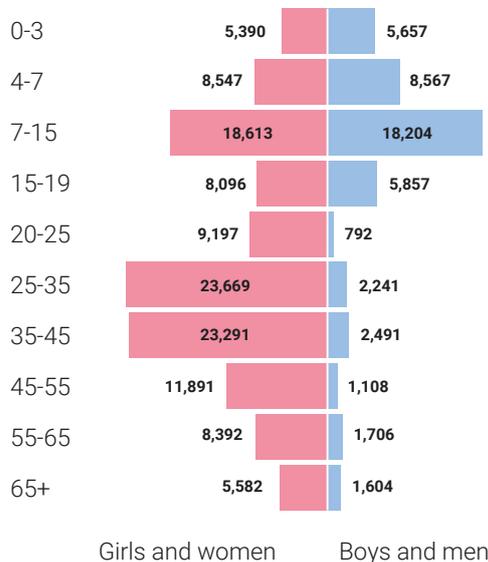
### Poland – total registrations 1 million 149 K

Age structure - visualization



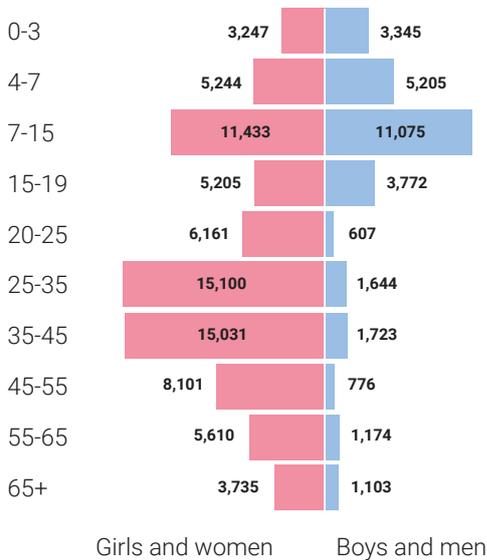
### Warsaw Metropolitan Area – 175,000 in total

Age structure - visualization



### Warsaw – 112 K total registrations

Age structure - visualization



There is over 10,000 children of preschool age (5,200 boys and the same number of girls), and over 22,000 of school age (half of them are girls and the other half boys). The number of registered high school-age youth is 9,000. This group is dominated by girls - over 5,000 with less than 4,000 boys.

More than 17,000 children attend municipal educational institutions. In Poland, it is 195,000 children and adolescents. Thus, Warsaw accounts for 9% of this group.

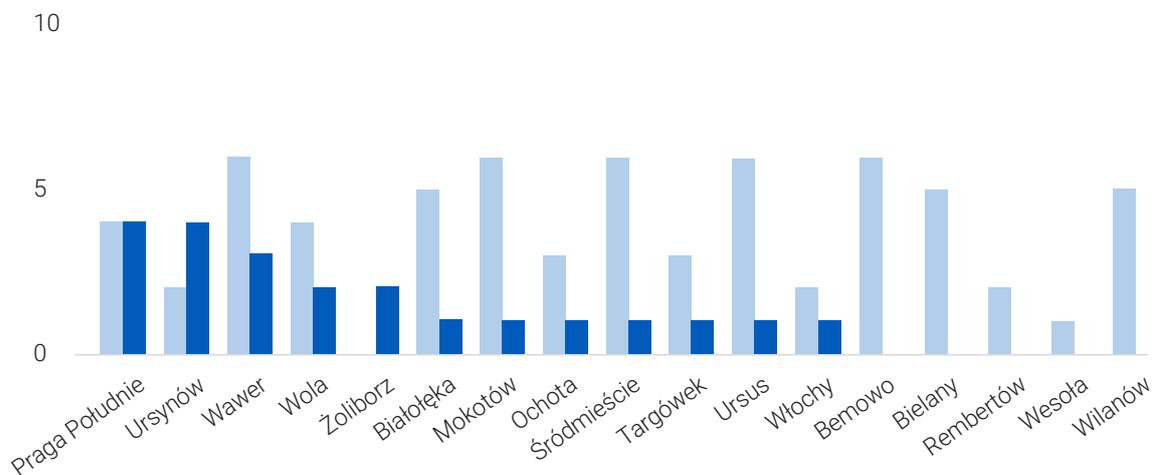
This group consists of both registered children and adolescents, and those who do not have a PESEL number. According to data from municipal educational institutions, even half of the children did not have a PESEL number at the end of May.

6,500 children aged 0-3 were registered in Warsaw, equally boys and girls. 146 were born in city hospitals. A little over 200 children attend city nurseries.

About half of the school-age children remained in the Ukrainian remote education system, which ended the school year on May 31.

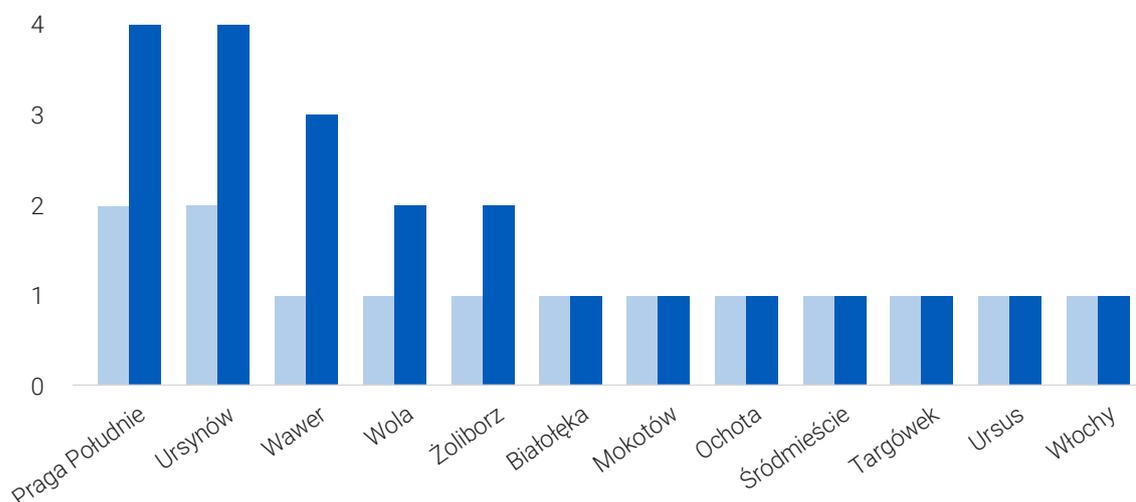
### Primary schools with UKR units

● number of schools ● number of units



### Secondary schools with UKR units

● number of schools ● number of special sections



Most Ukrainian children attend primary schools - over 10,000. The city organized 129 preparatory sections in 77 public primary schools and 22 sections in 14 secondary schools.

There are fewer children in secondary schools That's over 1,400 children. In Poland, it is 17,000.

About 5 000 Ukrainian children (42,000 in Poland) attend kindergartens, i.e. about 10% of all kids attending kindergartens in Warsaw.

Two groups are important among adults. Seniors and people of working age.

By the end of May, less than 5,000 seniors registered in Warsaw: 3,735 women and 1,103 men. In Poland, it is over 44,000 people with a clear dominance of women (34,500).

57,000 refugees in working age are registered in Warsaw, i.e. slightly more than half of all the registered cohort. This group is dominated by women. There are only 7,000 men. As already mentioned, the group of women is dominated by people aged 25-45. There are 30,000 of them.

What is very important, over 35% of people from this group have already found a job. By the end of May, the employment office in Warsaw received over 19,000 notifications\* about the employment of a Ukrainian citizen, which is a very good result and allows these people to integrate as well as contribute local taxes to the city budget, from which services for residents are financed.

\*The notifications were introduced by the law on assistance to Ukrainian citizens who found themselves in Poland after February 24 this year. Declarations are applied towards Ukrainian citizens who were in Poland before February 24. In practice, both categories overlap, and thus the total number of employees after February 24 is over 30,000.

## What's next?

The three months that have passed since Russia's aggression in Ukraine were the largest refugee crisis in Poland after World War II and one of the largest in Europe. The challenge faced by the city was not only the scale of the flood of people, but also the time in which it happened. In just a few weeks, the residents and the city had to face a challenge that no one was ready for.

The flexibility and resilience of Warsaw and its residents exceeded all expectations. The city received support not only from the residents themselves, but also from business that organized public and private collections or offered office space for the needs of temporary accommodation points. The city also received enormous support from international organizations such as UNHCR, UNICEF, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Norwegian Refugee Council. There were, as always, not only Warsaw NGOs, but also those that operate on an international scale: PAH, PCPM or WOŚP.

The partner cities of Warsaw in Europe and those that joined the Pact of Free Cities were also involved. They sent in kind assistance and consulted the support options on an ongoing basis.

The openness and kindness of the residents of Warsaw has built a global brand of the city, which increases not only the visibility, but also the interest in Warsaw in the world.

Warsaw is becoming a truly multicultural and diverse city. The new residents will bring new energy, increase diversity and rejuvenate the city. They are a value that cannot be overestimated.

However, Warsaw is now facing a huge challenge: how to integrate new residents,

who constitute approximately 10% or more of the city's current population, while maintaining the current quality of services and quality of life?

This problem concerns all areas of Warsaw's functioning: from public transport, through education, to public safety.

The problem is both the short time for action and the lack of system solutions, including financial ones. For example, the existing school infrastructure is at the limit of its capabilities. The number of new 23,000 children of primary school age registered in the city means additional 18% more children in the Warsaw education system. In the case of preschoolers, this is 20% more children. Finding and employing hundreds of new teachers and the expansion or construction of several dozen new institutions are activities that require time and huge resources, reaching billions PLN.

**The construction of a kindergarten for 200 children in the current standard costs several million PLN, a primary school for 1 thousand children is tens of millions and a few years from the launch of the investment to the its completion.**

Warsaw and other cities also consistently support legal changes that will allow the employment of medics and teachers from Ukraine. Legal changes are also necessary to open many other professions to foreigners who come to the city. We also need tax changes that will reverse the trend of reducing the finances of Polish cities. Taxes of everyone, including new residents of Warsaw, should remain in the city as much as possible in order to serve all its residents.

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