



### REPRESENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Since its opening in 1992, UNHCR Moscow has been working with the Government to find permanent solution to the problem of asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons. UNHCR fulfils this function through providing expert advice, trainings and supporting a number of projects with partner organisations, aimed at assisting the persons of concern, such as legal counselling and social support, particularly for persons with special needs.

#### UNHCR presence – Representation in Moscow

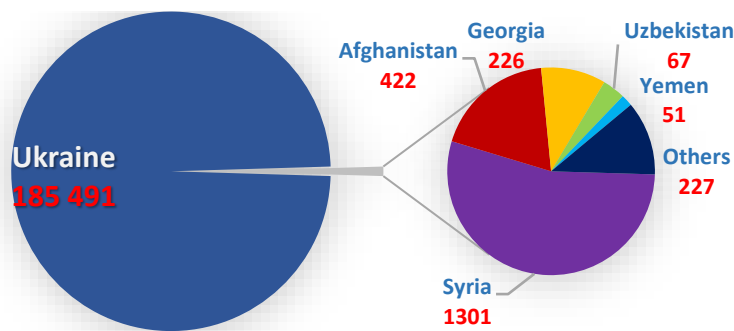
17 local staff

6 international staff

#### REFUGEE STATUS HOLDERS – 589

#### TEMPORARY ASYLUM (TA) STATUS HOLDERS – 187 785

#### TA STATUS HOLDERS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN<sup>1</sup>

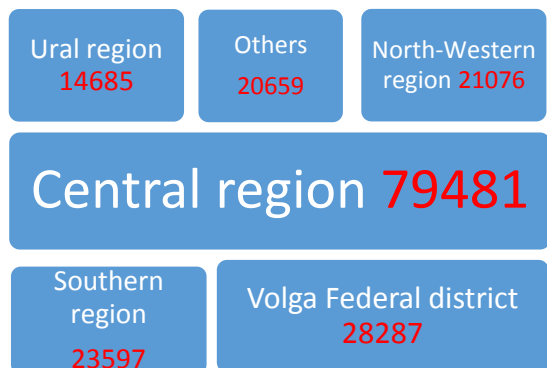


#### STATELESS PERSONS

Total – 178 000 persons<sup>2</sup>, of them:

Stateless persons that in 2017 received temporary and permanent residence permit in RF (as of July 1) 5177

#### TA STATUS HOLDERS BY GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION WITHIN RF



#### REFUGEE PROTECTION

- UNHCR provides expertise to the RF competent authorities to further develop national asylum system, including access to asylum procedure, also at borders, international airports and pre-removal detention facilities;
- UNHCR ensures individual legal assistance and counselling through partner organizations and independent lawyers (in the first half of 2017 – over 5500 persons). When necessary, UNHCR supports judicial engagement for individual cases before national courts and, in selected cases, with the European Court for Human Rights;
- UNHCR seeks to prevent refoulement of asylum-seekers to countries where their lives may be at risk (by end of June 2017 - 149 persons).

<sup>1</sup>As for June 30, 2017

<sup>2</sup>Based on the population census of 2010

## PROTECTION OF STATELESS PERSONS

Under the statelessness mandate conferred by the UN General Assembly, UNHCR:

- regularly informs competent agencies about known statelessness cases and through partner organizations provides legal assistance to stateless persons and those with undetermined status (in the first half of 2017 – nearly 1,100 persons);
- lobbies for accession of the Russian Federation to the two UN Conventions on statelessness;
- takes part in the UNHCR's global campaign for the eradication of statelessness; disseminates information materials and collaborates with media throughout the country.

## DURABLE SOLUTIONS

**Voluntary repatriation** is a preferred durable solution when individuals are able to return to their country of origin in safety and dignity. In 2017, UNHCR provided assistance with documents and visas, airfare and a small financial grant to eight persons returning to their homeland (Somalia, Iraq, CAR, Bangladesh and DRC).

Contrary to refugees from Ukraine, **local integration** is rather limited for other groups. UNHCR supports the Refugee Integration Centre, which operates at the premises of the St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Red Cross. The Centre holds Russian language classes for adults and children, computer literacy courses, tutoring senior school pupils for the graduation exam, lectures and seminars addressing social and legal issues.

With the support of UNHCR, "Civic Assistance" Committee is running an integration project for persons from Syria and other countries, seeking refuge in Russia (legal, psychological, social and medical consultations). In Moscow and St. Petersburg our partners hold professional training courses for refugees (sewing, haircutting skills, nursing etc.) to assist with further employment. In 2017, 20 Afghan women have completed courses of sewing and nursing, 45 have completed Russian language courses in Moscow.

**Resettlement to third countries** is pursued when refugees, for various reasons, cannot enjoy protection and achieve integration in the Russian Federation. In 2017, 40 cases were submitted for resettlement to other countries.

## EDUCATION

UNHCR assists talented young refugees with enrolling in colleges and universities through DAFI, a German-funded scholarship program. During the past 20 years, over 200 refugee students received higher education in Russia through this program. UNHCR supports partner NGO projects to help refugee children gain admission to local schools (in 2017 involving 48 Syrian refugee children in Moscow Region and 11 Afghan children in Moscow). Moscow's "Health and Life" Fund conducts Russian language courses for refugees from Afghanistan and African countries.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

By law, applicants for refugee status, holders of TA and refugee status in the Russian Federation are entitled to free medical care. UNHCR, through its partner organizations in Moscow, assists persons of concern with serious health issues who due to lack of legal status do not have access to obligatory insurance. In the first half of 2017, nearly 1000 persons received medication, sanitary materials or treatment, and about 90 persons received psychological assistance. For the most vulnerable cases, concerning women with children and people with health problems, UNHCR, through its partners offers social counselling and limited financial assistance, and helps with placement in shelters and temporary accommodation centres. In 2017, nearly 600 persons benefited from this form of assistance.

## WORKING WITH PARTNERS

UNHCR works with over 30 partners, including government agencies, national and international non-governmental organizations (ICRC, IFRC, MSF) and UN agencies. Local non-governmental partners include: "Memorial" Human Rights Centre; "Civic Assistance" Committee; "Faith, Hope and Love"; "Health and Life" Charitable Foundation; St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Red Cross; Centre for International Cooperation of the St. Petersburg Red Cross, Children's Fund of North Ossetia and Human Rights Institute. UNHCR is a member of UN Team in Russia and UN Thematic Group on gender issues. UNHCR is an observer of the Working Group on Asylum of the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organisation.

## CAPACITY BUILDING OF PARTNERS

- UNHCR conducts expert meetings on international protection standards, interviewing techniques, working with vulnerable cases, identification of durable solutions for refugees and other issues, etc.;
- organizes information workshops for partner NGOs and regional Ombudsmen;
- in the framework of cooperation with Universities – holds various events for students and professors on Refugee Law, organizes internships in the office, and provides methodical support to legal clinics in order to expand potential sources of free legal aid for persons of concern;
- educates partners on fundraising in shifting financing conditions for projects.