

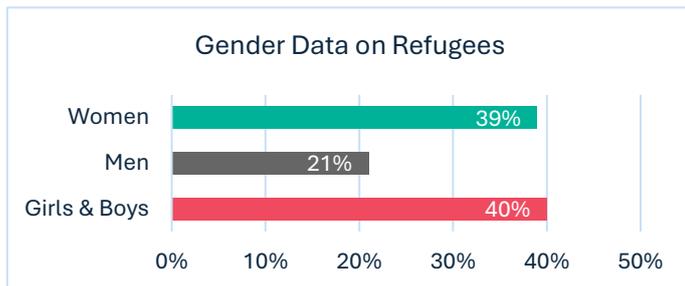
OPERATIONAL UPDATE JANUARY 2026



Dedicated services help older refugees overcome barriers and access essential aid. ©UNHCR/Eugenia Ciurcă

KEY FIGURES

140,140 Ukrainian refugees reside in Moldova.



88,383 Ukrainian refugees granted Temporary Protection.

6,189 citizens of Ukraine granted residence permits, either permanent or temporary.

3,422 stateless individuals and individuals with undetermined citizenship registered.

~ **10,000** refugees received cash assistance.

~ **320** refugees received legal counselling.

~ **820** individuals called the UNHCR-supported hotline.

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

The Republic of Moldova (hereinafter “Moldova”) recorded an increase in arrivals of Ukrainian refugees at the end of 2025, consistent with seasonal and holiday-related mobility, including short-term returns to Ukraine to check property, visit relatives, or access essential services. However, compared to 2024, fewer individuals arriving from abroad crossed onward into Ukraine, likely due to intensified attacks, which slowed seasonal movements. In January, arrivals declined slightly while departures to Ukraine increased, suggesting that some individuals who had temporarily remained in Moldova chose to return as conditions permitted.

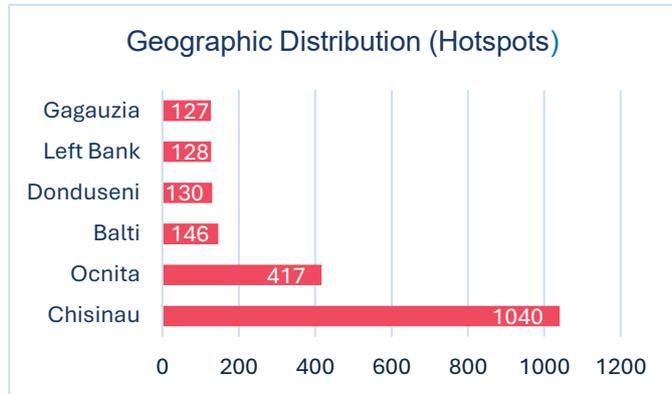
On 28 January 2026, the Government of Moldova extended Temporary Protection (TP) until **1 March 2027**, upgrading the online application system and safeguards, including questions on education, income, and disability to improve planning. UNHCR supported the process through legal guidance to ensure continuity of rights and protection-sensitive standards, technical input to the online module, and contributions to a joint information campaign.

Protection monitoring data from UNHCR indicates growing interest among refugees in pursuing longer-term legal solutions in Moldova, with around 40% of respondents open to applying for residence permits, particularly working-age individuals who feel integrated or intend to remain beyond the war. However, the interest is constrained by information gaps and a need for legal support.

HIGHLIGHTS

Mapping of Ukrainian Refugees with Disabilities

Keystone Moldova, UNHCR, and partners of the Disability and Age Task Force conducted a nationwide mapping that identified 2,633 Ukrainian refugees with disabilities. The findings reveal a high geographic concentration, with nearly 40% residing in Chisinau and 34% in northern rayons, placing sustained pressure on under-resourced local systems and deepening territorial disparities. On the Left Bank of the Dniester, parallel administrative systems and movement restrictions further limit access to assistance and services.



The mapping highlighted diverse functional limitations and support needs, requiring tailored and sustained responses. While access to basic healthcare has improved since 2022, rehabilitation, assistive devices, and mental health services remain critically limited. Access to services is further constrained by the requirement for formal disability recognition, leaving refugees without complete documentation at risk of exclusion. Transport emerged as the primary cross-cutting barrier, affecting access to healthcare, administrative procedures, education, and employment. Inaccessible housing and WASH infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, further increase protection risks and dependence on caregivers. Employment opportunities remain limited due to inaccessible workplaces, administrative hurdles, and stigma, reducing prospects for independence. Older persons and women with disabilities are particularly affected, facing heightened risks of isolation, invisibility, and rapid functional decline. For further details, refer to the full report [here](#).

Protection

- On 13 January, UNHCR, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), and the General Inspectorate for Migration (IGM) convened a roundtable with partners and refugee-led organizations to discuss the Temporary Protection (TP) extension. The Ministry presented key changes, including the extension of TP until 1 March 2027, the introduction of an online application system, a 90-day application period, and new fingerprinting requirements for children aged 14. The consultation provided an opportunity for participants to seek clarifications and raise concerns.
- Through UNHCR's partner AVE Copiii, 25 vulnerable refugee children (16 boys and 9 girls) received complementary case management, including referrals to guardianship authorities, social services, and support with essential non-food items. Building on this ongoing support, the intervention further strengthened access to child protection mechanisms, helping to reduce risks of neglect and legal uncertainty.
- UNHCR supported two community-based projects in Rîșcani to strengthen GBV prevention, risk mitigation, and women's empowerment. The Roma Women's Association provided vocational training in nail art and hairdressing to Roma and Ukrainian women and girls; 12 participants completed the courses and received starter kits, with six already generating income. The initiative also included awareness sessions on GBV, non-discrimination, personal development, and media literacy, and individualized coaching for six participants. The second project, led by the National Coalition Life Without Violence, strengthened the capacity of two grassroots organizations through community needs assessments and technical support in financial

management, strategic planning, and communications, enhancing their ability to implement effective GBV interventions.



Community Empowerment

- In January, UNHCR conducted a mission to Tiraspol, to meet with representatives of the local refugee-led organization “Ukrainian House,” supported by the Embassy of Ukraine, and with refugee groups. Discussions highlighted sustained access to quality education for refugee children on the Left Bank. Enrolment in existing schools was reported to be high as the instruction provided is in Russian or Ukrainian. However, locally issued certificates face challenges in recognition by Moldovan and Ukrainian authorities, potentially affecting students’ academic continuity, mobility, and long-term prospects. The engagement strengthened understanding of education access constraints and held discussions on practical solutions to enhance certification recognition and safeguard educational pathways.
- Targeted advocacy by UNHCR with local authorities in the Bălți and Dondușeni districts led to the establishment of a collaborative framework for 2026, ensuring sustained communication and coordination between local authorities and UNHCR partners in the field, as well as joint efforts to support the development of Community Centers.

UNHCR is grateful for the support provided by donors who have contributed to Moldova, as well as those who have contributed to global UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds:

Australia | Austria | Belgium | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Iceland | Ireland | Italy | Netherlands | New Zealand | Norway | Republic of Korea | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | United States of America



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For more information, please visit
the [Operational Data Portal for Moldova](#)
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Our work would not be possible without UNHCR’s implementing partners:



UNHCR Moldova is also thankful for the cooperation of Moldovan authorities at all levels, other UN agencies, the private sector and civil society organizations.