



REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA PROGRAMME SUMMARY 2026

Moldova – Olga and her family fled their home in Ukraine's Odesa region. They have now found safety in Moldova. © UNHCR / Andrew McConnell



2026 RESPONSE PLAN | KEY FIGURES



CONTEXT

Four years after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, protection needs remain severe both inside Ukraine and among refugees across Europe, including in the Republic of Moldova.

As of December 2025, around **148,000 Ukrainian refugees** were living in Moldova—about **6% of the population**. Despite limited resources, Moldova continues to provide protection and support, even as its economy and public services face increasing strain.

Refugees face heightened risks, contributing to increased vulnerability: **64% are women and girls, 47% are children, 23% are older people, and 10% are people with disabilities**. Risks include gender-based violence, trafficking, social exclusion, and barriers to accessing essential services.

[UNHCR's Socio-Economic Insights Survey](#) shows that one third of refugees struggle to meet basic needs, and **44% live in poverty**. Challenges in securing employment—linked to language barriers, limited job opportunities, and caregiving responsibilities—further deepen socio-economic vulnerability. Conditions are particularly challenging for older persons, persons with disabilities, and the estimated 8,000–10,000 refugees on the Left Bank of Dniester, where support is limited and economic conditions are severe.

Temporary Protection (TP) provides legal stay and access to employment, education, and emergency healthcare for **86,585 Ukrainian refugees**. However, gaps remain, as TP holders cannot access key national social assistance programmes.

Without continued support, gains in protection and inclusion risk being reversed. It is essential to meet urgent needs of the most vulnerable refugees, continue strengthening national systems, and advance sustainable solutions for both refugees and host communities.

UNHCR'S 2026 RESPONSE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA | PRIORITY AREAS

Aligned with UNHCR's Multi-Year Strategy (2024-2026), the Refugee Response Plan, and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, UNHCR's programme in Moldova in 2026 will be centred around four interlinked objectives:



Promote inclusive, protection-sensitive laws and practices that ensure protection, uphold rights, and ensure access to essential services, while advocating for greater inclusion of refugees in national systems.



Provide life-saving assistance and shelter to the most vulnerable refugees, addressing acute socio-economic needs and protection risks.



Support refugee's socio-economic and self-reliance through skills-development, job counselling and community-based programmes, while addressing structural barriers and linking interventions to national systems.



Promote community-based protection and social cohesion by empowering refugees and host communities, strengthening local institutions and civil society, and supporting community-led initiatives.

UNHCR will continue supporting the Government of Moldova to ensure that refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless people have access to territory, legal status, and their rights, while strengthening national asylum systems. UNHCR will also contribute to Moldova's European Union accession process by helping align national frameworks with the EU acquis and relevant international standards.

Protection Desks will remain essential frontline mechanisms for information provision, legal counselling, documentation support, and referrals to specialized services. They play a key role in identifying and responding to protection risks, including gender-based violence and child protection concerns. Prioritized groups include women and children, unaccompanied and separated children, older persons, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups, including those living on the Left Bank.

Targeted multi-purpose cash assistance will be provided to the most vulnerable refugees, those facing extreme protection risks and limited self-reliance. Cash assistance will be increasingly linked to protection case management and referrals to national services. UNHCR will support the consolidation of Refugee Accommodation Centres by improving living conditions for the most vulnerable residents and assisting less vulnerable refugees to transition to safe, private housing. In parallel, UNHCR will promote socio-economic inclusion through access to decent work, language courses, vocational skills development, and job counselling, addressing existing barriers.

Community-based protection and social cohesion will remain central to the response. Through the Cities of Solidarity initiative, UNHCR will strengthen municipal capacities, support inclusive local action plans, rehabilitate community infrastructure, and foster meaningful refugee participation, contributing to cohesive and resilient communities.

Preparedness and contingency planning will be reinforced, in coordination with the Government of Moldova, to ensure readiness to respond to potential future population movements and sudden increases in protection needs.



Moldova - Refugee and host community adolescents take part in activities during the Human Rights Caravan in Straseni organised by UNHCR partner Ombudsman Office. © UNHCR / Corina Cernat

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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- Global Focus page for Moldova
- UNHCR Moldova
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