

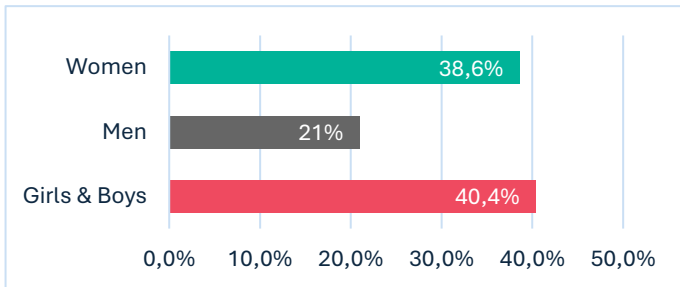


## OPERATIONAL UPDATE FEBRUARY 2026

Empowering Roma women through vocational training and GBV awareness. ©Roma Women's Association/Laura Bosnea

### KEY FIGURES

**140,793** Ukrainian refugees reside in Moldova.



**89,683** Ukrainian refugees granted Temporary Protection.

**6,043** citizens of Ukraine granted residence permits, either permanent or temporary.

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

~ **3,000** refugees received legal assistance.

~ **2,200** individuals accessed information through the UNHCR-supported helpline.

~ **200** refugees supported with specialized GBV and Child Protection services.

### OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Refugee arrivals to the Republic of Moldova (hereinafter “Moldova”) have stabilized following the winter holidays peak. As of end-February, 140,793 refugees reside in the country, confirming a shift to a complex context with persistent and evolving protection needs.

To support a needs-based response, Participatory Assessments are conducted quarterly through focus group discussions nationwide with findings shared via an [interactive dashboard](#) to monitor needs and trends. Insights indicate that, while refugees generally feel safe and can access basic services, interconnected challenges continue to undermine their stability and self-reliance. Housing remains a key concern due to high rental costs, limited affordable options, and reliance on informal arrangements, alongside uncertainty among residents of Refugee Accommodation Centres regarding potential closures. Livelihood opportunities are constrained, with many refugees in informal or low-skilled work due to language barriers, administrative hurdles, and discrimination, despite interest in skills development and entrepreneurship. Healthcare is accessible at the primary level but limited by long waiting times, high costs, and gaps in specialized services. Uncertainty over legal status, particularly the future of Temporary Protection further increase vulnerability, particularly for Roma refugees, older people and those in rural areas experiencing isolation.

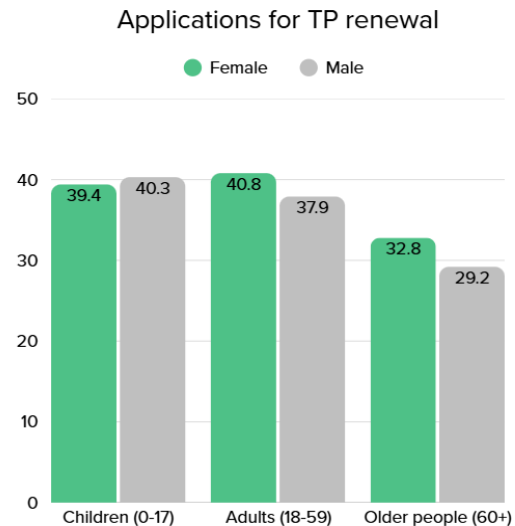
## HIGHLIGHTS

### Application for temporary protection renewal

Following the Government decision, Temporary Protection (TP) for refugees from Ukraine has been extended until **1 March 2027**, with beneficiaries required to apply online for renewal between 1 February and 30 April 2026. The application system collects data on vulnerabilities, disability, children's school enrolment, and sources of income, to inform targeted planning for the post-TP phase. The General Inspectorate for Migration (IGM) has up to 90 days to process applications. Refugees remain legally covered during this period, ensuring continued access to rights and services.

By early March 2026, over **36,000** Ukrainian refugees had applied for the renewal, representing 38 per cent of those registered under TP. Application rates are around 40 per cent for children and adults, but lower for older people (31 per cent), indicating possible access barriers. Uptake is highest in Chişinău and the Centre region (43 per cent), and lowest in the North (29 per cent) and particularly in the South, including UTA Găgăuzia (26 per cent). An urban–rural gap is also evident: 40 per cent in urban areas compared to 27 per cent in rural areas.

To support online applications, UNHCR and IGM conduct communication and outreach activities. Information is shared via partners, community networks, and social media. Targeted support focuses on those at risk of exclusion, including older people, people with disabilities, Roma refugees, and those in areas with limited connectivity. Assistance includes outreach, in-person guidance, mobile teams, and help with online applications to ensure equal access.



### Protection

- In February, UNHCR continued to strengthen protection at points of entry by combining capacity-building with targeted material support to national systems. On 17 February, a training session was delivered to 20 Border Police officers at Chişinău International Airport, primarily new recruits, focusing on the identification of vulnerable individuals, application of procedural safeguards, and alignment with national and international protection standards. In parallel, non-food items were provided to the General Inspectorate of the Border Police, including blankets, pillows, quilts, bed linen, and solar lamps, to improve temporary reception conditions for asylum seekers awaiting processing and ensure safe, dignified, and humane treatment.
- Strengthening the capacity to identify and respond to child protection risks remains a priority across institutional and community levels. In this regard, AVE Copiii, UNHCR's partner, facilitated supervision sessions for 48 child protection specialists and local authorities nationwide, providing guidance on TP renewals, with emphasis on unaccompanied and separated children and those over 14 undergoing biometric procedures. Complementing this, UNHCR also trained 21 integration mediators from the refugee-led organization Female Support Force, strengthening community-based identification and referral of children at risk.
- UNHCR also advanced gender-based violence (GBV) prevention through the second year of the Girl Shine programme, implemented by Association Casa Marioarei. Activities in Chişinău and Făleşti reached around 60 adolescent girls and caregivers from refugee and host communities

through sessions delivered in local schools. In Făleşti, the programme is now integrated into the school curriculum and delivered by trained facilitators from the previous year, demonstrating strong local ownership and the capacity to sustain GBV prevention efforts independently.

- Targeted education support improved the inclusion of refugee children. This included renovating a classroom at P. Rumeantev School in Cahul and providing 90 units of school furniture to the Mihail Kociubinski Theoretical Lyceum in Chişinău, enhancing learning conditions and supporting participation in a safe, inclusive environment.



## Community empowerment

- The transition of the Community Services Centre (CSC) in Ungheni to local authorities was completed on 11 February, with management formally handed over to the City Council. The centre will continue operating as a Public Youth Centre, ensuring sustained service provision for refugees of diverse profiles under the guidance of the local Refugee Council.
- Through the Sergio Vieira de Mello Academic Chair (SVMAC) Network, the six partner universities are contributing to closing gaps in research and strengthening the evidence base on refugee inclusion, building on insights from the [2025 SVMAC report](#). In 2025, 12 academic and student-led projects reached 250 refugees and host community members, including 150 adolescents engaged in research and digital literacy, 70 law enforcement officers trained on refugee protection, and 60 refugee women supported with medical and psychosocial services. In 2026, research will align with the Refugee Response data needs, generating evidence on refugees' contributions to the economy, social cohesion status, and other key areas of protection and inclusion. An [online repository](#) on the UNHCR Operational Data Portal has also been established to centralize and share the network's academic and policy outputs.

## Four years since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine

- To mark four years since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Embassy of Ukraine in Moldova, together with UNHCR and National Congress of Ukrainians of Moldova, convened a high-level event with government, diplomatic, and UN representatives. The event provided a moment to reflect on the humanitarian and protection impact of the war, the resilience of the Ukrainian people, and the need for continued international support. The programme included a photo exhibition and a screening of the short film *Once Upon a Time in Ukraine*, highlighting the experiences of Ukrainian children affected by the war. These stories underscored the human impact behind the crisis, disrupted childhoods, loss, and resilience, reinforcing the need to keep people at the centre of the response.

### DONORS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



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

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