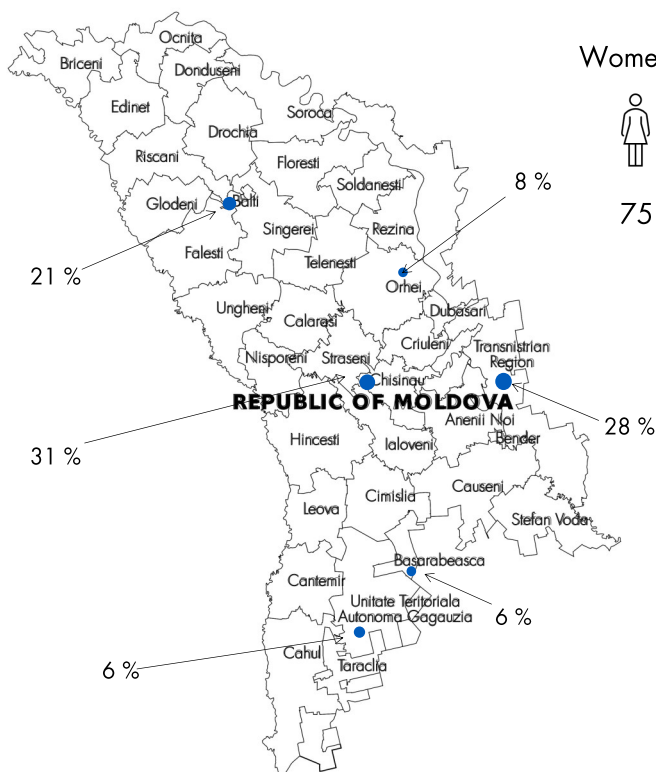


**Background and methodology:** In June 2023, UN Human Rights (OHCHR) in Moldova started the implementation of a 12 months project funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid. The project aims to improve access to services and assistance for refugees from Ukraine with specific needs, including people with disabilities; ethnic or linguistic minorities; LGBTQIA+, and for the most vulnerable and at-risk host families in Moldova, including the Transnistrian region. Through this project OHCHR focuses on the systematic identification of those who are more at risk of protection concerns and human rights violations, and on their referral to appropriate and timely services and assistance. This factsheet covers the findings of 143 surveys collected in August 2023.

## RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

In August 2023, **OHCHR interviewed 143 (75 % women, 25 % men) refugees from Ukraine**, all Ukrainian nationals, residing in various regions, as illustrated by the map below. One of the most represented age groups was [60-69], accounting for 30 % of the interviewed refugees, and including a significant number of persons with disabilities. 81 % of the refugees arrived to Moldova in the first year following the start of the conflict in Ukraine, while 19 % arrived in 2023, 11 % of them in the last two months. Most of the respondents who self-identified as Roma reside in Basarabeasca and Balti, while those who self-identified as Russian predominantly reside in the Transnistrian region and Chisinau.

Distribution of respondents by region



Distribution of respondents by age group and gender

Age Group	Women	Men
80-89	5 (4%)	0
70-79	12 (8%)	8 (6%)
60-69	33 (23%)	10 (7%)
50-59	11 (8%)	3 (2%)
30-49	35 (24%)	13 (9%)
18-29	11 (8%)	2 (1%)

Distribution of respondents according to their self-identification of ethnicity

**Ukrainian—57 %**  
**Roma—13 %**  
**Russian—12 %**  
**Moldovan—10 %**  
 Georgian—2 %  
 Slavic—2 %  
 Bulgarian—1 %  
 Gagauz—1 %

2% of respondents preferred not to indicate their ethnicity

Distribution of respondents by their arrival to Moldova

81 % - 2022 year	19 % - 2023 year
Feb-March—35 %	Jan-March—5 %
April-June—27 %	Apr-June—3 %
July-Sept—16 %	July-August—11 %
Oct-Dec—3 %	

# IDENTIFICATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The protection monitoring tool included the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning, which obtains information on difficulties a person may have in undertaking basic functioning activities, with a single question per functional domain: visual, hearing, walking or climbing stairs, remembering or concentrating, self-care, and communication (expressive and receptive) impairments. The analysis was conducted based on the criterion that a person is considered to have a disability if they respond with 'a lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do at all' for any of the functional domains.

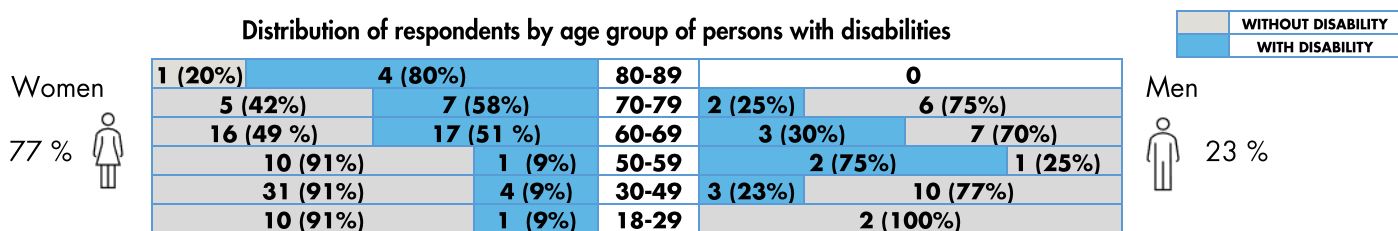
**The 31% of the interviewed refugees reported a lot of difficulties or impossibility to perform actions under one (40 persons) or several (14 persons) functional domains.**

Percentage of respondents with difficulties per functional domain



The highest concentration of women with a disability (51 % of the respondents) was found in the age group 60-69, mostly impacted by walking and visual impairments. Data findings suggest that both interviewed women and men have functional disabilities at relatively equal rates.

Distribution of respondents by age group of persons with disabilities

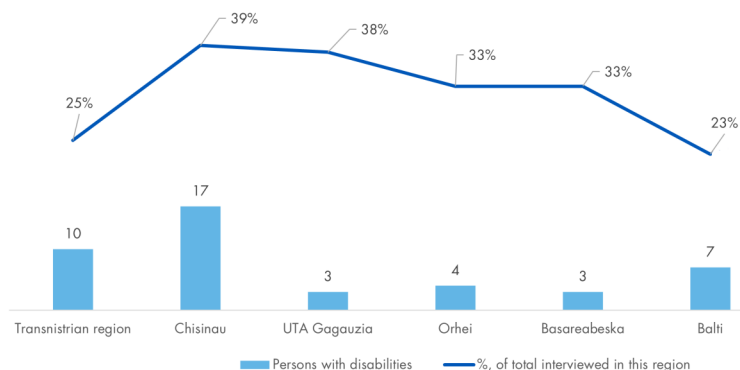


## Glasses and hearing aids are the most common needs

for 13 out of 20 persons with a visual impairment for 8 out of 27 persons with a hearing impairment

No correlation was found between **ethnicity and disability**; therefore, respondents who self-identified as Roma do not have a higher or lower percentage of disabilities than other groups.

Distribution of respondents by region of persons with disabilities



# EXPERIENCE OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

The findings of the enhanced questions of the Washington Group related to psychosocial functioning indicate **that almost 2/3 of the respondents (69 %) experience feeling of anxiety, worry and nervousness either daily (48 %) or on a weekly basis (21 %)**. 60 % of them reported experiencing high levels of these feelings. Based on the data, it can be concluded that women experience higher levels of anxiety than men among refugees from Ukraine, with 75% of interviewed women reporting anxiety compared to 50 % of interviewed men. **These feelings are widespread among the interviewed persons with disabilities (80 %)**.

Interviewed refugees in Chisinau, the Transnistrian region, and Balti reported higher levels of anxiety and nervousness compared to those in other visited regions. No relation was found between ethnicity and anxiety.

**57 interviewed refugees from Ukraine (40 %) felt depressed on daily (32 %) and weekly (8 %) basis.** Respondents indicated feeling depressed, with no differences between men and women and with half of the persons with disabilities reporting suffering from depression. Notably, the age group 60-69 predominantly reported experiencing depression.

Distribution of respondents by reported anxiety, nervousness and depression on a constant basis

	18-29	30-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89
Anxiety	3	30	13	34	14	4
Depression	1	11	9	27	6	3

## BARRIERS AND ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES

**67 % of respondents** (96 out of 143, including 70 women, 26 men) **reported suffering from serious medical conditions**, including chronic, non-communicable, and other conditions. *Conditions relate to heart (28 respondents), vision (24), legs (12), thyroid (10), diabetes (10), oncology (4), gastroenterology (3), hearing (3), asthma (2).*  
**The majority of respondents (84 %) of those with serious medical conditions were persons with disabilities.** Both women and men reported serious health issues equally.

The age distribution of interviewed people with serious medical conditions

18-29	30-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89
3	23	13	38	14	5

Of the 96 refugees who suffer from serious medical conditions, **33 % reported having difficulties accessing medical services in Moldova.** They face the following challenges: fees associated with medical care, medication, transportation (12), unavailability of medical facility and/or medical services (6), long waits for medical appointments (4), refusal to provide services by medical facilities or service providers (3), discrimination (1).  
 6 respondents refused to provide details regarding challenges.

Out of 44 refugees who have difficulties in one or more functional domains, **18 (representing 41 %) have a disability certificate issued in Ukraine.**  
*Despite this, half of them have encountered challenges in accessing medical services.*

The analysis of the data revealed that refugees from Ukraine received medical assistance in nearly equal proportions from the state (49) and from NGOs and volunteers (48). It is worth noting that interviewed refugees residing in UTA Gagauzia reported receiving less state-provided medical assistance compared to interviewed refugees from other regions. Conversely, surveyed refugees from the Transnistrian region did not receive medical assistance from NGOs or volunteers.

## URGENT NEEDS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION



For the majority of the respondents (78 out of 143, representing the 55 %) **the most pressing needs are health-care, including medicines, diagnostics, surgery.** These needs are particularly high among refugees with a disability.



The second most urgent need (for the 17 % of the respondents) is **cash assistance**, together with information on the reasons for delays with payments.



Some respondents expressed **a need for information on how to find an accommodation or receive rent compensation** (8 women, 2 men), **and are interested in job opportunities** (11 women, 1 men).




With the start of school, some respondents also expressed a need **for clothing and school supplies for children.**



5 respondents expressed the **need to renew personal documents**, including birth certificates for children (2 cases), Ukrainian ID cards (2 cases), and one individual requiring the renewal of an international passport. These refugees are equally located on both banks of the Nistru

Refugees from Ukraine were surveyed **regarding their preferred communication channels for receiving information.** The findings indicate that 72% of respondents, regardless of their gender, age, or location, prefer using their **phones as the primary channel.** Following closely, 41% of interviewed refugees opt for **social media** as their preferred source of information, with **family and friends** being mentioned by 32% of respondents as the third-choice channel. Only 3 % of respondents selected governmental websites as source for information that suggest it is the least preferable channel among refugees from Ukraine.

 - 72%

 - 41 %

 - 32 %

# TEMPORARY PROTECTION

**The majority of respondents (84 out of 143, representing the 59 %) applied for Temporary Protection.**

The data indicates that interviewed men tend to apply for Temporary Protection at a slightly higher rate than women. The age group [60-69] has the highest percentage of applicants, indicating a greater prevalence of older refugees from Ukraine seeking Temporary Protection. In contrast, the [30-49] age group shows a lower application rate, suggesting reduced interest among respondents in their 30s and 40s. **Notably, a significant disparity in Temporary Protection application rates emerges between the right bank (70 %) and the left bank (30 %) of the Nistru river,** highlighting marked differences in application behavior among refugees from Ukraine residing on both banks. Refugees from Ukraine who self-identified as Roma applied for Temporary Protection at a higher rate (79%) than those who self-identified as Ukrainian ethnicity (53%).

**Two-third of the applicants (65 out of 84, representing the 77 %) received the Temporary Protection ID.** The analysis shows differing rates of Temporary Protection ID issuance among interviewed refugees from Ukraine based on their location in Moldova. Specifically, 81 % of those who applied on the right bank received the ID, compared to 58 % of those who reside on the left bank of Nistru River. Differences in Temporary Protection ID issuance based on ethnicity were identified among interviewed refugees, with 33% of applicants of Roma ethnicity receiving the ID, compared to 53% of applicants of Ukrainian ethnicity. **Of the remaining 19 refugees who applied, 18 have completed the online registration form and were waiting for the appointment at the IGM Office, whereas one person received official notification of rejection.**

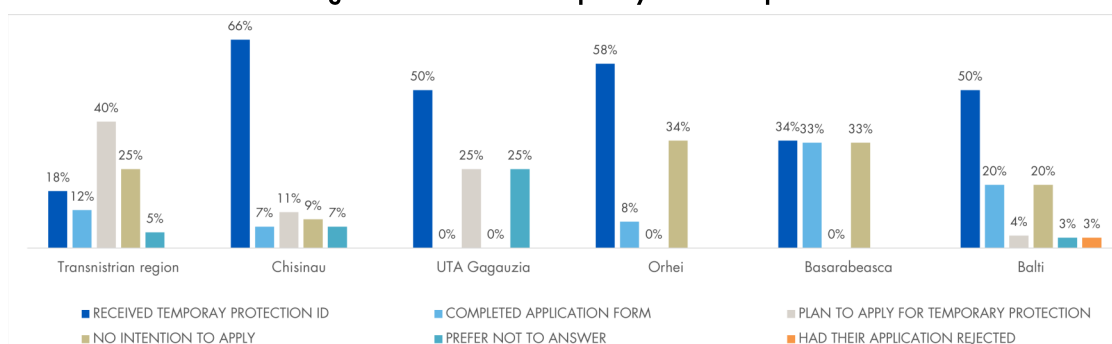
Of the 84 refugees who applied for Temporary Protection, the large majority (73 %), did not report any difficulty in the application process. Among the 27 % of respondents who encountered difficulties, these challenges were primarily associated with completing the online form, proof of residency, insufficient information, and identity document issues. Notably, 3 respondents with disabilities (out of 27 persons with disabilities who applied) specifically faced difficulties with the online form.

**Of the remaining 59 interviewed refugees, 57 did not apply for Temporary Protection (representing 40 % of those interviewed), whereas 2 preferred not to answer this question.** Significantly, 70 % of interviewed refugees residing on the left bank of Nistru River did not apply for Temporary Protection, in contrast to 28 % among those living on the right bank.

The 57 respondents who did not apply mentioned as main reasons that this was not a priority for them or they had not yet decided; they did not have enough information; they did not have proof of residence. **47 % of those who did not apply (27 persons) do not intend to apply,** the main reasons being: do not know how to apply, applied for different type of residence, do not see any benefits.

The graph below shows that in Chisinau, Orhei, Balti and UTA Gagauzia, the number of respondents who received the Temporary Protection ID was higher than the number of those who had completed the application form and were waiting for the interview. Orhei and Basarabasca had the highest number of respondents who had no intention of applying. In the Transnistrian region, the number of respondents who received the Temporary Protection ID was the lowest compared to the other regions and the main group of respondents where those who plan to apply but have not done so yet.

**Regional diversities in Temporary Protection patterns**



## EDUCATION

**Only 30 % of the respondents (43 out of 143),** representing mostly the following age groups [30 – 49] **have school-age children, grandchildren, or nephews.**

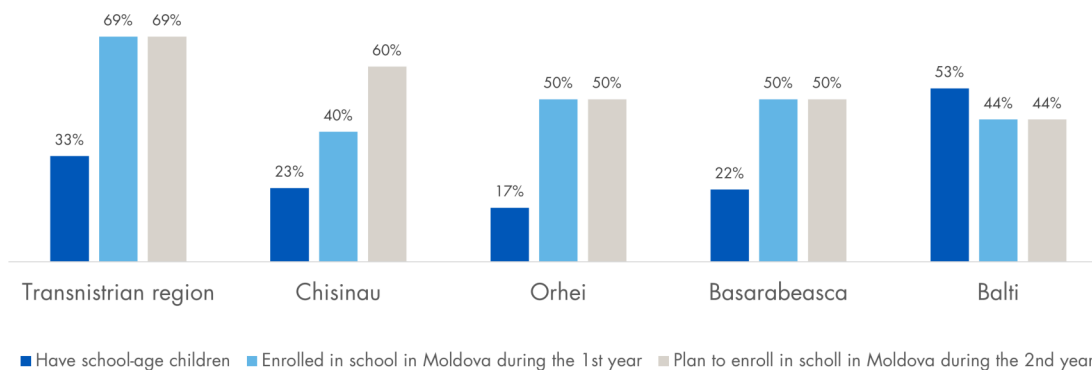
Approximately half of them (51 %) indicated that their children were enrolled in schools during their initial year in Moldova. Analyzing the location of respondents whose children enrolled in school during the first year, 69 % of residents from the left bank enrolled their children, while only 43 % of residents with children from the right bank enrolled their children. Differences in school enrolment rates were found also based on ethnicity: 71 % of Roma respondents enrolled their children at school, compared to 46 % of those who self-identified as Ukrainian ethnicity, and 33 % of those of Russian ethnicity.

**In the second year, 56 % of respondents with school-age children planned to enroll their children in school** (95 % of the respondents whose children were enrolled in the first year).

The primary reason cited for *not enrolling children in school both during the first and second years in Moldova* was a preference for ongoing online or remote learning using the Ukrainian curriculum, as indicated by 81 % of respondents with children who do not enroll in Moldovan school. Notably, all respondents whose children are already enrolled in school received Temporary Protection IDs.

The graph below shows that the highest rate of enrollment was reported in the Transnistrian region; and that the enrollment rates increased in Chisinau during the second school year. Among the refugees interviewed in UTA Gagauzia no one reported having school-age children.

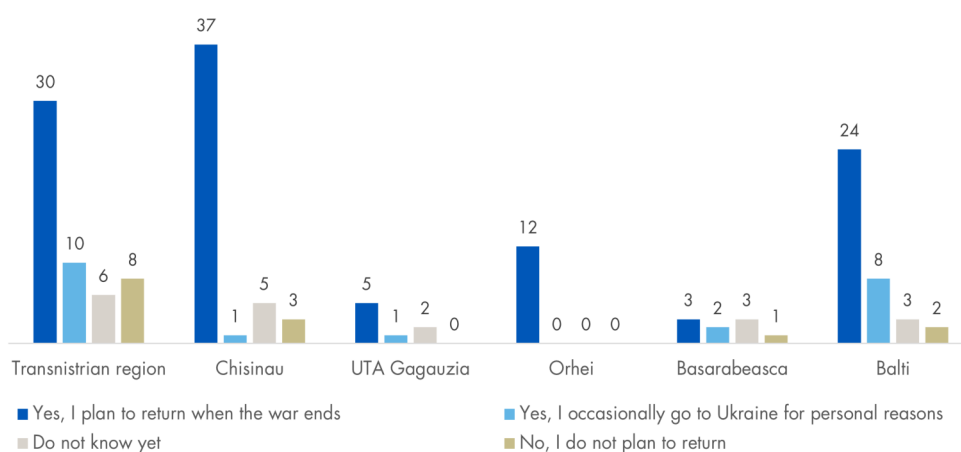
**Distribution by region of respondents with school-age children**



## INTENTIONS

The majority of respondents (79 %) plan to return to Ukraine in the future or occasionally go to Ukraine; 8% do not plan to do so, and 13 % remain unsure. 48 respondents, majority women, reported that they occasionally or frequently visited Ukraine for personal reasons, and 54 % of them had applied for Temporary Protection. Some of the reported reasons to visit Ukraine were to get the medicines or consultation from Ukrainian medical specialists.

**Respondents intention of return to Ukraine**



The graph shows that the refugees who reside in Basarabasca and in the Transnistrian region have more doubt on whether or not to return to Ukraine while in Orhei 100% of respondents plan to return to Ukraine when the war ends. Most of the respondents who occasionally go to Ukraine, reside in the Transnistrian region and Balti. Only 9 out of 22 who occasionally visit Ukraine, have received the Temporary Protection ID.

\*The total adds up to more than 143 (the number of respondents to our survey) because the answer to this question has multiple choice options.

# PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION/NEGATIVE ATTITUDE BASED ON PROTECTED GROUNDS

## REFUGEE STATUS

*The local community often expresses disapproval regarding the aid provided to refugees, and we frequently encounter criticism.*

Woman, 56 years old, Balti, person with disability

**19% of the interviewed refugees (therefore almost one in five refugees) reported that they had faced negative attitudes because of their refugee status.** Interviewed women encountered negative attitudes more frequently (27 %) than men (11 %). The data suggests that location also influenced the experience of negative attitudes, as respondents on the right bank reported such experiences 2.6 times more often compared to those on the left bank. There is a noticeable difference between Roma respondents facing negative attitudes (42 %) and non-Roma (28 %). Data reveals that refugees experienced negativity in medical institutions and faced accusations in public places due to cash assistance provisions to refugees.

## DISABILITY

**20 % of interviewed refugees with disabilities reported experiences of negative attitudes** during their stay in Moldova. Notably, 80 % of them were women and all of them resided on the right bank of Nistru river. The main reported issues related to refusal of medical assistance, rude attitude in Refugee Accommodation Centers and social tension from locals regarding their refugee status.

*The doctor refused medical care in a state hospital.*

Woman, 85 years old, Chisinau, person with disability

## SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

In August, OHCHR started the monitoring of different social media groups (Instagram, Telegram, TikTok) regarding reports on negative attitudes towards refugees from Ukraine. The initial findings reveal that negative attitudes against Ukrainians were reported during the Ukraine Independence Day (24/08) after a peaceful meeting near the Russian embassy.

## ETHNICITY

**6% of interviewed refugees reported a negative attitude due to their ethnicity.**

While this represents a relatively small percentage, it is worthy to note that 7 out of the 9 refugees who reported this were Roma (representing 37 % out of all interviewed Roma).

2 of them alleged having been denied humanitarian assistance due to their ethnicity.

*My son was subjected to mistreatment at school due to our Roma ethnicity and refugee status.*

Woman, 36 years old, Basarabesca

*I believe I am being denied humanitarian assistance due to my Roma ethnicity.*

Woman, 39 years old, Chisinau

In Balti, OHCHR, in collaboration with the NGO 'Zdorovyi Gorod' **organized a Focus Group Discussion** involving **25 members of the Roma community**, comprising 21 women and 4 men. The participants' ages ranged from 35 to 60 (18 individuals) and 60+ (7 individuals).

The key findings revealed:

- Local reluctance to rent accommodations to Roma individuals based on their ethnicity.
- Hesitancy among Roma parents to send their children to school due to concerns about discriminatory attitudes.
- Women in the community expressing disinclination to pursue education and employment, largely due to the responsibility of caring for a high number of children.
- Limited access to mobile phones, which hindered their ability to register for Temporary Protection and access to humanitarian aid.
- Additionally, there were reports of frequent discriminatory remarks from local residents, such as 'Roma people came to our head'.

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