UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Moldova Monitoring Fact Sheet July 2023

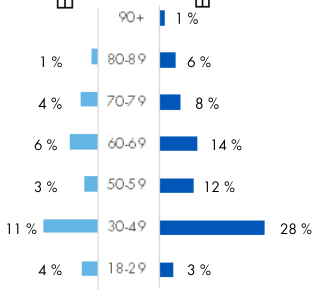
Background and methodology: June 2023, UN Human Rights (OHCHR) in Moldova started the implementation of a 12 months project funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid. The project aims to improve access to services and assistance for refugees from Ukraine with specific needs, including people with disabilities; ethnic or linguistic minorities; LGBTIQA+, 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 156 surveys collected in July 2023.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

In July 2023 OHCHR interviewed **156 refugees from Ukraine** (71 % women, 29 % men), 60 % of them reside in the Transnistrian region, the remaining 3 interviewed people were Moldovan nationals, who, however, have had legal residence in Ukraine for some time. Most of them are Ukrainian nationals and came to Moldova largely in the first months following the start of the conflict in 2022. The main reported reasons behind refugees' decision to settle in the Transnistrian region were the presence of family members (60 people) or friends (10 people).

Age Group and Gender

29 % 71 %



First Arrival to Moldova

86 % - 2022 year

40 % in Feb-March
25 % in April-June
10 % in July-September
10 % in Oct-December

14 % - 2023 year

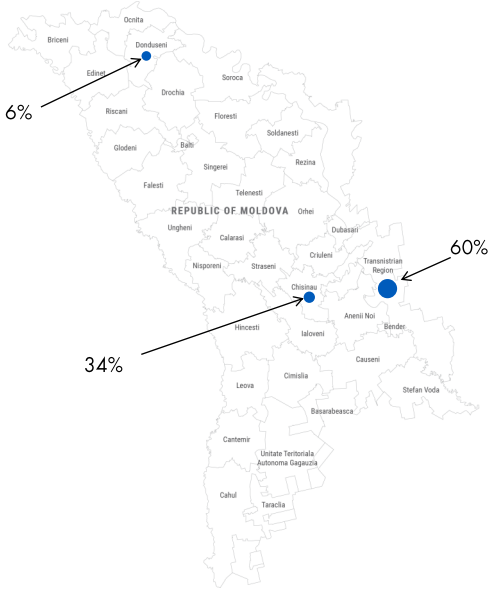
97 % of respondents were of Ukrainian citizenships

3 %—third country nationals (all Russian)

Distribution of respondents according to their self-identification of ethnicity:

77 % - Ukrainian
10 % - Russian
7 % - Roma
4 % - Moldovan

Distribution by region



IDENTIFICATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

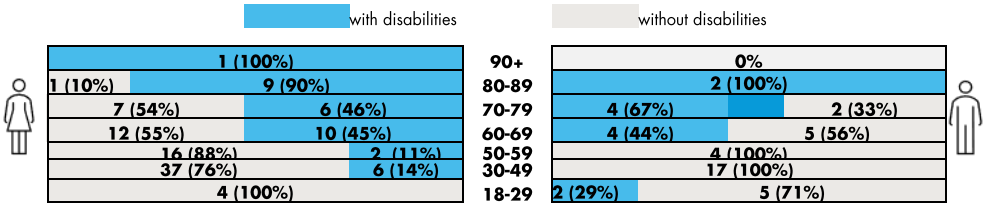
The protection monitoring tool included the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning, which obtains information on difficulties a person may have in undertaking basic functioning activities, with a single question per functional domain: difficulties seeing, hearing, walking or climbing stairs, remembering or concentrating, self-care, and communication (expressive and receptive). The analysis was made considering, per each functional domain, that a person has a disability if they answers 'a lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do at all' .

Out of 156 refugees from Ukraine, **46 (29%) reported a lot of difficulties or impossibility of doing one or several** (19 persons) **functional domains**:

11% Seeing **7%** Hearing **15%** Walking **10%** Remembering **4%** Self-care **4%** Communication

2 out of 3 Moldovan citizens reported a lot of difficulties with Seeing, Walking and Remembering domains.

Persons with disabilities are equally distributed between the right and the left bank of Nistru river.



5 out of 16 persons with **Seeing** disability need but **do not have required glasses**
7 out of 11 persons with **Hearing** disability need but **do not have a hearing aid**
2 out of 24 persons with **Walking** disability need **but who do not have mobility aids**
5 out of 46 persons with disabilities reported **Physical barriers in housing**
From the data it can be inferred that the most needed device is a hearing aid

ANXIETY

49 % of respondents reported that they feel worried, nervous and anxious and **20 %** felt depressed on a DAILY and WEEKLY basis

DEPRESSION

The protection monitoring tool included the enhanced questions of the Washington Group on psychosocial functioning, to identify anxiety and depression. Findings indicate that half of the respondents **(76) feel anxious, worried and nervous** on a daily (27 %) and weekly (22 %) basis.
These included 15 men and 61 women, and of the following age groups:

18-29	30-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89
4	30	10	14	8	10

It also included 26 persons with disabilities. This shows that 57 % of persons with disability suffer from anxiety and depression. Overall, 39 people out of 76 (51 %) reported HIGH LEVELS of these feelings.

Nearly **1 in 5 people** (20%) felt **DEPRESSED** on Daily (13 %) and Weekly (6 %) basis. These included 5 men and 26 women and 16 persons with disabilities that shows that 35 % of persons with disabilities suffer from depression. 6 people from age group 80-89 and 9 people aged 30-49 felt depressed on a daily basis. 31 out of 159 respondents reported that their level of depression was high (16 persons described the level of depression was 'a lot' on a daily basis).

BARRIERS AND ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES

93 (67 women, 26 men) out of 156 interviewed people **(60 %)** self-reported having **serious medical conditions** such as chronic, non-communicable and other diseases, including 40 out of 46 (87 %) persons with disabilities, while more than half of them (49 out of 93) reside in the Transnistrian region.

Age distribution of people with serious medical conditions

18-29	30-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+
5	21	15	25	17	12	1

11 people have a disability certificate issued in Ukraine and no one reported difficulties accessing medical services through the certificate; instead they reported a positive experience in medical institutions.

Distribution by reported medical conditions related to issues with:

HEART	WALKING	VISION	HEARING	ONCOLOGY
28 %	20 %	13 %	6 %	6 %

On both banks of Nistru river, the majority of respondents in need of the medical assistance claimed that medical services mostly were not free of charge and were too expensive for them. Data analysis showed that refugees from Ukraine rather relied on medical services provided by NGOs and volunteers than on medical services from State institutions. Some people did not know how to receive medical aid and had to go to Ukraine for medicines and diagnostics even if it was not save.

28 % of people on both banks of Nistru river reported that they did not get medical assistance including medicines

19 out of 46 persons with disability

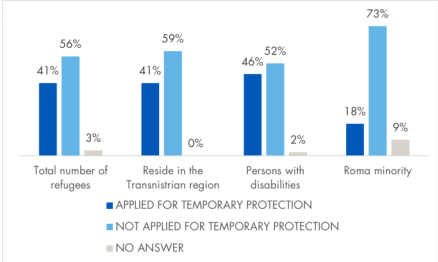
28 out of 93 people from the Transnistrian region

37 out of 93 people with serious medical conditions

> *It is difficult to get to specialized doctors. There are queues and a complicated recording procedure, they [in clinic] refuse to register, and everything is done so that people turn to paid medicine. We buy all medicines at our own expense.*
>
> - Woman, 81 years old, Transnistrian region, person with disabilities

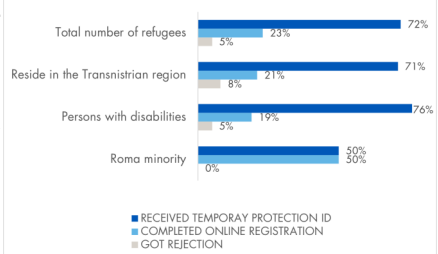
In July 2023 OHCHR **identified 11 persons** (10 women, 1 men) in need of referral, including 8 residing in the Transnistrian region. The main need was for medical assistance (cancer diagnostic and treatment, hearing aid, medicines, wheelchair, etc.). Among them, 8 were of persons with disabilities and all of them were Ukrainian nationals.

TEMPORARY PROTECTION

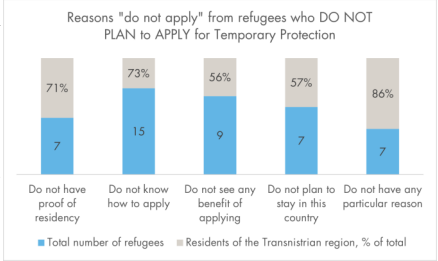


64 out of the 156 refugees from Ukraine (41 %) interviewed **applied for Temporary Protection.** These include 38 refugees (41 %) residing in the Transnistrian region, 21 persons with disabilities (46 %) and 2 out of 11 Roma.

46 out of 64 (72 %) **received the Temporary Protection ID**. These include 27 refugees (29 %) residing in the Transnistrian region, 16 persons with disabilities (35 %) and 1 out of 11 Roma. The remaining **15** have completed the online registration (8 from the Transnistrian region and 4 persons with disability) and are waiting for the appointment; while 3 people were rejected (2 of them are Russian nationals). The remaining 2 Russian nationals did not provide any information about Temporary Protection experience. The majority of respondents **(78 %) reported no difficulties with the application process**. These include 52 % refugees residing in the Transnistrian region, 40 % persons with disabilities. Only 5 respondents (2 residing in the Transnistrian region) reported difficulties with the proof of residence and 3 respondents with completing the online form (1 from the Transnistrian region).



88 out of 156 interviewed refugees from Ukraine (57 %) **did not apply for Temporary Protection** including 55 refugees (59 %) residing in the Transnistrian region, 24 persons with disabilities (52 %) and 8 out of 11 Roma (73 %). **46 out of 88 refugees** (52 %) **do not plan to apply for Temporary Protection.** These include 25 respondents (corresponding to 27 %) from the Transnistrian region, 13 persons with disabilities (28 %), 7 persons from Roma minority (64 %).



It was found that **almost half of people residing in the Transnistrian region do not have explicit information about Temporary Protection** and its purpose.

EDUCATION

55 respondents out of the 156 (35 %) have school-age children, grandchildren or nephews. During their first year of stay in Moldova, **30 respondents (56 %) reported that their children were enrolled in schools**. These include 18 out of 26 refugees residing in the Transnistrian region with school-age children. **55% of the respondents plan to enroll their children in the second year** (26 out of 30 respondents whose children were enrolled in 1st year), including 63 % of respondents residing in the Transnistrian region. The main reported reasons for not enrolling children at school are the preference for the continuation with online/remote learning in the Ukrainian curriculum (for 67 % respondents with children). In addition, some people (5 %) reported that their children have language barriers at school that negatively affected them.

INTENTIONS

78 % of respondents plan to return in Ukraine (76 % residing in the Transnistrian region; 42 % applied for Temporary Protection), **10 % do not plan to return** (66 % residing in the Transnistrian region; 33% applied for Temporary Protection) and **12 % do not know yet** (54 % residing in the Transnistrian region; 46 % applied for Temporary Protection).

16 people reported travelling occasionally to Ukraine for personal reasons (6 of them reside in the Transnistrian region and 7 received Temporary Protection), and only 7 people went back to Ukraine more than 5 times since the start of the conflict (5 from the Transnistrian region and all of them without Temporary Protection).

4 people claimed that they could not cross the border with their Ukrainian ID without their international passport, but it is expensive to receive it or renew it in Moldova.

SELF-REPORTED URGENT NEEDS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Medical services (including medicines, diagnosis, surgery), coupled with information on how to access them, are the **most urgent needs for 33 out of 156 respondents (21 %)**. This includes 20% persons with disabilities and 22 % residing in the Transnistrian region. **The second most urgent need is cash assistance** (together with information on the reasons for delays with payments) **for 25 out of 156 respondents (16 %)** while 20 of them are residing in the Transnistrian region**. A small number of people** (respectively 6 and 8) would like to know **how to find accommodation and how to receive compensation for rent.** 8 people are interested in knowing how to access education, and 6 in job opportunities. 6 people residing in the Transnistrian region asked for information on Temporary Protection and which supporting documents are needed for crossing the Ukrainian/Moldovan border.

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PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION/NEGATIVE ATTITUDE BASED ON PROTECTED GROUNDS

REFUGEE STATUS

19 (16 women, 3 men) out of 156 (12 %) refugees from Ukraine reported a perception of **negative attitude** towards them because of their **refugee status**. This data includes 6 people residing in Transnistrian region, 5 persons with disabilities, 4 persons are part of Roma community.

> It is hard to find a job if you are a Ukrainian refugee.
> — *Man, 83 years old, Transnistrian region*
>
> No free medical assistance even with my disability status.
> — *Woman, 40 years old, Chisinau*

> My husband had cancer and died without getting help. The doctors refused to see him because we were refugees
> — Woman 65, Chisinau

ETHNICITY

> They do not want to rent to us. I have been looking for a house for rent for several months.
> — *Man, 38 years old, Chisinau (Roma)*
>
> Local people support the Russian Federation and they started conflict.
> — *Woman, 31 years old, Transnistrian region (Ukrainian)*

8 (7 women, 1 men) out of 156 (5 %) refugees from Ukraine reported a perception of negative attitude due to their ethnicity. These include 2 persons with disabilities. 5 of them are Roma and reside in Chisinau, while the remaining 3 are residing in the Transnistrian region.

LANGUAGE

13 (10 women, 3 men) refugee from Ukraine (8 %) reported having experienced language barriers since their arrival to Moldova. These include 2 persons with disabilities. Half of them (7), including 5 people residing in the Transnistrian region, **prefer to speak Ukrainian but** faced resistance from the local population who does not understand Ukrainian. Whereas 3 people (all reside in Chisinau) said that they did not enroll their children at school because they did not speak Russian. **6 people, mostly in Chisinau, reported that local community members did not appreciate when they spoke Russian** in shops, public transport, and public institutions like the municipality. One person in Chisinau said that he **could not find a job because he did not speak Romanian language.**

> People do not want to hear the Ukrainian language and they leave (both neighbors or people during the school meetings)
> — *Man, 35 years old, Transnistrian region*
>
> At the store, they did not want to sell me products because I was speaking Russian
> — *Woman, 36 years old, Chisinau*
>
> My granddaughter speaks Ukrainian and she cannot study here because of the language barrier
> —*Woman, 42 years old, Chisinau*

SOCIAL TENSION

7 % refugees from Ukraine have the feeling that the host communities are already tired of supporting them. Half of respondents reside in the Transnistrian region

> At work the locals are saying that refugees should not be pitied, and that refugees here live better than the locals.
> — *Woman, 59 years old, Chisinau*
>
> The host communities believe that the war can start here because of us.
> — *Woman,41 years old, Transnistrian region*

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