

Child Protection

January-December 2023

Advocacy for children's rights:

UNHCR works and advocates to ensure that the rights and best interests of all refugee children are upheld, with a focus on the specific needs of each child.

Inclusion in national systems:

UNHCR supports the government of the Republic of Moldova to ensure that refugee children are included in national child protection systems.

Capacity building:

UNHCR works to strengthen the capacity of national and local child protection systems. Both of UNHCR's child protection partners are local NGOs.

POPULATION STATISTICS

As of December 2023, 100,494 refugees from Ukraine have remained in the Republic of Moldova.

60% are female

47% are children (51% boys, 49% girls)

6% of households have children in them who are separated from both parents

2% of refugee children in Moldova live in Refugee Accommodation Centers (RACs), with the majority of others living in private accommodations with family members

17% of children have been granted Temporary Protection (TP)

KEY FIGURES

UNHCR and partners provided **direct child protection assistance to 4,125 children and families** in 2023, including case management support, the provision of child-specific NFIs, legal assistance, and child and youth friendly activities.

UNHCR and partners conducted **389 Best Interest Assessments conducted (BIAs)** for children at risk.

UNHCR and partners **trained 932 professionals on child protection topics**, including best interest procedures, child friendly communication, and identification and referral of children at risk.

Prevention activities: Through activities to prevent violence against children, **146** RAC managers and local NGO representatives gained enhanced knowledge of child protection, **158** teachers were trained to deliver parenting and prevention programs, and over **200** adolescents from 14 schools took part in the **19 Days of Activism for Prevention of Violence and Abuse Against Children and Youth** campaign in November 2023.

HIGHLIGHTS

Expansion of child care services

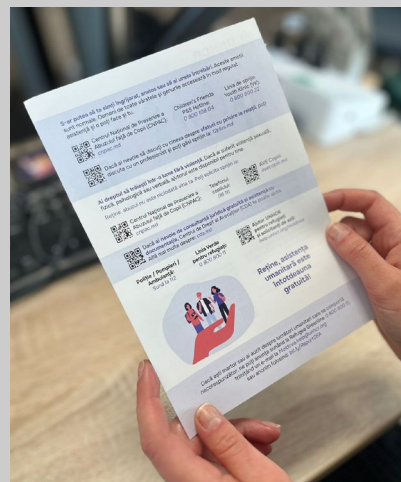
In 2023, UNHCR supported the rehabilitation of two creches, one in Balti and one in Chisinau, in order to expand their capacity to care for both Moldovan and Ukrainian children. Planning is underway to rehabilitate additional creches in 2024.

Moldovan National Youth Council (MNYC)

UNHCR collaborated with the MNYC, and its Ukrainian youth task force, to create youth friendly messaging about TP and education. Social cohesion activities, including bowling, rock climbing, and a theater performance were also organized.

Poster Presentation

Moldovan and Ukrainian youth from 14 schools presented posters they made about prevention of violence against children to government representatives in December 2023.



YOUTH FRIENDLY MATERIALS

UNHCR created and distributed a resource leaflet, with information targeted to Ukrainian youth. It includes information on the rights granted by the Government and services available in NGOs, as well as links to useful websites and help line numbers. The materials are available in Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian, and English.

Operational Response

- **Identification and referral of children at risk:** Refugee children at risk are identified by UNHCR and partners at border crossing points, cash enrolment centers, Blue Dots, and during recreational activities. UNHCR and partners collaborate closely with national child protection authorities, to ensure that cases are referred and that children's needs are met. BIAs are systemically conducted for all Unaccompanied and Separated Children who register for UNHCR cash assistance, and for other children at risk, to assess protection risks and identify referrals needed.
- **Case management:** While refugee children are included in national child protection systems, UNHCR and its partners provide complementary case management to refugee children at risk and to their families, in coordination with child protection authorities.
- **Capacity-building:** UNHCR and partners support the training of national and local authorities on child protection principles and activities, including Guardianship Authority staff, the Border Police, the General Inspectorate for Migration, and teachers, as well as local and international NGO staff.
- **Prevention:** UNHCR and its partners engage in activities to prevent abuse of, and violence against, children, and to ensure that they are safe and protected from harm, such as supporting caregivers to learn about positive parenting practices.
- **Child Protection for Roma children:** UNHCR collaborates with Roma mediators and Roma-led organizations to ensure that child protection services are tailored to their cultural context.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR collaborates with **UNICEF**, the **Ministry of Labor and Social Protection**, including the **Guardianship Authority**, **local Departments of Social Assistance**, the **Border Police**, and other authorities to ensure that refugee children are included in national child protection systems and are safe and protected from harm.
- UNHCR implements child protection programming through its partners: **AVE Copiii** conducts case management and capacity building, **National Centre for Preventing Child Abuse** conducts prevention and awareness raising activities, **Charity Centre for Refugees** runs a child friendly space for child asylum seekers, **Tarna Rom** provides support for Roma children, and **Centrul de Drept al Avocatilor** provides legal assistance for children and conducts BIAs at cash enrolment centers.



MOLDOVAN NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL ROCK CLIMBING EVENT

REFUGEE COORDINATION FORUM

UNHCR co-leads the Child Protection Sub Working Group (CP SWG) jointly with UNICEF. In 2023, the CP SWG partners managed 110 child friendly spaces and Blue Dots around the country, updated and localized six child protection referral pathways, and conducted over 4,000 training interactions on child protection.