

Education

January-December 2023

Only 6% of Ukrainian children in Moldova are enrolled in schools, a concerning low rate. Other Ukrainian children are believed to be studying online, though there is no tracking system.

UNHCR advocates for the **inclusion of refugee children into the national education system** to ensure access to quality education and higher education opportunities.

UNHCR works to ensure that children from specific groups, including Roma children and children with disabilities, have **inclusive access to education**.

POPULATION STATISTICS

As of end December 2023, over **120,000** refugees from Ukraine have remained in the Republic of Moldova.

59% are female

44% are children (23% boys, 21% girls)

2,237 children (1126 girls, 1111 boys) were enrolled in Moldovan schools (619 in kindergartens and 1618 in primary and secondary schools) as of 27 November 2023.

Of the children studying in primary and secondary schools, **11%** study in Romanian, and **89%** in Russian.

The raions of **Chisinau, Balti, Gagauzia, Stefan Voda and Cahul** have the largest numbers of Ukrainian children enrolled in local schools.

KEY FIGURES

Establishment of EduTech Labs: In 2023, UNHCR established EduTech Labs inside **three** schools in Cahul to facilitate refugee children to study the Ukrainian curriculum online, but from a school setting.

Info sessions: **Seven** information sessions were conducted in local communities for a total of one hundred parents, to share the revised MER school enrollment procedures, the importance of physically enrolling children in schools and its impact on children's social and emotional development, as well as to discuss any remaining challenges or concerns families have in enrolling their children in Moldovan schools.

School Furniture Distribution: In 2023, **six** schools were supported with donations of **200** desks and 200 chairs to enhance their capacity to enrol refugee students.

HIGHLIGHTS

Literacy Classes

UNHCR partner, Tarna Rom, facilitates literacy classes for Roma refugee children in five locations around the country.

Action Plan for Inclusion of Refugee Children

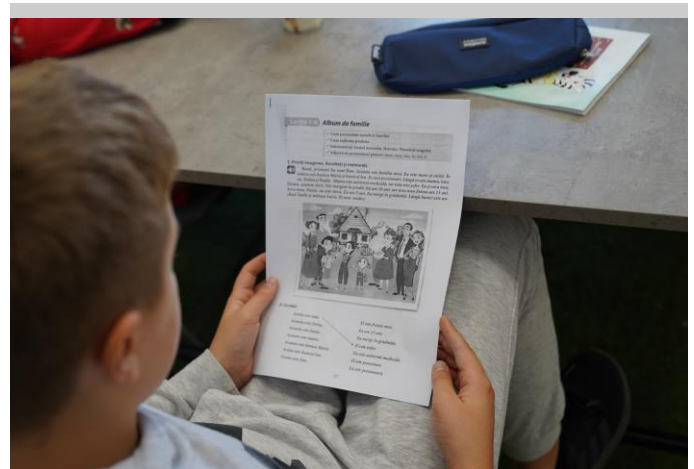
UNHCR, in coordination with UNICEF, developed a draft roadmap and action plan to support the Ministry of Education's efforts to ensure the enrolment of all refugee children in the Moldovan education system.

Scholarships for Higher Education

UNHCR is exploring opportunities for university study and scholarships for refugee students in Moldova and the possibility of bringing the DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarship program to the country.

Education Assessment

In collaboration with REACH and UNICEF, UNHCR completed **an education assessment** that sought to understand the education experiences and learning conditions of Ukrainian children aged 6-17 years old.



ROMANIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES

UNHCR in partnership with the local NGO Charity Centre for Refugees (CCR) and Laolalta organizes Romanian language classes in Chisinau and elsewhere in the country. The classes are available for both children and adults.

OPERATIONAL RESPONSE

Advocacy: UNHCR advocates with the Ministry of Education and Research (MER) on the inclusion of refugee students in the national system. UNHCR and UNICEF jointly advocated with MER to ensure that [the September 2023 Instruction on the enrolment of Ukrainian children](#) simplified enrolment procedures and guaranteed educational access for all children, regardless of legal status. UNHCR, together with UNICEF, plans to organize a roundtable in 2024 to raise awareness of funding gaps related to refugee inclusion in the education system.

Access to Education: UNHCR supports the enrollment of Ukrainian children in Moldovan schools through awareness raising, meetings with parents to identify challenges, and the provision of material support. Three schools in Cahul were provided with over seventy computers and headphones as part of the establishment of EduTech Labs, and school furniture was distributed to other six schools around the country.

Support to Children with Specific Needs: UNHCR partner Tarna Rom provides specialized support to children with no educational background who need basic literacy and numeracy skills, and is exploring how to further support children with disabilities in school settings.

Higher Education: UNHCR is engaged in the higher education sector and works on increasing access to free or affordable higher education for Ukrainian students. Visits have been carried out to state and private Moldovan universities and focus group discussions were conducted with refugee youth, to collect information on students' needs and the options available for refugees to continue university education. Information about the procedures to enroll at Moldovan universities was shared with Ukrainian students. UNHCR has also supported the State University of Moldova with technical equipment to facilitate access to education for both refugee and Moldovan students. Additionally, UNHCR experts regularly provide courses on issues related to refugee law and international protection, among others. In Moldova, UNHCR is also collaborating with universities under the international framework of [Sergio Vieira de Mello academic network](#).

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

In the education sector, UNHCR collaborates closely with the Ministry of Education and Research (MER), local Directorates of Education, and UNICEF.

Additionally, UNHCR partner CCR and Laolalta conducts free Romanian language classes for refugees in several locations. CCR also supports collaboration with Moldovan universities for the enrollment of refugee students. Tarna Rom, UNHCR partner, holds literacy classes for Roma refugee children in five locations throughout Moldova. UNHCR also collaborates with the Moldovan National Youth Council to share youth friendly information, including on topics related to education.



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Literacy class for Roma refugee children at the Refugee Accommodation Centre in Chisinau. An activity from UNHCR in partnership with the Roma-led organization Tarna Rom.

REFUGEE COORDINATION FORUM

The Refugee Education Working Group (REWG) meets on a regular basis to enhance coordination and provide technical expertise. The REWG is chaired by MER and co-chaired by UNHCR and UNICEF. In 2023, the REWG created a guidance note for the establishment of EduTech Labs (spaces inside schools for Ukrainian children to study online) and supported coordination of partners on school enrollment.



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