

While refugee children are included in Moldova's national child protection system, it lacks capacity to fully meet growing needs. UNHCR supports **capacity-building** for quality, **sustainable child protection** services.

Refugee children in Moldova need more support in complementary case management, MHPSS, child friendly activities, and service referral. UNHCR strengthens these services for an **effective child protection response**.

Preventing violence against children, addressing abuse, and promoting positive parenting remain crucial. UNHCR **strengthens protection systems**, assists families, and ensures safer environments for all children.

Population figures

~127,000 refugees from Ukraine in Moldova:

58% women and girls

42% children (22% boys, 20% girls)

5% of households included children who were separated from both parents

1% of refugee children in Moldova were living in Refugee Accommodation Centers (RACs), with the majority of others living in private accommodations with family members

*Figures as of 31 January 2025

Highlights

Safer schools for all: To combat violence in schools, UNHCR, in collaboration with CNPAC, supported Moldovan and Ukrainian adolescents in leading the "Education Doesn't Hurt" advocacy campaign. The initiative aimed to raise awareness of school violence and culminated in a meeting with the Minister of Education and Research, where adolescents presented their concerns and outlined steps for future action.

Inclusive child protection: To strengthen child protection services, UNHCR partner AVE Copiii held a three-day workshop in December 2024, bringing together Child Protection Specialists, social workers, Roma community mediators, and local authorities to improve coordination and strengthen protection mechanisms for vulnerable children.

Health education for adolescents: To enhance adolescent well-being, UNHCR and partners conducted sexual and reproductive health (SRH) sessions in Glodeni and Tiraspol, equipping adolescents with essential knowledge to make informed health decisions and reduce early pregnancies.

Expanding early education access: To increase access to early childhood education, UNHCR supported the renovation of four additional crèche groups in kindergartens across Moldova. This initiative increases access to education and quality childcare for both Ukrainian and Moldovan children, ensuring a stronger foundation for their learning and social integration.

Key figures

- In 2024, UNHCR and partners provided child protection assistance to **14,000 children and families**, including legal assistance, the provision of child specific Non-Food Items, and child and youth friendly activities, including through Blue Dots, improving refugee children's access to essential support and ensuring their safety and well-being.
- UNHCR and its partners conducted **293 Best Interest Assessments (BIAs)** for children at risk, ensuring tailored interventions to address their specific protection needs.
- UNHCR and partners **trained 1,446 professionals on child protection topics**, including best interest procedures, child friendly communication, and identification and referral of children at risk. This strengthened national protection systems, ensuring better responses to children's needs.
- **Prevention activities:** Through activities to prevent violence against children, 290 people were involved in the development of child protection policies in **10 schools and 50 adolescents** participated in the development of advocacy campaigns contributing to creating safer learning environments.



A mix of Moldovan and Ukrainian adolescents at the SafeTeen Summer School, organised by UNHCR partner CNPAC, engaged in participatory sessions, learning how to amplify their voices and drive change for inclusive, friendly education in schools and with policymakers.

Operational Response

UNHCR and partners identify **vulnerable and at-risk refugee children** at key locations, such as border points, cash enrolment centres, and child friendly spaces, ensuring **timely referrals** through collaboration with national authorities. **Best Interests Assessments (BIAs)** address protection risks and connect children to appropriate services without delay. UNHCR and partners ensure refugee children are included in national child protection systems, providing **complementary case management** to ensure tailored support for long-term well-being. **Capacity-building** equips frontline workers, including Guardianship Authority staff, Border Police, teachers, and NGO personnel, to identify and prevent child protection risks. To foster **safe environments** for children, UNHCR promotes **positive parenting practices** and conducts activities to prevent abuse and violence. To promote **equitable access to services** and trust within Roma communities, UNHCR ensures culturally sensitive services through partnerships with Roma mediators and Roma-led organizations.

Working with Partners

■ UNHCR collaborates with **UNICEF**, the **Ministry of Labor and Social Protection**, including the **Guardianship Authority** and 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 the Prevention of 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 Best-Interest Assessments at cash enrolment centers.

Refugee Coordination Forum

UNHCR, co-leading the Child Protection Sub-Working Group (CP SWG) with UNICEF, coordinates efforts to address the key concerns facing refugee children in Moldova. In 2024, priorities included strengthening national child protection systems through training, enhancing coordination with the Border Police and Guardianship Authority for the referral of children at risk at border crossing points, and supporting children affected by the planned closure of Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs).

Moving forward, efforts will focus on ensuring sustainable alternative care arrangements, continuing to ensure that refugee children are integrated into national protection systems, and continuing to strengthen local child protection mechanisms.



Children in the village of Popeasca, including refugee children, gathered with joy to celebrate Children's Day early at the Refugee Accommodation Centre. On May 30–31, UNHCR, partner organizations, and local authorities came together to organize a series of engaging recreational activities, fostering a sense of community and inclusion. Moldovan and refugee children participated in games, creative workshops, and cultural performances, creating cherished memories and strengthening bonds between the two communities.

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

For more information, please visit the Operational Data Portal for Moldova or the Global Focus page for Moldova.

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