QUARTERLY SOCIAL LISTENING REPORT

FROM JANUARY TO MARCH 2024

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This report is issued by InfoUnit, a project implemented by A.O. “Laolaltă” for the civic initiative “Moldova for Peace”, with the support of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

MOLDOVA FOR PEACE

LAOLALTĂ

DISCLAIMER

This report presents an analysis of refugee and local community social media posts or threads shared via online social media sources.

Between January and March 2024, the InfoUnit collected 2,941 posts or threads, monitored over 134,709 posts, posted 73 informative updates covering topics like temporary protection, medical services, cash assistance, and legal issues, addressed 2,884 questions, and shared information about over 500 free events, training sessions, courses accessible to both refugee and host communities, and other.

Rumors and information spread quickly among the communities and can have serious consequences. Tracking social media enables humanitarian organizations and various stakeholders to stay informed about community discussions and tackle any misinformation that may arise. Information monitoring also helps identify gaps or deficiencies in the humanitarian response.
In this report, the term "Refugees" applies to individuals displaced from Ukraine — including those seeking protection in Moldova, temporary protection, asylum seekers, refugee status, or others.
This report is part of the Accountability to Affected People (AAP) mechanisms of the Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) in Moldova.

ACCESS TO ACCURATE INFORMATION

The InfoUnit continuously provided verified information on legal matters, including legal status, and redirected legal cases to The Law Center of Advocates (CDA), ACTED, and the Department of Human Rights as part of the "Moldova for Peace" Initiative, Political and Reform Center (CPR-MOLDOVA), IOM MOLDOVA, Clinica Juridica, and others. Additionally, InfoUnit disseminated information about humanitarian aid programs, employment opportunities, medical services, education, and more.

- **No artificial intelligence used**: Collecting data manually provides a deeper context understanding. If the context is nuanced, it requires a human touch.
- **No personal data collected**: We do not collect any personal data and all the information is examined to ensure the anonymity of respondents.
- **Context analysis**: Posts and threads are provided alongside contextual information to give insight into the environment in which it was shared.
- **Quantitative analysis and categorization**: The information is grouped based on the assistance or services that were the subject of discussion.

OUR RESOURCES

- **Ajutor Ucraineni in Moldova**: the biggest help Facebook group for refugees in Moldova. Partners can post information about their assistance aid programs.
- **Українці Молдова**: informational Telegram channel launched by InfoUnit.

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SOURCES OF MEDIA POSTS OR THREADS

13 Viber groups

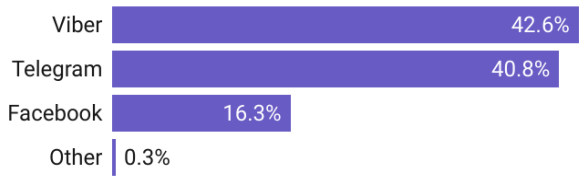
10 Telegram groups and channels

10 Online mass media

2 Facebook groups and pages

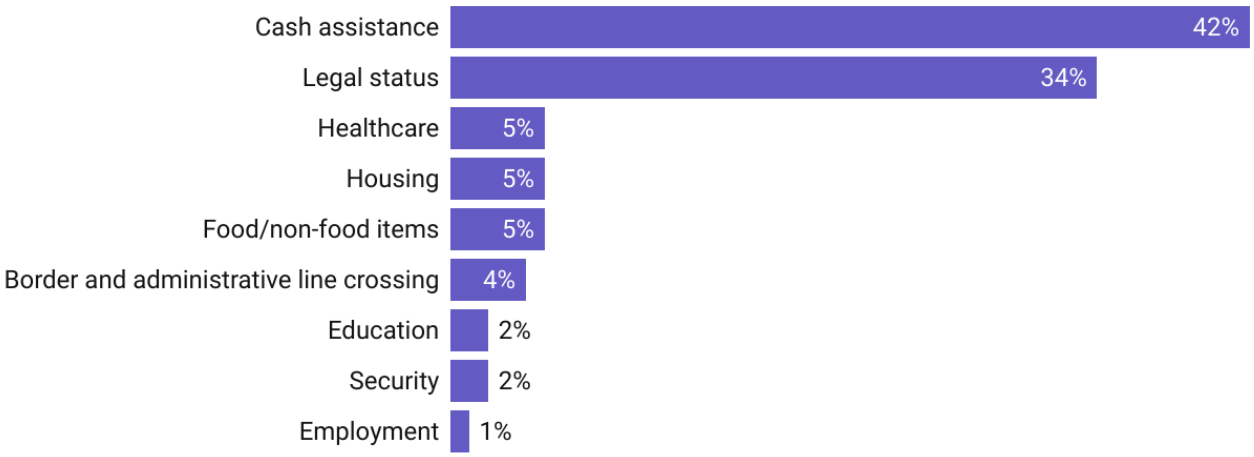
230.000+ TOTAL MEMBERS OF REFUGEE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES MONITORED AND REACHED

The specified period contains data from the sources mentioned above, which have been distributed as follows in the chart. The chart illustrates the distribution of messaging platform usage.



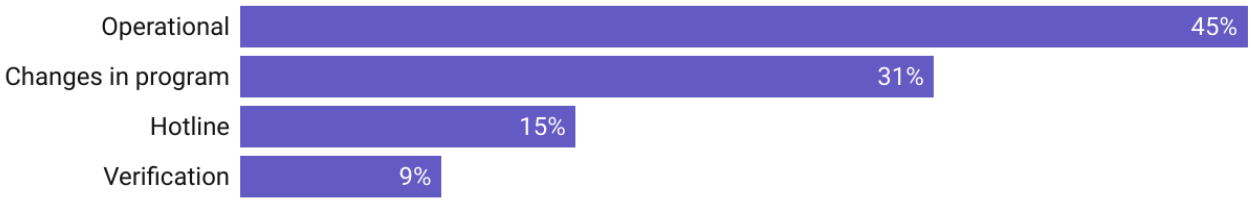
FEEDBACK ANALYSIS

During the reporting period a total of 2,941 social media posts and threads were collected.



FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: CASH ASSISTANCE 42%

UNHCR CASH ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES IN MOLDOVA 32 %[1]



[1] 32% UNHCR Cash assistance Program feedback, out of 42% collected feedback on Cash assistance programs.

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

In January, refugees expressed concerns regarding the payment system, citing concerns about insufficiency or delay in payments. They felt the system lacked transparency and reliability, prompting inquiries due to technical glitches and registration challenges related to legal status. Additionally, there was uncertainty about future payments and the next steps for those unable to register their legal status with UNHCR.

In February, the unclear timing and amount of payments worried beneficiaries. As questions about the payment process, including the possibility of advance winter payments, remained unanswered, doubts began to increase. Concerns also arose about how temporary (long or short) departures from Moldova might impact payments. Additionally, in February, beneficiaries became increasingly anxious due to distrust of suspicious calls and meeting invitations, reportedly for focus groups and verifications.

In March, confusion and uncertainty about the requirement for holding a temporary protection document and the unknown reasons for payment delays caused concern among beneficiaries of financial assistance. In early March, misunderstanding grew due to a lack of transparency in assistance criteria and procedures, in beneficiary's opinions, prompting a need for clearer guidelines from UNHCR. The released FAQ[2] from UNHCR eased some of the refugees' concerns.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"Could you please tell me if you're absent from Moldova for more than 15 days, will the UNHCR stop the payments?"
"I don't understand, do we need to call everyone, do they ask something there? Or do they just not pay everyone, regardless of initial registration in the system?"

UNHCR CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CHANGES

In January, updating data with UNHCR[3] caused difficulties, especially for families with children, where many technical questions arose. Some refugees encountered issues with the UNHCR online form and were forced to seek alternative methods for updating their data with UNHCR, such as visiting a registration center, or requesting a home visit (for people with disabilities and/or severe medical conditions who are unable to approach an enrolment center).

Many refugees were concerned about the payment disruptions under new UNHCR policies, especially for those who fail to update their data with UNHCR on time[4].
Some refugees doubted the continuity of payments, particularly for less vulnerable citizens with residence permits or citizenship of Moldova.

Many refugees said that a communication campaign outlining how cash assistance program works would be advantageous.

During February, refugees expressed concerns about the ambiguous criteria for changes in the cash assistance program and the categories of future beneficiaries, while also seeking clarification on extending assistance for those with dual citizenship. Questions also emerged regarding the eligibility for payments among individuals with Moldovan residence permits and the potential cancellation of payments for certain groups, such as Moldovan citizens and others, excluding those from Ukraine.

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[2] Frequently asked questions about UNHCR's cash assistance program in the Republic of Moldova.
[3] Refugee Cash Assistance Updates in Moldova - Starting February 2024 (afterward the deadline was extended until March 2024), a legal status in Moldova is required for UNHCR cash assistance program beneficiaries.
[4] Due to a short period for updating data with UNHCR, on February 2, 2024, the deadline was extended until February 29.

Many refugees requested more information to ensure transparency.

Refugees continued to inquire daily about the unclear process of updating data, unsure if their online updates were enough or if further action was necessary, and also about the eligibility criteria for individuals with Moldovan residency or for individuals that are not citizens of Ukraine.

In March, there was ongoing uncertainty regarding access to financial assistance due to uncertainty about eligibility criteria for payments for refugees with two citizenship and the need to update data, after March 1st, following the extension of temporary protection status to all its holders[5].

Some refugees faced difficulties due to unclear information in the process, requiring many to make repeated visits to the enrollment centers to update their information and continue receiving payments. Many also encountered communication issues with the UNHCR cash hotline and receiving SMS notifications for data verification, confusing those who had already updated their information previously.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"- Please tell me, does anyone have a family member who is a citizen of Moldova with a residence permit in Ukraine, who received payments from the UNHCR? Was there a payment for such a family member in February or has it already been canceled?
- In February there was, but from March onwards I don't know, I'm also interested."

UNHCR CASH ASSISTANCE HELPLINE (CASH HOTLINE)

During the reporting period, refugees encountered challenges when trying to contact the hotline, such as long wait times, connectivity issues, and sometimes unengaged operators. This led to many additional questions and even mistrust among callers due to unclear or insufficient information and varying responses from operators. While some callers received assistance, others were left uncertain about their payment statuses and verification procedures.

Example of comment translated into English:

"Could you please advise if anyone managed to reach the UNHCR hotline at 080010823? In February ... for the second week it has been impossible to get through, I call at different times of the day, sometimes the call is dropped, sometimes they don't pick up the phone. What could be the reason? I'm calling from a Moldovan number, I've always been able to get through before."

VERIFICATION INTERVIEW

Refugees shared their experiences regarding problems receiving SMS notifications for verification procedures and often didn't understand their content and the verification procedure. Failure to pass the verification procedure, due to missed or unreceived SMS notifications, led to payment suspensions and blocked cards, causing inconvenience for refugees.

Example of comment translated into English:

"I received an SMS invitation for verification in Causeni. I've already been there this month! They called me twice in person. And again, I received an SMS to come in person with the whole family... Could it be a glitch? I've provided the same information a hundred times already..."

[5] For individuals displaced from Ukraine, who were granted temporary protection before March 1, 2024, the validity period of the temporary protection identity document was automatically extended until March 1, 2025.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

- responded to questions regarding the UNHCR Cash assistance program in the Facebook group "Ajutor Ucraineni in Moldova" and telegram channel Українці Молдова/Помощь Украинцам в Молдове;
- suggested calling the Cash Assistance Helpline: 0 800 10823, and encouraged to consult the Frequently Asked Questions section regarding cash assistance. If refugees couldn't find the needed answer, IU informed them to reach out to UNHCR by completing a feedback form;
- informed about UNHCR's new Cash Assistance Feedback Form;
- informed about changes in the UNHCR cash assistance program, provided information, and answered various questions on how to do it;
- informed about deadlines for updating information with UNHCR;
- informed and shared information about Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – Cash and legal status;
- informed about Temporary closure: Enrolment centers and cash helpline;

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommend seeking consultations and clarifications through the UNHCR cash hotline to avoid misunderstandings;
- Share concise and informative posts, posters, videos, and infographics containing relevant details across various channels;
- Organize in person informative meetings, fairs;

OTHER CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR REFUGEES IN MOLDOVA 10 %[6]

CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN THE TRANSNISTRIAN REGION

In January, refugees were concerned about delayed payments from IOM for December and the absence of payments for January, also prompting worries about payment notifications. OSORC started to require an email address for registration / re-registration, which caused long queues.

This process also raised questions about the necessity of holding a temporary protection document to continue to receive assistance, similar to the UNHCR cash assistance program. Changes in the procedure, such as sending notifications and withdrawal codes via email, caused dissatisfaction among refugees, but improved message delivery.

However, some refugees still received SMS notifications without withdrawal codes, and they had to call the hotline for additional information.

Technical issues with the MoneyGram system led refugees to be advised to use banks on the right bank of the Nistru River for withdrawals.

In February, payment delays caused uncertainty and discussions among refugees. Refugees discussed that payments for December, January, and February had not yet been made. Those who did not receive assistance for December and January were advised to contact the IOM by email to clarify the situation.

Refugees also exchanged information regarding the re-registration procedure, including the possibility to re-register in OSORC without the presence of children and the choice to forgo payments without undergoing re-registration.

[6] 10% Other Cash assistance Program feedback, out of 42% collected feedback on Cash assistance programs.

In March, refugees anticipated receiving payments for December, January, and February. Some refugees stated that they did not receive payment notifications on email, due to changes in the procedure, possibly because messages could have been flagged as spam. Also, some refugees stated that they received notifications of payment refusal from OSORC, not specifying the reason.

Example of comment translated into English:

"- Please advise on the email address of the IOM in Chisinau where we can inquire about the absence of December payment. Maybe we missed something or didn't do something right.
- We also didn't receive it, like many others."

RENTAL CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

In February, ACTED Moldova announced the launch of a new Rental Cash assistance program for refugees from Ukraine. The program offered compensation for rent and utility bills for six months and generated significant interest and questions regarding participation criteria.

There were inquiries about eligibility for those living in the Transnistrian region and whether participation in other programs allowed for participation in this one. Even after the closure of applications, questions about the possibility of participation persisted.

In March, CONCORDIA announced the launch of a new Rental Cash assistance program for 45 refugee families from Ukraine, providing them with safe and stable housing in Moldova for the medium term (up to 6 months) in 2024. The application process closed very fast. As of April 1, 2024, all these programs are effectively closed because they have reached their maximum participant limit. Therefore, new applicants are unable to access the programs.

Example of comment translated into English:

"How can I find out where and how to get compensation for rent?"

CASH ASSISTANCE FOR HOST FAMILIES

In January, some host families received payments for the 11th round, while others didn't. Not all regions, such as Ungheni and its district, received payments for the 11th round. Host families shared information that correcting profile errors or incorrect data takes time and may lead to missed payments, and some faced data update issues. The verification procedure was mentioned as a quick and easy process, with some persons suggesting it wasn't even necessary to be at home for it.

In February, some refugees and Moldovan citizens shared their regret that the program for host families is limited to Moldova and does not include the Transnistrian region. Many hosts didn't receive payments due to verification issues. Problems also arose with receiving SMS codes for withdrawals, some waited for a second SMS, which was either delayed or never received.

There were discussions about the requirement for hosts to provide accommodation for free, with stories shared about some receiving payments both as hosts and landlords renting to people from Ukraine. The responsible organization didn't respond to questions about payments and data update, causing challenges for some hosts, including difficulties with receiving money via Western Union.

In March, many encountered difficulty in contacting the World Food Programme (WFP), with complaints about the inability to reach the hotline, some shared contacts via Viber, noting that using Viber was more effective than calling the non-functional hotline. Additionally, issues regarding the withdrawal of funds at the post office were discussed, troubling the reception of payments.

There was also information shared about not receiving SMS notifications, leading to doubts about the distribution of payments and dissatisfaction due to the lack of assistance after undergoing the verification process. There were also several inquiries about the possibility of receiving aid as a host family while being outside Moldova.

Example of comment translated into English:

"We have been living with our host since September, we registered them, there was an inspection, and so far, the host has not received any assistance."

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

- shared IOM Moldova's announcement about ongoing technical issues with the payment process and temporary unavailability of cash withdrawals in the Transnistrian region;
- contacted IOM Moldova, and WFP and gave feedback about their programs, offered support and expressed willingness to disseminate information as needed, and requested guidance on how to redirect refugees with further inquiries about these programs;
- provided information and answered questions about cash assistance programs, or advised to contact the organizations operating these programs directly and provided their contacts.;
- informed about the opportunity/necessity to register for the following round for participation or update information for the Cash for host families program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Clearly and concisely communicate eligibility criteria in programs;
- Maintain regular communication with refugees and partners;
- Consider using simple and accessible communication channels to stay connected with beneficiaries;
- Ensure clear access to different organizations' hotlines for supporting refugees with information, and provide timely, relevant information;
- Provide clear instructions for program registration and ensure transparency in the application process;
- Coordinate efforts to avoid service duplications;
- Continuously evaluate program effectiveness;
- Always communicate that participation in programs is free of charge.

FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: LEGAL STATUS 34%

In January, discussions primarily centered on temporary protection (TP) application and renewal procedures, updating information for TP beneficiaries, and required documents for initial registration. There was considerable interest in potential rule changes, especially among refugees who were eager for the 45-day rule[7] outside Moldova to be abolished. Some refugees inquired about applying for temporary protection without a rent agreement or proof of residence, and about postponing application submissions. Questions also arose regarding reapplication, revocation, and the consequences of delays in obtaining a legal status.

In February, questions about temporary protection were the most popular. Daily inquiries revolved around extending TP, rule changes, and leaving Moldova for over 45 days. Refugees expressed tension and uncertainty due to awaiting official information about the TP status extension.

Refugees also talked about obtaining protection in Moldova if already granted elsewhere and the risk of losing protection in Moldova. The 45-day rule was debated, with concerns about violations and fines. Procedures for obtaining TP in Moldova, the impact on daily life, and the need to exchange TP plastic cards were discussed.

After the government extended TP[8] refugees were pleased with the removal of the 45-day rule. Possibility of the police checks for the address of residence and the necessity to notify authorities about temporary absences or address changes were also highly discussed.

In March, issues related to QR codes on temporary protection documents led to confusion, sparking conversations about the process of replacing the cards. Despite the translation into Russian of the original government decree extending the duration of temporary protection, uncertainty remained regarding the duration of stay outside Moldova. Questions about the procedure for obtaining temporary protection and confirming residency without a rental agreement remained also relevant.

Discussions also covered questions regarding obtaining residency in Moldova: the grounds, the procedure, and the differences from other legal statuses. Moldovan citizenship was also discussed, specifically the fact that children born in Moldova can obtain citizenship, that individuals born in Moldova (at that time the Moldovan Soviet Republic) before 1991 came to realize themselves as Moldovan citizens, along with the requirements for citizenship acquisition: language proficiency, exams, eligibility through marriage.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"Maybe someone knows, is there any information regarding Temporary Protection after March 1st?"
"When scanning the QR code of the TP, it says that the document is not found..."
"The 45 days rule - no one is following it already. Why did they come up with this and informed everyone - it's unclear."
"Could you please advise if anyone has applied for a residence permit in Moldova (family reunification)? Please write down what documents are required and the overall procedure."
"- I saw that the '45-day' rule was canceled. Does this mean that now you cannot leave at all or can you leave for more than 45 days?
- I'm curious too."

7 Until March 1, 2024, the regulation stipulated that Temporary Protection holders could only spend a maximum of 45 days outside Moldova.

8 The Government of the Republic of Moldova starting from March 1, 2024, automatically extended the validity period of the identity document of the beneficiaries of Temporary Protection until March 1, 2025.

INFORMATION MONITORED ON SOCIAL MEDIA ABOUT LEGAL STATUS INCLUDES QUESTIONS ABOUT:

- Changes in legislation regarding temporary protection and Moldovan citizenship, potentially facilitating citizenship acquisition for temporary protection holders;
- Questions about legal status, penalties for overstaying, obtaining residence permits, and the necessity of holding residence permits and a national identification number (IDNP) for various procedures and services;
- Rules for entry and exit to Moldova, length of stay, and extension of stay without temporary protection or other legal status.
- Challenges with opening bank accounts without residence permits and the possibility of closure for those lacking them; The possibility of obtaining loans for foreigners in Moldova; the Possibility of opening cards for receiving salaries and other social benefits, and cards without having an official job or study.
- Limitations on the duration of stay for vehicles with Ukrainian registration plates; Necessity and procedure of changing plates for extending the vehicle's stay in Moldova; Questions about purchasing and registering a car in Moldova;
- Questions about driver's licenses and the procedure for obtaining licenses for temporary protection holders;
- Questions about vignettes (road tax), including their necessity, purchasing locations, and pricing; Problems with vignettes, fines for not having one, and purchasing and using green card insurance for Ukrainian cars.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"Is it possible to open a bank account (if yes, then in which bank) without having temporary protection? I faced the issue that Maib Bank plans to close my account if I don't have TP or a residence permit. I've been using the account without any problems for a year now."
"Please advise how long a car with Ukrainian registration can stay on Moldovan territory."

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

- responded to questions related to TP status and shared informative posts;
- directed questions to the Green Line at 080080011, the Hotline of the General Inspectorate for Migration - at 080001527, the Legal Center of Lawyers (CDA) at +37360574848, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at 080010877, Acted Moldova +37368352054, provided links to dopomoga.gov.md;
- informed about free legal aid in Moldova, including the Transnistrian region;
- informed about Temporary Protection Fairs, including the Transnistrian region;
- informed about the extension of temporary protection until March 1, 2025;
- addressed to IGM refugee challenges on temporary protection;
- informed refugees with unreadable QR codes should replace them at the General Inspectorate for Migration offices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote awareness campaigns on temporary protection and other legal statuses;
- Conduct TP Fairs, especially in the Transnistrian region.

FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: HEALTHCARE 5%

In January, discussions were about issues of free medical care for children and the accessibility of medical assistance for Ukrainians with temporary protection status (TP) in Moldova.

Refugees shared their experiences of accessing medical state institutions and also discussed the costs and accessibility of medical services for various categories, including the procedure for obtaining medical assistance.

In February, the uncertainty surrounding the extension of TP status caused refugees to worry about accessing free medical services. Many refugees misunderstood their rights to free medical services in state institutions.

In March, refugees with TP status discussed challenges accessing medical services due to unclear rules regarding available services with TP and, in some cases, the staff's lack of knowledge of the law. Refugees also shared their experiences under TP, which included both free and paid medical services, discussing benefits and rights associated with TP. Challenges with scheduling medical appointments resulted in difficulties accessing free healthcare assistance.

Additionally, many refugees discussed the possibility of purchasing a health insurance policy, or even a "travel insurance" to potentially address the issue of accessing medical services in Moldova. However, this approach doesn't apply to individuals staying in the Republic of Moldova for more than 90 days per year.

Formally employed refugees expressed dissatisfaction over being required to pay the full medical tax rate (9%) without the option to obtain a health insurance policy equivalent to those available to Moldovan citizens. They were keen on understanding the complex process of reclaiming these taxes paid accordingly.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"Since 2022, there has been a big gap with healthcare. Nobody properly informs them (medical staff in institutions) and it turns out that some are aware while others are not... Some (refugees) pay for medical services, while others get everything for free."
"- I went to the polyclinic to see a gynecologist and I paid. I have TP.
- I also went to the oncology dispensary in Chisinau, everything there is also on a paid basis."
"Has anyone encountered situations when doctors do not know that the TP has been extended?"
"- We receive services at the polyclinic for free.
- My daughter and I were hospitalized with the flu at the infectious diseases hospital in Chisinau. Everything was free."

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

- suggested reaching out to the Green Line at 0 800 800 11, International Organization for Migration (IOM) at 0 800 108 77, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova + 373 22 721 010, INTERSOS, RCTV Memoria;
- informed about Intersos Moldova mobile clinics and also primary medical care, protection and psychological support;
- informed about organizations that provide medical assistance to people with disabilities and chronic diseases, with diabetes ;
- Informed about medical support for children provided by WeWorld;
- informed about hotlines and organizations offering psychological support;
- shared Information developed and provided by the Ministry of Health and the National Health Insurance Company about Temporary protection - the right to medical services for refugees from Ukraine.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a public list of medical services and procedures fully accessible for individuals with TP status;
- Collaborate with the WHO and Ministry of Health to ensure that both refugees and service providers are informed about the available services for refugees under the new TP;
- Guarantee accessibility and awareness of organizations offering medical humanitarian aid.

FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: HOUSING 5%

In January, refugees talked about housing challenges and the need for new rental assistance programs in Moldova. They emphasized that many face financial difficulties, especially families with children or/and persons with disabilities, and they are in greater need of assistance.

The closure of many refugee accommodation centers (RACs) was unexpected and unwelcome news for those residing in them, resulting in challenges in securing housing and the necessity to find employment to cover expenses. All of this is compounded by expensive housing rents, a lack of or insufficient financial resources, and the difficulty of finding available housing due to high demand.

Many refugees expressed concerns about their future in Moldova after 2025.

In February, refugees shared that many of them were experiencing financial difficulties and housing problems due to rising rental prices. They also talked about some difficulties in getting rental deposits back and compared among themselves utility costs. There were many opinions about the lack of RACs, which complicated the search for housing for the more vulnerable category of refugees.

In March, refugees, especially in Chisinau, discussed housing problems due to high utility bills, and also difficulties with the search for temporary accommodation and renting in general.

Low salaries and limited social support aggravate the housing situation of refugees in Moldova, causing difficulties in paying rent, which leads to opinions about the need to open more assistance programs. There were also discussions about comparing real estate costs in Chisinau with other cities or countries, and even alternative housing options in other countries were being sought.

Also, refugees stated that salaries in Moldova in 2024 are lower in comparison to salaries in Ukraine at the beginning of 2022. As a result many refugees psychologically cling to these past values rather than acknowledging the current reality.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"Rent for Ukrainians is more expensive than for locals (if they even want to rent to Ukrainians)."
"I've encountered such a problem, not me personally, but my acquaintances. Is it true that they will be closing RAC's in Balti and Ungheni?"
"Will there be a housing rental assistance program?"
"In Chisinau, apartments are significantly more expensive than in Romania. I wouldn't come to Chisinau now; it has become very expensive to live here. I think it's better and cheaper in Constanta."

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

- provided links to commonly used websites and groups featuring housing listings;
- recommended contacting the Green Line for assistance to Ukrainian citizens in Moldova at 0 800 800 11 for free accommodation;
- informed about opportunities for households hosting refugees to receive cash assistance, covering essential expenses;
- shared information about CONCORDIA and ACTED Moldova rental cash assistance programs;

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Inform residents of RAC more frequently and clearly if the RAC is planned to be closed and available services to those forced to relocate;
- Open new rental assistance programs and offer financial support to refugees, ensuring affordable housing access.

FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: FOOD/NON-FOOD ITEMS 5%

During the reporting period, discussions revolved around requests for humanitarian aid in various cities of Moldova, mainly in Chisinau, Tiraspol, and Dubasari, with refugees sharing their experiences of receiving aid in Chisinau and providing details on distribution locations and dates.

There were active discussions regarding the rules for obtaining aid, such as the necessary documents, a border crossing certificate for example, as well as the accessibility and registration processes for humanitarian aid across different regions and organizations.
Refugees emphasized the necessity of assistance primarily for families with several children, people with disabilities, and older people. They were actively searching for organizations that offered humanitarian aid in the form of food and hygiene supplies.
There were also numerous requests for vouchers for food and medication for children and people with disabilities.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"In this (transnistrian) region, they don't provide any assistance with food and clothing. There are no vouchers, let alone medicine vouchers for pensioners."
"Can you please tell me where to get humanitarian aid? We need hygiene products, diapers, and groceries. It's really urgent right now. We're going to rent a room, it's a bit expensive, and we need something to eat."
"Do you fit the criteria? Vouchers for clothing are given to disabled people, large families, and children who attend school or kindergarten in Moldova (bring a certificate). To get vouchers for the pharmacy, you need to make an appointment with a doctor first. Appointments with doctors are already scheduled for June. They work from 9 am to 5 pm; lunch break is from 12 pm to 1 pm."

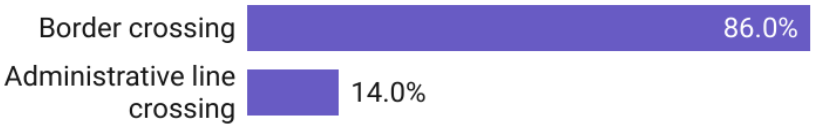
ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

- provided reference to a list of charitable centers, churches, and other organizations offering non-financial assistance to Ukrainian citizens in Moldova, listed and updated constantly on dopomoga.gov.md;
- recommended contacting the Green Line at 0 800 800 11 and reaching out to local municipalities with any inquiries;
- shared information about vouchers, medication, food, and clothes/footwear distribution for refugees, including the Transnistrian region;
- informed refugees that several humanitarian aid centers started to require temporary protection documents for each family member to get help from them;
- informed about different humanitarian organizations' working hours and rules;

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve accessibility and transparency: how to access humanitarian aid, participation criteria, and required documents communicated;
- Acknowledge the specific needs identified by refugees and develop aid programs to meet these needs, offering targeted assistance.

FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: BORDER AND ADMINISTRATIVE LINE CROSSING 4%



BORDER CROSSING

During the reporting period, discussions revolved around the document requirements for crossing the border with animals and the procedures for transportation through checkpoints.

There were also active discussions on whether entry into Moldova with an internal passport for adults and children - birth certificates is possible, and what rules apply for crossing the border without a passport for children.

Additionally, some refugees shared their experiences that mothers traveling with children, who crossed the border without the father's permission, may require additional documents.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"Please tell me, what are the current relevant documents needed to enter Moldova with a dog?"
"Has anyone recently crossed the border at Palanca-Moldova with a child who is listed in the mother's passport but doesn't have a separate passport? Is this still acceptable? Or is it necessary to obtain a separate passport for the child?"

ADMINISTRATIVE LINE CROSSING TO/FROM THE TRANSNISTRIAN REGION

During the reporting period, as in previous periods, the main topics of discussion were the entry requirements for the Transnistrian region, particularly for those without direct relatives there, the necessity of an invitation letter, and the presence of age restrictions.

Example of comments translated into English:

"Could you please tell me the address where I can submit an application for permission for someone to enter Bender?
"Can a man over 60 y.o. enter the transnistrian region if he doesn't have any relatives there?"

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

- ➜ advised to contact the Border Police Hotline of the Republic of Moldova at +373 22 259 717, the Green Line for assistance to Ukrainian citizens in Moldova at 0 800 800 11, or the Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova at +37322788888.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➜ Continue to provide information and facilitate easy access to border-crossing regulations, including guidelines for pets and goods.

FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: EDUCATION 2%

During the reporting period, the most common questions in this category revolved around seeking educational institutions - kindergartens, and schools, providing instruction in Ukrainian or Russian language across different districts of Chisinau.
Questions about access to education for refugee children and the expenses in state kindergartens and schools also remained highly relevant. Refugees willingly shared reviews about kindergartens with different language instruction (Russian and Romanian), noting that positive experiences of their children attending educational institutions in Moldova are very important for them.

Free groups offering diverse activities for Ukrainian children continued to be a highly relevant subject. Many inquired about it, while others shared information about available activities, primarily for children.

Questions about opportunities to learn English, Romanian, and occasionally German or French (much less frequently) for adults and children also occasionally arose. There was a high demand for Romanian language courses among refugees in the Transnistrian region.

Announcements about vocational training courses for refugees were in high demand and interest from refugees, some asked where they could take various courses with the possibility of further employment.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"Are there any kindergartens in Chisinau with instruction in the Ukrainian language?"

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

- provided, upon request, the list of general education institutions for the enrollment of children from refugee families from Ukraine;
- published announcements about available courses and learning opportunities for both children and adults, specifying locations and course offerings;
- shared information about different vocational training courses;
- informed about free places for refugee children in the Fundația de Binefacere "Casa Providenței"'s kindergarten;
- informed that in Chisinau, on April 1st, enrollment for first-grade children will start through the e-scoala portal;
- provided Feedback about the National Romanian Language Study Program - challenges due to the Google form registration being only available in Romanian;
- informed about the opportunity for refugees with legal status in Moldova to participate in the national program for tuition-free Romanian language courses;
- informed about free online courses available on Coursera (an educational platform).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide information about available courses, vocational training opportunities, and learning platforms, to enhance refugees' personal and professional skills;
- Promote Romanian language acquisition;
- Provide offline Romanian language training for people 50+ years old, considering limited digital proficiency;
- Enhance access to education and learning opportunities;
- Support the integration of refugee communities in Moldova.

FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: SECURITY 2%

During the reporting period, mostly in February and March, refugees discussed and expressed concerns about Ukrainian men's future stay in Moldova in the context of political instability, especially in the Transnistrian region. Unusual and loud sounds cause anxiety among refugees, mainly in the Transnistrian region.

There was much discussion about potential changes in consular practice, which raised fears of deportation to Ukraine and additionally requests for military documents for men.

Also, actively discussed, was the necessity of observing precautionary measures due to the increasing frequency of suspicious calls and messages, or the detection of fraudulent schemes.

Example of comment translated into English:

"Has anyone, recently, obtained a passport at the embassy in Chisinau? Were they asked for a military service record?"

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

- suggested to trust and consult official sources of information;
- informed about smishing - a new type of online fraud spreading in Moldova;

➜ detected a SCAM group in telegram and highlighted the significance of being cautious and avoiding sharing personal data.

RECOMMENDATIONS

➜ Promptly inform refugees about any changes that can affect their lives in MD;
➜ Inform about events and activities on which people may speculate, to prevent rumors and false information.
➜ Continue to provide information and facilitate easy access to border-crossing regulations, including guidelines for pets and goods.

FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: EMPLOYMENT 1%

Discussions addressed employment challenges in Moldova, particularly the requirement for proficiency in Romanian language. Some refugees shared issues with formal employment, such as delays or even non-payment of salaries, as well as employers' reluctance to officially hire refugees, citing bureaucratic hurdles. Concerns about low-paying jobs and possible exploitation or violation of their rights persisted, especially among those refugees without language proficiency. Legal requirements for employment, including medical examinations, were also discussed.

Examples of comments translated into English:

"- Could you tell me a website where Ukrainians can search for jobs?
- You can find only low-paying jobs. Without knowing the language, they don't pay much."
"Please advise, according to the laws of the Republic of Moldova, is it the employer's responsibility to pay for a medical certificate or the employee's who is being hired? If I need to get a medical certificate at my own expense, where and to which address should I apply?"

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INFO UNIT

➜ posted job vacancy announcements;
➜ redirected questions to the Legal Center of Lawyers (CDA) at +373 605 74848 and the Department of Human Rights as part of the "Moldova for Peace" Initiative;
➜ shared information about NRC's free services, including consultations and assistance with job placement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

➜ Improve information campaigns on refugee employment opportunities.

ABOUT US

Laoltă NGO is a non-governmental organization from the Republic of Moldova, founded in 2020, which promotes the involvement of citizens in community mobilization, good cooperation with public authorities, and community development. Laolalta is a member of the "Moldova for Peace (MpP)" civic Initiative, “Gender Equality Platform” and Erasmus+.

"Moldova for Peace" (MpP) is a civic initiative created to assist refugees from Ukraine. MpP brings together people who recognize and understand the difficulties faced by those who have left home and loved ones behind to reach safety. "Moldova for Peace" is a non-profit movement that operates under the legal umbrella of several NGOs of which Laolaltă NGO is a member.

➜ **Accountability to Affected People (AAP TF) member**

Laolaltă presents updated data on refugee and local community feedback monthly to the AAP Task Force working group and provides recommendations based on detailed and comparative analyses.

➜ **Refugee Coordination Forum member**

Laolaltă is an active member of the Refugee Coordination Forum. The InfoUnit participates in sector and several working groups.

➜ **Round table discussions**

Laolaltă participates in discussions on the refugee response in Moldova along with governmental entities, international and national NGOs, and UN agencies.

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