UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Moldova

Monitoring Fact Sheet

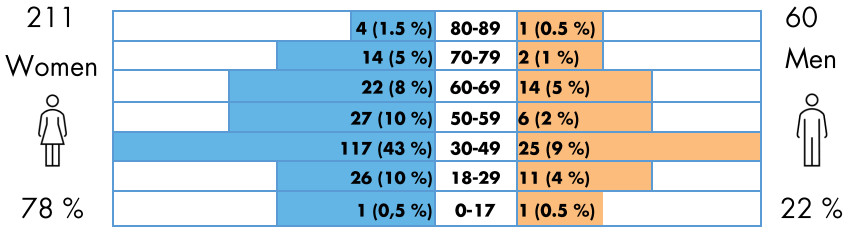
June-July 2024

Background and methodology: In July 2023, UN Human Rights in Moldova (OHCHR) started protection monitoring as part of a project funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid. OHCHR focuses on the systematic identification of those who are more at risk of protection concerns and human rights violations. OHCHR's methodology consists of individual interviews with refugees from Ukraine and host community members. Respondents are reached through the facilitation of international and national NGOs and local CSOs that work with the refugees from Ukraine, including the most vulnerable groups, in both banks of Dniester/Nistru River. In order to ensure a wide geographical coverage, each month interviews are done in the northern, centre, and southern regions of Moldova, including the Transnistrian region. Since the distribution of localities changes from month to month, it may not always be possible to compare data between different rounds of data collection. The analysis presented in the Factsheet refers to the respondents of the month for which it is published. Therefore, data may not always be representative of the refugee population as a whole. In addition, data reflects the self-reporting by respondents. OHCHR analyses the data, taking into account the existing legal framework and contextual information.

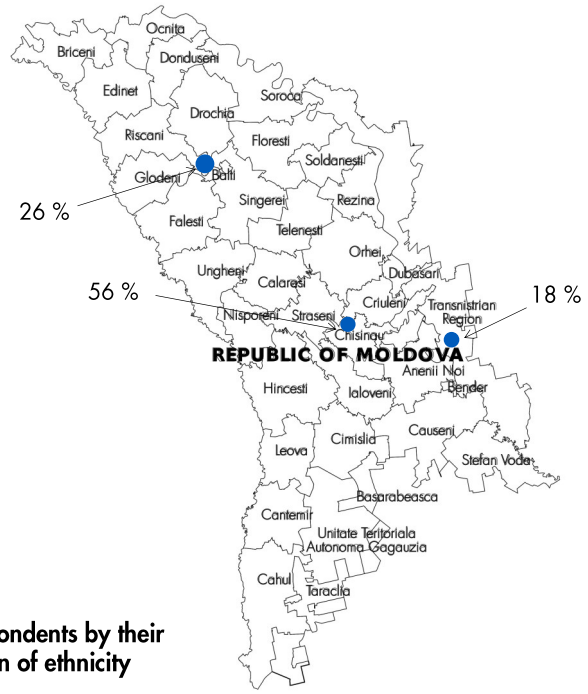
PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

In June and July 2024, **OHCHR interviewed 271 refugees from Ukraine,** of whom 78% were women and 22% were men. Among them, 266 were Ukrainian nationals and 5 were third-country nationals (3 Russians, 1 Belarusian and 1 Azerbaijani). According to the map below, 72% of respondents resided on the right bank of Dniester/Nistru river, while 18% resided on the Left Bank. More than half of the respondents were aged 30-49, followed by the18-29 and 60-69 age groups. Sixty-seven percent of respondents relocated with their immediate family members, including children and partners, while almost one-third of respondents relocated to Moldova alone. The ethnic background of the respondents was primarily Ukrainian, and they predominantly spoke Russian and Ukrainian, with only 5% speaking Romanian. Accommodation types varied by place of residence. The majority of respondents on the Right Bank rented their apartments or houses, whereas more than half on the Left Bank were hosted for free by relatives or friends. Each second respondent arrived in Moldova in 2022, while 22% arrived in 2024, indicating that the influx of refugees from Ukraine to Moldova is ongoing.

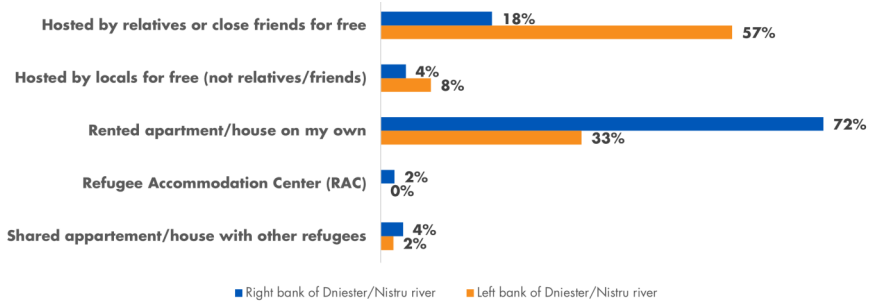
Distribution of respondents by age group and gender



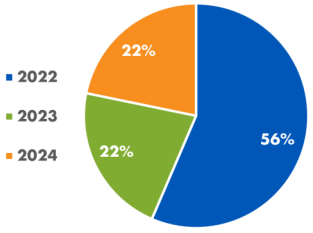
Distribution of respondents by region



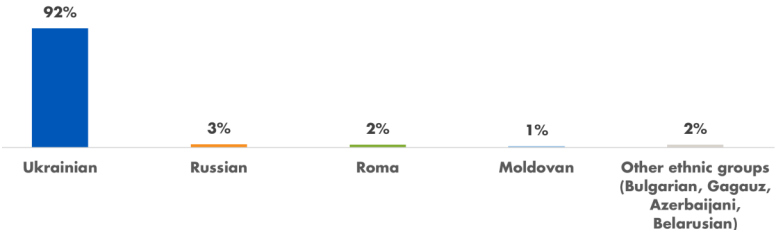
Distribution of respondents by accommodation type



Distribution of respondents by their arrival to Moldova



Distribution of respondents by their self-identification of ethnicity



IDENTIFICATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

OHCHR protection monitoring tool includes the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning, which obtains information on difficulties a person may have in undertaking basic functioning activities. The tool consists of one question per functional domain: seeing, hearing, mobility, cognition, self-care, and communication (expressive and receptive) impairments. The analysis applies the criterion that a person is considered to have a disability if they respond having 'a lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do at all' for any of the functional domains.

8 % (= 23 persons) of all interviewed refugees reported a lot of difficulties or impossibility to perform actions under one (13 persons) **or several** (10 persons) **functional domains.**

Among the interviewed refugees, 7% of women and 2% of men were identified as having a disability, indicating a higher prevalence among women. The 80-89 age group was the most affected, with 100% of respondents in this group reporting a disability. Mobility and vision impairments were the most commonly reported issues across age 30+ and all genders.

Respondents from the right bank of the Dniester/Nistru River reported difficulties in functional domains three times more often than those on the Left Bank. More than half of the interviewed persons with disabilities arrived in Moldova alone, highlighting their vulnerability. Among respondents with disabilities, 48% relied on the generosity of friends or relatives for housing free of charge, while 30% paid for their accommodation, 17% hosted for free by host communities and 5% shared housing with other refugees.

Percentage of respondents with difficulties per functional domain*

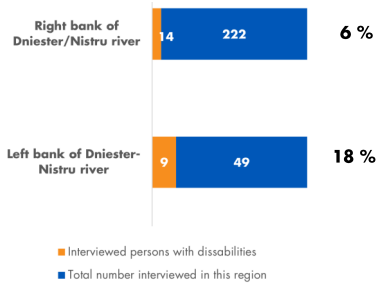
Seeing	Hearing	Mobility	Cognition**	Self-care	Communication
9 persons (3 %)	6 persons (2 %)	16 persons (6%)	1 person (0.5%)	3 persons (1%)	3 persons (1 %)

Distribution of respondents with disabilities by age group

WITHOUT DISABILITY
WITH DISABILITY

Women			Men		
18	4 (100%)	80-89	5	1 (100%)	
	8 (57%)	6 (43 %)		2 (100 %)	
	18 (82%)	4 (18%)		2 (14%)	12 (86%)
	26 (96%)	1 (4%)		1 (17%)	5 (83%)
	114 (97%)	3 (3%)		1 (4%)	24 (96%)
	26 (100%)	18-29		11 (100 %)	
7 %	1 (100%)	0-17	2 %	1 (100%)	

Distribution of respondents with disabilities by region



EXPERIENCE OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

The protection monitoring tool used includes enhanced questions from the Washington Group, focusing on **affect domain** of functioning, which involves emotional functions such as feelings of depression and anxiety. The data reveals that **41 % of respondents experienced anxiety,** with 49 % reporting it at high intensity, and **30 % felt depressed** regularly, with 59% experiencing high-intensity depression. Interviewed **refugees with disabilities** reported significantly **higher emotional distress**, with **65 % experiencing anxiety and 48% feeling depressed**. Women were more likely to experience anxiety (43 %) and depression (30%) than men (33% and 28%, respectively). Respondents resided on both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River reported similar levels of anxiety and depression. **Interviewed older persons, especially women, exhibited higher levels of anxiety and depression.** Unemployed respondents reported higher levels of anxiety (45 %) compared to those employed (43 %) or seeking work (39 %). Depression rates were also higher among the unemployed (33 % vs 26%). Ethnicity influenced emotional well-being, with interviewed Roma ethnic group representatives reporting the highest levels of anxiety (83 %) and depression (33 %), followed by Moldovans with 67 % experiencing both anxiety and depression.

Distribution of respondents with anxiety and depression by age group

	18-29	30-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89
% of total respondents by age group who reported **ANXIETY**	38%	48%	58%	53%	50%	60%
% of total respondents by age group who reported **DEPRESSION**	22%	33%	48%	39%	50%	60%

18 % Affect***

Data reveals that **18 %** of interviewed refugees from Ukraine have **difficulties with the affect domain**.

*10 respondents have difficulties in more than 1 functional domain
**In the Washington Group Short Set of Questions the cognition domain includes only remembering and concentrating functioning.
***The calculation of the affect domain aligns with Washington Group recommendations, entailing the counting of responses related to experiencing anxiety or depression on a 'Daily' or 'Weekly' basis, with a specific emphasis on instances marked as 'A lot', characterized by high intensity.

ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES

One-quarter of the interviewed refugees from Ukraine reported experiencing serious medical conditions (25%, 69 out of 271 respondents, including 56 women and 13 men). These health issues were noted in 24% of those residing on the left bank of the Dniester/Nistru River and 33% of those on the Right Bank. The primary conditions reported were chronic and non-communicable diseases, particularly affecting the cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems. Among the interviewed persons with disabilities, a significant 83% reported serious medical conditions. The prevalence of these conditions was similar across genders, with comparable rates among women and men. However, older persons were particularly affected, with 58% of respondents aged 60 and above reporting serious medical conditions.

Age distribution of interviewed refugees reporting that they suffer from serious medical conditions

	0-17	18-29	30-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89
% of respondents by age group with serious medical conditions out of total respondents	0%	3%	15%	42%	47%	75%	80%

The majority of interviewed refugees from Ukraine (92%, including 60 out of the 69 respondents with serious medical conditions) **reported no difficulties in accessing healthcare services in Moldova.** However, **8% of respondents (23 out of 271) faced challenges in obtaining healthcare**, with 13% of these individuals having serious medical conditions. Among those who did not report any challenges, 14% indicated that they did not need to use healthcare services in Moldova.

These 23 refugees* faced the following challenges related to health care:

			Primary	Secondary
Accessibility ⇒ physical: all healthcare services, facilities, staff are within accessible physical reach for the people, especially those left behind, like those in rural areas and people with disabilities; ⇒ economic (=affordability): how services are affordable to the people regardless of the income; ⇒ information: how we ensure that the information is accessible to everyone (level of awareness is very important); we need to keep in mind the gender perspective and also that the information is accessible to persons with disabilities; ⇒ non-discrimination.		**Refusals to provide services by medical facilities or service providers**	**12** respondents from the Right Bank	**3** respondents from the Right Bank
		Fees associated with medical care, medications, or transportation	**1** respondent from the Right Bank **1** respondent from the Left Bank	**2** respondents from the Right Bank **3** respondents from the Left Bank
		Long waits for medical appointments	**1** respondent from the Right Bank	**2** respondents from the Right Bank

Out of the 23 interviewed refugees with disabilities, **5 (4 women and 1 man) have a disability certificate issued in Ukraine.** One individual resides on the left bank of the Dniester/Nistru River, while the remaining 4 are on the Right Bank. No one of these respondents reported facing challenges in accessing medical services using their disability certificate.

Out of the 271 interviewed refugees from Ukraine, **169 (64 %) reported being registered with a family doctor in Moldova.** Registration rates are higher on the right bank of the Dniester/Nistru River, with 65% of residents registered compared to 51% on the Left Bank. Notably, two individuals residing on the Left Bank have registered with a family doctor on the Right Bank. Among interviewed persons with disabilities, eight are registered on the Right Bank and four on the Left Bank, while 43 respondents with serious medical conditions are registered on the Right Bank and five on the Left Bank. Regarding ethnicity, 83% of ethnic Roma confirmed registration with a family doctor. A significant number of respondents (83) do not feel the need for registration, including 7 persons with disabilities and 14 individuals with serious medical conditions. Additionally, 8 respondents remain connected with their Ukrainian family doctor.

*This question allows a multiple-choice answer.

ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

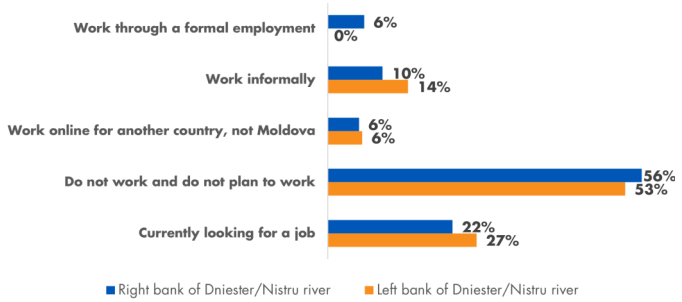
Currently, **16 % (42 out of 265*) of the interviewed refugees from Ukraine in Moldova are employed,** with 5 % in formal employment and 11 % in informal employment. Of those working, 16 % of the total number of respondents interviewed on the Right bank, and 14 % of the total interviewed on the Left Bank, indicating similar employment situation on both banks. Employment sectors include seasonal fieldwork, cleaning services, sales, and construction. 1 out of 6 interviewed ethnic Roma is employed.
Of the **223 unemployed respondents in Moldova (=84%), 61 are actively seeking work, 147 do not plan to work, and 15 work online for another country.**

The reasons for not being employed among respondents are diverse and can be categorized as follows:

- ⇒ **Child care responsibilities:** The most frequently cited reason, with 31 respondents indicating that child care duties prevent them from seeking employment. This highlights the need for better childcare support and services to enable parents, particularly women, to join the workforce.
- ⇒ **Health difficulties:** 14 respondents reported health problems as the primary barrier to employment. This reason intersects with the healthcare system's capacity to support persons with disabilities or serious medical conditions, underlining the importance of accessible healthcare services.
- ⇒ **Temporary stay intentions:** 15 respondents mentioned that they do not plan to stay in Moldova, which impacts their decision not to seek employment.
- ⇒ **Language barriers:** 11 respondents identified language barriers as a major obstacle to employment. This emphasizes the importance of language classes and integration program for refugees from Ukraine to improve their employability in the local job market.

Diversity in employment situation by the banks of Dniester/Nistru River

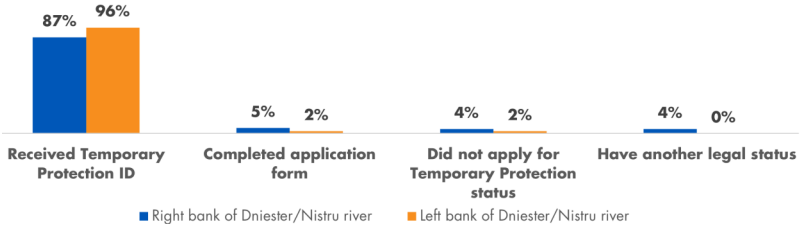
The graph illustrates nuanced variations in the employment landscape between the right and left banks of the Dniester/Nistru River. It shows slight differences in informal employment rates, an absence of formal employment on the Left Bank, a lower prevalence of job-seeking activities on the Right Bank compared to the Left, and a high unemployment rate on both banks.



LEGAL STATUS

93 % of respondents (250 out of 268, including 204 women and 46 men) applied for Temporary Protection in Moldova,** with a consistent trend showing the similar rates on both banks. Among these respondents, **95 % (237 individuals) have received the Temporary Protection ID**, while **13 have completed the online registration form** and are awaiting their appointment at the IGM Office.
The remaining **7 % (18 respondents) did not apply for Temporary Protection**. Of these, 9 were granted an alternative legal status in Moldova, 7 just arrived in Moldova and 2 did not provide details about their legal status. However, 17 out of 18 were aware of the 90-day permission to stay without Temporary Protection in Moldova and the risk of fines for unlawful stay in the country. 7 respondents, all men, confirmed that had been fined for overstaying.
The majority of respondents who received Temporary Protection status did not report any challenge in accessing their rights. Only 2 respondents reported difficulties accessing healthcare services since receiving Temporary Protection status.

Diversities in Temporary Protection patterns between both banks of Dniester/Nistru River



The graph illustrates minor differences in Temporary Protection applications between the right and left banks of the Dniester/Nistru River, suggesting that the situation regarding obtaining legal status in the country is quite similar on both banks.

*6 respondents did not provide answers regarding their employment status.
**3 respondents did not provide answers regarding the Temporary Protection application process

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Among the respondents with school-age children, grandchildren, or nephews (38 %, or 100 out of 266*), **45 % stated that their children are currently enrolled in Moldovan schools.** Notably, enrollment rates differ significantly between the banks of Dniester/Nistru River, with 40 % on the Right Bank and a substantially higher 69 % on the Left Bank. Regardless of their place of residence, interviewed refugees primarily chose schools for their children based on the language of instruction, with most opting for Ukrainian and Russian language instead of Romanian where it possible. Furthermore, a significant proportion **(91 %, or 50 out of 55 respondents) of those whose children are not attending school prefer online or remote learning with the Ukrainian curriculum.** This preference explains their decision not to enroll their children in Moldovan schools and is also linked to the intention of many to return to Ukraine. 2 respondents cited language barriers as a reason not to enroll their children to school. All interviewed ethnic Roma (4 respondents with school-age children) did not enroll their children in local schools.

ACCESS TO CONSULAR SERVICES

Since June 2024, OHCHR has been collecting data on access to consular services in Moldova for Ukrainian nationals, particularly men aged 18-60. This effort follows the implementation of Ukrainian law 3633-IX on Strengthening Mobilization, which came into effect on May 18, 2024.

Out of the 11 respondents who applied for consular services in Moldova to receive or renew personal documents such as ID cards, internal or international passports, and birth certificates, only **4 successfully obtained the needed document**s. The remaining **7 faced difficulties and were unable to secure a positive outcome**.

URGENT NEEDS

Food items **57 %**

Financial assistance **55 %**

Medical services **33 %**

Hygiene items **25 %**

Clothes **21 %**

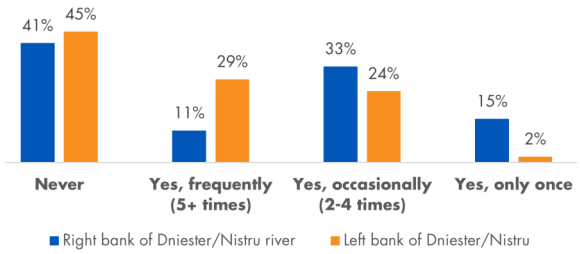
School items **8 %**

Food items are the top priority, especially for those aged 30-49 and 60-69, with women showing a notable prevalence. **Financial assistance** is critically needed by younger adults (18-29) and urban residents, particularly in Chisinau, highlighting economic vulnerability. **Medical services and medicines are crucial for all age groups but especially for older persons and persons with disabilities,** reflecting higher health-related needs. **Hygiene items** are often requested alongside other necessities, indicating multi-dimensional urgent needs. **Clothes and school items** are frequently cited by respondents with children or larger households, showing a correlation between household size and the type of assistance required. Overall, women report a broader range of needs than men, suggesting a higher responsibility for managing household necessities.

Among 271 interviewed refugees, **the most urgent informational needs are financial aid (51 respondents), job opportunities (15), access to medical care (19),** and **how to find accommodation (8).** Additionally, **5 respondents asked for information about legal status and documentation**, while 163 reported no additional information needed.

INTENTIONS

Distribution by banks of Dniester/Nistru River of respondents who visited Ukraine



Among the interviewed refugees, **69% expressed a desire to return to Ukraine in the future**, 9% stated they had no intention of returning, and 22% remained uncertain about their plans.

46% of interviewed refugees, predominantly women, reported occasional or frequent visits to Ukraine for personal reasons. Conversely, 41% of respondents have not visited Ukraine since arriving in Moldova and 13% visited Ukraine only once.

*5 respondents did not provide answers regarding having school-aged children with them in Moldova.

PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION/NEGATIVE ATTITUDE BASED ON PROTECTED GROUNDS

REFUGEE STATUS / LANGUAGE / ETHNICITY / CITIZENSHIP /GENDER/ DISABILITY

Discrimination *constitutes any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference or other differential treatment that is directly or indirectly based on the prohibited grounds of discrimination and which has the intention or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights.*

84 % of interviewed refugees from Ukraine did not report any negative experiences with the local community. However, **16 % (37 women and 6 men) did encounter negative attitudes during their stay in Moldova.**

⇒ Respondents on the right bank of Dniester/Nistru River reported a significantly higher incidence of negative attitudes (42 respondents) compared to those on the Left Bank (1 respondent).

⇒ Women (20 %) were more likely to experience negative attitude than men (10 %).

Discrimination based on refugee status:

28 interviewed refugees from Ukraine, 25 of them were women, **reported facing negative attitudes from locals, stemming from the belief that refugees are receiving humanitarian aid at the expense of the local population**. This perception has fueled resentment, leading to discrimination in housing and accusations that refugees are driving up prices.

Additionally, 6 respondents **reported encountering poor treatment during the registration process for cash assistance and humanitarian aid**, with some experiencing hostility and feeling as though they were undeserving of the support.

> *"Locals believe that refugees from Ukraine are taking away their resources and that they are living worse off than the refugees. This leads to resentment and envy."* *- woman, 71 years old, Balti*
>
> *"During the registration for cash assistance, the staff behaved very poorly, as if they were giving away something that belonged to them."* *- woman, 60 years old, Chisinau*

Discrimination based on language:

16 respondents, 15 of whom were women, reported **facing negative attitudes from locals due to language barriers,** particularly when speaking Russian instead of Romanian. These instances included being rudely addressed in public spaces, such as on public transport and in shops, where refugees were told they should speak the local language. Additionally, some refugees experienced a deliberate refusal by locals to communicate in Russian, which led to feelings of exclusion and discomfort. This language-based discrimination has significantly complicated their integration into Moldovan society. However, many respondents expressed a willingness to learn Romanian and recognized the importance of doing so for better integration and understanding with the local population.

> *"I wanted to open an account at the local Moldovan bank, but a man approached me and questioned why I spoke Russian instead of Romanian. I'm not sure if he was a provocateur or a bank employee."*
> *- woman, 39 years old, Balti*
>
> *"Due to the language barrier, Moldovans often say that since we have come here, we must speak Romanian."*
> *- woman, 41 years old, Chisinau*

For any questions, please reach out
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