Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Sergio Vieira de Mello

ACADEMIC NETWORK

MOLDOVA

Academic Chair Conference

Inclusive Academic Environments: Futures for Displaced in Moldova

Date: 25 November 2025
Time: 10:00 – 14:00
Location: Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University of Chișinău
Address: Strada Ion Creangă 1, MD-2069, Chișinău, Republic of Moldova

Organizers: Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University of Chișinău and Nicolae Testemițanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, with the support of the Representation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the Republic of Moldova.

Conference Abstract

The Sergio Vieira De Mello Academic Chair Conference constitutes the inaugural convening of the Academic Network in the Republic of Moldova, established with the support of the Representation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and named in honor of Sergio Vieira De Mello. The Network unites five universities and academies across the country with the purpose of advancing academic cooperation and strengthening institutional responses to the needs of displaced populations.

Since 2022, the Republic of Moldova has welcomed refugees from Ukraine, many of whom continue to seek access to education, including higher education. In this context, the integration of displaced learners within national education systems, including within Moldova's university system, has become a strategic priority. The Conference provides a platform for reviewing institutional adaptations, sharing lessons learned, and presenting the results of projects implemented under the Sergio Vieira De Mello Academic Network. It further aims to identify systemic challenges, highlight inclusive practices, and reinforce the role of academia as a key actor in promoting integration and resilience.

Conference Program

10:00 – 10:15 | Registration and Welcome Coffee
Arrival of participants; coffee and light refreshments will be served.

10:15 – 10:30 | Opening Session

Discussion Panel I (10:30 – 11:30)

Persisting Gaps in Inclusive Education for Displaced Communities
A high-level discussion panel focused on identifying the persisting gaps in ensuring inclusive higher education for displaced communities in Moldova and on exploring how effective practices and institutional responses can contribute to addressing these challenges.

11:30 – 11:45 | Coffee Break

Discussion Panel II (11:45 – 12:45)

Fostering Inclusivity – Implementing the Sergio Vieira De Mello Academic Network in Moldova
A presentation and discussion session highlighting the outcomes of the first year of the Academic Network, including twelve implemented research, education, and community outreach projects focused on displaced populations.

Exposition of SVMAC Academic Network Projects

An exhibition showcasing twelve projects implemented in 2025 by professors and students from six universities and academies in Moldova: Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University, Nicolae Testemițanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Comrat State University, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Ștefan cel Mare Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and Moldova State University. The exposition will present project summaries, photographs, and provide an opportunity for conference participants to meet the teams behind these initiatives, learn about their research on displacement-related topics, and explore the community engagement work carried out to support refugees.

12:45 – 13:15 | Transition Break

Discussion Panel III (13:15 – 14:00)

Academic Futures for Displaced: From Access to Inclusion
Format: An advocacy-oriented panel discussion focusing on policy frameworks and practical solutions to ensure that Moldova's academic environment fully benefits from the integration of displaced communities.

14:00 – 14:30 | Closing Plenary Session
Synthesis of key conclusions and recommendations delivered by the panel moderators and representatives of the Academic Network. Concluding remarks by the Rector of Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University followed by an official group photograph.