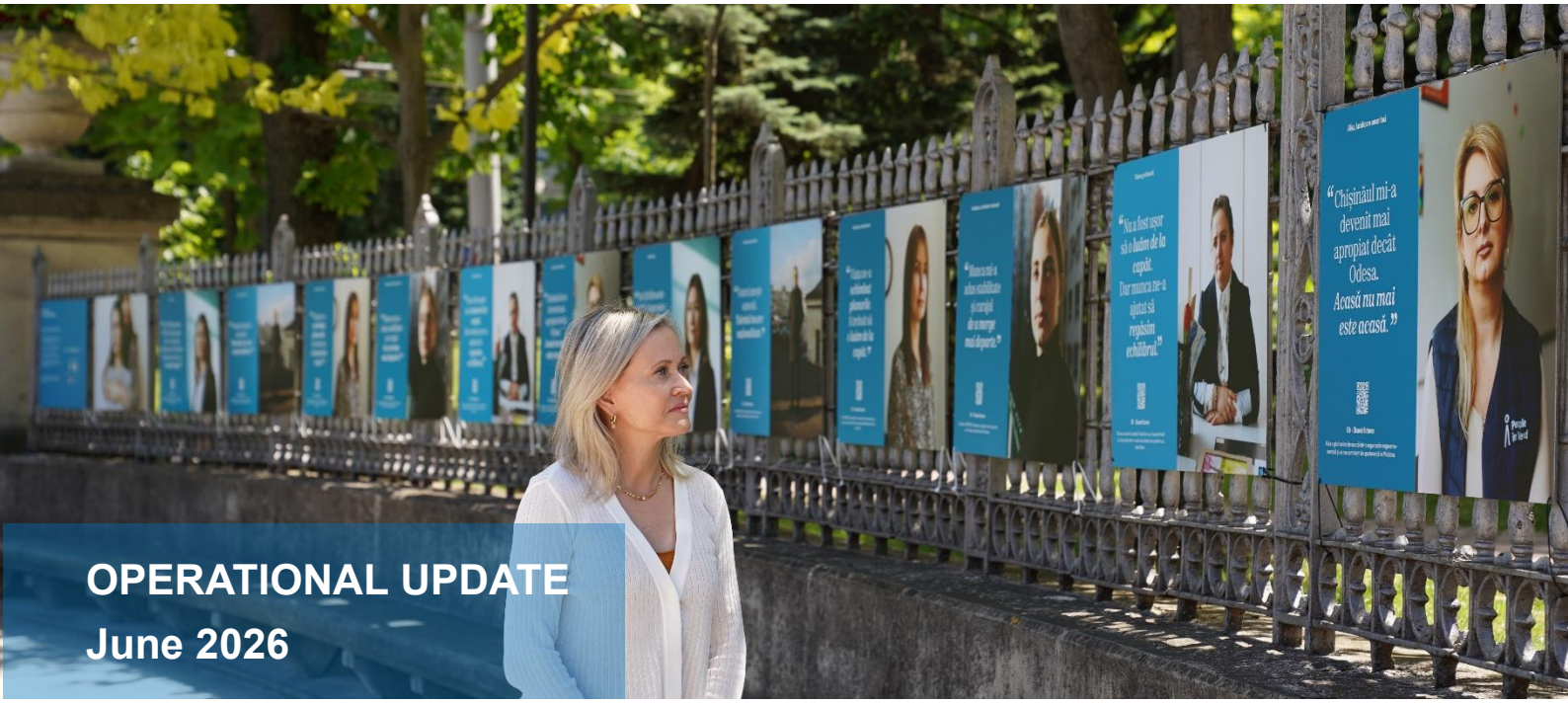
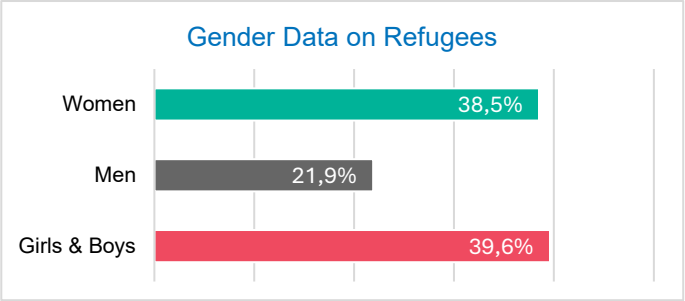


OPERATIONAL UPDATE
June 2026

UNHCR Moldova Representative visits the "Shared Futures" photography exhibition developed by EBRD, UNHCR and NCUM, showcasing the resilience of Ukrainian refugees rebuilding their lives in Moldova through work, inclusion and community engagement. ©UNHCR/Ana-Maria Botnarescu

KEY FIGURES

141,528 Ukrainian refugees are in Moldova.



53,964 Ukrainian refugees granted Temporary Protection.

6,483 citizens of Ukraine granted residence permits, either permanent or temporary.

6,264 refugees received cash assistance.

~9,700 refugees received legal assistance.

~6,500 individuals accessed information through the UNHCR-supported helpline.

~690 refugees supported with specialized GBV and Child Protection services.

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

As of June 2026, 141,528 refugees from Ukraine are in the Republic of Moldova, many of whom continue to face challenges in meeting basic needs and achieving self-reliance. While the Temporary Protection (TP) holders retain access to primary healthcare services and family doctors, access to specialized health care and essential medicines has deteriorated. The latest Participatory Assessment found that 20 per cent of refugee households identify healthcare as an urgent need, while 31 per cent require more information on available medical services. These challenges are largely driven by the closure or scale-down of humanitarian health and cash assistance programmes and the lack of corresponding government funding to absorb these services into national systems, leaving many vulnerable refugees to cover consultation, treatment and medication costs out of pocket.

Economic inclusion remains a significant challenge. Participatory Assessment findings show that only 20 per cent of surveyed refugees are employed and 1 per cent are self-employed, despite a strong willingness to work. Language barriers, skills mismatch, caregiving responsibilities and limited access to suitable jobs continue to constrain labour market participation, particularly among women, older people, and persons with disabilities, highlighting the need for targeted employment support measures.

HIGHLIGHTS

“We Are One Community”: World Refugee Day 2026 in Moldova

World Refugee Day 2026 was marked across Moldova under the theme "**We Are One Community**," while also commemorating the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention. Organized jointly by the refugee-led organization Female Support Force, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the programme brought together government institutions, humanitarian and development partners, refugees and host communities to promote inclusion and social cohesion. A high-level event at the State University of Moldova highlighted refugees' contributions to the country's social and economic development and explored ways to strengthen their economic participation. Complementing this, "Inclusive Employment of Refugees: Opportunities, Partnerships and Good Practices", organized by NCUM under the ROBOTA project in partnership with UNHCR and AFAM, brought together government institutions, employers and civil society actors to discuss practical approaches to refugee employment and sustainable economic integration.

Community events across the country further fostered interaction between refugees and their host communities, including activities for children, local community gathering, and sports initiatives. The Flying Seagull Project delivered circus, music and play-based activities for refugee and host community children, creating safe spaces for play, self-expression and connection. In parallel, UNHCR-supported Refugee Councils facilitated regional dialogues in six municipalities, giving refugees a platform to present their priorities directly to local stakeholders and strengthening their voice in local decision-making.

Protection

- In June 2026, UNHCR continued to strengthen Moldova’s protection environment for refugees by investing in the capacity of national institutions responsible for border management, protection and social support services. UNHCR, in partnership with the Law Centre for Advocates (CDA), the People’s Advocate Office and the Border Police, delivered two specialized training sessions for 50 Border Police officers from the South and East Regional Directorates. The training focused on the application of international protection standards, identification of persons with specific protection needs, procedural safeguards and the principle of non-refoulement. In parallel, UNHCR trained 27 staff members from Ministry of Labour and Social Protection Safe Shelters on refugee-specific risks, barriers to assistance and survivor-centred approaches. By enhancing the capacity of frontline staff, the initiative contributed to safeguarding access to protection and ensuring timely identification and referral of vulnerable refugees.
- UNHCR and its partner CDA advanced efforts to improve asylum-seekers' and refugees' access to quality legal assistance in Moldova, engaging with the National Legal Aid Council, which provides state-funded legal aid. Participants agreed on measures to strengthen legal support throughout the refugee status determination process, improve coordination among relevant institutions, and establish a platform for ongoing exchange among legal practitioners. These efforts are helping build a more effective, rights-based asylum system that ensures access to justice and fair procedures for individuals seeking international protection.
- UNHCR supported the third edition of the Human Rights Caravan 2026, a nationwide outreach initiative promoting awareness of human rights. Organized by the People's Advocate Office in partnership with the Council of Europe and UN agencies, and held in Fălești (14 June), Hîncești (21 June) and Comrat (28 June), the Caravan gave communities the opportunity to engage directly with national and international stakeholders, receive guidance on their rights and available complaint procedures, and learn about the role of institutions responsible for human rights protection, fostering greater public confidence in these institutions' capacity to safeguard protection and accountability.

- UNHCR conducted a field mission to Pervomaisc and Tiraspol on 11 June, engaging with 25 refugees from Ukraine residing on the Left Bank of the Nistru River. Most participants had settled in the region in 2022, drawn by its proximity to Ukraine, lower living costs and existing family connections. On the Left Bank, refugees face distinct protection and inclusion challenges. Most rely on Moldova's Temporary Protection regime while also having to renew local registration documents every 45 days, creating additional administrative burdens. Economic opportunities remain limited, with scarce employment, low wages and rising living costs affecting self-reliance. While some refugees have established small businesses through local patent schemes, increasing taxes and utility costs are eroding livelihoods. Access to healthcare is also challenging, as specialized services often require out-of-pocket payments and travel, further exacerbating vulnerabilities. These findings will inform UNHCR's ongoing advocacy and programming to address protection risks and strengthen access to services and inclusion opportunities for refugees on the Left Bank.

Socio-economic inclusion

- On 26 June, refugee economic inclusion was discussed for the first time at Moldova's Economic Council, the country's principal platform for economic policy dialogue, marking an important step towards integrating refugees into national economic planning. The discussion brought together key stakeholders to address measures for improving refugees' access to employment, entrepreneurship and qualification recognition, as well as regulatory barriers limiting their participation. To inform the discussion, UNHCR drew on findings from the UNHCR–UNDP Household Economic Capacity Assessment (HECA), which underscored both the challenges and opportunities associated with refugee inclusion. Preliminary results show that refugees from Ukraine have contributed an estimated MDL 1.6 billion in taxes and social contributions since 2022 and established more than 200 businesses. Participants also explored opportunities to expand self-employment through the proposed independent entrepreneur regime, which could benefit over 2,000 refugees and generate an estimated MDL 60 million annually in fiscal revenue. By placing refugee economic inclusion on the Economic Council's agenda, the Government signalled a shift towards longer-term solutions that support refugee self-reliance while contributing to Moldova's broader development and labour market needs.

"We live a full life. At the beginning, we stayed only at home, we didn't see anything. But now everything has changed." says Kriistina, a Ukrainian refugee.

Read the full story [link] about Kriistina, a refugee mother of four rebuilding her family's future in Moldova after fleeing the war in Ukraine.

DONORS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Australia | Belgium | Denmark | European Union | Finland | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Private Sector Partners

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

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

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