

# SITUATION UPDATE #1: Republic of Moldova

## Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS)

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**Update:** 16 March 2022

### OVERVIEW

The UNHCR-led **Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS)** is the coordinating body for IT and communications assessment and service delivery in refugee emergencies. RETS seeks to reinforce multi-sector coordination by streamlining IT and communications into operational preparedness and response strategies for the delivery of assistance to refugees and other persons of concern.

In the context of Moldova, with the number of humanitarian partners providing services to persons of concern expected to increase in alignment with the planning figures, RETS is prioritizing the establishment of internet connectivity in reception centres and other key operational sites, and delivering internet connectivity in Blue Dot hubs across the country. Partners and other sectors are fully engaged in the assessment, planning and implementation of the RETS response, and play an active role in identifying sites where connectivity services are a core requirement for operational enhancement.

A comprehensive update on the inter-agency response to the Ukraine Situation in support of Moldova can be consulted [here](#). For the latest displacement figures, please visit the [UNHCR Operational Data Portal](#).



### COORDINATION

#### Achievements and Impact

- The Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS) has been activated in Moldova in response to the increasing presence of humanitarian agencies responding to the influx of refugees from Ukraine.
- UNHCR mobilized partners to convene a coordination meeting in the first week of the Ukrainian refugee situation in Moldova. The weekly coordination meeting takes place every Thursday at 14.00 CET. Please contact [RETS.Europe@unhcr.org](mailto:RETS.Europe@unhcr.org) if you would like to be included in the meeting distribution list.
- UNHCR partner, ACTED, has deployed an IT Specialist who will focus on service delivery across key sites.
- Partners Ericsson Response, and Private Sector Partner, Cisco Crisis Response, are on standby and ready to deploy to support the expansion of Wi-Fi networks.
- Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF) is conducting needs assessments for service delivery to refugees and humanitarians in Palanca and the surrounding area and has satellite equipment in-country and ready to deploy in the event of rapid escalation.

- NetHope will initiate a need assessment in Moldova over the coming weeks, and will share the findings of the assessment with the RETS.



The Blue Dot at Palanca border crossing provide safe spaces for refugees to seek guidance, help and support. (Photo: Erno Simon/UNHCR)

## CONNECTIVITY

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR has activated internet connectivity hotspots in Blue Dot hubs in Palanca and Otaci.
- A third hotspot has been set up in tents in Palanca where humanitarian services are being provided by local aid organizations.
- Internet connectivity via local ISP has been installed in the UNHCR-Government registration centre, enabling access to cash programme for Ukrainian refugees.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- RETS is working closely with other sectors to identify connectivity requirements for humanitarians in operational sites across the country.
- UNICEF and UNHCR are working together to identify locations for future Blue Dot sites in Moldova.
- Due to identified needs relating to connectivity for refugees and refugee-facing technology solutions, the UNHCR Innovation Service and Regional Bureau for Europe are exploring opportunity for the deployment of a dedicated expert to focus on Connectivity for Refugees and Digital Inclusion.



## SECURITY COMMUNICATIONS

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR and UNDSS undertook a joint assessment of the UN joint VHF network in Chisinau.
- A request for new VHF radio frequencies has been submitted to the authorities through the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO).

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Renovation of the VHF repeater is required to ensure full functionality of the security communications capabilities in Chisinau.
- UNHCR is establishing a bill of materials for the extension of VHF coverage to the border with Ukraine.



## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR is working together with REACH to enable a regional information management structure and strengthen humanitarian information management, assessment, and analysis.
- Collaborating with UNDP and major MNOs in Moldova, UNHCR is exploring ways to support monitoring of onward movement towards Romania and other European Countries.
- Working with Cisco and Ericsson, UNHCR is implementing a captive portal to collect information about the partner presence and activities in the Blue Dot Hubs.
- An inter-agency coordination team for Ukraine Situation has been set up in Microsoft Teams. This will enable greater collaboration and efficient coordination amongst the partners. For access, please send your request to [RETS.Europe@unhcr.org](mailto:RETS.Europe@unhcr.org).



## EQUIPMENT

### Achievements and Impact

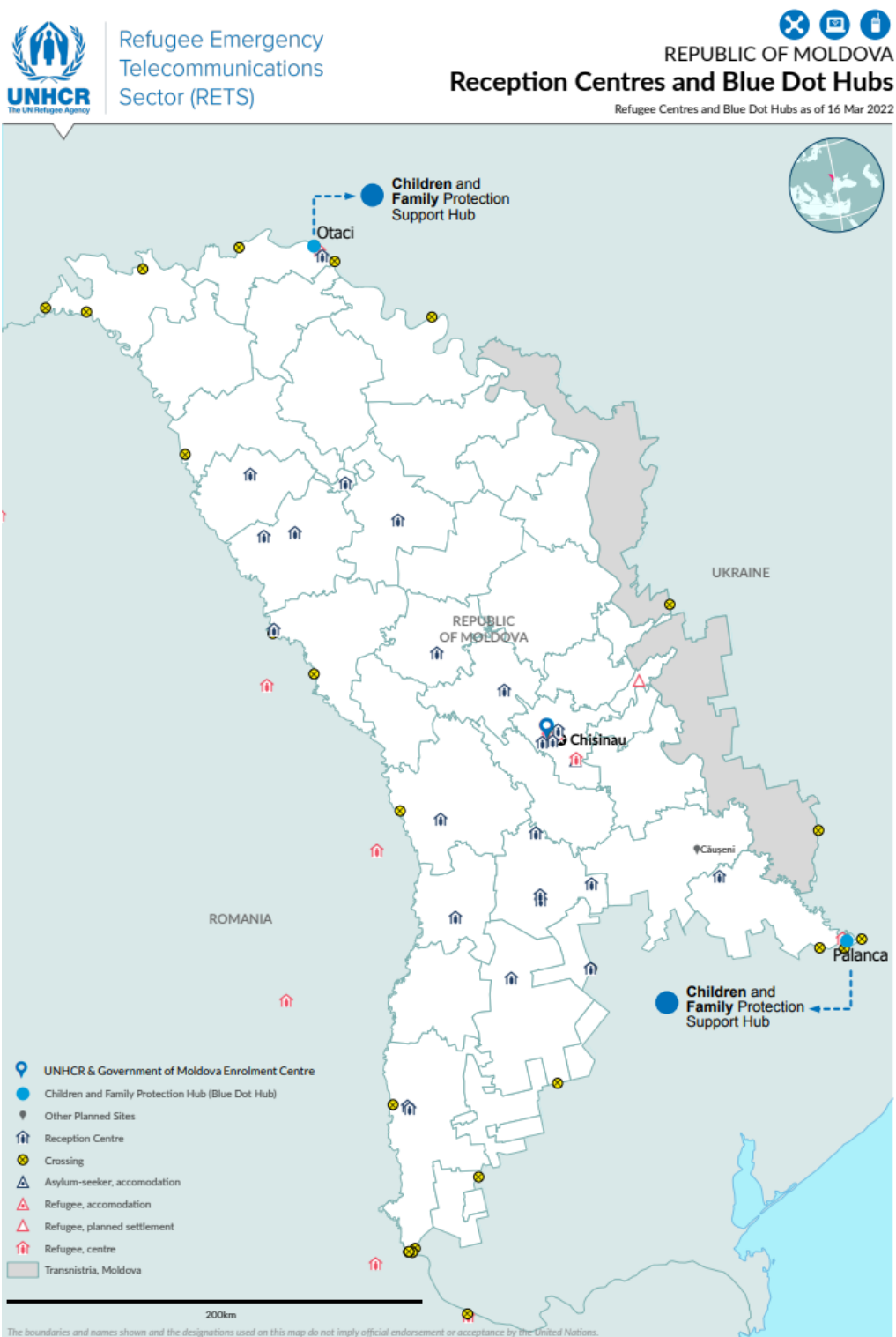
- Cisco Crisis Response has donated pre-configured network kits to UNHCR to enable Wi-Fi hotspot creation in key operational sites.

- Ericsson Response has donated equipment to enable the distribution of Wi-Fi across key operational sites.
- The Vodafone Foundation has committed to establish Instant Charge charging stations for humanitarians and refugees in Moldova.

**Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps**

- Regular power provision remains an issue in certain sites. Assessment is ongoing to identify solutions locally.

# Reference Map



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- Ericsson Response, Sweden
- Vodafone Foundation, UK
- Government of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

### CONTACTS

**Alexander Thomas**, Sector Lead – Moldova, Emergency Coordination Officer

[THOMAS@unhcr.org](mailto:THOMAS@unhcr.org), Tel: +373 (78) 341 164

**RETS Europe Mailbox**

[RETS.Europe@unhcr.org](mailto:RETS.Europe@unhcr.org)

### LINKS

UNHCR's [Operational Data Portal](#) for the Ukraine Situation.

[Inter-Agency Operational Update](#) (Ukraine Refugee Situation): Republic of Moldova - 12 March 2022