

SITUATION UPDATE #2: Republic of Moldova

Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS)

Update: 17 – 29 March 2022

OVERVIEW



Ericsson Response volunteers extend access to internet connectivity for the humanitarian response community working in the Blue Dot hub in Palanca, Republic of Moldova. (Photo: © Jiří Beran/UNHCR)

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 Republic of Moldova, with the number of humanitarian partners providing services to persons of concern increasing, 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.

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



COORDINATION

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR standby partner Ericsson Response deployed to Moldova on 20 March 2022. There are currently two Ericsson Response deployees in-country, with a number more on standby.
- Moldtelecom has extended its support to the Sector, notably with regard to internet connectivity, fixed and mobile telephony and IPTV.
- The minutes of the Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS) coordination meetings are available [here](#).
- NetHope has completed its series of needs assessments in Moldova and the findings have been shared with UNHCR.



CONNECTIVITY

Achievements and Impact

- RETS has deployed internet connectivity services across four operational sites:
 - Blue Dot, Palanca
 - Blue Dot, Otaci
 - Humanitarian service tents, Palanca
 - Căușeni Train Station
- In Palanca, Moldtelecom has extended a point-to-point link covering Palanca West, where Blue Dot containers and other humanitarian service tents are located.
- A fibre link has been extended in Otaci, covering the Blue Dot hub.
- RETS has been working with national internet service providers (ISP) to extend fibre links in Palanca and Otaci in order to strengthen internet access for humanitarians operating in the area.
- Based on needs identified relating to connectivity for refugees and refugee-facing technology solutions, the UNHCR Innovation Service and Regional Bureau for Europe are deploying a dedicated expert to focus on Connectivity for Refugees and Digital Inclusion.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- RETS continues to work closely with other sectors to identify connectivity requirements for humanitarians in operational sites across the country, including in Refugee Accommodation Centres (RAC), and future Mobile Blue Dots.



ACTED and Ericsson Response complete the installation of Wi-Fi for humanitarian actors and refugees in Căușeni train stations, one of the main transit points for Ukrainian refugees (Photo: © Jiří Beran/UNHCR)



SECURITY COMMUNICATIONS

Achievements and Impact

- The material requirements for the UN joint VHF and UHF networks have been finalized and delivery of materials is pending.
- UNDSS has submitted the request for the extension of the existing VHF frequencies to National Regulatory Agency for Electronic Communications and Information Technology (ANRCETI).



INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Achievements and Impact

- In collaboration with Cisco and Ericsson Response, the UNHCR Splash Page has been deployed across all RETS sites and is capturing information on organizations supported and data usage.
- A dedicated page on the [UNHCR Operational Data Portal](#) has been created for all information, maps and reports generated by the Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector.

- UNICEF has launched a [U-Report](#) survey on the situation of Ukrainian refugees in Moldova. U-Report is a messaging tool for young people to receive information and speak out on issues important to them.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNICEF is working to improve SMS aggregation for U-Report Moldova, as there is a need to scale-up and analyse large amounts of data.



EQUIPMENT

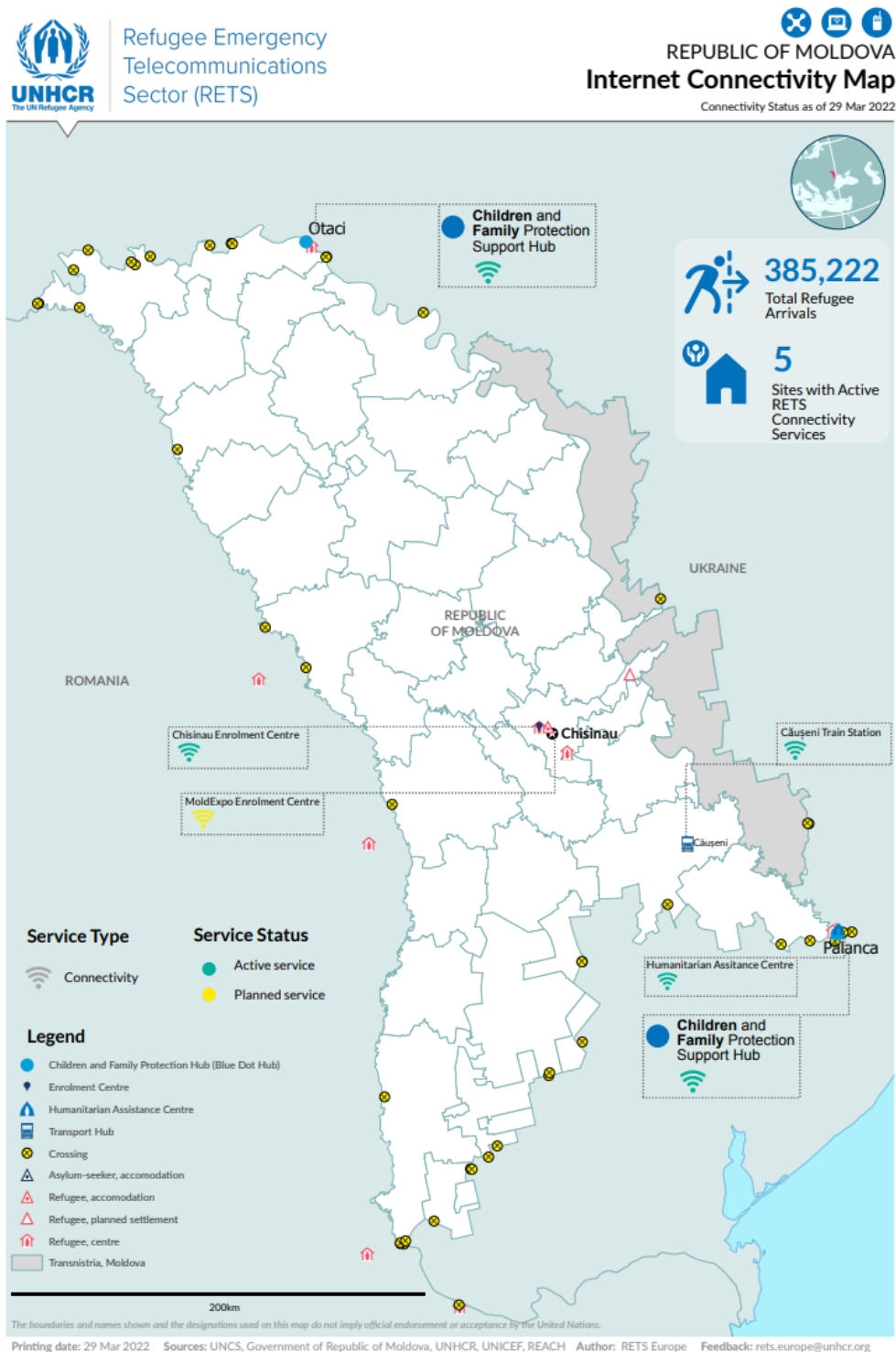
Achievements and Impact

- The network and distribution equipment donated by Ericsson Response and Cisco Crisis Response has arrived in Moldova.
- The Vodafone Foundation donated ten Vodafone Instant Charge charging stations for humanitarians and refugees in Moldova.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Regular power provision remains a challenge in certain sites. Assessment is ongoing to identify solutions locally.
- Several refugee families have expressed need for IT equipment for remote-learning, as well as technical equipment for children with disabilities. UNICEF is working to identify and procure suitable IT equipment.

Reference Map



Funding and partnership

UNHCR is grateful for the contributions of its partners and donors who have generously given in support of the refugee response in the Republic of Moldova.



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LINKS

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

[Inter-Agency Operational Update](#) (Ukraine Refugee Situation): Republic of Moldova
UNHCR Moldova [Emergency Response Overview](#), March 2022