



Inter-Agency Refugee Education Working Group (IREWG)

Meeting Details	
Date	2 September 2022
Time	13:00-14:00
Chair	Adriana Cazacu, State Secretary, Ministry of Education and Research (MER), Co-Chairs: Katie Lampe, Child Protection Officer, UNHCR Cristina Gaberi, Education Specialist, UNICEF
Reporting	Dina Zamfirova, Protection Associate, UNHCR
Email	lampe@unhcr.org
Agenda	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Welcome & Review of Agenda. Introductions (IREWG Coordination, 5 min);2. Updates (MER and all, 10 min);3. Presentation by Keystone (10 min);4. Update on Temporary Protection (UNHCR, 10 min);5. Presentation by Roma Task Force (Representative of the Roma Task Force, 10 min);6. WG updates (IREWG Coordination, 5 min);8. AOB (All, 10 min).	
Information collection and relevant links	
Education 5W Matrix ECW call for expression of interest (open until 24 Aug 2022) Winterization strategy template – Education	



Participants	
Adriana Cazacu/ State Secretary, Ministry of Education and Research	Ion Duminica/ Coalitia Vocea Roma
Crudu Valentin/ Head of General Education Directorate, Ministry of Education and Research	Elizabeth Spivak/ CRS Education and PSS Program Manager
Ludmila Malcoci/ Keystone	Cristina Gaberi/ UNICEF Moldova
Andrew Painter/ UNHCR	Gabriela Ojog/ Foundation for Advancement of Moldova (FAM)
Domnica Ginu/ Lumos Moldova	Lorina Ghitu/ CCF Moldova
Marcel Straton/ Lumos Moldova	Yulie Khromchenco/ Early Starters International
Cristina Sirbu/ INTERSOS Moldova	Eloi Rouillon/ BSF Libraries Without Borders
Natalia Griu/ UNFPA	Laurel Jansury/ EiE Advisor, People in Need
Gosia Kurkowska/ Helvetas	

Summary of discussions and agreements/ action points

Agenda	Discussion	Agreements/ Actions
Agenda Point 1 Welcome & Review of Agenda. Introductions. Mesaj de bun-venit. Revizuirea agendei. Introducere.	Katherine Lampe, Child Protection Officer at UNHCR, will be in charge of refugee education at UNHCR and will co-lead the IREWG with MER and UNICEF from now on. E-mail: lampe@unhcr.org The IREWG co-chair Katherine Lampe welcomed participants and thanked them for their presence. Katherine presented the agenda of the meeting and asked the participants if there were any suggestions.	Agenda agreed. Focal Point- Katherine Lampe, e-mail: lampe@unhcr.org



<p>Agenda Point 2</p> <p>Updates. Actualizări.</p>	<p>Integration of Ukrainian children into the educational system.</p> <p>The MER shared the latest school enrollment statistics of Ukrainian children. They stated that the enrollment figures are changing daily.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Grades 1-4, there are 482 children enrolled2) Grades 5-4, there are 386 children enrolled.3) Grades 10-12, there are 23 of children enrolled.4) Kindergarten/preschool, there are about 372 children enrolled. <p>The total is 867 pupils, of which 287 are fully enrolled pupils and 600 are auditors.</p> <p>Kindergartens are attended by children as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Children up to 2 years old, there are 9;2) Up to the age of 3, there are 62 children;3) Aged 4, there are 132 children;4) Aged 5, there are 35 children;5) 6 years, there are 69 children;6) 7 years old there are 14 children. <p>The information will be updated weekly. Next week there will be a meeting with the heads of the national education directorates with the participation of MER Ministry Topala, and they will discuss the issue of children's schooling.</p> <p>Also, next week 1200 school bags will be distributed from their colleagues in Romania.</p> <p>There are no statistics on the number of children who enrolled in school this year who were previously enrolled last year. The statistics available are for kindergarten, primary, secondary and high school. This indicator will be disaggregated at the next meeting.</p> <p>Regarding the exclusion from full enrollment in Moldovan schools of refugee children who have not claimed asylum, it was discussed whether it would be appropriate for the CES to exclude this provision. The MER stated that they must follow the current legislation related to school enrollment criteria but that discussions are ongoing on the topic.</p>	<p>Provide at the next meeting the presentation of disaggregated statistics on children enrolled in educational institutions (MER)</p> <p>Provide, if available, statistics on the number of refugee children who were enrolled last year who are re-enrolling this year vs. how many students are newly enrolling (MER)</p>
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<p>Adriana Cazacu/ State Secretary, Ministry of Education and Research</p> <p>Crudu Valentin/ Head of General Education Directorate, Ministry of Education and Research</p>	<p>The MER stated that they have electronically distributed information in RACs about how to enroll children at school.</p> <p>There are fewer schools in rural areas. Children can study in Romanian or Russian.</p> <p>The information will be updated weekly.</p> <p>More information and registration forms can be found here.</p>	
<p>Agenda Point 3</p> <p>Presentation by Keystone Prezentarea din partea Keystone</p> <p>Ludmila Malcoci, Keystone Moldova Email: Lmalcoci@khs.org</p>	<p>Mainstreaming children with disabilities refugees in Moldova school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background information on Task Force on Disability. • Established under UNHCR-end of March. • Members of TF-national NGO, public authorities, donors, international organizations, and NGOs. <p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient reference mechanism and services delivered to support refugees with disabilities (more than 1700 refugees); • Advocated for disability inclusion /mainstreamed disability in other sectors. • Advocacy meetings with central public authorities to provide/increase the accessibility of shelters. • Established regional EASPD hub in Moldova and built relationships with NGOs from other countries including Ukraine to ensure safe transfer of persons with disabilities. • Increased visibility of actions in the disabilities field through weekly reports and their integration in UNHCR newsletter. • Integrated disability in several assessment tools. <p>What information do the have on children with disabilities refugees?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of data on Ukrainian refugee children with SEN and disabilities living in Moldova. Their number and placement locations (rayons/villages and municipalities/sectors) are not available yet. • During the last months of the school year 2021-2022, the Republican Center for Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance monitored 20 refugee children with special educational needs placed in different locations. 	<p>It is necessary to map children in general and children with disabilities present in Moldova.</p> <p>UNHCR to share statistics on children with disabilities who are enrolled in cash assistance</p>



- Data on Ukrainian refugee children with SEN and disabilities living in the Republic of Moldova who attended online lessons in Ukraine during the last months of the school year 2021-2022 are not available.
- As per local education experts, the e-learning platform for distance learning developed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (<https://lms.e-school.net.ua/>) is a good resource for children to continue their link with the Ukrainian education system and to contact their schools and teachers, when possible. It is unclear how many refugee families can help their children use this resource.

What are the main gaps and challenges in meeting the educational needs of children refugees with disabilities?

- Refusal of some schools to enroll children who have not claimed asylum.
- Impossibility to prove the immunizations required for school by parents as they do not have access to the medical files left in Ukraine.
- Assessment of special educational needs is required for the development of Personalized Learning Plans and recommendations for appropriate support services (support teacher, personal assistant etc.);
- Big distance between the locations where children are placed and the schools with Russian language teaching programs, especially in rural areas. Language represents another barrier for school inclusion for children who speak Ukrainian.
- Limited financial resources of schools to ensure the necessary support for children with special educational needs and disabilities, both refugees and nationals.
- Limited or lack of access to educational, social, and medical support/rehabilitation services.
- Lack of adapted school transport.
- Lack of adapted books.
- Lack of personal learning spaces for children of different ages who are placed in RACs.
- Lack of personal computers and limited access to the internet in case of many children (some of them used personal mobile phone to connect to online courses);
- Inaccessible school facilities create physical/architectural barriers for children with physical and sensorial disabilities.

What can we do to support school inclusion of children with disabilities refugees?

- Standard data collection protocols to identify refugee children with SEN and disabilities are necessary. The Republican Center for Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance could guide/lead the



	<p>process for approval of these protocols and further coordinate the evaluation process to establish the special educational needs of refugee children. There is the need to identify and hire additional human resources by the Republican Center for Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance for this task (eg, a specially established and trained Mobile Teams).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data on refugee children with disabilities could be collected through the local NGOs and mayoralties. The lack of human resources within NGOs and mayoralties for this mapping exercise could be a risk. • It is necessary to create a mechanism for transferring additional financial resources to schools that enroll refugee children with special educational needs and disabilities via the creation of a special fund for ensuring accessibility of the educational process, environment, and materials. • There is a need for additional financial resources for social support services and medical rehabilitation services to address the needs of refugee children with disabilities. <p>Checklist shared for mainstreaming disability in education (to be used in each educational setting hosting refugees).</p>	
<p>Agenda Point 4</p> <p>Update on Temporary Protection Actualizări referitor la protecția temporară</p> <p>Andrew Painter, Protection officer, UNHCR</p> <p>Head of the protection team, UNHCR.</p> <p>Coordinator for the Protection WG</p>	<p>The legal status of refugees is currently controlled by the decision of the Commission on Exceptional Situations. In this context, children are able to access school, but must be enrolled as “auditors” (as opposed to being fully enrolled and receiving credit) if they have not applied for asylum.</p> <p>The emergency laws that are in effect right now are due to expire in early October. At that point, the legal status of Ukrainians who were in the country would revert back to the regular law on foreigners. They would be allowed to remain in the country for an additional 90 days. So, there is a question about the legal status of those Ukrainian refugees after early January.</p> <p>There have been discussions about trying to provide Ukrainians and TCNs with a more stable legal status via Temporary Protection (TP). TP is provided for under Moldovan law but has not been activated to date. But, there are now discussions within the government to potentially activate TP. If that happens, it is hoped that it would encourage school enrollment, as well as help with employment. Currently, the protection working group would be the primary consolidator of comments and inputs from different sectors on inputs to a TP draft.</p>	<p>The EWG will need to activate quickly to review the draft on temporary protection and to see what comments they wish to make.</p>



<p>Email: painter@unhcr.org</p>	<p>It is expected that the TP decision will address a range of issues including access to health care, access to education, and access to social assistance. Given that the comment period for a TP draft will likely be relative brief (about 10 days), the various working groups, including the Education Working Group, are requested to already begin thinking about comments that should be included in the TP directive.</p>	
<p>Agenda Point 5</p> <p>Presentation by Roma Task Force Prezentare din partea subgrupului de lucru Roma</p> <p>Ion Duminica, Coalition Roma Voice</p>	<p>Challenges in schooling Roma children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The challenge of motivating parents of Roma children to enroll their children in school. • The challenge of motivating Roma children to engage in education; • Completion of compulsory education, secondary education. <p>Other issues are:</p> <p>The big problem of Roma children in the Moldovan educational system is that they graduate from educational institutions with certificates of attendance and not with diplomas. Some Roma children complete school while still having very low literacy levels.</p> <p>Completing their studies with certificates of attendance does not give the Roma any chance to integrate into the workforce. Their access to the labor market is limited.</p> <p>The education process is affected by the migration of Roma families.</p> <p>Roma children do not go to kindergartens because of the language barrier (they often don't speak Romanian, as their mother tongue is Romani).</p> <p>Discrimination is a big problem for Roma inclusion and education. Fear of Roma children persists, with negative prejudices toward them.</p> <p>There are no information materials in schools about who the Roma are, or about their culture.</p> <p>In 2016-2018, UNICEF implemented a successful project to support the increase of educational inclusion of children from the Roma community. The data of this report showed that it is with this support that the number of Roma children integrated in the educational process has increased. The support of Roma children in the city of Soroca consisted of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School supplies. - Clothing/footwear. - Educational support for tutoring in primary and secondary school. 	<p>There are no information materials in schools about who the Roma are, about their culture.</p>



	<p>- Financial support for feeding children in the secondary school.</p> <p>Because Roma parents are largely illiterate, they do not actually have the ability to write the application to register their children for school, which is another barrier to school enrollment.</p>	
<p>Agenda Point 7</p> <p>AOB Alții</p> <p>Katherine Lampe UNHCR, e-mail: lampe@unhcr.org</p>	<p>Winterization planning: Education working group members, including MER colleagues, were asked to provide any final inputs they have about winterization planning. The draft will be reshared with the working group for final comments.</p>	<p>Provide final inputs to winterization planning</p>