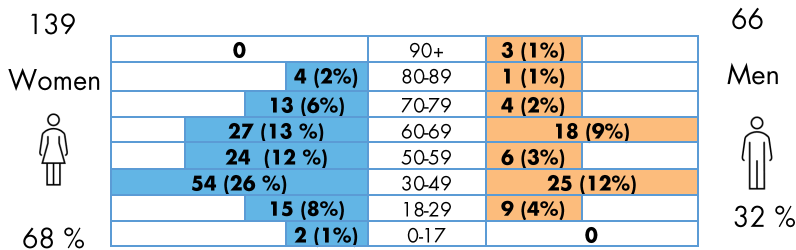


Background and methodology: In July 2023, UN Human Rights (OHCHR) in Moldova started protection monitoring as part of a project funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid. OHCHR focuses on the systematic identification of those who are more at risk of protection concerns and human rights violations. OHCHR’s methodology consists of individual interviews with refugees from Ukraine and host community members. Respondents are reached through the facilitation of international and national NGOs and local CSOs that work with the most vulnerable groups on both banks of Nistru river. In order to ensure a wide geographical coverage, each month interviews are done in the northern, centre and southern regions of Moldova, including the Transnistrian region. Since the distribution of localities changes from month to month, it may not always be possible to compare data between different rounds of data collection. The analysis presented in the Factsheet refers to the respondents of this month, therefore data may not always be representative of the refugee population as a whole. In addition, data reflects the self-reporting by respondents. OHCHR analyses the data taking into account the existing legal framework and contextual information.

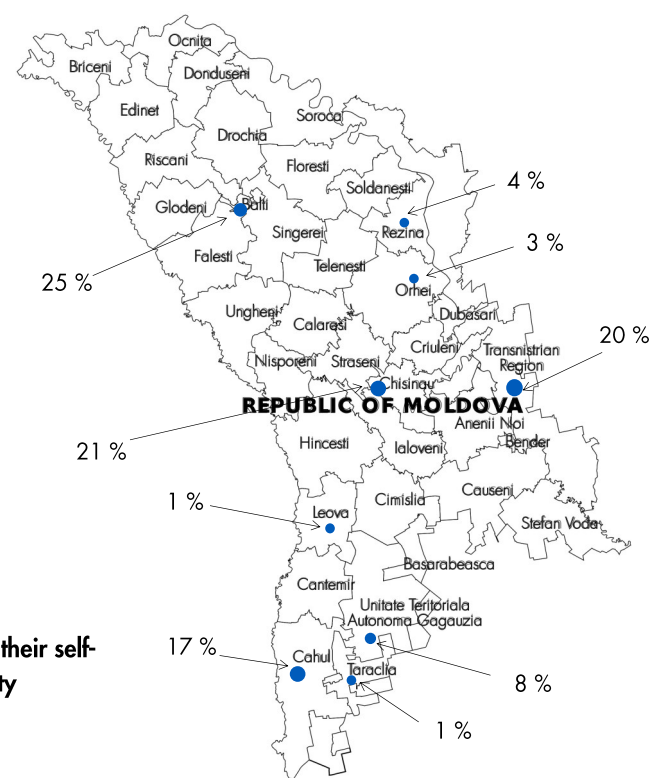
PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

In September 2023, **OHCHR interviewed 205 refugees from Ukraine** (68 % women; 32 % men). All of these individuals were Ukrainian nationals. They were located in various regions, as indicated on the map below. The largest age groups among the interviewed refugees were those aged 30-49 and 60-69, comprising 39 % and 22 % of the respondents, respectively. Respondents from the Transnistrian region stated that their primary reasons for choosing to stay in that region were the presence of family and friends and its proximity to Ukraine, as well as the relatively lower cost of living compared to the right bank of Nistru river. It is worth noting a distinct housing pattern: 50% of those living on the left bank of Nistru River rented their housing, in contrast to just 22 % of those on the right bank. Furthermore, nearly half of the interviewed refugees from Ukraine arrived in Moldova with children, while 28 % came alone, irrespective of their location of residence in Moldova. Interestingly, most of the respondents who self-identified as Russian by ethnicity primarily resided in the Transnistrian region and Balti.

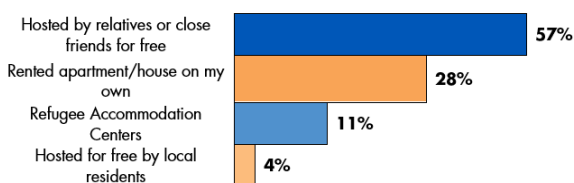
Distribution of respondents by age group and gender



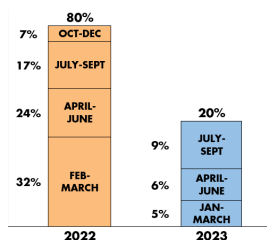
Distribution of respondents by region



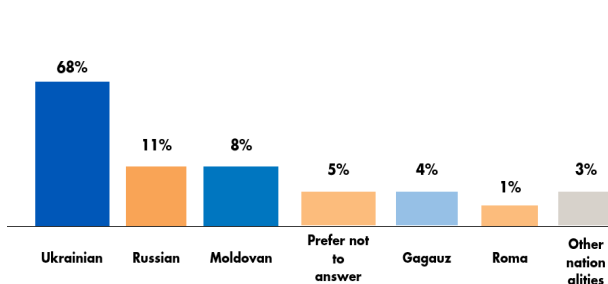
Distribution of respondents by accommodation type



Distribution of respondents by their arrival to Moldova



Distribution of respondents by their self-identification of ethnicity



IDENTIFICATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The protection monitoring tool included the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning, which obtains information on difficulties a person may have in undertaking basic functioning activities. The tool consists of one question per functional domain: visual, hearing, mobility, cognitive, self-care, and communication (expressive and receptive) impairments. The analysis applies the criterion that a person is considered to have a disability if they respond with 'a lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do at all' for any of the functional domains.

The 20 % (=42 persons) of the interviewed refugees reported a lot of difficulties or impossibility to perform actions under one (30 persons) or several (12 persons) functional domains.

Percentage of respondents with difficulties per functional domain

12 % Visual	1 % Hearing	9 % Mobility	2 % Cognitive*	2 % Self-care	1 % Communication

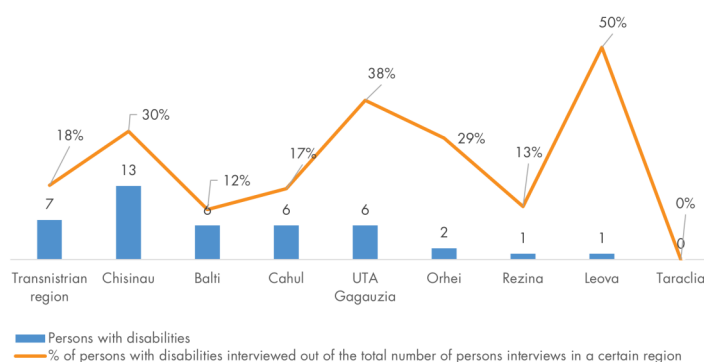
*In the Washington Group Short Set of Question the cognitive domain includes only remembering and concentrating

Distribution of respondents with disabilities by age group

	0		90+		2 (67 %)		1 (33%)	
	3 (75 %)	1 (25 %)	80-89	80-89	1 (100 %)			
Women 29 21 %	6 (46 %)	7 (54%)	70-79	2 (50 %)	2 (50 %)			
	15 (56 %)	12 (44 %)	60-69	3 (17 %)	15 (83 %)			
Men 13 20 %	20 (83 %)	4 (17 %)	50-59	6 (100%)				
	49 (91 %)	5 (9 %)	30-49	3 (12 %)	22 (88 %)			
	15 (100 %)		18-29	2 (22 %)	7 (78 %)			
	2 (100 %)		0-17	0				

- ⇒ The highest concentration of women with a disability was found in the age group 60-69, and they mostly have mobility and visual difficulties.
- ⇒ Data suggest that both women and men have functional disabilities at relatively equal rates.
- ⇒ No correlation was found between ethnicity and disability.
- ⇒ The 60% of persons with disabilities are hosted for free by relatives or close friends, which can signify that they may receive more support in their daily activities and expenses.

Distribution of respondents with disabilities by region



EXPERIENCE OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

The findings of the enhanced questions of Washington Group related to psychosocial functioning indicate **that 57 % of the respondents experience feeling of anxiety, worry and nervousness either daily (33 %) or on a weekly basis (23 %)**. 60 % of them reported experiencing high levels of these feelings. **86 % of persons with disabilities reported having such feelings**. Among the interviewed refugees from Ukraine, women experienced anxiety and nervousness 1.8 times more frequently than men. Such feelings are prevalent among individuals aged 60 and older, with 80% reported having anxiety, worry and nervousness during the interviews. The respondents' residence on either side of Nistru river did not impact the reported levels of anxiety, indicating a widespread experience regardless of place of residence. It is interesting to note that the interviewed refugees who are currently employed reported feelings of anxiety and depression 1.6 times less often than those without current occupation.

Experience anxiety, nervousness and depression by age groups

	18-29	30-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+
Anxiety	11	38	18	29	13	4	3
Depression	1	13	2	14	3	1	0

34 interviewed refugees from Ukraine (17 %) felt depressed on daily (9 %) and weekly (7%) basis whereas 20 respondents described such feelings as 'a lot'. Interviewed women more often felt depressed than men. 125 (61%) respondents answered that NEVER felt depressed.

MEDICAL SERVICES: ACCESS AND BARRIERS

61 % of respondents (125 individuals out of 205, including 90 women and 35 men) **reported suffering from serious medical conditions.** These conditions encompass a range of chronic and noncommunicable diseases, primarily concerning the *heart, vision, musculoskeletal system, diabetes, and neurological system.*

41 out of 42 interviewed persons with disabilities reported having severe medical conditions. Both women and men reported similar rates of serious health issues, irrespective of their location of residence in Moldova. Serious medical conditions are prevalent among **97% of respondents aged 60 years and older.**

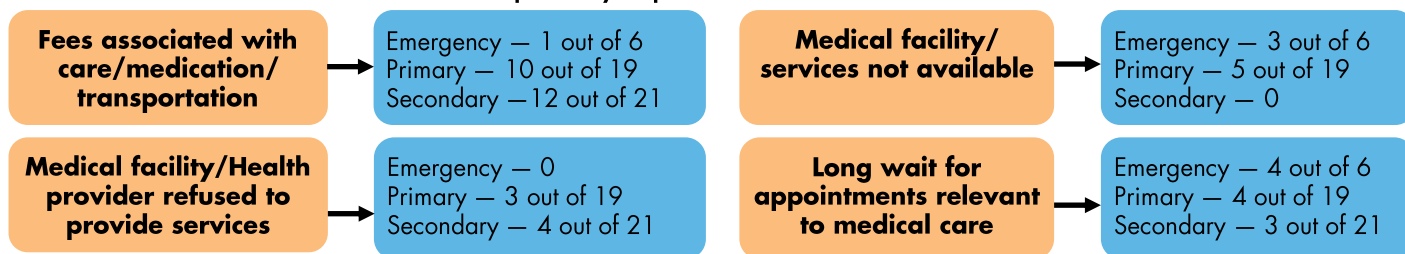
The age distribution of interviewed people with serious medical conditions

	18-29	30-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+
# of respondents reported having serious medical issues	7	36	18	39	17	5	3
% of total respondents by age group	29%	46%	60%	87%	100%	100%	100%

About 1 in 5 interviewed refugees from Ukraine with serious medical conditions reported facing challenges in accessing medical services in Moldova.

Out of 27 respondents, 21 encountered obstacles when seeking secondary healthcare services, 19 experienced difficulties accessing primary healthcare services, and 6 faced challenges in obtaining emergency medical assistance. Remarkably, none of the respondents from the left bank reported difficulties in accessing emergency medical assistance, whereas all of them have encountered challenges when trying to obtain secondary healthcare services on the left bank. Financial barriers are more pronounced in the access to primary and secondary care, whereas emergency care is relatively free of charge. All population groups face challenges related to service availability and long wait times, emphasizing the need for improved healthcare infrastructure and resource management.

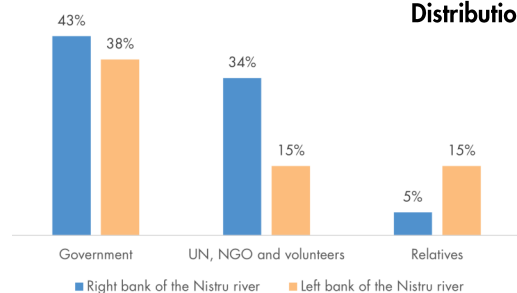
Difficulties reported by respondents with serious medical conditions*



*This question allows a multiple-choice answer, however, not all respondents wanted to give a description of the difficulties experienced

Out of 42 refugees who have difficulties in one or more functional domains, **13 (representing 31 %) have a disability certificate issued in Ukraine.** All of them indicated suffering from serious medical condition. 8 respondents confirmed that this certificate allowed them to fully or partially access the needed medical services in Moldova. 5 respondents mentioned that their certificate did not grant them access to necessary medical services, without providing specific details.

Distribution of respondents receiving medical assistance by source and residence



The graph illustrates that the interviewed refugees from Ukraine almost equally received public health, regardless of their location. However, there is a noteworthy distinction between the left bank and the right bank of Nistru River. On the left bank, respondents more frequently relied on financial assistance from their relatives for medical care, while on the right bank, the rate of receiving medical assistance from UN, NGOs, or volunteers was over twice as high.

About half of the surveyed refugees from Ukraine in Moldova (101 out of 205) registered with a family doctor.

This includes 49 % of refugees residing in the right bank of Nistru river and 43% refugees residing in the left bank; hence, registration rates are similar between both banks of Nistru river. Out of the 40 refugees residing on the left bank, 4 have registered at a family doctor on the right bank, and 13 on the left bank. While the majority of those who registered at a family doctor have Temporary Protection (66 individuals), the remaining 35 do not have this legal status. Their registration can be explained by the following reasons: they have another status in Moldova (such as residency in the Transnistrian region, where they could register) or they have registered in private clinics. It is also interesting to note that 42 % of individuals with the Temporary Protection ID have not registered with a family doctor.

URGENT NEEDS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION



91 respondents out of 205 (representing 44 %) identified **their most urgent need as medical care, encompassing medicines, diagnostics, and surgery**. 64% of these respondents reported having serious medical conditions. These needs are particularly high among persons with disabilities. The majority of respondents expressed a need to access primary healthcare (37%), followed by secondary healthcare (23%), and 15% mentioned a need for emergency medical assistance. Notably, these needs were expressed in higher proportions by refugees residing on the right bank of Nistru river. OHCHR will aim to identify possibly reasons for this.



8% of the respondents have identified a need of **cash assistance**, together with information on the reasons for delays with payments. Some of them mentioned need of cash for winterization needs such as firewood or coal as well as warm cloths. These findings may suggest a continuous need to receive cash, for those already benefitting from it.



9 % of respondents (both women and man) are looking for information about **job opportunities**. 7 % expressed a need for information about **their legal status in Moldova**. 1% of the respondents need to renew missing or lost **personal documents**.



- 69 %

During the interviews, refugees from Ukraine were asked about their preferred sources for receiving information. 69% of respondents, irrespective of their gender, age, or location, favor using their phones as their primary source. Additionally, 62% of the interviewed refugees opt for social media as their preferred information channel, with 25% of respondents mentioning family and friends as their third preferred source. Organizational websites, on the other hand, were selected by only 10% of respondents, making it the least preferred channel among refugees from Ukraine.



- 62 %



- 25

ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

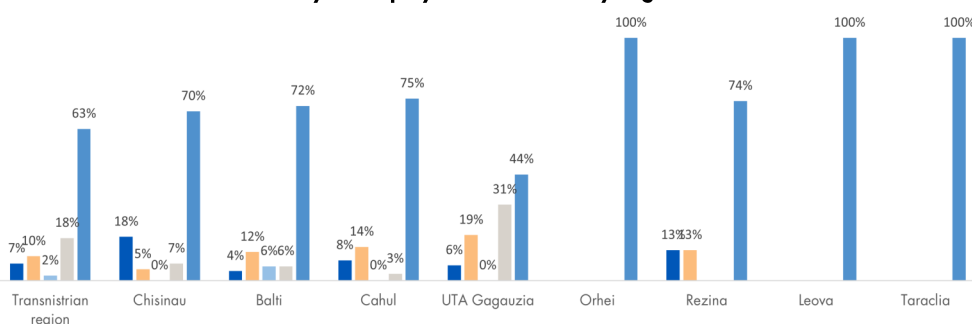
79% (162 of the 205) of the interviewed refugees from Ukraine are currently not employed in Moldova. 19% of the respondents are actively working in Moldova (9% formally and 10% informally), while 2% work online for another country. Among those who are working in Moldova, 19% of residents of right bank of Nistru river and 18% of residents the left bank.

Among the 162 respondents who are not currently employed, only 19 are actively seeking employment, accounting for 12% of the non-employed interviewed refugees from Ukraine.

The analysis of respondents' explanations for not seeking employment in Moldova reveals a multifaceted landscape of workforce participation barriers and helps to better understand the causes:

- ⇒ **Aging and Disabilities:** 40% consists of individuals aged 60 and older, with a substantial portion of 27 individuals having disabilities. This highlights the unique challenges faced by older individuals, especially those with disabilities, in accessing job opportunities.
- ⇒ **Caregiver Responsibilities:** 12% of respondents, all women aged 27-48, are primary caregivers for small children, highlighting how caregiving responsibilities affect their workforce participation.
- ⇒ **Job Market Challenges:** 6% had attempted to find work previously but faced challenges, including a lack of job opportunities and language barriers, pointing to existing issues within the job market that require attention.
- ⇒ **Disabilities in the 18-59 Age Group:** 3% of working-age individuals (18-59) with disabilities encounter employment barriers, highlighting the urgency of implementing inclusive job strategies.

Diversity in employment situation by regions



The graph illustrates that in Orhei, Leova, and Taraclia, none of the respondents are currently employed. Conversely, the highest number of employed respondents can be found in UTA Gagauzia, Cahul, and Chisinau.

■ Work through a formal employment ■ Work informally ■ Work online for another country not for Moldova ■ I am looking for a job ■ I do not work

TEMPORARY PROTECTION

The majority of respondents (60 %, 124 out of 205) applied for Temporary Protection in Moldova.

In comparative terms, women applied slightly more than men. Data reveals that interviewed young adults (18-29) had the highest application rate, while the 70-79 age group had the lowest. Among interviewed refugees with disabilities, 60 % applied for Temporary Protection. There is a significant difference in application rates between the right bank (67%) and the left bank (33%) of Nistru River, indicating diverse application patterns among refugees from Ukraine depending on their location in Moldova.

78 % of surveyed refugees who are currently officially employed in Moldova applied for Temporary Protection .

The 91 % of the interviewed applicants (113 out of 124) received the Temporary Protection ID.

- ⇒ Data show that 92 % of applicants from the right bank of Nistru river received the Temporary Protection ID, against a 79 % from residents in the left bank.
- ⇒ Temporary Protection IDs were received by 85 % of respondents who are currently employed in Moldova.
- ⇒ 96 % of applicants among persons with disabilities received a Temporary Protection ID.

Out of the remaining 11 interviewed refugees who applied for Temporary Protection, **9 have successfully completed the online registration form** and are currently awaiting their appointments at the IGM Office. Meanwhile, **2 individuals reported that their application was rejected** due to difficulties in documenting the residence in Moldova.

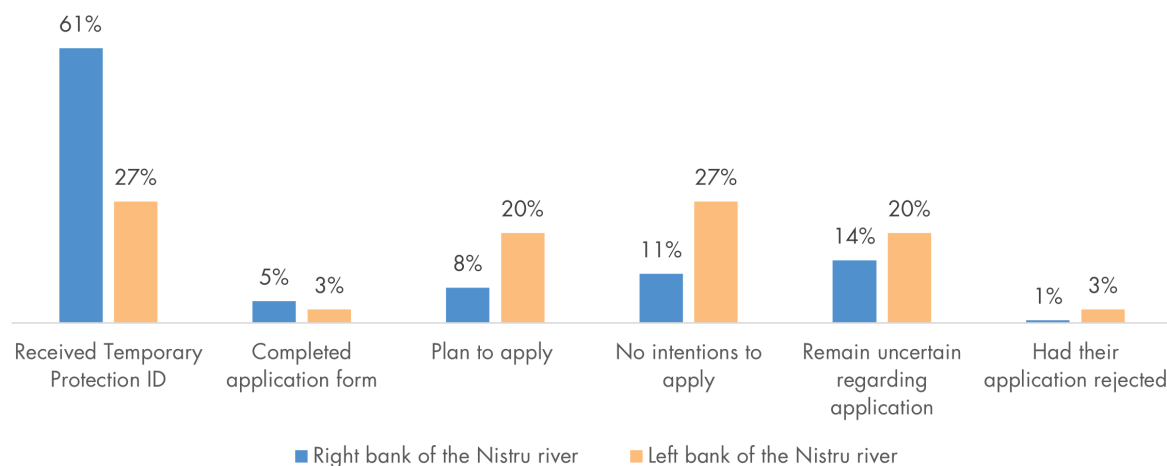
113 applicants (91 %) reported no difficulties during the Temporary Protection application process, and only 11 applicants faced challenges related to proof of residency (6), completing online forms (3) and identity documents (2).

81 interviewed refugees from Ukraine (40 % of the total interviewed) did not apply for Temporary Protection. There is a significant difference in the place of residence among those who did not apply: 68 % of the residents in the left bank, compared to 33% of residents in the right bank of Nistru river.

Nonetheless, **21 out of 81 (26 %) plan to apply for Temporary Protection.** Respondents who chose not to apply so far but who intend to apply in the future cited the following as their main reasons: it was not a priority, they had not made a decision, they lacked sufficient information, or they did not possess the proof of residence as requested previously by the application regulations.

36 % of those who did not apply (29 persons) do not intend to apply, and **38 % of them (31 persons) remain uncertain about whether they will apply.** The main reasons being: do not know how to apply, applied for different type of residence, do not see any benefits.

Diversities in Temporary Protection patterns by both bank of Nistru river



The graph above highlights a significant disparity in the number of interviewed Ukrainian refugees who received Temporary Protection IDs, with a higher rate on the right bank of Nistru River. Interestingly, Chisinau and Balti, specifically on the right bank, show lower rates of respondents with Temporary Protection IDs compared to UTA Gagauzia, Orhei, Leova, and Taraclia.

EDUCATION

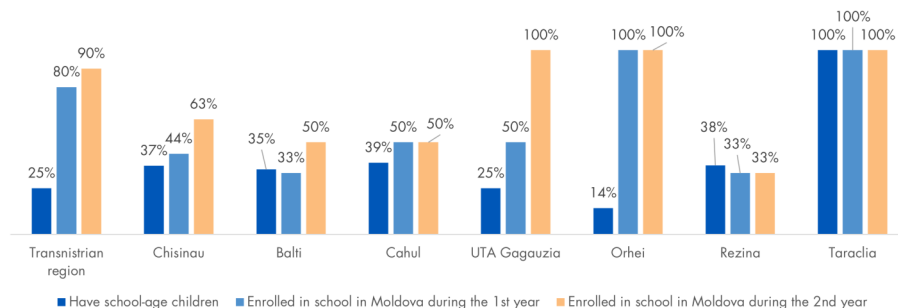
Among the respondents who have school-age children, grandchildren, or nephews (69 out of 205 individuals, representing mostly age groups 30 – 49), approximately **49 % stated that their children were enrolled in Moldovan schools during their first year in Moldova.**

A deeper analysis of the responses reveals that 80 % of respondents residing the left bank enrolled their children in schools in the place of their residence, whereas only 44 % of residents with children from the right bank did so. The high school enrollment rate on the left bank of Nistru river can be attributed to the availability of schools curriculum and teaching in the Russian language, which is a key factor facilitating enrollment. In contrast, on the right bank of Nistru river, where the majority of school curricula and teaching are in Romanian, language can be a barrier to the students enrollment. While there are schools with Russian and Ukrainian language teaching, it is possible that they may not be sufficient to meet the needs of the refugee population, or that they may not be accessible to all refugee children (in the entire country).

The number of school enrollment **increased in the second year in Moldova, 59 % of respondents with school-age children enrolled their children in school**, and of those, 94 % of enrollments were of children already enrolled in the first year. This increase can be explained by the entry into force of the Temporary Protection legal status. Notably, 60% of respondents whose children were already enrolled in school received Temporary Protection IDs (65% from the right bank and 50% from the left bank) that can be explained by the rule according to which all children of Ukrainian nationality, irrespective of a Temporary Protection status are eligible for enrollment in Moldovan schools.

The primary reason for not enrolling children in Moldovan schools during both the first and second years was a preference for online or remote learning using the Ukrainian curriculum; this was expressed by 85 % of the respondents.

Distribution by region of respondents with school-age children and enrollment process

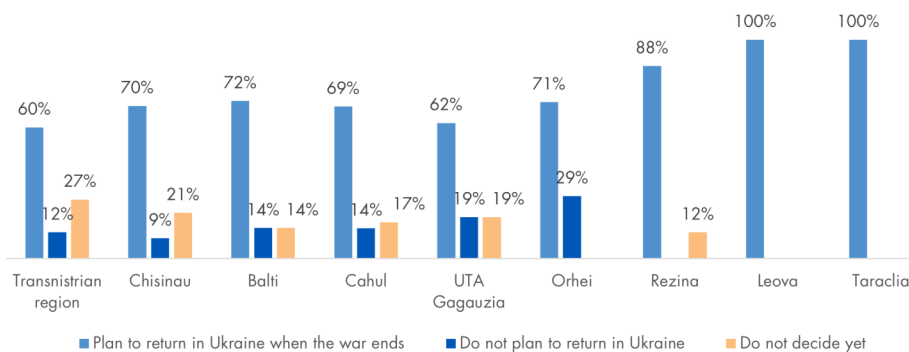


The graph below illustrates that the highest enrollment rate was reported in the Transnistrian region, for the reason explained above. Enrollment rates experienced significant increases during the second school year, mostly in UTA Gagauzia, also in Chisinau and Balti.

INTENTIONS

Among the interviewed refugees, **69 % express their intention to return to Ukraine in the future**, while 13 % do not wish to return, and another 18 % remain uncertain about their future intentions. 87 surveyed individuals, the majority of whom are women, have occasionally or frequently visited Ukraine for personal reasons (including to get medicine or for health consultations with specialists). Over half of them (61%) received Temporary Protection status in Moldova.

Respondents` intention of return to Ukraine by their place of residence

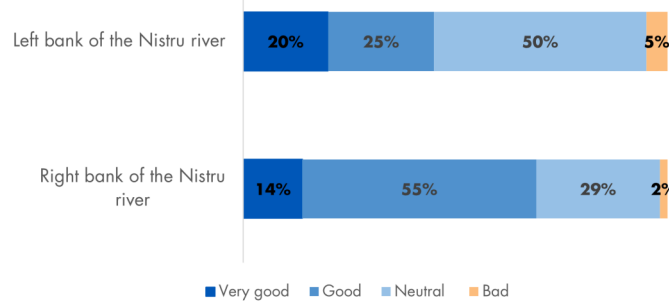


The graph shows differences in return intentions based on places of residence, however OHCHR did not ask further questions to understand whether there are specific reasons for this, or if on the contrary, these differences do not have any particular meaning. What can be noted however is that 27% of those who are employed (even though only 14% of them have a formal employment) in Moldova do not plan to return. OHCHR will continue to gather data on this aspect to determine the existence of a possible correlation between having a formal employment in Moldova and intentions to return.

SOCIAL COHESION

A comparative analysis of the data gathered from both the right and left banks of Nistru River, focusing on the interactions and relationships between refugees and locals, aimed at assessing the level of cohesion between refugees from Ukraine and the local population, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of their integration. The analysis highlights clear differences and commonalities in responses, which were categorized into 'Very good,' 'Good,' 'Neutral,' and 'Bad.' Additionally, respondents were encouraged to provide supplementary feedback to support their chosen responses. The findings are presented below.

Respondents' perceptions of the quality of the relationship between refugees from Ukraine and locals



Right bank of Nistru river

- ⇒ **Diverse Range of Perceived Experiences:** On the right bank of the Nistru river, there is a mix of experiences. While some respondents report "Good" relationships, others report "Neutral" or "Bad" relationships. This suggests a diverse range of interactions between refugees and locals.
- ⇒ **Diverse Reasons for Conflict:** Some respondents mentioned conflicts initiated by refugees themselves, while others reported misunderstandings about the war in Ukraine or political differences as reasons for tensions.
- ⇒ **Language Barriers and Misunderstandings:** Language barriers and the inability to communicate effectively are cited as challenges, contributing to misunderstandings between refugees from Ukraine and locals.
- ⇒ **Perception of Financial Impact:** Some local residents believe that refugees receive more financial assistance and resources, which leads to resentment and negative perceptions. This financial aspect is a key factor contributing to the negative views.
- ⇒ **Occasional Positive Stories:** Despite the reported conflicts, there are instances of positive interactions, with some respondents mentioning that refugees and locals coexist peacefully.

Left bank of Nistru river

- ⇒ **More Uniformity in the Perceived Experiences:** On the left bank of Nistru river, the predominant response is "Neutral," indicating that refugees' relationships with locals are often perceived as neither strongly positive nor negative. However, there are still positive stories shared by respondents.
- ⇒ **Negative Perceptions and Verbal Abuse:** A few respondents on the left bank reported negative relationships with locals, including instances of verbal abuse. The term "Bandera" being used derogatorily is one such example.
- ⇒ **Cultural and Political Divide:** Differences in political views and cultural backgrounds are factors contributing to misunderstandings and occasional conflicts.
- ⇒ **Respect for Refugees from Ukraine:** Some respondents from the Transnistrian region noted that as a result of the history of the local conflict in the region, refugees from Ukraine are treated with respect.
- ⇒ **Economic and Language Issues:** Similar to the right bank, there are mentions of concerns about refugees taking jobs and language issues contributing to misunderstandings and social tensions.

Overall, the relationship between refugees from Ukraine and locals in Moldova is multifaceted, influenced by economic, cultural, and political factors. While some respondents reported positive experiences and good relations, others noted tensions and negative perceptions. The varying attitudes and opinions in the data underscore the complexity of these relationships, highlighting the need for open dialogue and understanding between these two groups to foster better integration and cooperation between the refugees from Ukraine and Moldovan society.

PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION/NEGATIVE ATTITUDE BASED ON PROTECTED GROUNDS

REFUGEE STATUS

15% of interviewed refugees reported that they had faced negative attitudes because of their refugee status.

- ⇒ Respondents from the left bank of the Nistru river experienced slightly higher levels of negative attitude (18 %) compared with the interviewed refugees from Ukraine residing on the right bank of Nistru river (14 %).
- ⇒ Both interviewed women and men reported experiencing negative attitudes towards them, with no evident gender bias in expressing more negativity.
- ⇒ Ethnicity does not appear to be a strong determining factor in these attitudes, as respondents from various ethnic backgrounds reported perceiving negative attitudes.
- ⇒ It is essential to note that the reasons for negative attitudes are diverse and include comments about language, financial assistance, and general hostility. Some responses suggest that locals blame refugees for worsening their living conditions or accuse them of taking resources.
- ⇒ The nature of negative attitudes on the right bank of Nistru river reported by interviewed refugees from Ukraine leans more towards linguistic and resource-related issues, while on the left bank confrontational behaviors seem more common.

While on the street, I experienced a distressing incident as a group of individuals loudly accused Ukrainians, including me, of taking their resources, using offensive language. When I responded, the situation escalated, and shockingly, one of them was a law enforcement officer, which was the reason why me and my grandson had to leave the territory of the left bank for one year.

Woman, 45 years old, the Transnistrian region

Local children engaged in physical confrontations with my kids, aggressively yelling at them to return to Ukraine.

Man, 53 years old, Chisinau

Local residents maliciously vandalized our car, slashing its tires, all because it had an Ukrainian license plate.

Woman, 32 years old, Balti

LANGUAGE

3% of respondents experienced negative attitudes linked to their language.

- ⇒ Women experienced these attitudes slightly more often than men.
- ⇒ On the right bank of Nistru river, some locals emphasized the importance of linguistic integration by expressing in a negative way a desire for refugees to learn the local (Romanian) language.
- ⇒ On the left bank of Nistru river, refugees reported instances of verbal insults and derogatory terms related to their language (Ukrainian), suggesting a need for greater tolerance and inclusivity.

While conversing in Russian at the local market, I was told, 'I would not engage with you because you have spent over a year and a half here and still do not know our local language'.

Woman, 59 years old, Chisinau, person with vision impairments

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is grateful for support in facilitating the interviews to OCORC; Asociația „MOTIVATIE”; Keystone Moldova; NGO ‘Zdorovyi Gorod’; International Blue Crescent Relief and Development Foundation (IBC), Moldova For Peace.

SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

The key findings based on social media monitoring of different social media groups (Viber, TikTok, Telegram) related to refugees from Ukraine in September 2023:

- ⇒ **Economic Tensions:** High rental costs and concerns about gas compensation contribute to tension and distrust between refugees and host communities, with some locals holding refugees responsible.
- ⇒ **Xenophobia and Hate Speech:** Online hate speech targeting refugees from Ukraine reflects xenophobia and can harm refugees' well-being and intergroup relations.
- ⇒ **Perceptions of Government Support:** Concerns about government support for refugees suggest locals feel neglected. This can lead to social tensions, requiring government communication to address misconception.
- ⇒ **Language Barriers:** Tensions arise from language differences in social media, underscoring the need for language integration to enhance social cohesion.

For any questions, please reach out Martina Gastaldello, Human Rights Officer, OHCHR Moldova, martina.gastaldello@un.org

United Nations or its officials or Member States.

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