UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Moldova

Annual Monitoring Factsheet

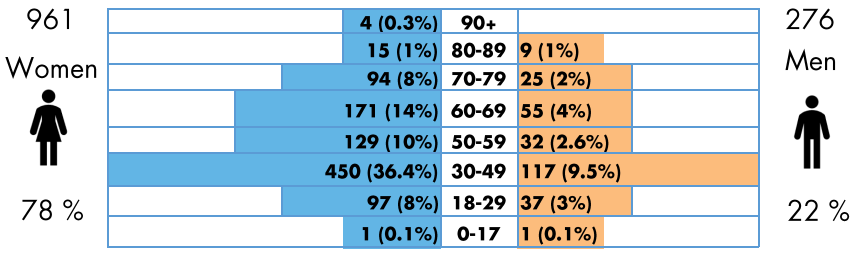
March 2024-February 2025

Background and methodology: In July 2023, UN Human Rights in Moldova started protection monitoring as part of a project funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (DG-ECHO). UN Human Rights focuses on the systematic identification of those who are more at risk of protection concerns and human rights violations. UN Human Rights' methodology consists of individual interviews with refugees from Ukraine and host community members. Respondents are reached in communication with international and national NGOs and local CSOs that work with refugees from Ukraine, including the most marginalized groups, on both banks of Dniester/Nistru River. In order to ensure a wide geographical coverage, each month interviews are conducted in the northern, central, 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. Therefore, data may not always be representative of the refugee population as a whole. In addition, data reflects the self-reporting by respondents. The analysis presented in this Factsheet refers to the respondents of data collection for twelve months. Since the summer of 2024, UN Human Rights started protection monitoring in accreditive and non-accreditive Refugee Accommodation Centers (RACs) that explains variations of housing arrangements compared with previous data collecting period. UN Human Rights analyses the data, taking into account the existing legal framework and contextual information.

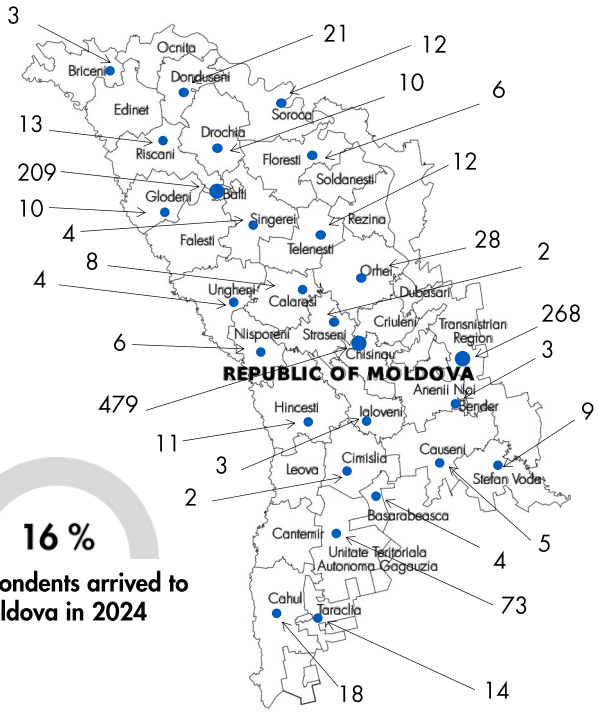
PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Between March 2024 and February 2025, **UN Human Rights conducted interviews with 1,237 refugees from Ukraine residing in Moldova**, the vast majority of whom were women (78%). The largest age groups represented were adults aged 30–49 (46%) and older persons aged 60 and above (30%). While 98% of respondents were Ukrainian nationals, a small proportion (2%) self-identified as Third-Country nationals, including individuals from Russia, Belarus, and Azerbaijan. Regionally, 78% of those interviewed resided on the right bank of the Dniester/Nistru River, and 22% on the Left Bank, with notable disparities in housing conditions between the two areas. Refugees residing in the Transnistrian region commonly cited family ties and proximity to Ukraine as key reasons for choosing to remain there. Overall, 51% of respondents rented private accommodations, 25% were hosted by friends or relatives, and 14% lived in Refugee Accommodation Centers (RACs). Among self-identified Roma refugees, 39% reported being accommodated in RACs, underscoring distinct shelter patterns within this group. In terms of family composition, 30% of all respondents arrived in Moldova alone, while over half relocated with children or grandchildren.

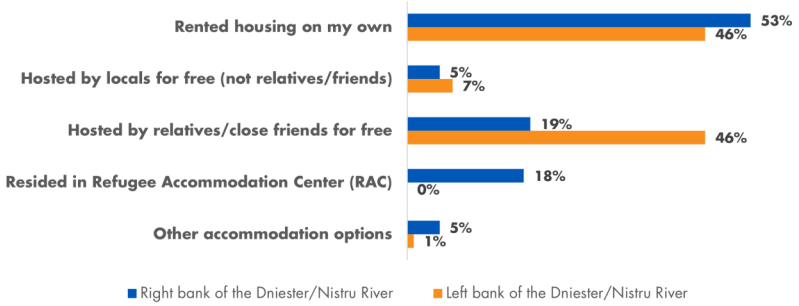
Distribution of respondents by age group and gender:



Distribution of respondents by region:

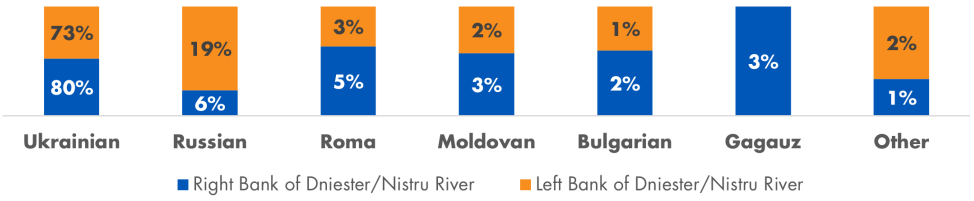


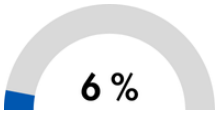
Distribution of respondents by accommodation type:



of respondents arrived to Moldova in 2024

Distribution of respondents by their self-identification of ethnicity:





of respondents indicated Romanian as one of the speaking languages

IDENTIFICATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

UN Human Rights protection monitoring tool includes 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: seeing, hearing, mobility, cognition, 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 having 'a lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do at all' for any of the functional domains.

155 persons, or 13 % of all interviewed refugees reported a lot of difficulties or impossibility to perform actions under one (124 persons) **or several** (31 persons) **functional domains.**

Among the interviewed refugees, 13% of women and 10% of men were identified as persons with disabilities. Older respondents (aged 60 and above) faced greater challenges than younger age groups, with difficulties related to vision and mobility being the most commonly reported functional limitations. Refugees residing on the left bank of the Dniester/ Nistru River reported a slight higher prevalence of functional difficulties compared to those on the Right Bank. Accommodation arrangements for persons with disabilities varied, with a notable 23% of Refugee Accommodation Center residents identified as having a disability. Of the 155 individuals identified as persons with disabilities, only 51 (34%) reported having a disability certificate issued in Ukraine, and fewer than half of them (22 individuals) stated that the certificate enabled them to access necessary medical care in Moldova. Interestingly, 98 respondents held a disability certificate despite not reporting any functional difficulties based on the Washington Group Short Set of questions.

Percentage of respondents with difficulties per functional domain*

76 persons (6%) Seeing	16 persons (1%) Hearing	81 persons (7%) Mobility	13 person (1%) Cognition**	18 persons (1%) Self-care	3 persons (0.2%) Communication

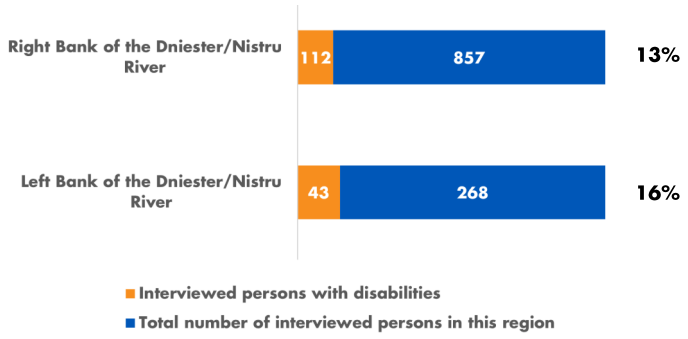
Distribution of respondents with disabilities by age group and gender:

128 **Women** out of 961 — 13 %

27 **Men** out of 276 — 10 %

Women: WITHOUT DISABILITY	Women: WITH DISABILITY	Age group	Men: WITHOUT DISABILITY	Men: WITH DISABILITY
2 (50%)	2 (50%)	90+	0 (0%)	
3 (20%)	12 (80%)	80-89	5 (56%)	4 (44%)
58 (62%)	36 (38%)	70-79	6 (24%)	19 (76%)
133 (78%)	38 (22%)	60-69	10 (18%)	45 (72%)
113 (88%)	16 (12%)	50-59	1 (3%)	31 (97%)
430 (96%)	20 (4%)	30-49	4 (3%)	113 (97%)
93 (96%)	4 (4%)	18-29	1 (3%)	36 (97%)
1 (100%)		0-17	1 (100%)	

Distribution of respondents with disabilities by region:



Distribution of respondents with disabilities by accommodation type:

	of total interviewed persons with disabilities **reside on the Right Bank***	of total interviewed persons with disabilities **reside on the Left Bank**
Hosted by relatives or friends for free	**22%**	**56%**
Hosted by locals for free	**8%**	**5%**
Rented private accommodation	**28%**	**39%**
Resided in RACs	**37%**	**0%**
Shared accommodation with other refugees	**1%**	**0%**

*31 respondents have difficulties in more than 1 functional domain
**In the Washington Group Short Set of Questions the cognition domain includes only remembering and concentrating functioning.
*** Remaining 4% of interviewed persons in this regions have other accommodation options not listed in the table

EXPERIENCE OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

The protection monitoring tool used includes enhanced questions from the Washington Group, specifically targeting the **affect domain** of functioning. This domain relates to emotional aspects, such as experiences of depression and anxiety. The data shows that **50% of respondents experienced anxiety,** with 47% of these cases being high intensity. Similarly, **30% reported depression**, with 50% of them facing it at a high intensity. Interviewed **persons with disabilities were particularly vulnerable, with 68% reporting anxiety and 46% experiencing depression**. Women were more likely to experience anxiety (54%) and depression (33%) than men, who reported lower levels of both states (37% and 21%, respectively). Across both banks of Dniester/Nistru River, anxiety and depression levels were similar. **Older respondents (60+) had significantly higher rates of anxiety (65%) and depression (39%) compared to younger persons**. Unemployment was also a key factor, with 53% of unemployed individuals reporting anxiety, compared to 47% of those employed and 41% of job seekers. Depression showed a similar trend, with 32% of the unemployed experiencing it compared to 27% of those employed.

Total number of respondents reported feelings of:

anxiety, nervousness, and worrying 50 %

depression 30 %

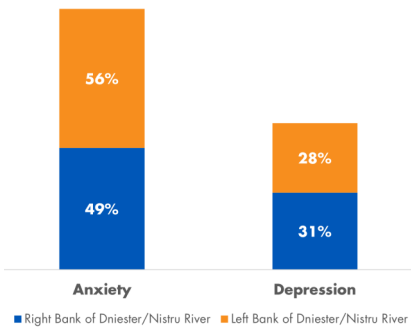
These marginalized groups reported higher levels of anxiety and depression compared to others:

	anxiety		depression	
women	54 %	vs 37% reported by **men**	33 %	vs 21% reported by **men**
persons with disabilities	68 %	vs 48% reported by **persons without disabilities**	46 %	vs 28% reported by **persons without disabilities**
older persons	65 %	vs 44% reported by **younger persons [18-59]**	39 %	vs 26% reported by **younger persons [18-59]**
self-identified ethnic Roma	41 %	vs 50% reported by **other ethnic groups**	24 %	vs 31% reported by **other ethnic groups**

Distribution of respondents reported feelings of anxiety and depression by accommodation type*:

	anxiety	depression
Hosted by relatives or friends for free	**51%**	**30%**
Hosted by locals for free	**67%**	**41%**
Rented private accommodation	**46%**	**25%**
Resided in RACs	**57%**	**41%**
Shared accommodation with other refugees	**59%**	**55%**

Distribution of respondents reported feelings of anxiety and depression by region:

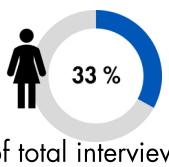


*Percentages represent the proportion of respondents within each accommodation type who reported feelings of anxiety or depression.

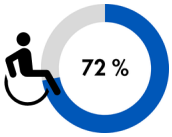
ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES

32% (401 persons) of interviewed refugees from Ukraine **reported suffering from serious medical conditions**.

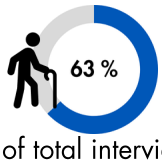
Distribution of respondents with serious medical conditions among marginalized groups:



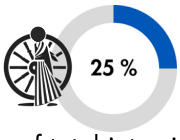
of total interviewed **women and men**



of total interviewed **persons with disabilities**



of total interviewed **older persons**



of total interviewed **self-reported ethnic Roma**

40% of total interviewed **reside on the Right Bank**

30% of total interviewed **reside on the Left Bank**

14% of respondents (167 persons) reported facing significant difficulties in accessing public medical services in Moldova, with accessibility being the most prominent issue. Among the interviewed refugees from Ukraine, disaggregated data shows that 1 in 7 women, 1 in 13 men, 1 in 4 persons with disabilities, 1 in 7 older persons, 1 in 4 persons from ethnic Roma group, 1 in 4 persons with serious medical conditions, 1 in 7 residents of the Right Bank, and 1 in 8 residents of the Left Bank experienced such challenges. Interviewed **ethnic Roma and persons with disabilities have faced the greatest challenges, predominantly due to discrimination based on their ethnicity**. Additionally, **individuals with serious medical conditions, despite their critical need for medical aid, also encountered significant barriers.**

Distribution of respondents who reported difficulties with access to medical services by type of care:

Emergency 8 %

Primary 80 %

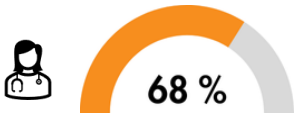
Secondary 54 %

The collected data highlighted significant disparities in access to medical services between the Left and Right Banks of Dniester/Nistru River, with the Right Bank reporting higher challenges across all categories.

Distribution of respondents who reported specific difficulties* with access to medical services by challenges:

Category	Issue	Emergency		Primary		Secondary	
		Left Bank	Right Bank	Left Bank	Right Bank	Left Bank	Right Bank
Availability	**Unavailability of medical facility and/or medical services**	1 respondent	5 respondents	13 respondents	21 respondents	9 respondent	21 respondents
Accessibility	**Refusals to provide services by medical facilities or service providers**	1 respondent	5 respondents	8 respondents	55 respondents	4 respondent	24 respondents
	Fees associated with medical care, medications, or transportation	1 respondent	4 respondents	16 respondents	42 respondents	13 respondents	37 respondents
	Languages barriers	-	-	-	4 respondents	-	1 respondent
	Long waits for medical appointments	-	3 respondents	9 respondent	30 respondents	2 respondent	20 respondents
Quality	**Low quality of medical services**	-	-	1 respondent	3 respondent	-	4 respondent

Registered with a family doctor in Moldova:



of respondents self-reported registration with a **family doctor in Moldova**

70% of total interviewed **women**

72% of total interviewed **persons with disabilities**

76% of total interviewed **older persons**

77% of total interviewed **self-reported ethnic Roma**

76% of total interviewed **reside on the Right Bank**

68% of total interviewed **reside on the Left Bank**

*This question allows a multiple-choice answer.

ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

16% (199 out of 1,237) of the interviewed refugees from Ukraine are currently employed in Moldova, with 6% (70) in formal employment and 10% (129) in informal employment. Employment rates are similar across both banks of Dniester/Nistru River, with **16% of respondents on the Right Bank and 18% on the Left Bank employed**. Among respondents, 16% of women and 17% of men are currently employed, indicating a similar employment rate between genders. Refugees are primarily employed in sectors such as cleaning services, sales, beauty sphere, education, and seasonal works. Employment among ethnic Roma is critically low, with only 6 out of 51 interviewed individuals reporting employment.

Employment distribution among marginalized groups currently working in Moldova (both formally and informally):

16 % of total interviewed **women**

8 % of total interviewed **persons with disabilities**

4 % of total interviewed **older persons**

12 % of total interviewed **self-reported ethnic Roma**

Distribution of respondents currently employed in Moldova (both formally and informally) by their type of accommodation:

13% Hosted by relatives or friends for free

15% Hosted by locals for free

20% Rented private accommodation

10% Resided in RACs

Out of the **1,038 unemployed respondents in Moldova (84%), 743 (72%) do not plan to work, 229 (22%) are actively seeking work, and 66 (6%) work online for another country.**
The reasons for unemployment among respondents vary significantly, especially among those not planning to seek work. Key categories include:

- ⇒ **Retirement (152 respondents):** Retirement is the leading reason for unemployment, primarily affecting older adults, particularly women aged 60–79, clearly reflecting reduced labor-market participation upon reaching pension age.
- ⇒ **Childcare responsibilities (106 respondents):** Childcare responsibilities significantly limit employment opportunities for women, especially those aged 30–49, highlighting a critical need for accessible and flexible childcare options to support mothers in balancing family obligations with professional opportunities.
- ⇒ **Health difficulties (105 respondents):** Health-related conditions predominantly impact women aged 50–69, demonstrating how medical challenges and age-related health concerns create substantial obstacles in seeking or sustaining employment.
- ⇒ **Lack of job opportunities (37 respondents):** Limited availability of suitable jobs disproportionately affects women aged 30–49, suggesting a mismatch between labor-market demand and individuals' skills or expectations, underscoring the importance of tailored employment initiatives.
- ⇒ **Language barriers (25 respondents):** Limited knowledge of Romanian notably limits employment opportunities for adults (18–49), particularly women, emphasizing the urgent need for targeted language-training programs to enhance integration and employability.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

34 % of total interviewed refugees have **school age children/ grandchildren/nephews**

Each 2 child (50%) of respondents is currently enrolled in local schools in Moldova.

90 % of respondents who do not enroll their children to local school cited a **preference for online or remote learning** using the Ukrainian curriculum

22 % of total interviewed **self-reported ethnic Roma who enrolled their children in local schools**

The language of instruction at school, as reported by respondents:

49% Respondents from the **Right Bank enrolled their children in local**

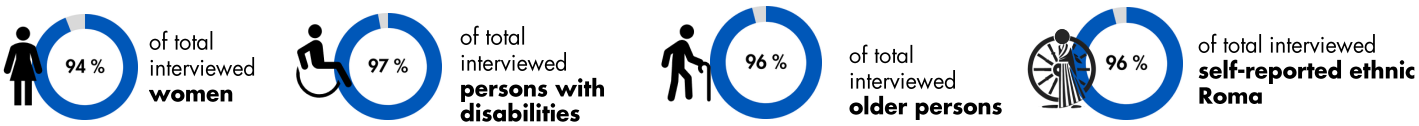
66% Respondents from the **Left Bank enrolled their children in local school**

LEGAL STATUS

94% of respondents (1,162 out of 1,237, including 918 women and 244 men) applied for Temporary Protection in Moldova, with the similar rate on both banks of Dniester/Nistru River.

Of those, **98 % (1,135 individuals) have received the Temporary Protection ID,** while 25 respondents are awaiting appointments after completing the online registration and 2 persons got a rejection. 6 % (75 respondents) did not apply for Temporary Protection. Among them, 26 were granted alternative legal status, while 49 did not provide details about their status; 14 of these persons were aware of the 90-day stay permission and the risk of fines for overstaying. Most Temporary Protection holders reported no issues accessing their rights, though 23 respondents faced difficulties with access to healthcare, 4 with access to social assistance, and 2 respondents with access to labor market.

Distribution of Temporary Protection Status among interviewed marginalized groups currently residing in Moldova:



URGENT NEEDS

Overall, **84% of respondents reported various urgent needs** with possibility to select multiply options.

The data illustrates clear variations in reported urgent needs among different respondent groups.

⇒ **Financial assistance emerged as the most prevalent urgent need overall** (52%), especially among self -reported ethnic Roma (67%), women (54%), and Right Bank residents (53%).

⇒ **Persons with disabilities and older persons notably indicated heightened urgent needs for medicines** (59% and 50%, respectively) and **medical care** (45% and 34%, respectively), with older persons also highlighting school items (16%), likely due to caregiving responsibilities.

⇒ **Ethnic Roma respondents identified substantial needs for clothing** (39%) and **winterization support** (35%), exceeding other groups significantly.

⇒ Geographically, **respondents resided on the Right Bank generally reported slightly higher urgency across most categories compared to the Left Bank**, particularly in financial assistance and food items.

Groups of respondents categorized by their type of residence or affiliation with a marginalized group:	Financial assistance	Food items	Medicines	Medical care	Hygiene items	Clothes	Winterization support	School items
Right Bank	**53%**	**36%**	**30%**	**23%**	**21%**	**16%**	**6%**	**5%**
Left Bank	**46%**	**30%**	**33%**	**23%**	**18%**	**13%**	**8%**	**4%**
Women	**54%**	**37%**	**32%**	**25%**	**21%**	**16%**	**6%**	**5%**
Persons with disabilities	**48%**	**26%**	**59%**	**45%**	**19%**	**11%**	**5%**	**3%**
Older persons	**45%**	**31%**	**50%**	**34%**	**17%**	**12%**	**5%**	**16%**
Self-reported ethnic Roma	**67%**	**39%**	**29%**	**25%**	**39%**	**35%**	**14%**	**16%**
Overall among all respondents	**52%**	**35%**	**30%**	**23%**	**21%**	**15%**	**6%**	**5%**

Key information needs identified by respondents:

224 respondents asked about **Financial aid**

90 respondents asked about **Job opportunities**

82 respondents asked how to **Access medical care**

39 respondents asked about **Legal status in this country**

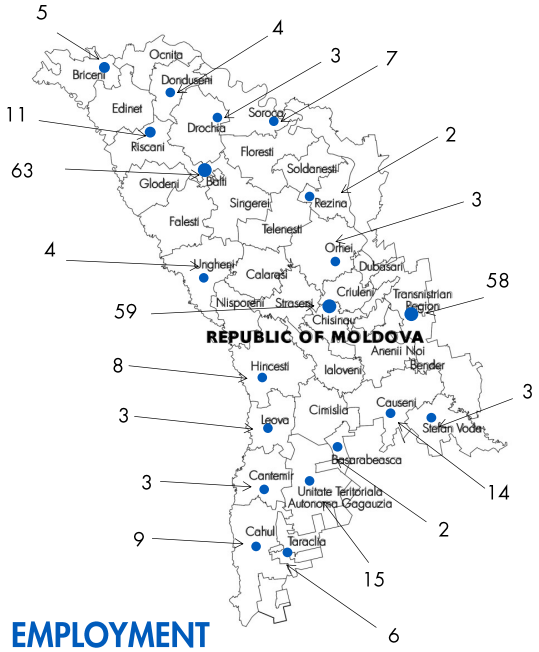
HOST COMMUNITIES

Between February 2024 and March 2025, **UN Human Rights interviewed 282 members of Moldova's host community**, comprising 189 women and 93 men. Participants included both Moldovan citizens who are currently hosting refugees and those who are not, representing diverse regions across Moldova, including 21% of respondents reside on the left bank of the Dniester/Nistru River. The analysis examined the impact of refugees from Ukraine on critical areas of community life on both banks, such as education, employment, healthcare, and social cohesion.

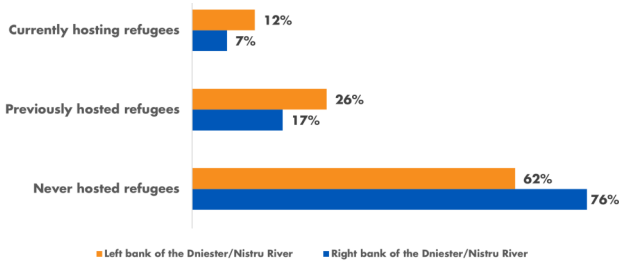
Local hosting experience:

27% of the interviewed locals (76 individuals), had previous or current experience of hosting refugees from Ukraine. Of these 76 individuals, 55 hosted their relatives without charging them any fee, 18 hosted non-relatives for free, 3 hosted relatives in exchange for rent fee. 75 out of 76 (99%), received various forms of assistance from humanitarian organizations or government for hosting refugees. This assistance included humanitarian aid, government support, and gas compensation.

Distribution of respondents by region:



Diversities in hosting refugees patterns between both banks of Dniester/Nistru River:



HEALTHCARE

The influx of refugees from Ukraine had a limited but noticeable impact on healthcare services in Moldova according to respondents. While **most interviewed local residents reported no major changes in quality or access**, a temporary strain was observed during the early months, with minor increases in waiting times and competition for specialist care. **Some expressed frustration overperceived preferential treatment for refugees**, such as faster access to services or free medications. However, many noted that Moldova's healthcare system already faced challenges, including specialist shortages and long wait times. In some cases, international support linked to the refugee response, such as medical equipment and funding, also benefited local communities. Overall, the refugee presence slightly exacerbated existing weaknesses without creating new problems.

EMPLOYMENT

The arrival of refugees from Ukraine had minimal impact on the labor market in Moldova, according to the majority of surveyed residents. Most respondents, including those employed in sectors such as education, healthcare, retail, and agriculture, **reported no noticeable changes in employment conditions, wages, or access to work.** A few business owners and agricultural workers expressed positive effects, noting an expanded labor pool and the arrival of skilled workers among the refugees, which supported local businesses and filled workforce gaps in sectors like farming and services. On the other hand, a very small number of respondents reported negative impacts, such as increased competition for low-skilled jobs. The data suggests that the refugee influx neither significantly disrupted nor transformed the broader labor market landscape in Moldova.

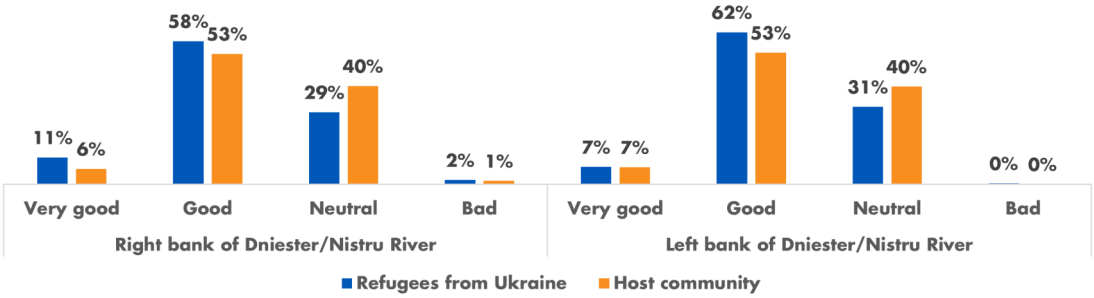
EDUCATION

The arrival of refugees from Ukraine had little impact on access to and quality of education in Moldova. Most respondents with school-age children or grandchildren reported no noticeable changes, with some noting the presence of Ukrainian children in schools but without any negative effects. A few expressed pride in how refugee children were welcomed. Some concerns about education quality were mentioned but were unrelated to the refugee influx. Overall, the refugee presence did not disrupt or strain the education system based on feedback of respondents.

SOCIAL COHESION: HOST COMMUNITIES AND REFUGEES

UN Human Rights monitoring includes a component aimed at assessing the level of social cohesion between refugees from Ukraine and the local population through the perceptions that both groups have of their interactions and relationships. Data confirmed that activities organized by humanitarian and development actors in Moldova to promote refugees' integration into the host communities continue to be relevant to foster social cohesion between the two groups.

Respondents' perceptions of the quality of the relationship between refugees from Ukraine and local communities on both banks of Dniester/Nistru River



	Right bank of Dniester/Nistru River	Left bank of Dniester/Nistru River
Positive experience:	⇒ Refugees describe locals as kind and welcoming, especially in rural areas. ⇒ Locals emphasize **compassion and mutual respect**, often sharing support stories.	⇒ **Refugees widely feel accepted "like family,"** especially near Tiraspol. ⇒ Locals highlight respectful and friendly relationships, with minimal distinctions between communities.
Specific issues:	⇒ **Language barriers, political differences**, and confusion about aid sources cause occasional tension. ⇒ Locals note concerns **over behavior, not nationality.**	⇒ **Minor issues around politics and aid perceptions** during crises. ⇒ Locals express some frustration over perceived lack of integration or fairness in assistance.
Challenges:	⇒ Refugees report **some exclusion and occasional discrimination** (notably among Roma). ⇒ Locals cite **fatigue and frustration over prolonged refugee presence.**	⇒ Few reports of direct hostility. **Mild tension from economic stress and prolonged stay.** ⇒ Some concerns about refugee behavior or aid entitlement.

Suggested measures for integration of refugees from Ukraine based on respondents' feedback:

Language Support

⇒ **Expand free language courses in Romanian for refugees** to reduce communication barriers and support access to services, employment, and education.

⇒ **Promote informal language exchanges** between locals and refugees to encourage mutual learning and trust-building.

Community Engagement

⇒ **Organize joint cultural and social events** to encourage interaction between host communities and refugees.

⇒ **Support volunteering initiatives where refugees contribute to local communities**, shifting perceptions from "aid recipients" to active participants

Conflict Prevention and Mediation

⇒ **Train local authorities and community leaders in conflict-sensitive approaches** to managing diversity and addressing grievances early.

⇒ **Encourage dialogue platforms** where locals and refugees can openly discuss concerns and solutions.

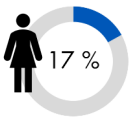
PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION/NEGATIVE ATTITUDE BASED ON PROTECTED GROUNDS

REFUGEE STATUS / LANGUAGE / ETHNICITY / CITIZENSHIP /DISABILITY

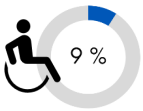
Discrimination *constitutes any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference or other differential treatment that is directly or indirectly based on the prohibited grounds of discrimination and which has the intention or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights.*

Data reveals that 87% of respondents reported no discrimination or negative attitudes from local population in Moldova, reflecting an overall positive social reception. However, **13% of respondents (164 individuals) reported experiencing negative attitude based on different protected grounds.**

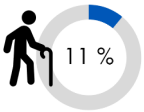
Reported negative attitudes and discrimination toward marginalized groups:



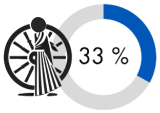
of total interviewed **women**



of total interviewed **persons with disabilities**



of total interviewed **older persons**



of total interviewed **self-reported ethnic Roma**

Discrimination based on Refugee Status:

is primarily linked to **perceived competition over resources, challenges in securing housing, tensions around aid distribution, and signs of social fatigue among host communities, rather than explicit hostility.** Refugees were more likely to encounter subtle forms of exclusion or resentment than direct or overt acts of discrimination.

"When we rented an apartment, the neighbors were very negative when they found out we were refugees."
- woman, 45 years old, Chisinau

"Locals say refugees are taking their money."
- woman, 63 years old, Orhei

""The hospital did not want to provide help when they found out we were refugees."
- woman, 29 years old, Balti

Discrimination based on Language:

Interviewed refugees reported facing verbal hostility in public spaces, including shops and public transport, where **they were pressured to speak Romanian or told to "go back home."** Some encountered difficulties accessing services when staff refused to communicate in Russian, especially in hospitals. Speaking Russian was sometimes wrongly associated with political support for the war, leading to additional stigma and exclusion. Although not universal, language barriers contributed significantly to feelings of social isolation and discomfort among refugees.

"In a trolleybus, with a child, someone shouted that we should speak Romanian."
- woman, 34 years old, Balti

"Sometimes when I speak Russian, they think I support the war, and they tell me to go back."
- woman, 52 years old, Orhei

*"**The doctor did not want to explain things in Russian, only in Romanian. '***
- woman, 49 years old, Floresti

"If you speak Russian, you feel invisible in some places."
- woman, 37 years old, Chisinau

Discrimination based on Ethnicity:

was particularly experienced by interviewed Roma refugees, who faced stronger prejudice compared to other Ukrainians. **Refugees reported being stereotyped as "wild" or "untrustworthy," leading to social exclusion and avoidance, especially in urban areas.** Some faced open distrust, being wrongly accused of misusing humanitarian aid or being associated with theft. Even non-Roma Ukrainians noted they were sometimes mistaken for Roma and treated with suspicion. While not universal, ethnic-based discrimination significantly contributed to feelings of isolation and marginalization among Roma refugees.

"Locals treated Roma refugees differently, thinking they were troublemakers
- woman, 60 years old, Orhei

"At first, I lived in Meridian, and people did not want to communicate with us because we were Roma refugee."
- woman, 32 years old, Balti

"Many think that Roma refugees do not want to work and only demand assistance."
- man, 45 years old, Floresti

"We were blamed for problems simply because we are Roma, even when we did nothing wrong.
- woman, 47 years old, Ungheni

PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION/NEGATIVE ATTITUDE BASED ON PROTECTED GROUNDS (continued)

REFUGEE STATUS / LANGUAGE / ETHNICITY / CITIZENSHIP /DISABILITY

Discrimination based on **Citizenship:**

Although rarely reported, **some refugees perceived exclusion based on their lack of Moldovan citizenship.** In isolated cases, individuals were told they should not expect assistance or support without a local passport. While this likely stemmed from miscommunication or confusion between government and humanitarian services, such incidents contributed to a sense of exclusion and reinforced the perception of being treated as outsiders due to their foreign nationality.

"They said: you are not Moldovan, go get help from your own country."
- woman, 41 years old, Cahul

"I was told that if I do not have Moldovan citizenship, I should not expect any help.
- woman, 53 years old, Chisinau

"Sometimes I hear comments like 'you are not even from here' when we go to ask for help." -
- man, 48 years old, Ungheni

"The family doctor had a bad attitude. He did not want to give a proper prescription, only a paper one that pharmacies did not accept.
- woman, 67 years old, Balti

"In Rezina, a medical assistant told me to go to work because I am a refugee, and that I should have learned Romanian in two years.
- woman, 52 years old, Transnistrian region

"The ENT doctor refused to speak Russian and told me to learn Romanian. A nurse stepped in to help
- woman, 42 years old, Balti

Discrimination based on **Disability:**

Refugees with chronic health conditions or disabilities not immediately apparent reported **facing discriminatory attitudes in healthcare settings.** Some were accused of avoiding work despite experiencing significant physical limitations, while others were denied necessary assistance or treated dismissively by medical staff. In several cases, these experiences were compounded by language barriers, such as being refused service in Russian. Though not widespread, such incidents reinforced feelings of being judged or marginalized due to their health status.

Discrimination patterns reflect systemic integration challenges and underline entrenched biases that weaken social cohesion. Refugees' experiences reveal **the need for targeted interventions that address language-related exclusion, ensure non-discriminatory access to services, and actively counter ethnic and nationality-based prejudice.** To foster inclusion, policies must also provide tailored support for groups facing compounded vulnerabilities, including persons with disabilities, Roma, and those with limited language proficiency.

To combat discrimination and promote inclusion among refugees from Ukraine and host communities, UN HUMAN RIGHTS RECOMMENDS:

⇒**Clarify aid sources to reduce tensions:** Communicate that assistance comes from international donors, not the state budget.

⇒**Prevent housing discrimination:** Monitor rental practices and promote equal access to accommodation.

⇒**Ensure inclusive language access:** Provide interpretation in Russian and Romanian, especially in health and social services.

⇒**Support Roma inclusion:** Address ethnic profiling and engage Roma mediators and community groups.

⇒**Respect disability rights:** Train healthcare providers on non-visible disabilities and patient-centered care.

⇒Promote social cohesion: Facilitate community dialogue and counter harmful narratives.

⇒**Strengthen accountability:** Create accessible channels to report discrimination and ensure follow-up.

For any questions, please reach out Olha Florynska, Information Management Officer, UN Human Rights in Moldova, olha.florynska@un.org

UN Human Rights in Moldova is grateful for support in facilitating the interviews to OSORC; NGO 'Zdorovyi Gorod'; NRC; International Blue Crescent Relief and Development Foundation (IBC); Moldova For Peace; People in Need (PIN); ADRA; Catalyst.

The views expressed in this fact sheet do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations or its officials or Member States. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this fact sheet do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Funded by European Union Humanitarian Aid

UN Human Rights in Moldova gratefully acknowledges the financial support from the Humanitarian Aid department of the European Commission towards the production of this factsheet.