



World Food Programme

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WFP Moldova Country Brief January-February 2024

Operational Context

The onset of the conflict in Ukraine in February 2022 has led to the displacement of millions of people both in and outside of Ukraine. Since then, over 1 million Ukrainians crossed into the Republic of Moldova, of whom 115,000 still remain, according to [UNHCR](#). In response, the Government of Moldova, with the support of international and local entities, has stepped up and provided life-saving support to those people fleeing the conflict.

Moldova is one of the countries most affected by the war in Ukraine due to its physical proximity and its inherent vulnerabilities as a small, landlocked economy with close linkages to both Ukraine and Russia.

The influx of refugees to Moldova has increased fiscal costs, squeezing resources for long-term development priorities. The large influx of refugees has also created a challenging socioeconomic environment in the medium term, especially if many migrants remain but fail to find employment opportunities.

Heavy reliance on imports to meet food and energy needs has left Moldova vulnerable to disruptions in the supply of food, energy, and commodity imports from Ukraine and Russia. Additionally, Moldova continues to rely substantially on natural gas imported from Russia for powering its energy needs. Import disruptions are expected to further increase price pressures, in turn eroding the competitiveness of firms and household incomes, especially for the poor.

WFP has been present in Moldova since March 2022 to deliver life-saving assistance to more than 10,700 refugees, 42,000 vulnerable Moldovan households hosting refugees and 143,800 vulnerable Moldovans to meet their essential needs. In March 2024, WFP Moldova launched its Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP) 2024- 2026, to meet the needs of refugees, host communities, and vulnerable Moldovan households who are directly affected by the war. With partners and guided by government counterparts, WFP aims to accelerate the transition from emergency response towards strengthening the national social protection systems.

Population: **2.6 million**

Income Level: **upper-middle- income**

Inequality Index: **0.205, ranking it 51 out of 170**

2021 Human Development Index: **80 out of 191**



In Numbers



114,000 people assisted in January 2024

16,200 people assisted in February 2024

USD 11.9 m cash-based transfers made in January and February for hot meals, Vulnerable Moldovans, and border snacks.

USD 5.9 m six months net funding requirements (March 2024 - August 2024)

Operational Updates

- WFP continues to provide three hot meals daily to refugees in Refugee Accommodation Centres (RAC) in Moldova. WFP assisted **2,526 refugees** in January, and **2,491 refugees** in February across **41 RACs** were provided through WFP's cooperating partners. Where government-approved kitchen facilities are available, WFP offers commodity vouchers worth 100 Moldovan Leu (MDL) per person (approximately USD 5). Additionally, in January **523 people** received snacks at the border. In early February, the distribution of ready-to-eat meals commenced at Palanca and Otaci. During the same month, a total of **666** beneficiaries received snacks/meals at the border.
- WFP continues its cash-based assistance to aid Moldovan households hosting refugees to help offset accommodation costs. In January the eleventh round of cash-based transfers included **4,929** households hosting Ukrainian refugees (**12,775** individuals) and in February **1,210 households (3,283 individuals)** The value of the payment is equivalent to **USD 1.38 million**.
- Since the start of 2024, WFP has continued its temporary cash-based assistance to support vulnerable Moldovan households, which includes households caring for children with severe disabilities, families with disabled members, pensioners born before 1945 and pregnant or breastfeeding women with children under 13 months. In January **47,950 households (98,149 individuals)** and in February **4,612 households (9,736 individuals)** received cash assistance, to help cover basic needs, such as food and energy costs.
- In February, WFP Moldova presented the new Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP) for March 2024 – February 2026 to the WFP Executive Board. The ICSP aims to ensure continuity in the consolidation of the social protection system in the country by supporting the integration of refugees, ensuring social cohesion with the national population and fortifying humanitarian preparedness.

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Photo Caption: Ukrainian refugees in the dining area of the Cărpineni RAC. ©WFP/ WFP Moldova

WFP Country Strategy

Interim Country Strategic Plan (March 2024 – February 2026)

Total Requirements (USD)	Total Received (USD)
86 m	62 m
2024 Requirements (USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (March 2024– August 2024)
38 m	5.9 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected populations in Moldova, including refugees, are able to meet their food and other essential needs throughout the year.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide food assistance to refugees and other crisis-affected populations.

Strategic Result 2: Capacity strengthening

Strategic Outcome 2: The Government of Moldova has enhanced capacities and programmes to support the essential needs of vulnerable populations by 2026 **Focus area:** Resilience building

Activities:

- Provide assistance to national institutions on social protection, including through transfers to targeted populations.

Strategic Result 3: Enhance Global Partnerships

Strategic Outcome 3: Humanitarian and development actors in Moldova have improved capacities to prepare for and respond to emergencies throughout the year. **Focus area:** Crisis Response

Activities:

- Provide on-demand services to humanitarian and development actors.
- As part of capacity development activities, WFP continued to provide training to the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MLSP). As a follow-up to the previous capacity strengthening initiative in December, which engaged 3,510 government employees, WFP initiated a new series of trainings focused on "Gender-based Violence and Case Management". On 22 February, a Training of Trainers (ToT) session on "Gender-based Violence and Case Management" was jointly conducted with UNFPA. The ToT gathered 26 facilitators who subsequently conducted a total of 45 training sessions during 26-29 February. These sessions were attended by 1,850 representatives from 10 Regional Agencies for Social Assistance and two municipalities. The training aimed to equip representatives with essential skills and knowledge to effectively address issues of gender-based violence and improve case management practices within their respective institutions.

than half of households hosting refugees are family relatives. The participants at the monitoring survey consisted of 61 percent female-headed households which was reflected in the decision-making result on the use of WFP assistance divided by gender. In the last five rounds (since July 2023), decision-making has shown a trend towards women, with 62% of decisions being made solely by females, 19% solely by males, and the remaining 19% being collaborative decisions made by both women and men.

- The hosting households spent nearly half of WFP's assistance covering utilities, 26 percent on food, 8 percent on health, and the remaining on NFIs, debt repayment, sharing with refugees and 4 percent reported savings. According to the results on perceived needs, utilities continue to be the household's priority, increasing by three times since April 2023, followed by food items and healthcare. 60 percent of households mentioned an increase in price on the market, especially for food items, utilities, and fuel.
- Beneficiary awareness levels increased with repeated rounds of distribution, as more than 50 percent of households received nine or more rounds of cash assistance, and the beneficiary households' assistance satisfaction levels remained high. The cash programme reportedly reduces the stress of financial burden among 95 percent of the host families.

British Ambassador to Moldova's visit a Refugee Accommodation Center



WFP Moldova accompanied the British Ambassador in Moldova, Ms. Fern Horine and the UK FCDO representative's delegation to a Refugee Accommodation Center (RAC). The visited RAC number accommodates primarily mothers with children and elderly. The delegation met Tamara (39), a Ukrainian mother of twins who has left

behind in the Herson region a partially destroyed home due to bombing, and a husband who had enlisted in the Ukrainian army. In April 2022, Tamara arrived in Chişinău with her twins, who were only a few months old at the time. The family is provided with living spaces, nutritious food, psychologist's services, and children's educational activities. The UK through WFP is contributing to funding the daily meals in the RAC.

Donors

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Republic of Korea, Romania, Total Energies Foundation.

Photo Caption: The British Ambassador in Moldova greeting Tamara and her twins ©WFP/ WFP Moldova

Monitoring and evaluation

- In February, 202 refugee-hosting households were interviewed for the Round 11 outcome-level post-distribution monitoring survey. Findings showed that more