



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

## WFP Moldova Country Brief October 2024



### In Numbers



1,933 people assisted in October 2024

396,294 USD in October was disbursed for hot meals and border snacks for new arrivals and for refugee-hosting households

USD 16.6 million six months net funding requirements (November 2024 – April 2025)

### Operational Context

The onset of the war in Ukraine in February 2022 has led to the displacement of millions of people both in and outside of Ukraine. Over 1.1 million Ukrainians crossed into the Republic of Moldova<sup>1</sup>, of whom 123,000 still remain in the country, according to UNHCR. In response, the Government of Moldova, with the support of international and local entities, has stepped up and provided life-saving assistance to those people fleeing the conflict.

Moldova continues to be affected by the war in Ukraine due to its physical proximity and its inherent vulnerabilities as a small, landlocked economy with reliance on imports from both Ukraine and the Russian Federation for basic needs. This has left Moldova vulnerable to disruptions in the supply of food, energy, and commodity imports - affecting local markets, competitiveness and directly impacting households' incomes and buying capacity, especially for most vulnerable households.

Additionally, the influx of refugees to Moldova has increased fiscal costs, squeezing resources for long-term development priorities. The large refugee influx creates a challenging socioeconomic environment, where continued efforts are made by the Government and partners to balance inclusion and integration of refugees.

WFP Interim country strategic plan ICSP (2024-2026) focuses on assisting most vulnerable population groups while transitioning from delivering emergency response to strengthening sustainable Government social protection systems, equipped with a capacity to respond to crises, even after WFP departs from Moldova. By channeling the support through Moldovan systems, WFP provides technical assistance aligned with Government efforts to enhance transparency and accountability. Cash assistance to most vulnerable populations also contributes to economic growth - increasing household purchasing power, stimulating local demand and boosting the local market, also contributing to social cohesion.

Population: 2.6 million

Income Level: upper-middle- income

Inequality Index: 0.205, ranking it 51 out of 39

2021 Human Development Index: 80 out of 191



<sup>1</sup> Thereinafter "Moldova"

### Operational Updates

- WFP sustained the provision of three hot meals daily to refugees in Refugee Accommodation Centres (RACs) in Moldova. In October, WFP supported **1,551 refugees** in **25 RACs**. Where Government-approved kitchen facilities are available, WFP offers commodity vouchers worth Moldovan Leu (MDL) 100 (~USD 5) per person per day to purchase food for onsite cooking. In situations where kitchens are no available, catering services are contracted.
- WFP continues to support the Ministry Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) consolidation strategy to reorganize and enhance the operations of the Temporary Accommodation Centers for Refugees. The Government is committed to facilitate the integration of Ukrainian refugees into society, prioritizing the social assistance support to refugees with adequate social accommodation solutions. In alignment with the MLSP strategy, WFP is adjusting its support to better meet these objectives. Consequently, **16 RACs** were closed from the beginning of 2024, with the latest RAC in Chisinau housing **176 refugees** closed at the end of October. With these closures, 35 percent of the hosted refugees, mostly vulnerable elderly individuals or refugees living with disabilities, were relocated to other RACs.
- WFP maintained to support the distribution of food at Palanca and Otaci borders, to Ukrainians refugees entering Moldova. In October, **263 snacks and hot meals** were distributed.
- WFP continued to distribute bi-monthly cash-based assistance to Moldovan households hosting Ukrainian refugees offsetting some of the accommodation financial burden. In October, an ad-hoc distribution of the 15<sup>th</sup> round of support was carried out, allowing **119 beneficiaries** a second opportunity to cash out their assistance. Households hosting 1 to 4 refugees received MDL 3,900 (USD 217) and those hosting more than four refugees received MDL 4,800 (USD 268).

# WFP Country Strategy

Interim Country Strategic Plan (March 2024 – February 2026)	
Total Requirements (USD)	Total Received (USD)
60 m	30 m
2024 Requirements (USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (November 2024 –April 2025)
38 m	16.6m

### 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.

## Announcement of 2024-2025 joint UN-MLSP winter cash assistance provision for the most vulnerable Moldovans.

For the third consecutive year, WFP, in collaboration with other UN-agencies (IOM in 2024) and under guidance from the MLSP, is ready to provide a one-time winter top-up to the most vulnerable Moldovans. In this regard, the Labour and Social Protection Minister Mr Alexei Buzu announced this year's winter cash top-up for 31,000 pensioners and around 6,000 households with a child living with severe disability, to be made available as of November.



In 2022, the Moldovan authorities requested the humanitarian community to provide winter cash top-up for vulnerable Moldovans in response to the socio-economic shock caused by the conflict in Ukraine. The aim for winter 2024/25 remains to provide the most affected poor and vulnerable households, with additional means to cover increased cost of energy and food during the most difficult time of the year, namely winter.

On behalf of the UN-community, since 2022, WFP brought together up to five UN agencies (UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA and IOM). Across all three rounds of assistance, MLSP identified the elderly and disabled as most affected groups, employing different databases associated to distinct social cash programmes, and aligning with the implementation of the RESTART reforms.

Monitoring results from the past two rounds confirm high relevance and effectiveness of this winter assistance. Results indicated that most recipients used cash assistance for food, utilities, and health care. 93 percent reported that the aid improved their living conditions and reduced stress. These results confirm high relevance and effectiveness in targeting the most vulnerable Moldovans during winter.

## VOICES FROM THE FIELD

### How WFP support brings resilience and hope to vulnerable Moldovan families.

*The life of Valeriu (85) has been marked by resilience and dedication, following a tragic explosive incident, resulting in the death of his brother, and leaving Valeriu with life-changing injuries. Both, he and his wife are pensioners, and their vulnerability was exacerbated following the war in Ukraine, when the cost of basic needs increased.*

Valeriu and Nina received the 2023-2024 winter UN-MLSP cash top-up assistance.



*“Our family budget is severely strained by the cost of medicines. As pensioners, we rely solely on our pensions. The support from the WFP has provided much-needed relief, it helped us in covering our expenses for food and medicines.”*

*Similar to 71 percent of vulnerable Moldovan households who received the support, Valeriu and Nina cannot rely on any working member, and their household would have fallen below the extreme poverty line without the cash assistance provided by the WFP.*

## Donors

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