MINISTERUL EDUCAȚIEI
ȘI CERCETĂRII
AL REPUBLICII MOLDOVA

MAY 2025

ROADMAP FOR THE INCLUSION OF REFUGEE CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

OVERVIEW

The Republic of Moldova's Ministry of Education and Research (MER) in collaboration with the Refugee Education Working Group[1] co-chairs, UNICEF and UNHCR, has developed a comprehensive roadmap whose goal is to facilitate the inclusion of all refugee children in the country in its education system by the end of 2026. With the war in Ukraine extending into its fourth academic year, only a fraction of the estimated 25,000 refugee children (including nearly 10,000 pre-school and 15,500 school-age) are currently enrolled in Moldovan schools. The large number of children studying outside of a school setting poses risks such as academic underachievement, social isolation, and increased vulnerability to protection risks. The Roadmap outlines coordinated actions to support refugee children and, in parallel, strengthen Moldova's educational system to benefit all children in the country.

REMAINING CHALLENGES IN REFUGEE EDUCATION

- **Enrollment gaps:** Approximately 21,500 refugee children remain outside the Moldovan formal education system (either studying online or possibly not at all), widening existing educational disparities.
- **Language and curriculum barriers:** Differences between Ukrainian and Moldovan instructional systems and Romanian language barriers hinder effective integration and academic progress.
- **Funding deficits:** Current MER funding from the government budget is insufficient to meet the education needs of all refugee students in the country. Increased enrollment, without complementary funding, may negatively impact both refugee and Moldovan students.
- **Infrastructure needs:** Schools, especially in high-refugee-density regions, require upgrades and additional resources (classroom equipment, technology, and personnel) to accommodate additional children.
- **Current funding formulas constraints:** Funding formulas based on older enrollment data cause delays in financial responses, thereby straining the system as refugee enrollment numbers grow.

OBJECTIVES

- **Integration of refugee children in Moldova's education system:** Progressively increase the inclusion of refugee children in the Moldovan education system, starting with 25% enrollment, followed by a 50% target, and ultimately aiming for full integration of all refugee children.
- **Quality education for all:** Provide equitable, quality education by developing new curricula for the preparatory year and Accelerated Learning Program, as well as increasing language support, and offering remedial programs to bridge gaps between Ukrainian and Moldovan education systems.

[1] The Refugee Education Working Group is under the coordination structure for the Refugee Response managed by the Refugee Coordination Forum.

- **Financial sustainability:** Mobilize additional funding to cover the increased costs and prevent adverse effects on the education of Moldovan and refugee children.

- **Education system strengthening:** Enhance teacher training, revise funding formulas, upgrade school infrastructure, and improve digital learning facilities to accommodate the increased student population.

STRATEGIC PILLARS AND FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

- **Compensation for additional direct costs of the national education system:** Additional funding is needed to cover the direct costs of integrating more students. This includes support for preschools and schools, school meals, and teaching supplies and resources. **25.3M EUR**

- **Support for children with special education needs:** The roadmap estimates that approximately 5% of refugee children require specialized educational support. Activities will include the recruitment of specialist staff, the provision of assistive devices, and the establishment of inclusive resource centers. **1.6M EUR**

- **Non-formal education and extracurriculars:** Activities that support social cohesion and student engagement will be scaled up in schools with high numbers of refugee children to ensure that refugee children feel welcomed and integrated in their schools. **936,000 EUR**

- **Online learning via EduTech labs:** While in-person schooling is the priority, support for Ukrainian curriculum online learning in school-based labs remains a transitional measure to ensure that children are learning in a school setting. **546,000 EUR**

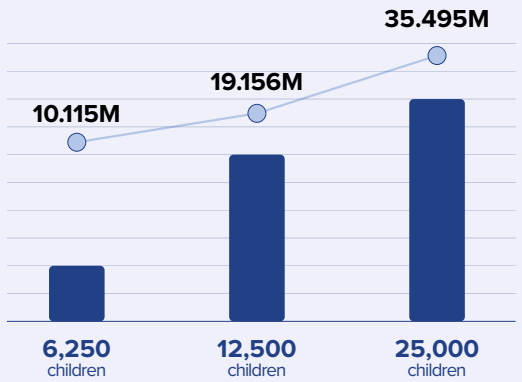
- **Catch up and accelerated learning programs:** These programs will support children to "catch up" with the Moldovan curriculum, as well as support students with no educational background, including Roma children. **4.81M EUR**

- **Integration program in romanian-language schools (preparatory year):** New intensive Romanian language, history, and culture courses will be introduced to prepare refugee students for full participation in schools that teach in Romanian. **1.2M EUR**

- **School infrastructure improvements:** Minor rehabilitation and equipment purchases will be supported in schools most affected by increased enrollment, to ensure adequate learning conditions. **923,000 EUR**

- **Communication:** Campaigns will address information gaps, targeting both refugee and host communities, to ensure that refugee families have the needed information to support their children's school enrollment. **143,000 EUR**

SUMMARY OF FUNDING NEEDS



To enroll **25%** (6,250) of refugee children: **10.115 million** EUR is needed.

To enroll **50%** (12,500) of refugee children: an additional 9.041 million EUR is needed, for a total of **19.156 million** EUR.

To enroll **100%** (25,000) of refugee children: an additional 16.339 million EUR is needed, for a **grand total of 35.495 million** EUR.

Detailed budget:

FIELD OF INTERVENTION	ENROLLMENT OF 25% OF REFUGEE CHILDREN	ENROLLMENT OF 50% OF REFUGEE CHILDREN	ENROLLMENT OF 100% OF REFUGEE CHILDREN
Compensation for additional direct costs of the national education network	6,108,000 EUR	12,659,000 EUR	25,318,000 EUR
Implementing a supplement to finance catch-up programs	992,000 EUR	2,084,000 EUR	4,167,000 EUR
Implementing an Accelerated Education Program for children without access to education, including Roma children	174,000 EUR	405,000 EUR	644,000 EUR
Support for children with special educational needs	421,000 EUR	856,000 EUR	1,609,000 EUR
Preparatory year for integrating refugee children in schools teaching in Romanian	438,000 EUR	605,000 EUR	1,210,000 EUR
Non-formal education and extracurricular activities	590,000 EUR	936,000 EUR	936,000 EUR
School infrastructure	949,000 EUR	923,000 EUR	923,000 EUR
Online learning in schools through EduTech labs	390,000 EUR	546,000 EUR	546,000 EUR
Communication	143,000 EUR	143,000 EUR	143,000 EUR
TOTAL	**10,115,000 EUR**	**19,156,000 EUR**	**35,495,000 EUR**

CONCLUSION

The Roadmap is a strategic initiative aimed at overcoming significant barriers to integrate all refugee children into Moldovan educational institutions. By addressing enrollment gaps, revising funding mechanisms, enhancing teaching support, and upgrading infrastructure, the Roadmap sets a clear path toward educational equity. However, its success depends critically on securing additional funding and broad collaboration among national, local, and international partners. In doing so, Moldova will not only support vulnerable refugee children but will also modernize its education system for the benefit of all its students including foreign children and diaspora children returning to Moldova.

The Roadmap for the Inclusion of Refugee Children into the Education System in the Republic of Moldova was developed by the Ministry of Education & Research in partnership with UNICEF and UNHCR, with financial support from the European Union through ECHO.

CONTACT

Dr. Ivan Duminica
Head of the Department for Interethnic Relations at the Ministry of Education and Research
ivan.duminica@mec.gov.md

MINISTERUL EDUCAȚIEI ȘI CERCETĂRII AL REPUBLICII MOLDOVA

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

unicef

We are thankful for the contributions of our donors

Australia | Austria | Belgium | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Iceland | Ireland | Italy | New Zealand | Netherlands
Norway | Republic of Korea | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America