

Moldova: Information for stateless people and those at risk of statelessness fleeing Ukraine



European
Network on
Statelessness

ENS Focal Point: Centrul de Drept al Avocatilor - [Law Centre of Advocates \(CDA\)](#)

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This briefing provides country-specific information for stateless people and those at risk of statelessness fleeing Ukraine. It is intended as a source of information for refugee response actors and affected individuals. The focus is on stateless people and people at risk of statelessness, including those who are undocumented. Links to more general information for refugees from Ukraine are provided throughout. We will endeavour to keep this information updated. Please contact Ukraine.crisis@statelessness.eu if you have relevant updates. Unless otherwise shown, the source of information provided is the ENS Focal Point.

1. SITUATION AT THE BORDER & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

There are reports that some documented stateless people have crossed from Ukraine to Moldova without difficulty. The Law Centre of Advocates (CDA), ACTED and INTERSOS are [present](#) at border crossing points to provide assistance, including with transportation, protection, vulnerability screening and counselling, while further NGOs provide assistance in refugee accommodation centres.

For more information on the location of border crossings, number of people crossing, and the general situation in Moldova for people fleeing from Ukraine, see: [UNHCR Operational Data Portal on Moldova](#) and [Ukrainian Border Guard](#). Frontex officials are present at the border supporting registration and identity checks following an [agreement](#) between the EU and Moldova on 17 March 2022.

Documents required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Adults</u>: passport (biometric or non-biometric), national ID card, or internal passport (in which case they can only cross the border once into Moldova)• <u>Children</u>: passport (biometric or non-biometric), birth certificate or certificate confirming fact of birth issued by a medical institution, national ID card or national passport (including expired); undocumented children, children with expired and deteriorated documents are allowed to cross after completing formalities according to Law 140/2013 regarding the special protection of children in risk situations and children separated from their parents• <u>Stateless people and people at risk of statelessness</u>: as above if they have such documents; if not, entry will be permitted in order to apply for asylum
Entry and registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Recognised stateless people</u>: entry into the country is registered by the Border Police; they may apply for asylum• <u>Undocumented people</u>: entry into the country is registered by the Border Police; they may apply for asylum or statelessness status• <u>Beneficiaries of international protection in Ukraine</u>: entry into the country is registered by the Border Police; they may apply for asylum in Moldova• <u>Unaccompanied children</u>: permitted entry; border police must inform and hand-over care to child protection authority
Documents issued	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Asylum-seeker</u>: renewable temporary identity document valid for 30 days• <u>Applicants for statelessness status</u>: renewable temporary identity document valid for 3 months
Entry status	Asylum-seeker (in case of asylum application); other foreigner status

2. ROUTES TO INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Stateless persons, persons at risk of statelessness and undocumented persons can apply for protection in

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Moldova even if they are undocumented. Moldova recognises statelessness status and international protection granted by Ukraine. Moldova offers different forms of international protection: refugee status, humanitarian protection, temporary protection, and political asylum. According to the Government’s decision from 18 January 2023 (updated on 28 February 2024), temporary protection was activated on 1 March 2023 and is valid until 1 March 2025.

Temporary protection is available to stateless people recognised as stateless by Ukrainian authorities and to stateless people who benefitted from international protection or equivalent national protection in Ukraine. Moldova does not extend temporary protection to stateless persons who had a valid permanent residence permit in Ukraine, nor to undocumented persons from Ukraine.

The routes to protection available to stateless persons and those at risk of statelessness are summarised below (see Section 3 for Statelessness Status).

	Refugee Status	Humanitarian Protection	Temporary Protection
What is it?	Protection under 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees	Protection for persons who do not meet 1951 Convention definition but would be subject to serious risk upon return	Temporary protection for eligible displaced persons from Ukraine, similar to the EU Temporary Protection Directive and Council Decision
Can stateless and/or undocumented persons apply?	Yes	Yes	<u>Stateless people</u> : yes, if eligible (i.e., people recognised as stateless by Ukrainian authorities; beneficiaries of international protection or equivalent national protection in Ukraine & family members, who are unable to safely return to country or region of origin) <u>Undocumented people</u> : may not apply
Where to apply?	At border, police stations, detention facilities, or Bureau of Migration & Asylum	Same as Refugee Status	At the General Inspectorate for Migration .
Procedure & rights	Application questionnaire, interview, decision within 6 months, legal assistance from NGOs, right to appeal, interpreter provided, renewable temporary ID for 30 days, right to request work, school for children	Same as Refugee Status	Online application (pre-registration), visit to Migration Service for an in-person interview and collection of biometric data (General Inspectorate for Migration), decision on same day, legal assistance from NGOs, right to appeal
Rights upon recognition	Remain in Moldova, obtain an ID card for 5 years, travel documents upon request for 2 years, work, study, social	Remain in Moldova, obtain an ID card for 3 years, travel document upon request for 1 year,	Remain in Moldova for a limited period of time (until 1 March 2025), right to work, school for

	insurance, practice own religion, monetary aid	work, study, social insurance, practice own religion, monetary aid	children, housing (for vulnerable people), primary and emergency health services, social assistance from external sources, social assistance for families with children
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For more information, see:

- [Law Centre of Advocates \(CDA\)](#)
- [Government help page on Ukraine](#)
- [General Inspectorate for Migration \(IGM\)](#)
- [Moldova, Decision on Temporary Protection, 18 January 2023](#)
- [UNHCR, Temporary Protection in Moldova](#)
- [UNHCR Regional Protection Analysis #2](#)
- [UNHCR Regional Refugee Response Plan \(January-December 2023\)](#)
- [Caritas Europa, Europe's welcome of refugees from Ukraine and lessons learnt](#)
- [Oxfam, Further into the Margins: A regional report on Roma communities displaced by the Ukraine crisis \(September 2023\)](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination Centre Memorial, The situation of Ukrainian children in European countries after 24 February 2022](#)
- KIND & Child Circle, [Note on unaccompanied children fleeing Ukraine](#)
- Right to Protection, [Who are stateless persons who fled Ukraine after the Russian invasion on 24 of February, 2022](#)

3. STATELESSNESS DETERMINATION AND PROTECTION STATUS

For stateless people, it is important to determine both a claim for international protection and their statelessness. Each application should be assessed and both types of status should be explicitly recognised so that even if international protection ceases, the person remains entitled to protection as a stateless person. Statelessness determination should be conducted either in parallel with or following the refugee status determination, with due regard to the primacy of the asylum claim and the principle of confidentiality for refugees in statelessness determination procedures. For more information, see: [ENS briefing on statelessness determination & protection in Europe](#).

Moldova has a dedicated Statelessness Determination Procedure and statelessness protection status. The procedure is summarised in the table below. For more information, see: [ENS Statelessness Index Moldova](#).

	Statelessness Status
What is it?	Protection under the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons
Can stateless and/or undocumented persons apply?	Yes
Where to apply?	At Bureau of Migration & Asylum (no time-limit); applications cannot be made at the border
Procedure & rights	Ex officio, in person, oral or written application, interview, decision within 6 months (may be extended to 12 months), legal assistance from NGOs, right to be in Moldova throughout the application process, right to appeal, interpreter provided, temporary ID document, right to work, housing (although in practice social housing is not available), right to social security if working

Rights upon recognition	Permanent residence, rights in line with nationals (travel document, family reunion, work, primary, secondary & higher education, social security, healthcare, etc.)
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4. REQUIREMENTS FOR ONWARD TRAVEL TO THIRD COUNTRIES

People who apply for international protection in Moldova must [hand over](#) their identity documents, including travel documents, so they may not leave the territory of Moldova during the application process. People holding a passport may [enter Romania from Moldova](#). People without a valid passport may enter Romania by applying for asylum.

5. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

As of 2024, 1,360 000 refugees from Ukraine had entered Moldova and over 30,000 applied for protection (data from the Border Police). [Mechanisms for emergency cash distribution](#) have been set up with the support of UNHCR, IOM, the Moldovan Government, and NGOs. As of September 2023, 79,821 people had received cash assistance. 10 [Blue Dots](#) have been established by UNHCR and UNICEF in Moldova, which 10,134 people had reached out to as of September 2023.

There are [reports](#) of discrimination against Romani people indicating that Moldovan authorities house Romani people separately from other persons fleeing the war in Ukraine and deny them housing at government-run facilities. Further [reports](#) indicate that Romani people face discrimination accessing to other services and humanitarian assistance.

6. ORGANISATIONS ASSISTING STATELESS PEOPLE

<p>Centrul de Drept al Avocatilor - Law Centre of Advocates (CDA) https://cda.md/ Statelessness hotline: +37369906400 Asylum hotline: +37368828180 Info page for Ukrainians: КРАТКИЙ СПРАВОЧНИК ДЛЯ БЕЖЕНЦЕВ/ОК ИЗ УКРАИНЫ В МОЛДОВЕ - CDA</p>	<p>UNHCR – Moldova https://www.unhcr.org/md/ mdachhr@unhcr.org Green line (free helpline): +37380080011</p>
<p>Government help page for Ukrainians https://dopomoga.gov.md/index.php Hotline for Migration agency (from Moldova): +3780001527 Hotline for Migration agency (from Ukraine): +37322820007</p>	<p>Government Asylum webpage for Ukrainians http://bma.gov.md/ro/content/%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%B6%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%BE Hotline: +37380001527 Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/347615063908402 More information in Ukrainian about State Telegram channel: https://t.me/prima_sursa_md/24</p>
<p>National Council for State Guaranteed Legal Assistance, partner of the Migration and Asylum Office (+37322) 496 953, 496 339, 310065 ot_chisinau@cnaigs.md http://www.cnaigs.md/ro</p>	