

# Temporary Protection Assessment

## Key Findings presentation

Moldova, February 2024

**REACH** Informing  
more effective  
humanitarian action



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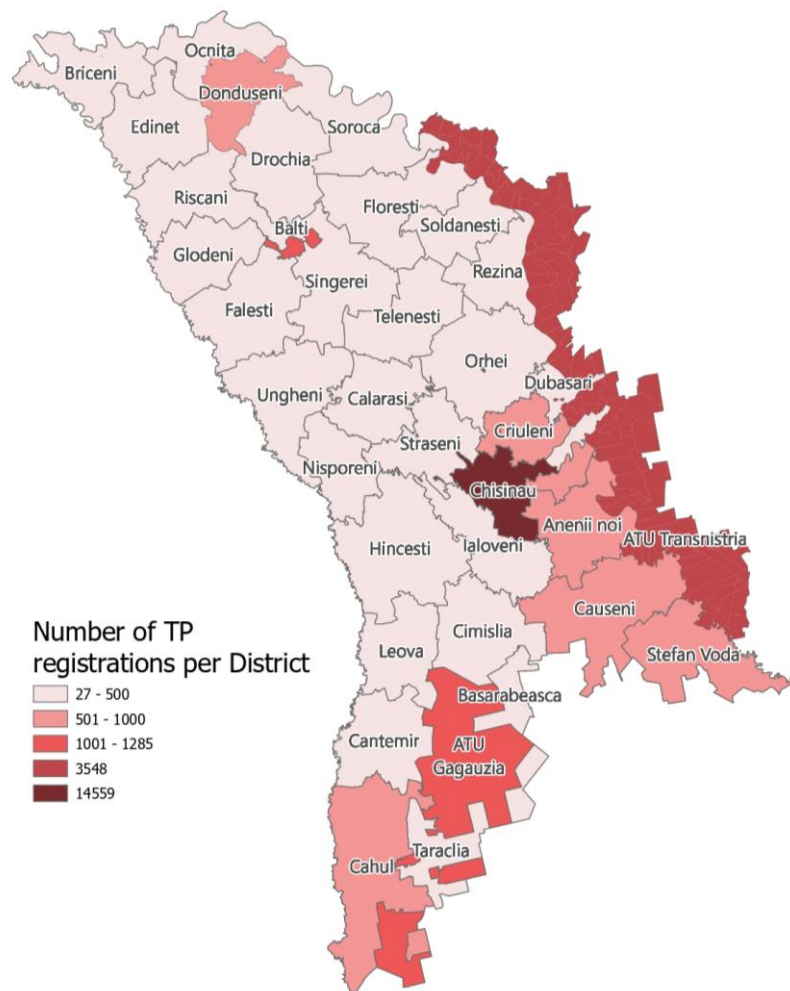


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01

# Context



# Context

On May 15th, 2023, Moldova introduced the obligatory Temporary Protection (TP) status for displaced persons from Ukraine (accessible since March 2023 on a voluntary basis). Refugees had to register by August 13, 2023, but registration remained open at the time of data collection (October 2023).

Temporary Protection status grants:

- The right to remain in Moldova until 01.03.2024.
- The right to work and study in Moldova.
- Access to healthcare and social assistance services.
- Accommodation in the temporary placement centres for persons in need.

As of December, registration figures remained relatively low – about 34,4454 refugees were pre-registered (out of an estimated 112,811 residing in Moldova). By December 18th, 2023, 26,382 individuals had received TP, including 7,988 children [1].

While existing research focuses largely on the TP enrolment process, REACH conducted an assessment to get a first understanding of **TP's impact on refugees' access to basic services (healthcare, education), and employment**. Additionally, this assessment investigates **refugees' protection-related environment, movement intentions**, as well as **access to information and awareness of their rights and obligations related to TP**.

[1] [General Inspectorate for Migration](#), 18 December 2023.

A decorative network graphic in the top-left corner, consisting of a series of interconnected nodes (dots) and lines. The nodes are colored in shades of red and grey, and the lines are thin and grey. The network is dense and irregular, with some nodes having multiple connections.

**02**

# Research Objectives

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# Research Objectives

This assessment aimed to get a first understanding of the impact of Temporary Protection on refugees' living conditions and access to basic services, in particular healthcare and education, as well as employment.

Specifically, investigating changes since the implementation/acquiring of TP status related to:

1. Quantitative component:

1. Protection-related environment for refugees
2. Movement intentions of refugees

2. Qualitative component:

1. Refugees' access to basic services (education and healthcare)
2. Refugees' access to employment
3. Evolution of the refugee response
4. Refugees' level of access to information and awareness regarding their rights and obligations under TP

Findings from this assessment are intended to support government and humanitarian actors' efforts and inform their programming regarding the implementation of the temporary protection measure in Moldova.



03

# Methodology

# Research methodology



## Geographical coverage

4 raions in Moldova with the highest number of TP registrations (as of September 2023): Chisinau, Balti, Cahul, ATU Gagauzia



## Population of interest

Adult refugees displaced from Ukraine to Moldova, who have obtained Temporary Protection status in Moldova



## Quantitative Component

164 household (HH) surveys with the refugees registered for TP:

- changes in access to **basic services**, **protection-related environment**, **movement intentions**, and **access to information**



## Qualitative Component

57 Key Informant Interviews (KIs) with representatives of:

- **Public facilities** providing healthcare, education
- **Local authorities** departments responsible for healthcare, education and employment/social assistance
- **NGOs** (subject-matter experts for healthcare, education and employment)



# Limitations

## Assessment of change was retrospective – responses could be subjective

The assessment of change in access to services is retrospective and lacks baseline data to compare the results with – respondents and informants were asked to assess the situation before and after TP provision. Their assessment of past experiences could be **subjective** or have shifted with time.

## Only a first understanding of the impact of TP

As the assessment was conducted relatively soon after the mandatory registration timeframe for TP (May-August 2023), the **results provide a first understanding of how the TP status impacts refugees’** access to the services, rather than providing a thorough overview of the TP measure’s impact.

## Low response for Area of Knowledge (AOK) questions

The HH survey originally included the **Area of Knowledge (AOK) method**. However, due to the low number of responses received within the AOK sections, **these findings were not included in the report**.

# Data collection



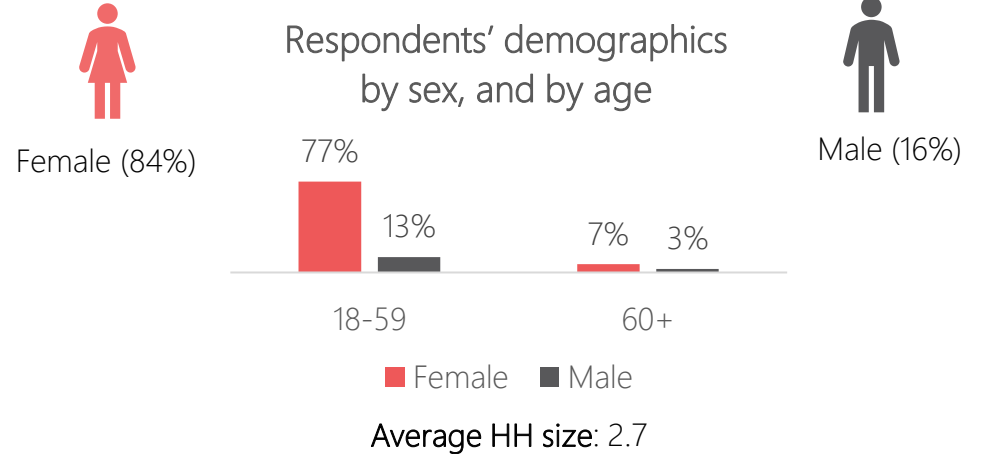
Data was collected between September and October 2023.



Unless specified, the findings do not provide a full comparison between the situation before and after the introduction of TP. Instead, they offer a snapshot of conditions during each period, as informants and respondents were asked about their retrospective perception of the situation before and after TP provision. Unless the sample size of survey is specified, n=164.



Quantitative data collection: HH survey demographics



Qualitative data collection: KII composition

Breakdown of KIIs by location, by sector, and by KI profile									
	Healthcare			Education			Employment		Total
	Local authorities	Provider	NGO	Local authorities	Provider	NGO	Local authorities	NGO	
Cahul	1	3	3	1	3	3	1	3	18
Chisinau	1	3	1	1	3	2	1	2	14
Balti	1	3	2	1	3	1	1	1	13
ATU Gagauzia	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	1	12
Total	4	12	7	4	12	7	4	7	57

A decorative network graphic in the top-left corner, consisting of a web of thin grey lines connecting various circular nodes. Some nodes are red and some are grey, with varying sizes.

04

# Key findings

A decorative network graphic in the bottom-right corner, similar to the one in the top-left, featuring a web of thin grey lines connecting red and grey circular nodes of different sizes.



# Healthcare

# Refugee access to healthcare

## Scope of healthcare access

### Before TP:

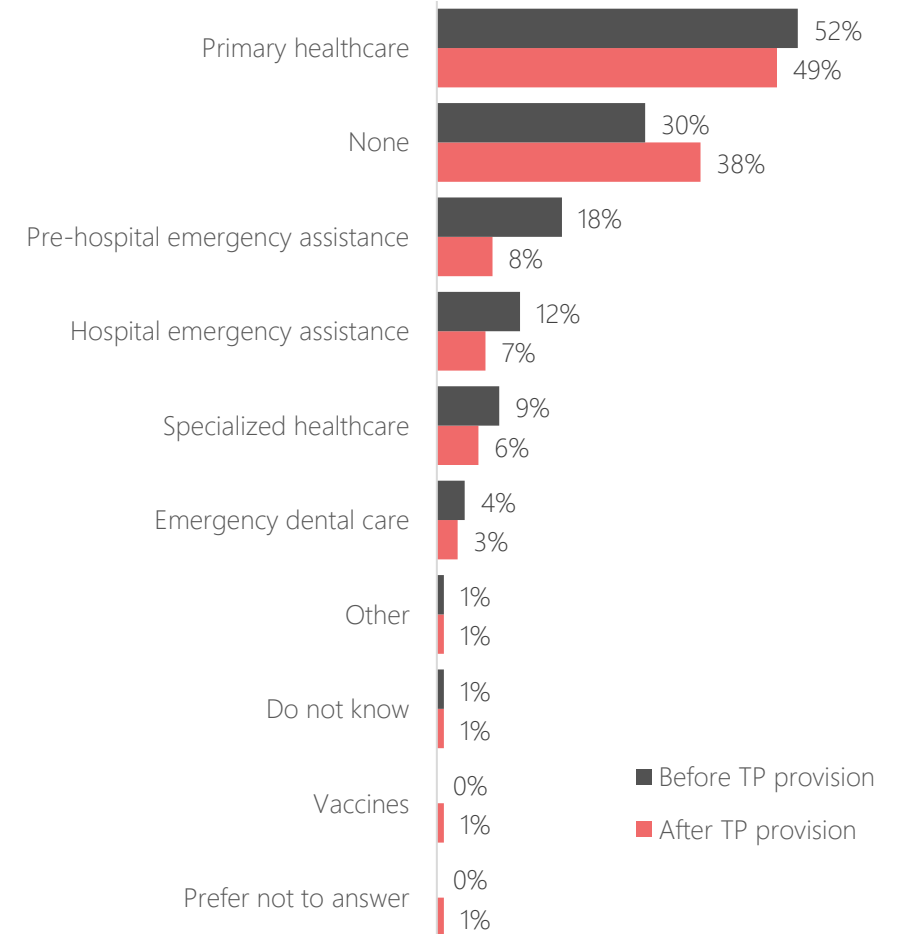
- 72% of refugee HHs reported having attempted to access healthcare services **before having received TP**.
- Almost all (97%) of these attempts were **successful**, with primary healthcare being the most accessed service (52% of HHs).

Almost half of the key informants reported that refugees had **sufficient** access to healthcare prior to TP.

### After TP:

- 64% of refugee HHs attempted to access healthcare services, similar with primary healthcare being the most sought-after (accessed by 49% of HHs).
- 99% of attempts to access any healthcare services were **successful**.

Healthcare services successfully accessed by the refugee HHs (n=164)



# Refugee access to healthcare

## Cases of Access Refusal

### Before TP

2 respondents of the HH survey  
(in Balti and Chisinau)

Some NGOs reported instances of refusals  
in Balti, Cahul, and Gagauzia.

### After TP

1 respondent of HH survey  
(in Cahul)

According to all health providers interviewed and most of the NGO key informants the situation appears to have improved after TP introduction, with only one NGO in Balti reporting instances of refusal.



# Demand patterns

After the introduction of TP, **perceptions of changes in demand varied**. Some key informants (most notably in Cahul and Chisinau) claimed that the **demand for healthcare services did not change**. Others declared the **demand increased** (particularly in Balti and Gagauzia).

On the other hand, some informants declared that they observed a **decrease in demand**.

Within the HH survey, only **7%** of respondents reported **an increase in the frequency of their medical visits** since obtaining TP, with most of them attributing the increase, at least to some extent, to having obtained TP.

# Barriers to healthcare access

## Before TP:

- 45% of HHs did not encounter any barriers.
- 31% of HHs faced prolonged waiting times for appointments, while 21% could not register with a family doctor.

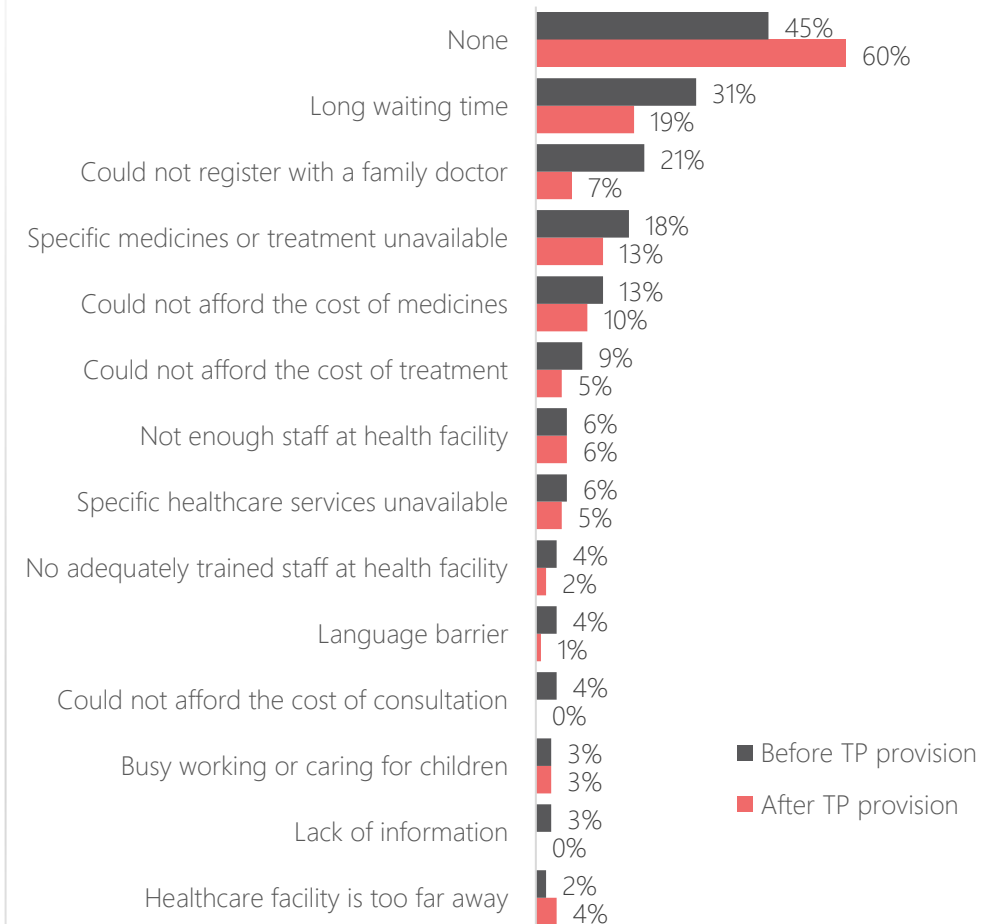
More than half of the key informants highlighted some **barriers** to refugee healthcare access **across all locations**. The **most frequently mentioned barriers** were extended waiting time for appointments, along with lack of clarity regarding rules, and limited availability of free healthcare services.

## After TP:

- 60% of HHs did not encounter any barriers.
- The most persistent issues included prolonged waiting times for appointments (19%), unavailability of specific medicines and treatments (13%), and unaffordability of medicines (10%).

Some key informants noted **remaining barriers** after TP implementation. The most reported barrier being refugees' lack of clarity on rules and registration processes.

Reported barriers to healthcare access  
(before TP n=117, after TP n=103)





# Procedural adjustments

## Changes to access reported by the informants

Key informants noted that TP introduced changes to the registration process, including the possibility to register with a family doctor, and reported access to a wider range of services. However, a few informants did not notice any change.

### According to the law on TP

Refugees who obtained Temporary Protection can access pre-hospital emergency care, primary healthcare, emergency hospital care, outpatient dialysis, and emergency dental care. They are also eligible to register with a family doctor (general practitioner). The state insurance company (CNAM) covers these services.

Those who did not register for TP cannot access healthcare services. Those who prove a willingness to obtain TP can access the aforementioned services, but implementation of this measure remains unclear [2].

[2] UNHCR, *Temporary Protection Update, Republic of Moldova*, August, 7th, 2023, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/102835>.

# Procedural adjustments

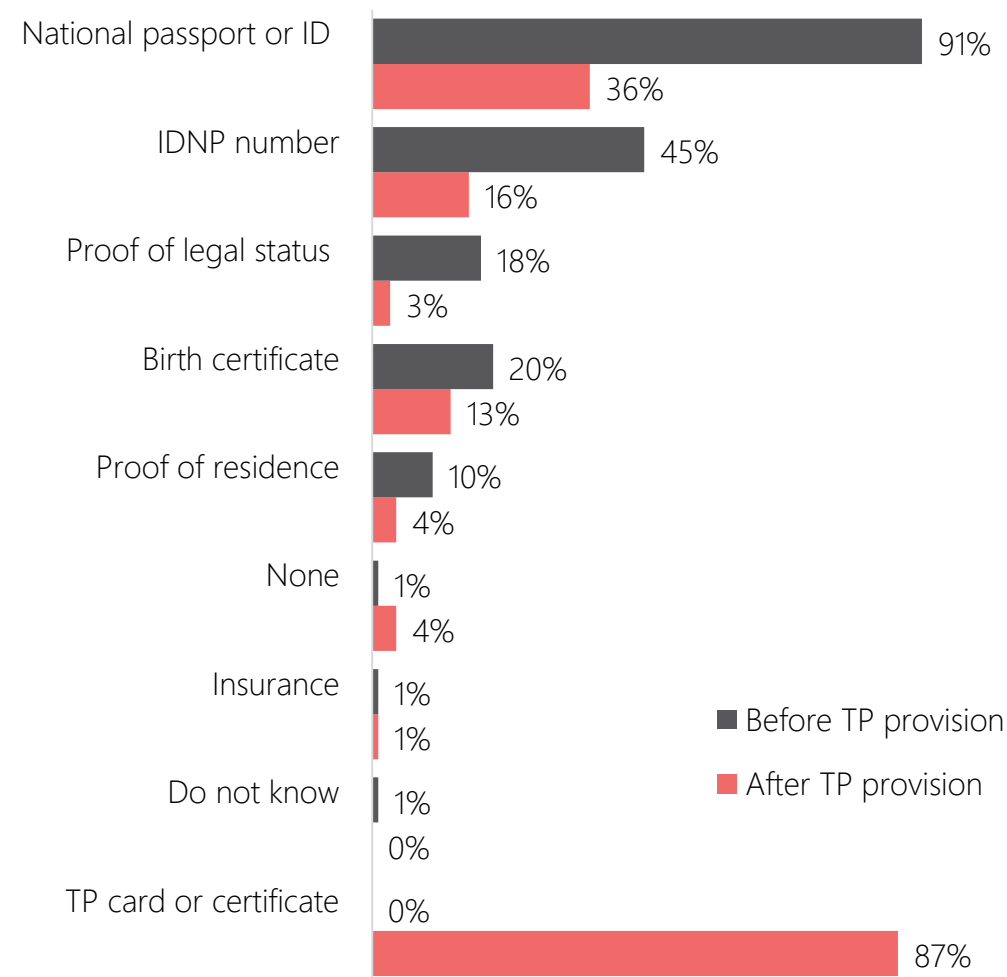
## Documents required to access healthcare services by the informants

All the interviewed **healthcare providers** indicated that they required refugees to present their national **passport or ID**, or **birth certificate**, to access the services, before TP provision.

After the TP introduction, most of the interviewed **healthcare providers** across all locations declared that refugees were required to present **TP proof**.

## Reported documents required to access healthcare services by respondents

(before TP n=117, after TP n=103)



# Procedural adjustments

## Reported payment for primary healthcare services by households

Before the introduction of TP, 36% of those attempting to access primary healthcare\* (31 out of 85) reported having to pay either always (6%) or sometimes (31%)\*\*.

- Payments (at least occasionally) were reported for pre-hospital emergency assistance (5 out of 29), hospital emergency assistance (4 out of 19), specialized healthcare (outpatient dialysis services, 6 out of 15), and emergency dental care (4 out of 7).

Following the TP provision, the situation appeared to have improved. 16% of those who attempted to access primary healthcare\* (13 out of 81) reported that they always (2%) or sometimes (14%) had to pay.

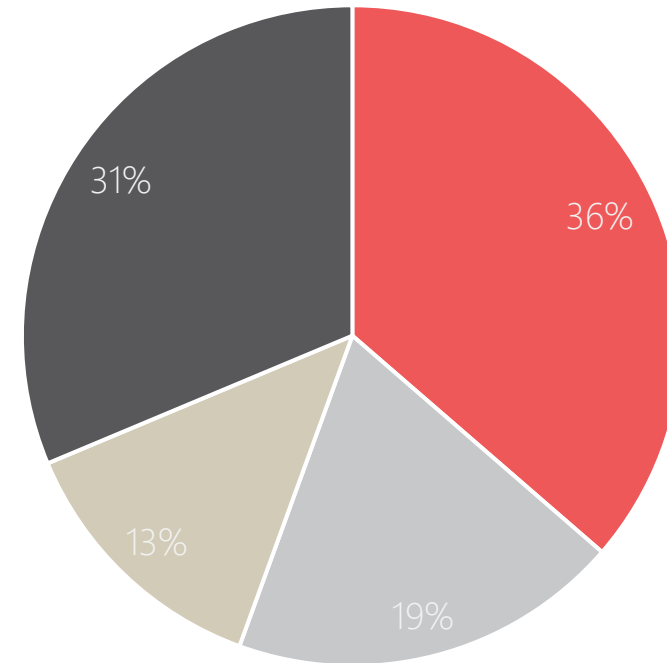
- For instance, all respondents trying to access emergency dental care (5 of 5) reported being asked to pay, at least sometimes.

\* Primary and emergency healthcare was officially free of charge even before TP.

\*\* Because of rounding up, the percentages do not add up to 36%.

# Healthcare access facilitation

Healthcare access facilitation according to  
household survey (n=164)



- Mostly or significantly facilitated
- Slightly or moderately
- Did not facilitate
- Do not know



# Education

# Refugee access to education

## Scope of education access

According to the HH survey, **41% of the households with children** (106 households) **attempted to enrol at least some of their children in Moldovan public schools**, before having received TP (39% attempted to enrol all children in the household). **95%** of those who tried, **succeeded** in enrolling their children before receiving TP.

Following the implementation of TP, the **majority of key informants** indicated that **access to education had become easier**.

A slight increase in school enrolment was noted after TP provision by the HHs. The share of those who **attempted to enrol at least some of their children** who received TP (i.e., 105 HHs) into Moldovan public schools slightly increased to **49%** (while 48% tried to enrol all of the children in the household). **98%** of those who attempted to enrol their children following TP provision **succeeded**.

# Refugee access to education

## Cases of Access Refusal

### Before TP

1 respondent of the HH survey  
(in Cahul)

Few key informants in Gagauzia and Chisinau, mentioned cases of access refusal due to schools having a limited number of free places.

### After TP

2 respondents of the HH survey  
(in Cahul and Chisinau)

Slightly few key informants in Gagauzia reported instances of access refusal.

# Demand patterns

Before the introduction of TP, an average of less than 1 (0.85) child per household (among 106 households with children) were reported to be enrolled as full-time students in Moldovan schools, while 0.54 were enrolled as auditors.

Most key informants declared that after TP's introduction, the demand for education services increased across all locations.

After TP provision, more children were enrolled as full-time students, among 105 households with children, (on average 1.22 per household) and fewer as auditors (on average 0.28 per household).

- The highest average of those registered as full-time students appeared in Cahul, followed closely by Gagauzia, while Chisinau recorded the highest average of auditors.

49% of those attempting to enrol their children were motivated, at least partially, by having obtained TP. About a third (31%) declared that having obtained TP was the most significant factor influencing their decision.



# Barriers to enrolment

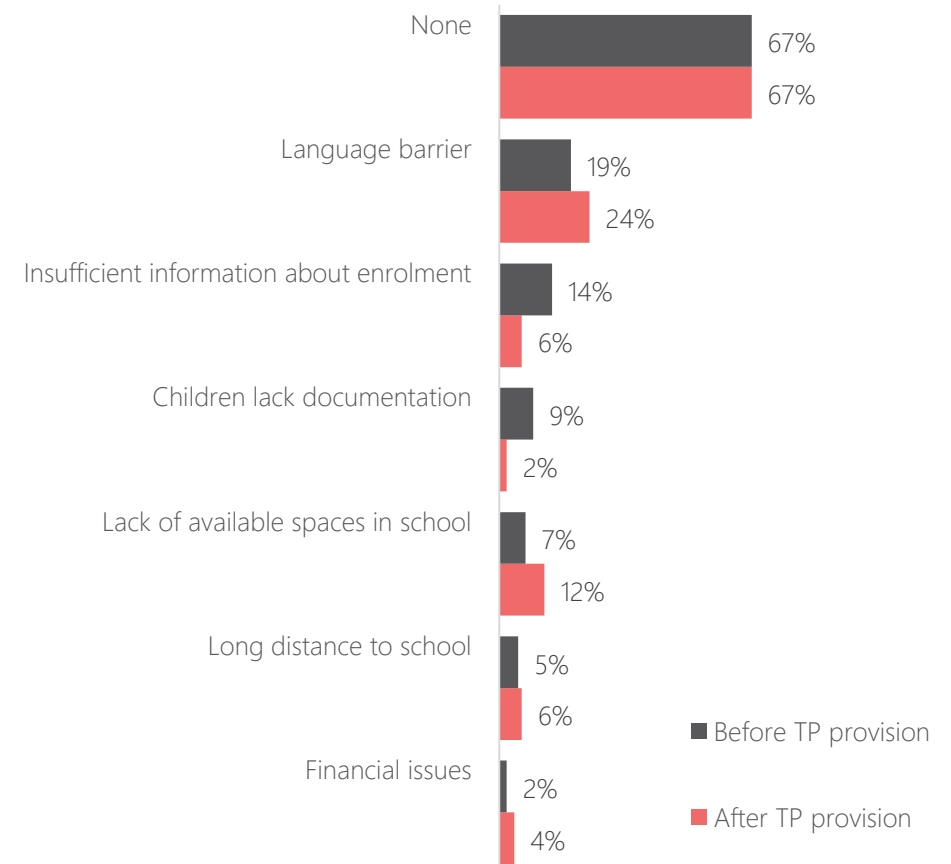
- 33% of HHs (mostly in Chisinau and Balti) that attempted to enrol their children in schools **reported encountering barriers to enrolment both before and after obtaining TP.**

Also, most key informants reported that **before the TP introduction**, refugees faced **barriers** to education in all locations. **Language barriers** were the most commonly reported barrier by key informants and by 19% of households.

Following the TP provision, most key informants reported that **barriers remained**.

- According to the HH survey, some barriers were **reduced**, such as **insufficient information about enrolment** (from 14% before TP to 6% after TP) and **lack of required documents** (from 9% before TP to 2% after TP).

Reported barriers to education access  
(before TP n=43, after TP n=51)





# Barriers to enrolment

## Barriers faced by children from vulnerable social groups

Some NGO representatives pointed out that **Roma children**, in particular, faced discrimination and limited educational participation due to their parents' decisions not to enrol them in formal schooling.

- This observation was noted in Balti, Cahul, and Chisinau.

Additionally, some key informants in Balti and Chisinau emphasized that **children with disabilities** faced physical constraints in accessing education facilities not adapted to their needs.

# Procedural adjustments

## Changes to access reported by the informants

Education providers commonly reported that the TP provision introduced changes to the registration process, including a simplified application process and facilitated access to the fully-enrolled student status.

### According to the law on TP

Initially, the Ministry of Education and Research announced that children who have obtained the TP status or have arrived in Moldova within the previous 90 days can enrol in Moldovan schools. Those without the TP status were to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Alternatively, refugee children can continue following Ukrainian education online [3].

[3] Ministry of Education and Research of Moldova, *Admission of Ukrainian citizens to general education institutions of the Republic of Moldova in the 2023-2024 academic year*, <https://dopomoga.gov.md/admission2024/>.

# Procedural adjustments

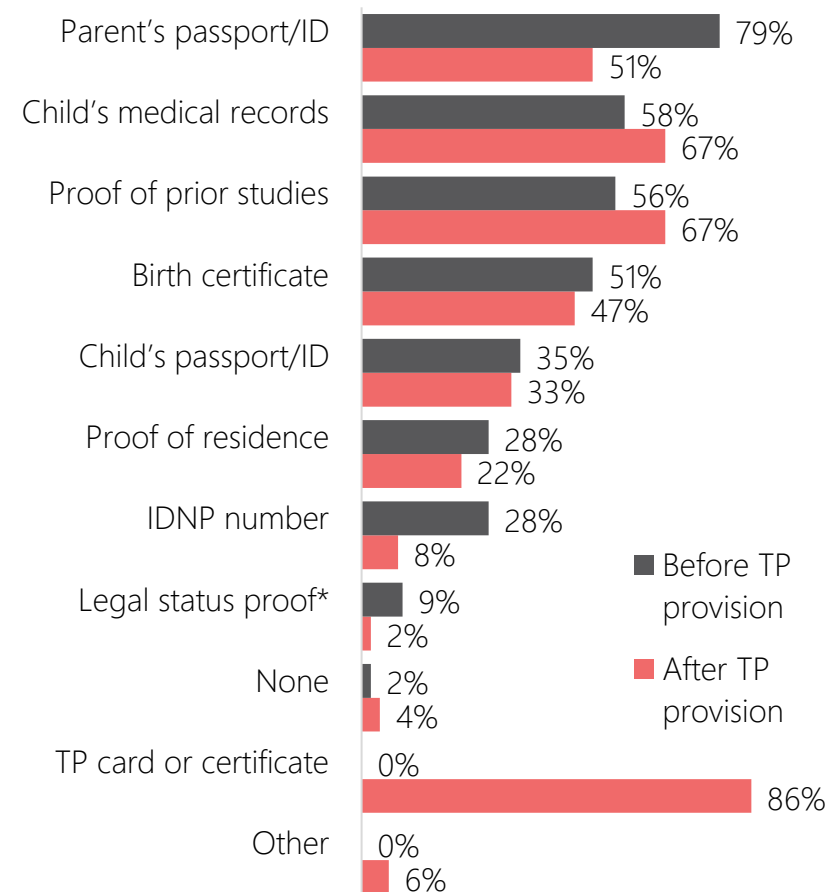
## Reported documents

Before TP provision, according to the household survey, the most required document to enrol children into Moldovan schools was **parents' passport or ID (79%)**.

After the TP provision, although TP is not officially required for education access, TP holders were reportedly asked to provide a **proof (86%)**.

- Most education providers reported the **child's education file** remained the most requested document for school enrolment, after TP.

Reported documents required to enrol children in schools (before TP n=43, after TP n=51)



\* Other than TP status.

# Procedural adjustments

## Reported payment for school enrolment

17% of respondents declared that before receiving TP they **had to pay for school enrolment**, at least in some cases.

- 5% had to pay always, 12% sometimes.

Following TP provision, the situation appears to have slightly improved, with 10% declaring **having to pay** for school enrolment, at least in some instances.

- 2% had to pay always, 8% sometimes.

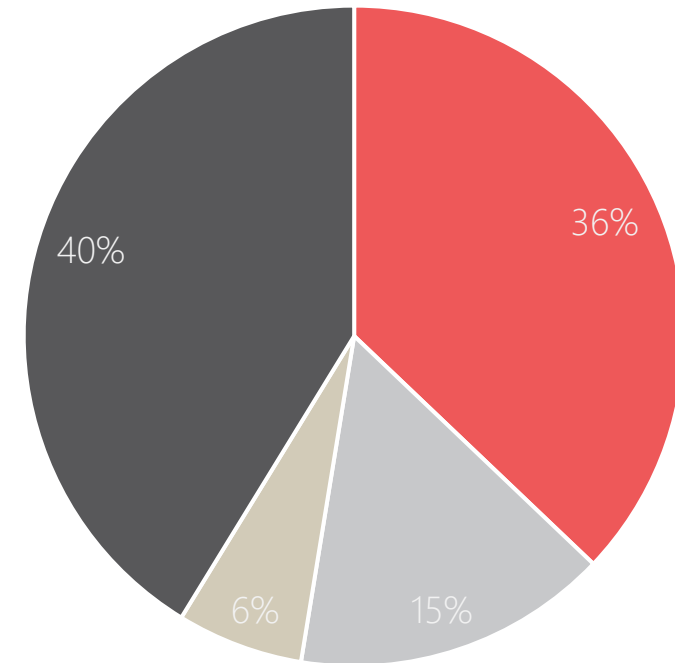
## According to the law on TP

According to the regulations, before and after the introduction of TP, refugee children could access public education in Moldova free of charge, registering as a full-time student or an auditor (i.e., following courses on a voluntary basis, without receiving grades).[4]

[4] Ministry of Education and Research of Moldova, <https://dopomoga.gov.md/admission2024/>, accessed on November 10th, 2023.

# Education access facilitation

Education access facilitation according to household survey (n=106)



- Mostly or significantly facilitated
- Slightly or moderately
- Did not facilitate
- Do not know



# Employment

# Refugee access to employment

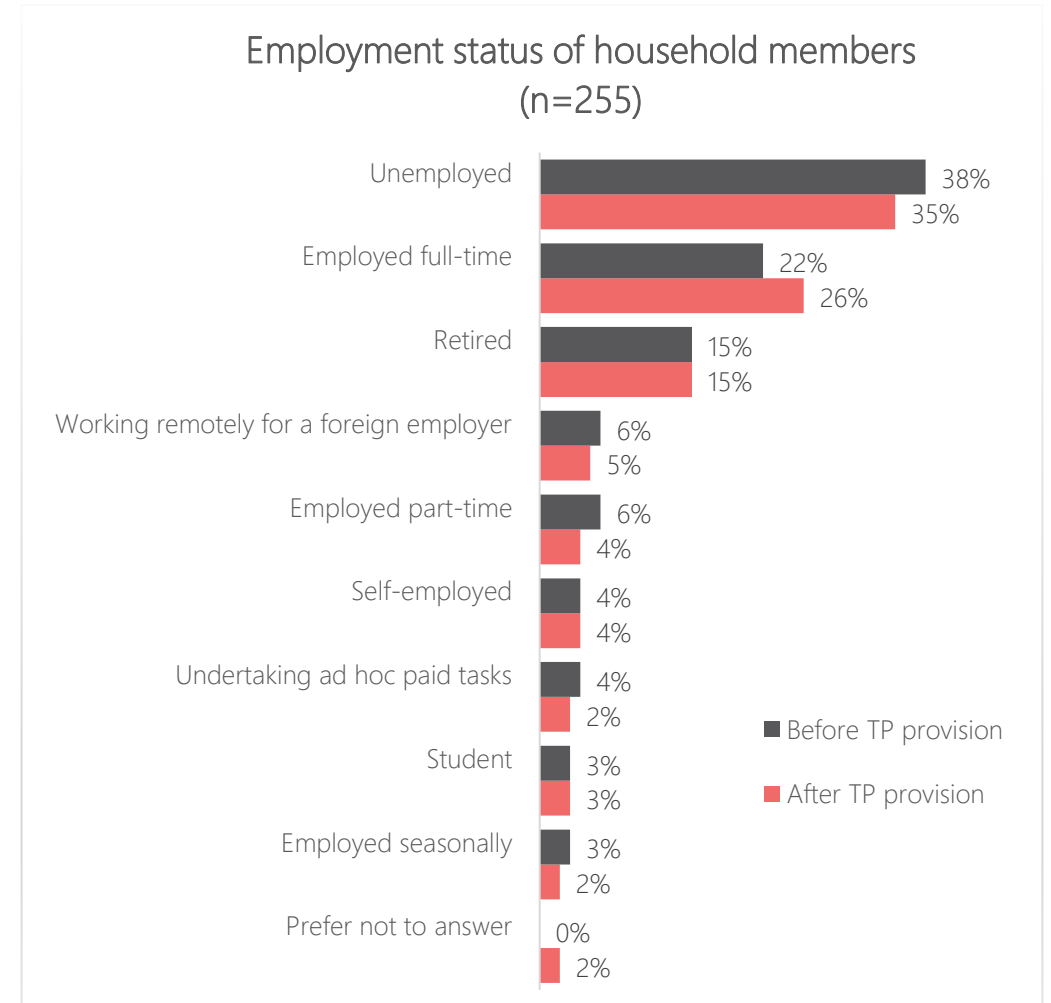
## Employment rate

Before obtaining TP, **44%** of household members **were reportedly working**, 22% of whom **were employed full-time** in Moldova. Over a third (38%) were unemployed.

Most informants reported that after the introduction of TP, **job access became easier**

After TP provision, **unemployment** among the household members reportedly slightly **decreased to 35%**. Overall, the share of respondents reporting being **employed** remained the same (**44%**), however **full-time employment increased to 26%**.

- Chisinau had the highest employment rate before, as well as after TP provision, while Cahul had the lowest.





# Refugee access to employment

## Cases of Access Refusal

### Before TP

6 respondents of the HH survey (3 in Cahul and 1 each in Balti, Chisinau, Gagauzia)

Some NGOs mentioned cases of refusal to employment access (on reportedly discriminatory grounds) in Cahul and Chisinau before TP provision. These refusals were reportedly encountered among vulnerable groups, in particular Roma, supposedly due to perception of prejudice.

### After TP

5 respondents of the HH survey (3 in Cahul and 1 each in Balti and Chisinau)

Based on the informants' accounts, TP has not brought significant changes, as refusals were also noted after its introduction, including among vulnerable groups.



# Demand patterns

According to the household survey, **10%** of household members **changed their employment status after obtaining TP**, most of whom were at least partially, up to significantly motivated by the acquisition of TP.

**8% of household members** (primarily in Cahul) planned to **change their employment status** in the future due to having obtained TP.

Most key informants across all locations asserted that the **job market would be able to accommodate higher demand** for employment if the refugee influx increased. According to some informants, in case of increased demand for jobs, **employers would need additional support** to be able to employ the refugees, mainly in the form of financial aid to subsidize hiring additional workers.

# Procedural adjustments

## Changes to access reported by the informants

The only reported change to the employment process following TP introduction was the new requirement to provide TP proof to be formally employed.

## Remaining gaps in refugee employment by the informants

The remaining gaps in refugee employment included insufficient access to childcare, hindering parents' ability to take up employment, and a lack of Romanian language skills among the refugees.

## According to the law on TP

The law on TP repealed the previous decisions on employment, which granted Ukrainian refugees the right to work in Moldova without a residence permit.

According to the TP measures introduced in May, refugees must obtain TP or another legal status to be employed in Moldova.

The law was not retroactive and contracts in place as of May 15th, 2023, remained valid while refugees regularized their status [5].

[5] UNHCR, *Temporary Protection Update, Republic of Moldova*, August, 7th, 2023, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/102835>.

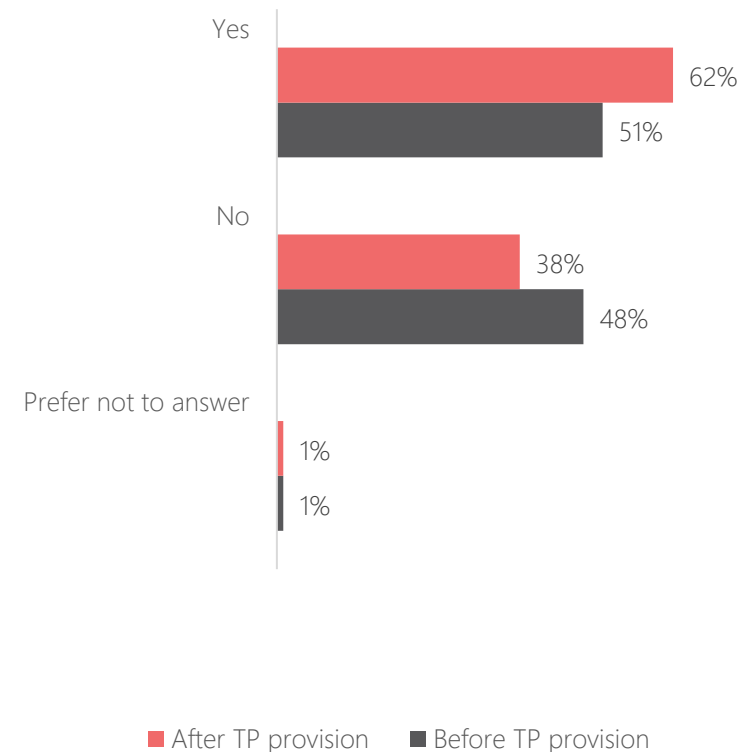
# Formal refugee employment

Following TP implementation, the proportion of employed household members with **official job contracts increased to 62%** ( from 51% before TP).

- The change was particularly evident in Balti and Gagauzia.

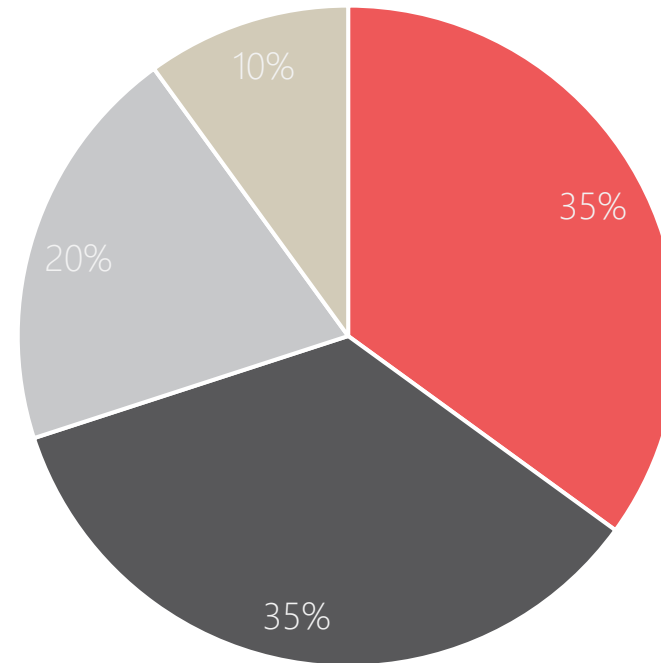
Notably, 21 out of 23 individuals who altered their employment status after obtaining TP **secured an official employment contract**, which could indicate a progressive formalization of refugee employment.

Employed household members holding an employment contract  
(before TP n=112, after TP n=114)



# Employment access facilitation

Employment access facilitation according to  
household survey (n=164)



■ Do not know

■ Mostly or significantly facilitated

■ Slightly or moderately

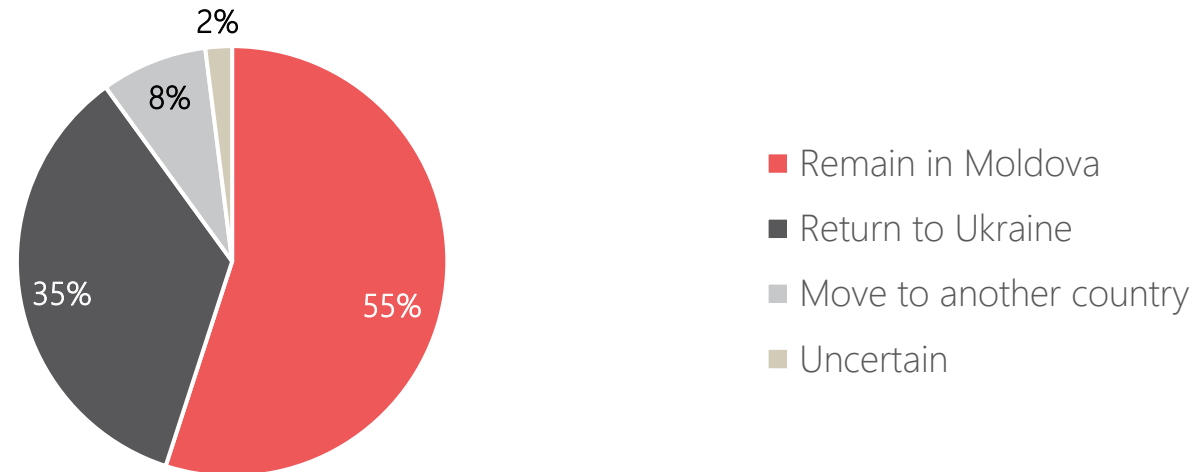
■ Did not facilitate

An abstract network graphic composed of interconnected nodes and lines. The nodes are represented by small circles in red and grey, while the lines are thin, light grey. The network is distributed across the background, with a higher density of nodes and connections on the left and right sides, leaving the center area more open. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern, suggesting a digital or technological theme.

# Movement intentions

# Households' movement intentions

## Before obtaining TP (n=164)



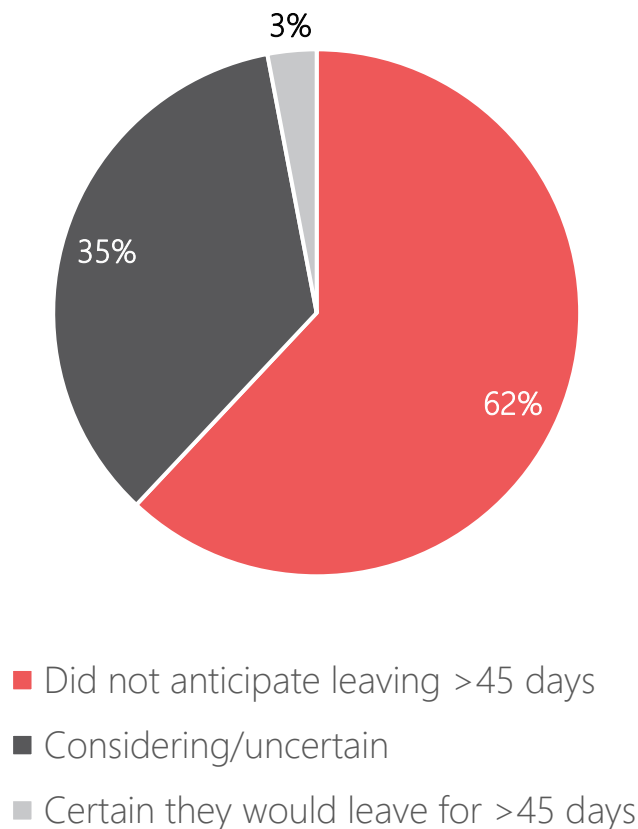
## After obtaining TP (n=25)

25 households reported having altered their movement plans after receiving TP.

Among them, 24 planned to stay in Moldova, while 1 intended to move to another country (elsewhere than Ukraine).

# Leaving Moldova for over 45 days

HHs that anticipated leaving Moldova over  
45 days in the upcoming 6 months (n=164)



## According to the law on TP

TP status grants the right to remain at the territory of Moldova until 1 March 2024. However, the TP status expires if its beneficiary spends over 45 days abroad (in total). Refugees are then allowed to reapply for TP. [6]

[6] UNHCR, *Temporary Protection Update, Republic of Moldova*, August, 7th, 2023, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/102835>.





# Information environment

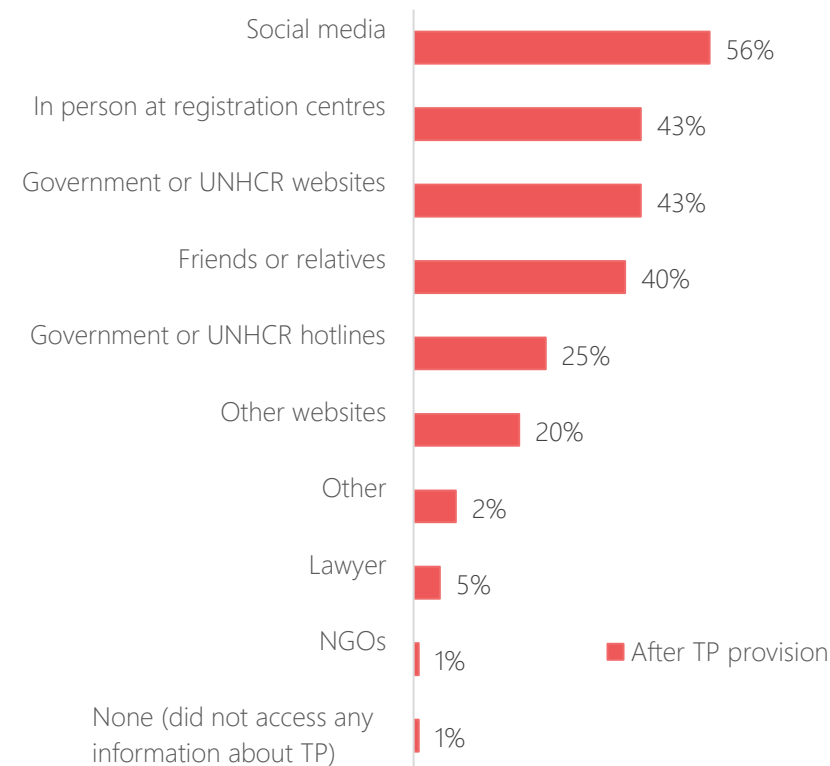
# Access to information

According to the household survey, refugees mainly looked for information about Temporary Protection (TP) through **social media channels (56%)**.

Key informants highlighted the widespread implementation of **information campaigns on TP** and access to related services and employment across all locations.

These campaigns were delivered through **in-person meetings, online dissemination, or the distribution of written materials**.

Sources used by the households to access information about TP (n=164)



# Level of awareness

Most key informants assessed that the refugees have a sufficient level of awareness of TP.

## Rights guaranteed by TP, as recognized by the respondents

The knowledge of TP-related rights seemed relatively high.

Most of the respondents listed the right to remain on the territory of Moldova until March 2024 (87%), work (73%), access healthcare (71%) and education (63%). Less than half of respondents were aware of their right to social assistance (46%) and accommodation in the temporary placement centres for persons in need (42%).

## Responsibilities of TP beneficiaries according to the respondents

Respondents displayed a limited awareness of their obligations.

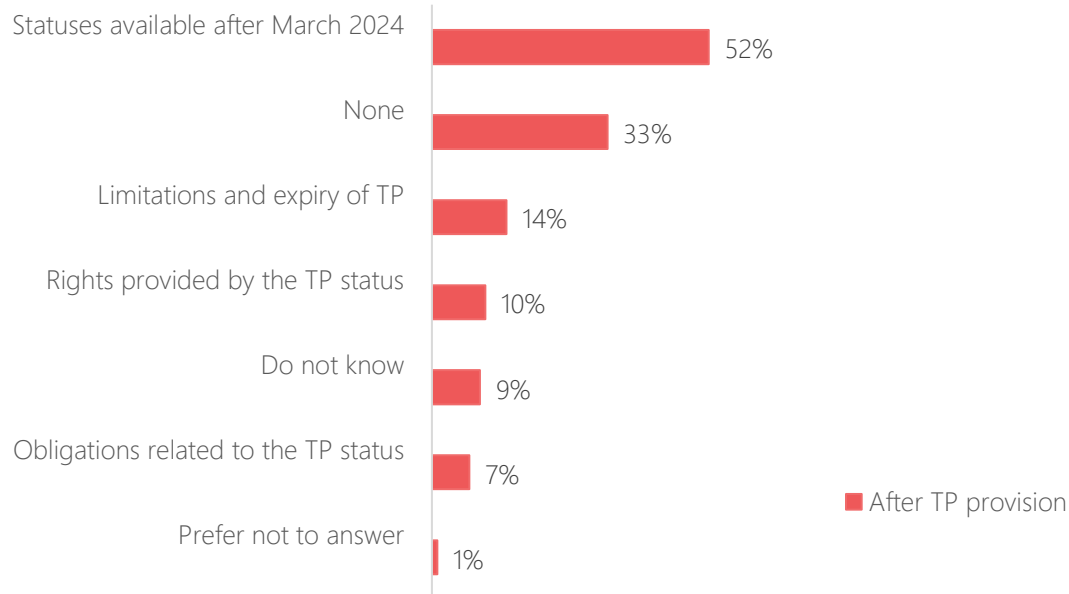
In terms of TP-mandated obligations, almost all respondents were aware that they are bound by TP to respect Moldova's law (93%) and about a half knew of the requirement to inform the General Inspectorate of Migration in case of a voluntary return to Ukraine (54%) and to respond to the requests of state authorities (47%).

# Need for additional information

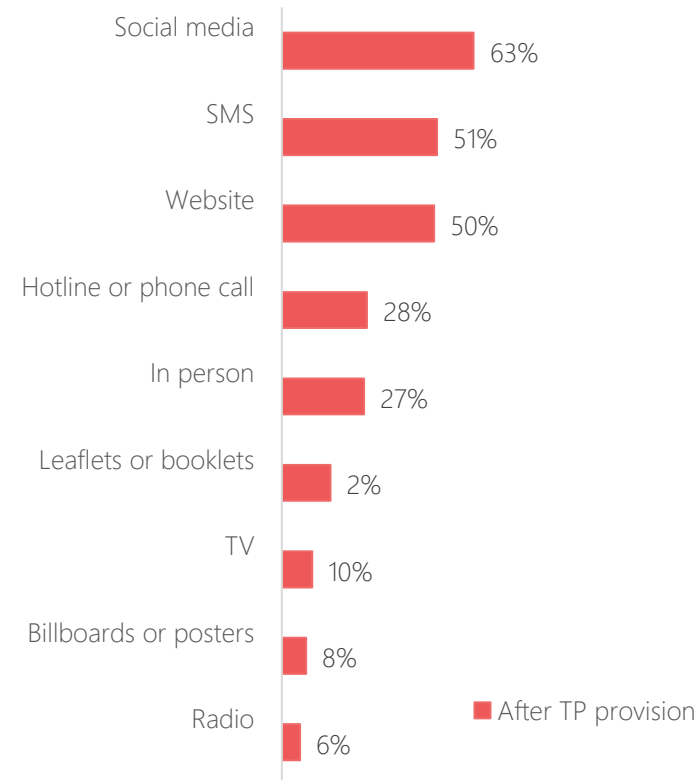
Key informants held differing opinions on the necessity for additional information campaigns, indicating a **high level of awareness** among refugees and **potential ongoing information fatigue**.

However, **67% of the respondents** expressed their **need for more information**.

Additional information needed by the households (n=163)



Sources preferred by the households to access additional information about TP (n=109)





05

# Conclusion



# Conclusion

- The introduction of Temporary Protection has most significantly impacted **procedural aspects** (with the TP documentation often replacing other documents required for access). According to most key informants, **access to healthcare, education, and employment** became **facilitated following TP provision**. Similarly, respondents generally agreed that TP has, at least slightly, facilitated access to healthcare (55%), employment (55%), and education (cited by 51% of households with children).
  - Cahul faced the most challenges, exhibiting **the lowest employment rates, unsuccessful school enrolment, and a higher share of access refusals** (to employment, accommodation, and banking services) based on perceived discriminatory grounds.
  - Balti experienced the highest proportion of respondents reporting **barriers and gaps in healthcare access**.
- Although Temporary Protection provision has reduced some **barriers**, certain barriers such as the language barrier, not determined by legal status, remained in place.
- TP also served as **proof of long-term plans to stay in Moldova**, while indeed influencing some households' decision to stay. However, few decisions or access patterns were solely dictated by obtaining TP; rather, it seemed to have functioned as **an enabler aligned with the households' needs**.
- The overall **level of access to information and refugee awareness** of Temporary Protection-related rights appeared **satisfactory**. However, **many refugees** displayed **limited understanding of their obligations** related to the TP status.
- More than half of the refugees have requested **additional information**, mainly about the legal statuses available after March 2024, when TP is set to expire.



# Thank you for your attention



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