Press release

UNICEF and maib establish the first nursery in Hîncești, expanding access to early childhood education for children under 3

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Hîncești, April 29, 2026. UNICEF, in partnership with maib and the Hîncești City Hall, announces the inauguration of the first nursery group in the city of Hîncești, opened within Kindergarten No. 4 „Andrieș".

The kindergarten is currently attended by over 230 children, and the nursery group, the first of its kind in the community has a capacity of 20 places. The group is intended for children aged between 1.6 and 3 years, offering a safe, inclusive, and stimulating environment for early development. This initiative marks a significant milestone in expanding pre-preschool education services across the country's districts and addresses a genuine need for families with young children in the regions.

„The opening of the first nursery group in Hîncești is a clear example that when public institutions, the private sector, and development partners join forces, we can provide concrete solutions to the needs of families with young children, including those in the country's districts. Investments in early childhood education represent investments in the children's future and the development of communities", stated ***Maha Damaj, UNICEF Country Representative in Moldova.***

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„Ensuring favorable working conditions in kindergartens is a priority for the local public authority; thus, out of the five early childhood education institutions in the municipality of Hîncești, three have been fully renovated. Within the 'Andrieș' Kindergarten, we aimed to open two new groups, with the renovation of the rooms and the furnishing of one of them being covered by the Local Public Authority. The opening of new groups, including a nursery group, contributes to ensuring children's access to quality early education and supports the integration of parents into the workforce, responding to the real needs of the community", noted ***Alexandru Botnari, the Mayor of Hîncești.***

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***Macar Stoianov, Vice President of maib**, stated: „For maib, the 35 years we are celebrating signify a responsibility toward the more than one million customers who choose us every day and toward the community in which we operate. We chose to mark this moment through a project with real impact—the first nursery group in Hîncești, an investment in what matters most: the future of our children. Early education is the foundation of a healthy society, and through this project, we contribute to creating safe and friendly development conditions from the earliest ages. We believe that responsible investments in people generate visible progress in society and the economy. This is also the essence of our anniversary message: When you lead, a country grows. For 35 years. Maib".*

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The space designated for the nursery group, as well as the sanitary facilities, were renovated using funds from the local public authority. Simultaneously, with financial support from maib, the group was equipped with the necessary furniture and equipment to ensure a safe and child-friendly environment, including beds with mattresses, tables and chairs, cabinets, teaching materials, and toys, as well as the daily essentials for the comfort of the children and educational staff. The equipping and furnishing process was carried out with the support of the „Voinicel" National Early Childhood Intervention Institute.

***Aliona Crețu, Head of Demographic Policies at the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection,** mentioned: „The opening of the nursery group is the result of a strategic partnership that demonstrates the importance of collaboration between authorities, the private sector, and development partners in creating essential services for children and families. The initiative contributes to expanding access to early care and education services, giving children an equitable start in life and supporting parents to integrate more easily into the labor market".*

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„Investments in early education represent a strategic direction for the Ministry of Education and Research. On one hand, we aim to expand nursery groups so that children are integrated as early as possible into early education institutions, benefiting from an environment that supports their harmonious development from the formation of communication and socialization skills to language development and autonomy. On the other hand, these services offer real support for parents, facilitating their return to or integration into the labor market. We thank our partners, UNICEF, maib, the Hîncești Municipality, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, for their involvement and support, because investing in children is, essentially, an investment in the future of our country", noted ***Marcelina Baleca, Head of the General Directorate of General Education Policies.***

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„Early childhood represents the most important stage of a child's growth. Learning through participation and respect, active and creative play, and the safety and happiness of every child is our responsibility as adults. By investing love and resources in children, we are investing in the country's future", added ***Daniela Bordeianu, project coordinator.***

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„I offer sincere thanks on behalf of our family and all parents in Hîncești to the organizations dedicated to our children that developed this initiative to open a nursery group in our kindergarten. This represents real support for us parents, giving us the opportunity to balance professional and family responsibilities while having the peace of mind that our little ones are in a safe and well-organized environment", mentioned ***one of the parents.***

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Pre-preschool education plays an essential role in the harmonious development of children from their earliest years, when the foundations of cognitive, emotional, and social development are formed. Access to quality educational services supports child development and contributes to reducing inequalities from the start, while simultaneously providing parents, especially mothers, the opportunity to return to the workplace.

The Hîncești project is implemented within the Business Advisory Board platform, launched by UNICEF to stimulate private sector involvement in social and community actions. Through this platform, UNICEF promotes a co-financing formula that combines contributions from public and private partners to develop childcare infrastructure.

The new nursery group will become a replicable model of public-private partnership, demonstrating how coordinated investments can generate sustainable social impact for children, parents, and communities.

Through this initiative, UNICEF reaffirms its commitment to collaborating with public authorities, the private sector, and development partners to expand access to quality early childhood education services for every child in the Republic of Moldova.

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