

# OUR IMPACT

## Overseas Stories:

## Winter Relief for Eastern Europe's Most Vulnerable Jews



A widow living alone in a small studio apartment in Balti, Moldova, Bronya Sushinskaya, 75, struggles to get by on her meager monthly state pension, especially during Moldova's brutal winters. With utility costs taking up more than 85% of her monthly budget, Bronya faces a difficult challenge each year as she struggles to find a way to pay for winter heat, which can sometimes cost nearly double her pension.

"With such a meager pension, it's very difficult for me to make ends meet," said Bronya, who also suffers from poor eyesight and a host of serious heart conditions. "This is why JDC's assistance is so important. It's how I survive."

The JDC's *Hesed* social welfare center in Balti, where Bronya has been a member since 1999, provides her with material assistance each winter to cover heating costs, as well as a warm tracksuit, winter boots, and sturdy shoes when she needs them. In addition to winter relief, she receives help through JDC's food card and medical assistance programs.

From Eastern Europe to Central Asia and throughout the former Soviet

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Union (FSU), JDC's work in preparing the most vulnerable Jews for winter each year is one of its signature accomplishments. "In different parts of the FSU, winter assistance remains relevant and sometimes even critical for survival," said Yulia Lidis, a JDC staff member in the region.

