



Brief overview - UNHCR and its presence in Romania



Basic facts about UNHCR

- The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was established on December 14, 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly.
- The agency is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. It strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another State, with the option to return home voluntarily, integrate locally or to resettle in a third country.
- In more than five decades, the agency has helped an estimated 50 million people restart their lives. Today, a staff of around 6,300 people in 117 countries continues to help 32.9 million persons.
- UNHCR is almost entirely funded by direct, voluntary contributions from governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals. There is also a very limited subsidy from the regular budget of the United Nations, which is used exclusively for administrative costs.



UNHCR in Romania

- UNHCR established a presence in Romania since 1992 and contributed significantly to the development of the asylum system in this country.



UNHCR Projects in Romania

- **Local Settlement Project**
 - assistance to asylum-seekers, refugees and persons with subsidiary protection in Romania, implemented by NGO implementing partners;
 - guidance and support towards legislative initiatives and changes of domestic laws relevant for UNHCR's persons of concern, as well as capacity building for various actors in the asylum field. As a result of UNHCR efforts, in June 2007, the Government of The Netherlands invited Romania to be part of the "Durable Solutions in Practice" a resettlement capacity building project. Within the framework of this project in June 2007, a delegation from the Directorate for Asylum and Integration – Romanian Immigration Office traveled to the Netherlands for a capacity building exercise on resettlement related issues. In February 2008 Romanian officials joined the Dutch counterparts in a selection mission to Jordan. The project's closing conference was organised in Bucharest, beginning of May 2008.
 - Research papers on **Secondary movement in Romania: the asylum-migration nexus** (2007) and on **Partners for protection: a review of the organizational capacity of NGOs in Romania** (2008)
- **Asylum Systems Quality Assurance and Evaluation Mechanism Project in the Central and Eastern Europe sub-region** - funded by the European Union
The Project which covers Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, is carried out to support the continuous development and enhancement of fair and efficient asylum procedures that are based on the full and inclusive application of the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.
- **Evacuation Transit Centre Project**
The centre, located in the western Romanian city of Timisoara, is the first of its kind in Europe and will provide temporary relocation for refugees pending final resettlement to a third country. The ETC will address the need for immediate protection that refugees face when risks persist in the first country of asylum, such as the threat of refoulement or unstable, inhumane or dangerous conditions.



Implementing Partners of UNHCR Romania

- **The Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR)** provides legal counseling and assistance to asylum-seekers, monitors the refugee status determination (RSD) procedure, manages the Country of Origin Information Centre (ROCCORD), conducts border monitoring and provides training for border police and other relevant stakeholders and for future practitioners through the Social and Legal Clinics.
- **The Romanian Forum for Refugees and Migrants (ARCA)** specialised on durable solutions: provides support to persons granted a form of protection in Romania to access their rights, by providing social and legal counseling focusing on access to socio-economic rights and access to citizenship, monitoring of various aspects of refugee integration process.
- **Refugee Women's Organization (RWO)** - a refugee based organization- plays a significant role in further empowering the refugee community and supporting refugees to integrate into the society through self-support mechanisms. RWO's main activities include regular information/educational sessions on various topics (from access to RSD procedure, rights and obligations to SGBV, personal hygiene reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention).
- **Generatie Tanara/ UNNGA LIV Association (GTX)** - based in Timisoara provides assistance to persons of concern located in in the Evacuation Transit Centre.



Operational partners of UNHCR Romania

- **Save the Children Romania (SCR)** provides assistance to refugee and asylum-seeker children, including separated minors. SCR ensures access to mainstream education, monitors school participation and provides additional educational support. Regular recreational/extra curricular activities are organized mainly in Bucharest.
- **Jesuit Refugee Service Romania (JRS)** provides assistance to refugees and migrants, covering gaps such as accommodation, medical, social and material assistance for rejected asylum-seekers who are tolerated on Romanian territory.



Partnership in Romania (I)

- UNHCR in the UN country team
- Cooperation with International Organisation for Migration
- Very good working relations with the most relevant governmental counterparts:
 - Romanian Immigration Office, the Ministry of Interior and Administration Reform
 - The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 - The National Inspectorate of the Border Police,
 - The Ministry of Education, Research and Youth
 - The Ministry of Labor, Family and Equal Opportunities
 - The National Agency for Employment
 - The National Agency against Trafficking in Persons
 - The National Authority for Child Protection



Partnership in Romania (II)

- In order to facilitate and strengthen UNHCR efforts to widely promote refugee and asylum related issues, a number of partnership agreements were concluded with the following:
 - Ministry of Education and Research for the production of materials for piloting an optional course "Human rights and refugee rights" (curriculum, manual and teacher's guide distributed to schools in 42 counties nationwide for the school year 2007-2008).
 - The National Institute of Magistracy (INM) for extracurricular courses on asylum and refugee issues and for developing internship opportunities for interested future magistrates.
 - The National Institute for the Training of Lawyers (INPPA) for courses on providing legal assistance to persons of concern with a view to identify and train interested lawyers across the country.
 - The Centre for Humanitarian Law Studies – "Nicolae Titulescu University" Bucharest: the cooperation aims to increase students' awareness of refugee issues and to develop activities related to Refugee Law and International Humanitarian Law among interested students and professors.
 - "Dimitrie Cantemir" University Bucharest for the course "Human Rights, Refugee Rights and UNHCR" within the Masters degree on International and Community Law.



UNHCR Romania and projects the Black Sea region

Pursuant to UNHCR Romania' s request, in
September 2008 the ODA Emergency
allocation has positively recommended to the
Minister of Foreign Affairs the earmarking of
funds for the Emergency Operation in
Georgia

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