



Romania

March 2024

Since the start of the international armed conflict in Ukraine which has forced some 6 million people to flee their homes to seek safety, protection, and assistance across Europe, more than 5.6 million border crossings into Romania have been recorded. The Government and partners including civil society, the private sector, volunteers, and international organisations have responded to the crisis with generosity and hospitality.

UN agencies and NGOs, support the national response in coordination of humanitarian actors under the framework of the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) and through the Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) and sector working groups. The 2024 Romania RRP is aligned with the Government National Plan of Measures (NPM) for the protection and socio-economic inclusion of refugees from Ukraine.

UNHCR leads the Inter-Agency platform comprising of 37 appealing partners implementing humanitarian activities for the refugees from Ukraine. During March, the Inter-Agency established the Communications Task Force within the RRP coordination structure. The Task Force aims to research and analyse public discourse, rhetoric, as well as messages related to refugees from Ukraine in Romania.

KEY FIGURES*

6 M

individual refugees from Ukraine recorded across Europe.

5.8 M

border crossings from Ukraine and Moldova into Romania

77,902

refugees from Ukraine present in Romania.

156,901

obtained temporary protection in Romania.

72

percent of refugees are women and children.

REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN (RRP) FOR THE UKRAINE SITUATION**

USD 1.1 B

Overall financial requirements

USD 117 M

Romania financial requirements

37

Partners involved in the Romania response

*See the [Operational Data Portal for the Ukraine Refugee Situation](#) and the [Romania portal page](#) for more details on refugee population figures and information resources. **See the [Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan](#) for a breakdown of sectoral response priorities and requirements and the [Refugee Funding Tracker](#) for RRP funding information.

Operational context

Since 24 February 2022, more than 6 million people from Ukraine have sought refuge across Europe. As of 31 March 2024, border police recorded more than 5.8 million border crossings from Ukraine and Moldova into Romania. 155,349 Ukrainians and 1,552 Third Country Nationals obtained temporary protection in Romania, which provides access to healthcare, education, and the labour market. The number of refugees from Ukraine present in Romania increased during the past month from 75,236 (on 29 February) to 77,902 on 31 March.

On 15 March, the Communications Task Force held its inaugural meeting with guest speakers including Ms. Victoria Stoiciu, Counsellor of State, Prime-Minister's Chancellery, Mr. Remus Stefureac, CEO and Founder of INSCOP Research, Ms. Oana Popescu Zamfir, Director of Global Focus, and Mr. Mircea Toma of the National Audiovisual Council. The Task Force will research and analyse public discourse, rhetoric, and messages related to refugees from Ukraine in Romania in support the work of Inter-Agency partners towards the positive inclusion of refugees and promotion of social cohesion of refugee and host communities. The Task Force will underpin the work of RRP partners by supporting information exchange of among partners both in their regular communications activities, and for special activities such as World Refugee Day (20 June) and during information campaigns.

In March, the final report of the [Multi-Sector Needs Assessment 2023](#), carried out in the second part of 2023, was published on the Operational Data Portal. The report provides a comprehensive insight and overview of findings gathered through extensive research and analysis, to map the prevailing needs and challenge of the refugees from Ukraine living in Romania.

Autism Voice provides recovery and integration programs for children diagnosed with autism spectrum or behavioural disorders.

Dasha and her 6-year-old son Marcos, along with her friend Aliona, and Danil, her 4-year-old boy, fled Kharkiv two years ago. They arrived in Romania with two bags of clothes and two backpacks. For a month, after their arrival in Romania, the two young women and their children walked from hotel to hotel or from accommodation to accommodation. No one was able to host them for long for various reasons.



One morning they arrived at the Autism Voice Refugee House, awkward and cautious, mentally and physically exhausted. That's one of the reasons why the Autism Voice House came to life so quickly. For people like them. Dasha kept telling us that they didn't want to disturb us. That they will stay 5-6 days, until they will find somewhere else. We told them that they are welcome as long as needed, because for safety and special needs we opened the house. No one deserves to be a victim of war, especially a child... Two years on, Danil is laughing and smiling. He plays as well as he can. Dasha and Aliona are smiling and do everything they can to make things go well for them. They will be fine. In time... they will be fine.

Autism Voice operates two therapy centres recognised for their professionalism within Romania. The dedicated multidisciplinary team ensures optimal outcomes in enhancing the capabilities of children facing neuropsychic disabilities. Since March 2022, Autism Voice provides assistance to Ukrainian refugees, including social services, and specialty services dedicated to helping both children and adult refugees cope with mental health issues. The Autism Voice Line for Ukraine provides a free call-centre for behavioural analysis and psychological counselling for refugees. The Autism Voice Refugee House offers individual and group therapy for children and adults, offering shelter and services. Autism Voice also provides training and special instruments and materials for teachers and parents. Autism Voice has helped over 700 people fight the negative repercussions of human crisis and war, having a great impact on mental health issues and problems.



Protection

Achievements and Impact

- On 28 March, the Government of Romania extended its cash assistance for refugees from Ukraine for a further three months until the end of June 2024, with protection actors having conducted advocacy efforts in this regard. Through this programme, which replaced the so called “50/20 programme” in April 2023, the Government is providing RON 2,000 (USD 435) per family per month to cover accommodation costs and additional RON 600 (USD 130) per person per month for food expenses for eligible refugees from Ukraine, notably those on the path towards inclusion and certain vulnerable categories.
- On 29 March, the Ministry of Internal Affairs published on their transparency website for consultations a draft normative act Government Decision for the modification and completion of some normative acts regarding the content of the residence permit for beneficiaries of temporary protection. The proposed change refers to the inclusion in the temporary protection permit of the address (certified or declared) of the beneficiary to validate their address in Romania and legal residence. Several members of the Protection Working Group have submitted comments on the bill. It is hoped that the decision will enable temporary protection holders to access social benefits, which is currently prevented largely due to the lack of a residential address on the temporary protection permit.
- During March, protection partners provided information and protection services to refugees from Ukraine. The Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) counselled 1,865 Ukrainian and 46 non-Ukrainian citizens at the border. 564 temporary protection holders accessed the integration department’s integration service, and 292 temporary protection holders received counselling over the phone.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Protection actors reported increased interest among refugees from Ukraine in understanding the requirements for obtaining Romanian citizenship. One organization mentioned that this has been particularly true for those coming from areas of origin in Ukraine most heavily affected by the conflict. Some of those showing interest in Romanian citizenship have Romanian origins. Currently, time spent in Romania on the basis of a temporary protection permit does not count towards other, more permanent types of residencies or citizenship.
- Protection actors still observe delays in the payment of lump sums for accommodation and food through the government assistance programme, putting beneficiaries at risk of not being able to support themselves. Partners have also received many requests for help with filing appeals against rejections of applications for the allowances because the legislation is not adapted to particular situations.
- More accommodation centres for temporary protection holders are closing due to lack of funding. People who have just arrived in Romania are at risk of not finding emergency accommodation until they find a place to rent or a job.



Child Protection

Achievements and Impact

- To support strengthening child protection systems, UNHCR, in partnership with the General Inspectorate for Immigration (GII), conducted two training sessions on best interest procedure and specific protection considerations for unaccompanied and separated children. The training emphasised adherence to international legal frameworks and principles for child protection, addressing risks such as family separation and focusing on the well-being of displaced children. Over 70 representatives from various public institutions attended, including reception centres, school inspectorates, and the general directorate for social assistance and child protection (DGASPC). The training aimed to enhance participants' ability to identify and support vulnerable cases, particularly within displaced populations.
- UNICEF together with the Alternative Sociale Association held two events under the "Strengthening the response and preparation of child protection systems to support refugees in Ukraine" project. In Bucharest, they presented findings from studies on social services and launched an updated guide for interviewing children in judicial proceedings for professionals working in the judicial field (judges, prosecutors, police officers) or social services (social workers and psychologists). Additionally, a new day care centre opened in Iași, offering integrated services to some 100 vulnerable children annually, regardless of nationality, including counselling, health care, and rehabilitation.
- In partnership with UNHCR, CNRR organized a coordination meeting with national and local child protection authorities aiming to promote the implementation of new legislative provisions for unaccompanied foreign children seeking protection in Romania. Following positive cooperation in 2023, CNRR seeks to identify challenges and good practices six months after the enactment of these provisions, focusing on monitoring the situation of unaccompanied children under temporary protection, ensuring their legal representation, facilitating access to education for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, and regulating payment modalities for interpreters. CNRR pledges continued support to authorities in safeguarding the best interests of these vulnerable children and youth.
- Terre des Hommes (TdH) conducted various activities in Bucharest, Baia Mare, Brașov, and Constanța in support of vulnerable children and communities. These included mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) sessions, educational inclusion initiatives, and individual protection assistance. Their resilience innovation facilities provided modern technology exploration opportunities, benefiting 175 people. Overall, 430 children received MHPSS support, 43 received tailored information and referrals, 289 received educational inclusion support, and 29 in Baia Mare received food and non-food assistance.
- Autism Voice's project for Ukrainian Refugees provided specialised evaluations for 21 children suspected of autism and needing psychological support. Additionally, 10 children participated in group therapy and individual therapy sessions, and 60 Ukrainian refugees and Romanian parents with special needs children engaged in social inclusion groups and themed activities.
- Save the Children operated integrated hubs and counselling centres across several counties, delivering services such as social evaluation, counselling, and referrals to 1,491 children and 2,162 adults from Ukraine. Case management services were provided to 326 children and their families, with 104 new cases initiated. Additionally, Save the Children initiated the implementation of the Safe Families methodology aimed at reducing physical and humiliating punishment while promoting positive parenting. The first session focused on "Family Dreams and Self Care" for parents and involved 17 children and 14 parents from Năvodari. Plans are underway to expand this program to other Save the Children centres.
- World Vision reached over 1,100 Ukrainian refugee children through "Happy Bubbles" socio-educational centres in various Romanian cities, offering weekly activities addressing child protection and mental health, alongside therapeutic approaches. Simultaneously, 100 caregivers attended sessions aimed at reducing stress

and strengthening parent-child relationships. Bi-monthly integration events fostered cross-cultural friendships among 760 Romanian and Ukrainian children, while 30 teenagers engaged in a child protection

and participation mentorship program. Additionally, 96 children received case management for adaptation difficulties and developmental delays, focusing on behavioural regulation and cognitive stimulation.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Ukrainian refugee children need mental health and psychosocial support, aiming at combatting exclusion, especially among those with specific needs and autism.



Gender-Based Violence

Achievements and Impact

- In partnership with UNHCR, Sensiblu Foundation commemorated throughout March and within the framework of the International Women's Day, women's resilience and empowerment through physical and online workshops, engaging nearly 770 participants across 45 groups. Events included a Mărțișor fair uniting Romanian and Ukrainian families and transformative workshops in Suceava and Constanța, fostering dialogue and solidarity while promoting personal and collective growth. International Women's Day was marked with sharing sessions in Rădăuți and an online event in Baile Olănești, highlighting feminism and femininity. Through creative expression like crafting dolls symbolising strength, participants affirmed the importance of supporting each other on the journey towards empowerment and self-realisation.
- NGO Anais conducted three empowerment through self-defence workshops led by instructor Daniela Draghici, benefiting 22 participants. Supported by HIAS and UNICEF, the workshops engaged diverse groups including women, girls, and a man, focusing on game-based exercises covering empowerment through self-defence principles and situational awareness. Feedback emphasised the workshop's usefulness for personal safety, extending interest beyond attendees to their families. The workshops are part of a project targeting gender-based violence among refugee women, adolescents, and host communities from Ukraine in Bucharest and Ilfov.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Further efforts in promoting structured GBV prevention are needed. Engaging the same groups for longer and through set curricula, especially regarding engaging men and boys.
- A need to utilize GBV interventions for social cohesion remains a priority, especially by enhancing integration between Romanian and Ukrainian communities through empowerment self-defence workshops.



Education

Achievements and Impact

- A [bilateral agreement](#) concluded between the Governments of Romania and Ukraine on 18 August 2023 on the mutual recognition of studies was ratified by Romania on 23 February 2024.
- Overall, 42,651 refugee children from Ukraine are now recorded as officially enrolled in the Romanian education system¹, including 13,770 who have acquired the full pupil status, and 22,540 children and youths who are engaging in Romanian schools with a transitioning status as audients. 5,862 children are also registered in early childhood education and care institutions (at ante-preschool level). Based on the [latest UNHCR data](#) on beneficiaries from temporary protection in Romania, some 87 per cent of all Ukrainian refugee children, and about 68 per cent of the estimated school aged population of such children in Romania, are now enrolled with the Romanian education and early childhood education and care system (82 per cent for primary school aged children, and 60 per cent for secondary school aged children respectively). Nonetheless, only about 30 per cent of school aged children are fully enrolled as pupils in Romanian schools and enjoy the same benefits as their Romanian peers, in spite of the reform introduced by the Government in April 2023, making it mandatory for Ukrainian refugee children to enrol in Romanian schools or in non-formal education services available locally, in order to qualify for social benefits under the temporary protection scheme.
- 74 education hubs are officially registered with the Ministry of Education, providing alternative or complementary learning opportunities - including remedial learning support and/or learning continuity by the Ukrainian curriculum - to reportedly an additional 9,751 children in March.
- While no official data is currently available on the effective participation of Ukrainian refugee children registered with Romanian schools, information gathered from several county school inspectorates suggests that up to one third of all children registered as audients attend Romanian schools on a regular basis since the start of the school year in September 2023, with a significant proportion attending school only from time to time and participating in education hubs, online learning, and language courses in parallel, at least until they can master better Romanian language skills in order to engage meaningfully in Romanian schools which use Romanian language as the main means of instruction.
- Support continues to be provided to ensure that refugee children from Ukraine can access quality education services and progressively integrate or transition to the Romanian education system through diversified learning pathways and bridging modalities including or combining inclusion into Romanian schools, online learning, special classes and after-school activities offering learning support ('education hubs'), and access to Romanian language training to support integration and transition to the national education system. RRP partners continue to facilitate access primarily to classroom-type education encouraging face-to-face learning and personal interactions, as well as Romanian language courses, MHPSS and activities fostering local integration, and only using online learning (in a complementary or alternative manner) as last resort. Most RRP partners offering alternative or complementary learning support through education hubs increasingly require, and facilitate in most instances, children's registration with the Romanian education system and their participation in Romanian language classes, towards their progressive integration into the national education

¹ Source: administrative data, Ministry of Education, as of 22 March 2024.

system. Many education hubs have adjusted their operations as complementary afternoon/afterschool activities in order to allow children to attend Romanian schools in the morning.

- Coordination in the education sector remains critical, both at national and decentralised levels, to extend the provision of educational services and ensure that refugee children can progressively transition to the Romanian education system. UNICEF continued to assume the coordination of the Education Working Group in partnership with other UN sister agencies (IOM, UNHCR and the World Bank), the Government of Romania (the Ministry of Education in particular), as well as NGOs and other development partners supporting the delivery of educational services (with JRS co-chairing the Education Working Group).
- In March, efforts focused on local and national coordination, on facilitating increased access to Romanian language courses, identifying options for refugee children facing difficulties enrolling and participating fully in local Romanian schools, and facilitating access to alternative or complementary learning modalities when necessary. Technical support and advocacy efforts geared towards national authorities were extended by RRP partners, including on monitoring and evaluation systems and capacities, and regulatory frameworks for the provision and certification of Romanian language courses delivered by local NGOs.
- On 14-17 March, a national training of trainers workshop was held in Sinaia in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and within the framework of UNICEF's partnership agreement with the British Council in Romania, under the Teaching and Learning in Difficult Times (TLDT) initiative. The workshop trained some 80 trainers from 34 county school inspectorates/districts to prepare the cascading of teacher training interventions countrywide on trauma-informed teaching and learning.
- UNICEF engaged with several county school inspectorates and local NGOs to ensure continuity of education support services, including through partnership agreements to help prolong the operation of education hubs throughout the current academic year, and to advocate for the organization of additional Romanian language courses under the leadership of county school inspectorates in order to meet the growing demand. Through dedicated support extended to the Bucharest municipal school inspectorate (ISMB), an additional 243 Ukrainian refugee children were registered with Romanian schools in Bucharest alone during March. UNICEF's partnership agreements with the resource centre for ethical initiatives and solidarity (CREIS), Timiș county youth foundation (FITT), JRS Romania, PATRIR, Step-by-Step, and Sus Inima helped to deliver complementary and/or alternative education services in cities hosting large refugee communities, including through hub modalities, benefiting several thousand Ukrainian refugee children with continuing support towards progressive integration in Romanian schools and stronger focus on Romanian language courses.
- CNRR offered counselling on access to education in Bucharest, Brașov, Constanța Galați, Iași, and Suceava. This includes assisting beneficiaries with the kindergarten and school enrolment procedure; the procedure of recognition and equivalence of studies and diplomas; and their referral to Romanian language courses and other educational activities. In March, CNRR distributed some 150 Romanian language "Limba română pentru ucraineni" (Romanian language for Ukrainians) manuals to various educational hubs. The manual was published by CNRR in partnership with UNHCR.
- World Vision supported some 1,500 refugee children, both directly and in collaboration with local partners, including through preschool and after-school programs run in eight socio-educational "Happy Bubbles" centres in six locations (Bucharest, Cluj, Constanța, Iași, and Suceava). Pre-school activities focused on early childhood development programming aimed at ensuring that children acquire basic concepts, skills, and attitudes required for successful learning and development. The after-school program, also, provides access to online classes (for children still enrolled in formal Ukrainian education), homework assistance, and remedial classes. Additionally, the program includes life skills workshops such as arts and crafts, reading clubs, math club, computer literacy, and English club. In all centres, beneficiaries receive daily meals and are equipped with educational kits to ensure they have all the necessary resources to keep up with their academic progress. Four hours of Romanian Language lessons are provided each week in all locations to ensure educational support for overcoming the language barrier and facilitate integration into the host community and local schools. Child protection and MHPSS services are provided promoting integration and the well-being of those affected by the crisis. In collaboration with the Finnish school in Bucharest, support was extended to deliver formal education (preschool, primary, secondary) benefiting 60 refugee children in collaboration with ACCB (Christian Bucharest Association Centre) as local partner.

- In Sibiu, Sus Inima continued to operate the 'SIPRI Edu Hub', with technical and financial support from UNICEF, as a bridging programme to support the progressive integration of Ukrainian refugee children in Romanian public schools, with additional language support for Ukrainian children. The program covers remedial education, homework assistance, and extracurricular activities, promoting holistic child development. In March, 107 children and adolescents engaged in Romanian language training courses and education support activities, and 824 in play-based learning activities.
- In March, JRS Romania helped more than 1,500 children in 14 Educational Hubs operating in Bucharest, Braşov, Constanţa, Galaţi, and Mediaş (eight in public schools), mainly with financial support from UNICEF, engaging 90 Ukrainian refugee teachers. Romanian language classes for children continued to be provided at all hubs. Various activities, including a Green Week, were held at hubs to welcome the beginning of spring. Six psychologists provided support in mediating schooling-related issues among children, parents, and teachers in Bucharest, Braşov, and Constanţa. In Constanţa, with World Vision support, JRS provided remedial integration activities for both refugee and host communities through a mentorship and educational support program for Ukrainian children attending Romanian schools. The activities supported 300 children (150 Ukrainian refugee children and 150 Romanian children) in three schools; they received support with Romanian language and mathematics, as well as with integration in local schools. 300 educational kits were distributed to the children.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- While funding has now been secured to sustain the operation of most education hubs until the end of the current academic year, including support for progressive integration in Romanian schools and delivery of Romanian language courses, there are increasing concerns on the capacity of the Romanian education system to fully absorb and meet the educational needs of thousands of children who are enrolled still with a transitioning status of audience who still largely rely on education hubs and/or online learning. RRP partners are facing serious difficulties to secure funding for continuing their operations beyond the current school year, hence the risk of having to discontinue the provision of services from September onwards, unless additional resources can be mobilised in the next few months or if such services can be progressively transferred and sustained through national and/or local public authorities.
- If increasing numbers of Ukrainian refugee children are now enrolling in Romanian schools, be it with transitioning status of audience, many continue to follow the Ukrainian curriculum in parallel, including through online and home-schooling arrangements, or in education hubs, at least until they can acquire sufficient communication skills in Romanian language. Significant language barriers remain, with still too few opportunities to access Romanian language courses and adequate learning support materials through county school inspectorates, which hinder children's effective integration and participation in local schools.
- There is a shortage of places in creches and kindergartens, particularly full-day places. This also affects parents who are looking for jobs because they cannot leave their children unattended.
- Several communities and schools continue to express the need to assign school or cultural mediators (Ukrainian speaking educators who can facilitate communication with parents, children, and teachers) in schools to support the effective integration of Ukrainian refugee children in Romanian schools. Such arrangements could also help school communities improve social cohesion.
- Diverse experiences are reported suggesting heterogeneous capacities in Romanian teachers, calling for additional efforts on teacher training, support, and supervision to ensure the effective integration of Ukrainian refugee children in general, and particularly those enrolling as audiences.
- Benchmark tools and assessments are needed to assess learning progress and track learning outcomes in Ukrainian refugee children who have integrated Romanian schools.



Health and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- Significant information gaps persist for refugees seeking healthcare services, impairing their ability to access care. Throughout March, WHO cultural mediators provided personalised advice and guidance on accessing care to 118 Ukrainians, scheduled doctor's appointments for 38 beneficiaries, and accompanied 27 patients to medical consultations.
- Additionally, language remains a barrier to healthcare access and uptake for Ukrainians in Romania. To address this issue, WHO Romania is launching an interpretation hotline which will provide free of charge Romanian-Ukrainian interpretation for during medical consultations in health facilities throughout Romania.
- Access to primary care remains a priority for Ukrainian refugees. WHO Romania continues to provide financial and administrative support to family medicine clinics in Bucharest, Braşov, Galaţi, and Suceava and to support the registration of Ukrainians in the national system. WHO supported family doctors delivered 225 consultations to Ukrainians in March; with more than 4,500 primary healthcare consultations delivered since January 2023.
- WHO cultural mediators delivered 108 individual counselling sessions and 11 group counselling session to 305 beneficiaries and held 6 therapy sessions attended by 68 beneficiaries.
- WHO midwives provide essential maternal services for refugee women and support Ukrainian refugees to receive specialised care. In March, WHO midwives provided 2 midwifery consultations and 27 referrals to specialised care.
- The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent Ukrainian refugee crisis has meant a prolonged and increased workload for medical staff, and many healthcare workers are at risk of burnout. WHO Romania is addressing this with trainings on stress management for Romanian healthcare workers and conducted three one-day workshops on "Doing What Matters in Times of Stress" in March attended by 75 healthcare workers from the Clinical Emergency Hospital for Children "Louis Țurcanu", the Jebel Psychiatry and Security Hospital and the Caransebeş Municipal Emergency Hospital in Timișoara.
- To strengthen the preparedness and resilience of refugee and asylum centres to a potential influx of refugees, WHO conducted missions to the regional centres in Baia Mare Galaţi, and Timișoara with the aim to better understand the health needs and identify potential areas of support.
- UNFPA drafted the Regional Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) report, providing information and analysis on Sexual and Reproductive Health-related needs across Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. The assessment report serves as a crucial tool to advocate for adequate resources to address the needs of vulnerable communities in the region.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- There are challenges regarding access to medical services. In addition to the limited availability of family doctors, the language barrier is one of the main problems.
- Additional funding is required to scale up and sustain efforts to address the health and humanitarian needs of refugees in Mureş County, particularly in areas such as mental health support, access to essential services, and community outreach initiatives.



Basic Needs

Achievements and Impact

- On 1 March, a validation workshop was held to endorse the reviewed vulnerability scorecard. The reviewed scorecard incorporates feedback received from 47 participants from authorities, UN agencies, and NGOs engaged in the three-day recalibration workshop conducted in January 2024. In addition, other tools are under development to support the cash assistance enrolment process. These efforts are geared towards ensuring that programmes reach those more in need.
- Basic needs partners are working closely to assist refugees in transit or remaining in Romania with provision of core-relief items, food and other protection services, upholding the commitment to meeting the diverse needs of refugees.
- In March, AidRom distributed core relief items (CRIs) including 33 hygiene kits, 71 kitchen utensils, 187 items of clothing woman, 124 thermoses, and 114 towels to 78 families (230 persons) in Timișoara. In Bihor County, AidRom reached 68 families (199 persons) with hygiene kits, mattresses, pillows, sleeping bags and quilts. Furthermore, through AidRom's partnership with the Food Bank in Timișoara which delivers food to beneficiaries once every two weeks, 27 families (93 persons) were assisted.
- World Vision supported vulnerable Ukrainian refugees within its program "Family Hygiene Kit & Food Voucher One Time Assistance". The distribution of hygiene kits and food vouchers took place at two social stores located in Bucharest (Romexpo hub) and Constanța (World Vision Constanța Social Store), and World Vision "Happy Bubbles" Centre in Vâlcea. In March, 921 hygiene kits and food vouchers were distributed, reaching 1,996 beneficiaries including 217 persons with disabilities.
- UNHCR together with partners distributed some 950 core relief items including clothes, bedding, and hygiene kits to some 975 refugees in Baia Mare, Constanța, Galați, and Suceava.
- In March, a meeting took place between UNHCR and the Ministry of Department of Emergency Situations (DSU) to undertake a joint analysis of preparedness capacity and contingency planning efforts in case of large numbers of arrivals of refugees from Ukraine.
- The enrolment for UNHCR's winter cash assistance closed on 15 March, with some 3,009 individuals being enrolled. More than 2,256 persons have been assisted with one-off cash for winter assistance. The payment and deduplication with other humanitarian partners for the remaining individuals is ongoing.
- Save the Children has responded to the urgent needs of vulnerable people by providing essential financial support through the distribution of 662 vouchers to cover basic needs to 247 people, comprising around 86 families. This direct assistance plays a crucial role in alleviating financial hardship and improving the quality of life of those facing economic difficulties in the community.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In mid-March, Maramureș Border Police requested support from basic needs partners to provide CRIs for Ukrainian men crossing the border and swimming across the river in Sighetu Marmăției. Basic needs partners are working closely to meet the needs.
- Ukrainian refugees hosted at the Edmond Nicolau refugee transit centre in Bucharest were temporarily moved to the UTCB – Tei transit centre due to a bedbug infestation. DGASPC, Four Change, Habitat for Humanity, UNHCR, UNICEF, and other local organizations worked in coordination to ensure basic needs were met before, during and after the relocation. To prevent the issue from spreading to the UTCB centre, all their personal belongings were left at the Edmond Nicolau centre. Four Change Association requested UNHCR's support to provide the refugees with items to meet their needs.

- At the social store from Romexpo, run by the General Assistance of Bucharest Municipality (DGASMB), there is still an acute shortage of in-kind food and hygienic items. Very few partners currently provide items to meet the basic needs of Ukrainian refugees.



Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion

Achievements and Impact

- On 7 March, the Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Working Group, co-led by UNHCR and IOM, was organized in hybrid format from Constanța focusing on entrepreneurship. In total there were over 40 participants including representatives from the local Employment Agency (AJOFM), World Vision, HORECA Employers' Union, locally active NGOs and representatives of the refugee community.
- The Romanian start-up Innovation Cons provides accredited Romanian language courses, professional qualification courses, employment assistance, and support with equivalence of studies for refugees from Ukraine and other foreign citizens in Romania. In March, 30 refugees were helped with finding employment, and 55 refugees with the process of equivalating their studies. Innovation Cons also provided entrepreneurship and legal counselling, leading to the successful start-up of two refugee-led businesses.
- Project Voyager supported refugees' economic inclusion with a focus on job readiness, job matching and community engagement, supporting a total of 418 people in Romania and Ukraine during March. The [Jobs4Ukr.com](https://www.jobs4ukr.com) platform is their main tool for connecting refugee job seekers with employment opportunities. 349 individuals were engaged on the platform and 24 "matches" with employers were facilitated. A further 16 people were matched to job opportunities offline with companies like KFC, WebHelp and Concentrix. As a complementary service, the Project Voyager team also offered information and counselling sessions for 59 people and held two English and Romanian speaking clubs attended by 13 participants.
- World Vision carried out group and individual information sessions with 347 participants in the context of a new project focused on enhancing the self-reliance and economic inclusion of refugees and vulnerable host community members in Romania. This month, the World Vision team engaged with 70 employers to identify possible job opportunities for refugees.
- On 20 March, UNHCR, IKEA, Project Voyager, World Vision and some 10 other private sector and humanitarian actors participated in an event on "Accelerating Business Growth with Refugee Talent in Romania", organized by the Romanian Diversity Chamber of Commerce (RDCC). The event was focused on discussing lessons learnt and ways forward as it relates to refugees' socio-economic inclusion.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Among the 858 individuals who expressed interest in World Vision's livelihoods project, the main stated barriers to access the labour market were the following: language barrier (90 per cent), limited knowledge about employment opportunities (30 per cent), uncertainty about legal rights to access the labour market (27 per cent), lack of professional qualifications (17 per cent), and challenges with equivalence of studies (12 per cent). In total, 80 per cent of respondents expressed their interest in attending Romanian language courses and 59 per cent expressed an interest in entrepreneurial support.

Cross-Cutting Priorities



Youth and Adolescents

Achievements and Impact

- In March, the National Youth Foundation made significant strides in supporting the young Ukrainian community through its initiatives. Together with the British Council, they launched a leadership training program tailored for young Ukrainian refugees, marked by a week of dynamic pop-up activities hosted by participants or local partners. Participants were equipped to organize further activities, ensuring a lasting impact. The National Youth Foundation expanded its reach by initiating a pilot program in Bucharest and Tulcea, engaging young Ukrainians in the European Solidarity Corps' Volunteering in High Priority Areas, integrating them as full-time volunteers for two months. The project, funded by the European Commission and implemented by Timiș county Youth Foundation (FITT), enhances youth centres' focus on meeting beneficiaries' needs, embodying the National Youth Foundation's commitment to serving the community.
- National Youth Foundation staff participated in capacity-building training conducted by Plan International, focusing on youth engagement, leadership, and sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR). This training not only bolstered the team's expertise but also reinforced the National Youth Foundation's dedication to empowering young people to lead and make a difference.
- The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Romania launched at The Virtual Award Centre. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a global informal education initiative established more than sixty years ago and operating in some 140 countries worldwide. It offers young participants between 14- and 16-years old access to various activities such as volunteering, physical activities, skills development, and adventure, culminating in a residential project for the gold award. The initiative aims to build self-confidence, emotional management, determination, and resilience in young people.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The lack of funding for youth programming remains one of the most pressing challenges.



Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

Achievements and Impact

- Save the Children continues to deliver MHPSS activities to Ukrainian refugees through counselling centres and transit points in Bucharest, Baia Mare, Constanța, Galați, Iași, Suceava, Timișoara, and Tulcea. In March, the NGO provided psychological counselling to 66 children and 12 adults; 1,236 children and 212 adults participated in psychosocial activities such as art therapy workshops, chess clubs, dance classes, and cooking workshops. Save the Children also held several social cohesion events, including visits to theatre and circus, attended by 127 adults and 2,237 children.
- The National MHPSS Strategic Planning Workshop took place on 28 March, with 21 participants from the MHPSS sub-Working Group, including NGOs, UN agencies, and government representatives. Participants compared previous and current service mappings and discussed on minimum preparedness action plans for

public health emergencies, refugee influx, and earthquakes. The finalised work plan and MHPSS-focused plans will be shared with partners and stakeholders in April.

- The Romanian Angel Appeal (RAA) conducted formative research for UNICEF's project on MHPSS for Bucharest's youth. RAA identified MHPSS resources in the city, mapping services, schools implementing interventions, and cataloguing digital resources. Secondly, RAA conducted qualitative data collection involving over 200 participants, including teenagers, parents, teachers, school managers, healthcare professionals, and NGO representatives resulting in a comprehensive report assessing mental health needs and barriers among children and adolescents in Bucharest. Preliminary findings and recommendations were shared during the project's first Steering Committee meeting in March. The final report will be released in April.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- There is a need for ongoing assessment in Târgu Mureş to tailor MHPSS interventions effectively and ensure the well-being of refugees. Further collaboration with local partners is essential.



Trafficking in Persons

Achievements and Impact

- In March 2024, the Crisis Response Anti Trafficking Task Force (CRATTF) co-chairs attended the Regional Anti-Trafficking Task force which was established as part of the regional refugee response for Ukraine. This was an opportunity to network and experience sharing amongst the ATTFFs in the region. The Romanian task force co-chairs presented on Romania's CRATTF.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The regional meeting highlighted the need for periodic opportunities to connect at regional level to discuss and identify trafficking trends and risks.
- It has been identified that the priorities and focuses of the CRATTF require updating and review considering the shift from emergency to inclusion phase.

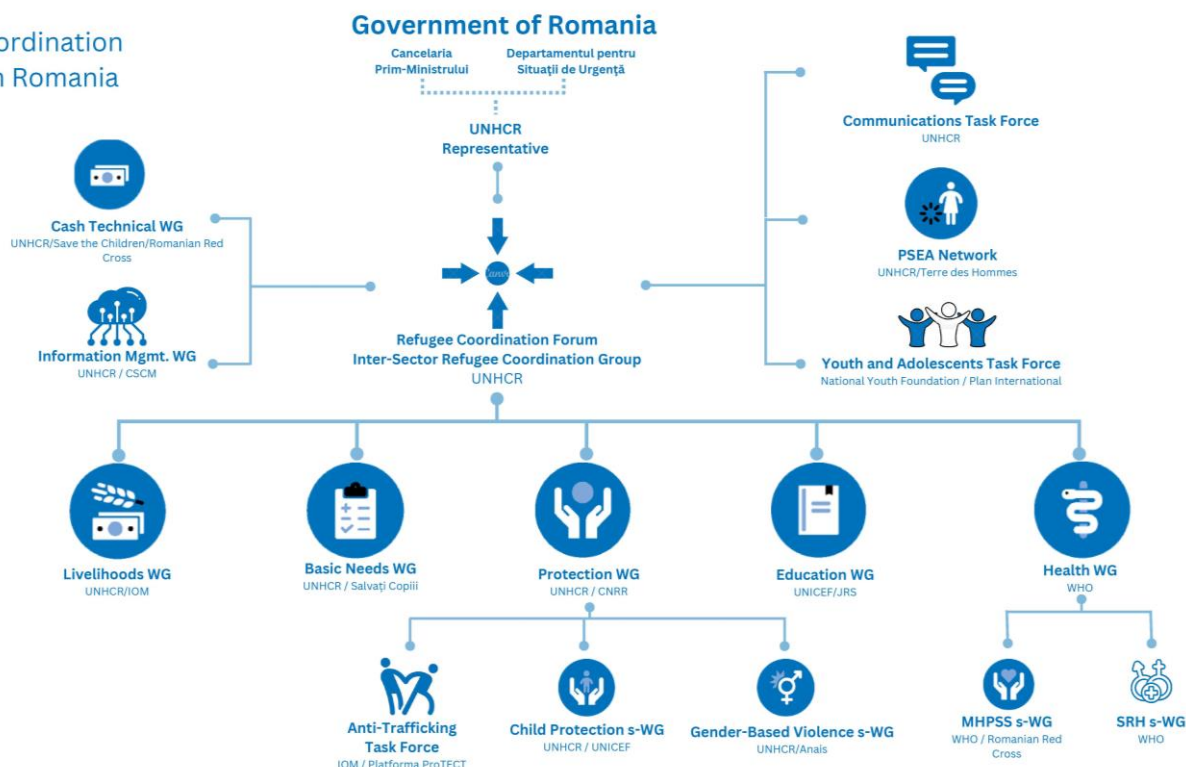


Communications

- On 15 March, the Inter-Agency Coordination Team, led by UNHCR, held the launch event of the Communications Task Force for the refugee response in Romania. More than 40 participants from authorities, embassies, and partners implementing the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) attended the event. Three researchers, Mr. Remus Stefureac, Ms. Oana Popescu Zamfir, Mr. Mircea Toma, presented their insights on the public narratives around the Ukraine refugee situation. The Communications Task Force - within the RRP coordination structure - aims at analyzing the public discourse related to refugees from Ukraine and work collectively towards promoting social cohesion.

Working in partnership

Refugee Coordination Structure in Romania



In 2024, the Inter-Agency platform comprises of the following 37 appealing partners implementing humanitarian activities in Romania for refugees from Ukraine:

ActionAid International | Action Contre la Faim | Asociația Moașelor Independente | CNRR | CORE | eLiberare | FONSS | Four Change | Good Neighbours Japan | Habitat for Humanity | HEKS/EPER | HIAS | IOM | Jesuit Refugee Service | Migrant Integration Centre Brașov | National Youth Foundation | Necuvinte | Novapolis | ParentIS | Project Voyager | PATRIR | Plan International | Roma Just | Romanian Angel Appeal | Save the Children | SECS | Sensiblu Foundation | Sera | Sus Inima | Terre des Hommes | Tineri pentru Tineri | UNESCO | UNFPA | UNICEF | UNHCR | WHO | World Vision

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LINKS

Regional data portal – Romania Page – Ukraine Situation RRP – Refugee Funding Tracker