

ROMANIA

Annual 2024 Overview

31 December 2024

Key figures

175,331 refugees* obtained temporary protection in Romania

17,413 refugees enrolled for cash assistance

15,454 refugees supported with cash assistance

24,097 refugees provided with protection counselling services and legal support since January 2024

48,911 refugees were supported with 96,050 core relief items (CRIs)

9,286 refugees supported with livelihood, employment services and Romanian Language courses since January 2024

37 partners including 24 national NGO under the 2024 RRP appeal (increased from 2 in 2022, and 14 in 2023)

11 direct partners operating in 17 counties implementing a wide range of programmes and activities



Mural made by youth of Ukraine and Romania in UNHCR's Service Hub - Community Centre at RomExpo in Bucharest, Romania. December 2024

Operational Context

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022 triggered one of the fastest-growing displacement and humanitarian crises on record, pushing millions into internal displacement and abroad in search of safety. Since 24 February 2022, Romania has recorded **over 7.9 million border crossings from Ukraine and Republic of Moldova, while there have been almost 5.1 million border crossings from Romania to Ukraine** during the same period. **As of 31 October 2024, a total of 175,331 individual refugees obtained temporary protection (TP) in Romania**, as per data from the Government of Romania.

UNHCR, together with other UN agencies and NGOs, support the government's refugee response through Inter-Agency coordination of the **Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) – January-December 2024**, following the **Refugee Coordination Model**. The RRP is implemented under the government's leadership and sets priorities and activities for the protection and inclusion of refugees from Ukraine, beneficiaries of Temporary Protection.

UNHCR in Romania responds to the needs of refugees from Ukraine through its Field Offices in Suceava and Galați -with its Field Presence in Constanța- a Field Presence in Timișoara, and the Country Office in Bucharest. UNHCR is also present at the Emergency Transit Centre for refugees located in Timișoara. UNHCR in 2024 implemented projects through 11 national and international partner NGOs in 17 counties across Romania. In a section below, a list of these NGOs and the thematic areas they cover in their partnership with UNHCR are provided. UNHCR Romania is honoured to partner with them and very grateful for their qualitative work and dedicated commitment.

Response

Protection

UNHCR works with authorities, partners and refugees to promote the legal and physical protection of refugees while enhancing their inclusion into the national systems in accordance with the EU Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), as transposed in Romania. During 2024, UNHCR supported the protection of those forcibly displaced by providing legal assistance and information provision for their inclusion into the Romanian social protection schemes, provision or referral to services to persons with specific needs and as well as assistance and interventions for specific groups such as children, survivors of gender-based violence, as well as persons with disabilities, older persons, LGBTIQ+ persons and the Roma community. Throughout the year, UNHCR and partners engaged in advocacy with a view to further advancing the inclusion of refugees and their access to social protection benefits. Some key results of UNHCR's Protection response in 2024, are the following:

- **24,097 refugees** were provided with information, legal assistance and counselling in person or via hotlines;
- **720 officials** of local authorities, partners and volunteers trained on core concepts of refugee protection, including child protection, prevention of and response to gender-based violence, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), etc;
- **56 organisations** participated in the PSEA Network;
- **21,955** refugees have been reached through social media dedicated channels, including Telegram and Facebook. Some posts have been viewed or shared 45,600 times;
- **UNHCR's advocacy work along with other organisations, in support of governmental deliberations**, contributed to the granting of access to social benefits to refugees from Ukraine under the same conditions as nationals, in accordance with the TPD.

UNHCR leads the Inter-Agency Protection Working Group to help more than 50 organisations coordinate their protection response and avoid duplication of effort. Under this umbrella, UNHCR co-chairs, together with UNICEF and the National Agency for the Protection of Children and Adoption, the Child Protection Sub-Working Group (with a total of 30 members), as well as the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Sub-Working Group, where 20 GBV actors coordinate their responses.

UNHCR, together with partners, have provided support to children with specific needs in Braşov, Bucharest, Constanţa, Galaţi, Iaşi, and Suceava, supporting children with case management and speech therapy, establishing child-friendly spaces, ensuring psychosocial support to children, and enhancing capacity of various stakeholders. Aiming at combatting GBV, UNHCR has promoted prevention and response interventions, working with community members. UNHCR, jointly with UNICEF and partners, also advocated on access to education for refugee children from Ukraine to ensure that no child is left behind.

Cash Assistance: UNHCR's cash assistance programmes have been designed in consultation with authorities to provide support to refugees from Ukraine. These programmes act as a transitional safety net while they secure employment or access national social protection schemes. Within the cash programme, UNHCR used the inter-agency vulnerability scorecard to identify the most vulnerable refugees from Ukraine and help them in avoiding negative coping mechanisms, such as skipping payment of rent or debt, taking loans, preventing a child from going to school, as well as potential GBV and exploitation risks. Since January 2024, vulnerable Ukrainian families and individuals have been enrolled through centres and mobile missions across 13 counties in Romania, with 15,454 individuals receiving cash assistance through different cash programmes. More recently, UNHCR started a cash for winter programme for vulnerable refugees to help them cope with the increased seasonal expenses. To prevent aid duplication, recipients



A refugee from Ukraine is being enrolled at RomExpo, Bucharest.
 © UNHCR

were cross-checked with other organizations providing cash assistance and neighbouring UNHCR operations.

Border Monitoring: Since the onset of the Ukrainian refugee emergency, UNHCR established Field Offices in Galați and Suceava that continue to monitor the main border crossings with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, identifying trends and needs of arriving refugees, as well as covering the needs in key areas hosting substantial number of refugees. UNHCR also has a presence in Timișoara that supports authorities and refugees in the western part of Romania. and assists authorities to manage the Emergency Transit Centre.

Socio-Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods: Together with the National Employment Agency (ANOFM) and partner NGOs, UNHCR is working to promote the socio-economic inclusion and self-reliance of refugees through language courses, employment counselling, employers' engagement and by organizing job fairs and workshops. During 2024, UNHCR supported refugees from Ukraine with the following livelihoods services:

- **1,783 refugees** were supported with Romanian language courses;
- **7,503 refugees** were supported with employment assistance/coaching/counselling;
- **28,857 refugees** enrolled in employment services or other similar platforms with ANOFM and partners;
- **2 national job fairs** organised by ANOFM with refugee participation through partner NGOs; and
- **7 regional/local events** organised by or in collaboration with Chambers of Commerce (e.g. Chamber of Commerce and Industry Iași, Romanian Diversity Chamber of Commerce) for strategic employer engagement.

Contingency Planning and Preparedness: In January 2024, the Department for Emergency Situations (DSU) and UNHCR, under the DSU's leadership, conducted a drill to enhance coordination and assess shelter preparedness and emergency response capabilities. UNHCR and DSU established temporary transit facilities in two locations in Galați and Bacău, designed to accommodate up to 480 refugees. Within 48 hours, the sites were fully set up, including interconnected tents, generators, lighting systems and heaters in place, setting the basis for rapid deployment and efficient operation in case of need. UNHCR in coordination with authorities maintains contingency stock in its warehouse in Bucharest.



Temporary reception facility part of the contingency exercise done by UNHCR and DSU in Bacău. January 2024 © UNHCR

Winterisation: UNHCR, in coordination with authorities and partners, has enhanced its support for the winter season. UNHCR and partners are distributing humanitarian aid, including bedding and hygiene kits, to assist refugees from Ukraine -notably new arrivals- during winter, as well as assessing sites for potential transit accommodation. Additionally, UNHCR is providing top-up cash assistance to support the most vulnerable families manage increased winter expenses. Core relief items (CRIs), such as blankets, winter clothing, and sleeping bags, are also being distributed. In 2024, UNHCR provided over 96,050 CRIs to nearly 48,911 refugees.

Communication with Communities: UNHCR promotes a two-way communication with refugees in Romania through multiple channels, including a dedicated hotline, a Telegram channel, protection counselling desks and complaint mechanisms. These platforms provide tailored information on available services and assistance, while also allowing refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons to raise queries and concerns. The hotline ensures direct access to crucial up-to-date information.

The official Telegram channel, followed by over 12,200 individuals, offers real-time updates and resources, making it the preferred communication tool for the refugee community. Additionally, UNHCR shares information via social media and its dedicated HELP page. As part of this interaction, and in addition to its well-established participatory assessments with refugees, UNHCR implemented a direct consultation mechanism in the design of its 2025 programme, whereby 1,061 refugees communicated the areas they consider priority in UNHCR's programme and advised on the composition of integrated services and support.



The UNHCR Directors for Europe and of Strategic Planning and Results Romania mark World Refugee Day in Bucharest, reaffirming solidarity with people forced to flee. 20 June 2024 © UNHCR

Working with Partners

UNHCR carried out a wide range of activities through 11 partnerships in 17 counties. The main activities carried out by partners (alphabetical order) are: AidRom (cash based interventions, provision of information, support to the Emergency Transit Centre), Autism Voice (child protection), CNRR (access to territory/documentation, information and advice on rights and obligations, child protection), CSCM (research and data analysis), Estuar (community engagement and participation, mental health and psychosocial support), FONSS (community engagement and participation, mental health and psychosocial support, child protection, cash based interventions), PATRIR (community engagement and participation), Project Voyager/Jobs4Ukraine (self-reliance, economic inclusion and livelihoods), Sensiblu Foundation (gender based violence), Terre des Hommes (child protection), WorldVision Romania (self-reliance, economic inclusion and livelihoods, child protection).

Inter-Agency Coordination

To ensure effective coordination among the humanitarian partners implementing the Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP), UNHCR in collaboration with authorities established since 2022 an Inter-Agency coordination platform which counted with 37 appealing partners in 2024. The coordination structure is made up of seven sectoral working groups, three sub-working groups, three task forces, and one network, led by national and international organizations. The sector working groups hold regular meetings ensuring a flexible and effective structure. UNHCR and partners work closely with authorities to ensure complementarity and synergy between government priorities and the Inter-Agency coordination structure of the RRP in support of national policies regarding refugees from Ukraine. In line with the 'localization' strategic direction of the 2024 RRP, the year saw a significant increase in the number of national NGO partners, from 37 appealing partners in 2024 to 42 appealing partners in the upcoming 2025/2026 RRP. Furthermore, to enhance local coordination and linkages to national coordination platforms, eight local coordination networks were launched at county level, while coordination at municipal level is also being strengthened. Moreover, for a sustainable response, efforts are being carried out towards an engagement with private sector actors, as an important component of the whole-of-society approach. On 18 October, a Donor Meetup event in Bucharest convened over 120 participants, including 28 private companies, to strengthen collaboration and sustainable funding for the Refugee Response Plan, notably support to Romanian NGOs. The event resulted in eight reported new funding relations, expanded advocacy and collaboration opportunities, and stronger private sector engagement. Its marketplace format fostered connections and amplified visibility and the event reached 10,000 people through media and social outreach. In 2024, UNHCR launched a Communications Task Force under the RRP to analyse public discourse on Ukrainian refugees in Romania, promote inclusion, and enhance social cohesion. With RRP partners, authorities, researchers, and donors, it discussed ways of addressing misinformation and disinformation, providing tools and expertise to foster positive communication.

Information Management and Needs Assessments

During 2024, UNHCR strengthened the localisation and sustainability of information management activities in Romania by expanding partnerships with local and international actors, including national authorities, UN agencies, NGOs, and academia. Key assessments, such as the Socio-Economic Insight Survey and a Winterization Assessment, were conducted with local partners to enhance collaboration and avoid duplication. Intention surveys were also conducted in Romania as part of regional initiatives. In addition,

UNHCR fostered partnerships with the Romanian National Institute of Statistics, leading to the third edition of the RefData Meet Up on 5-6 December, where other national statistics institutions from European countries participated. Engagement with academia was further solidified through initiatives like the Refugee Full Scholarship and the UNHCR's Research Scholarship Programme that supported five refugees in their high education.

RomExpo UNHCR Integrated Service Hub for Refugees and Regional Multi-Purpose Hubs

Since 2022, in support of the national response, UNHCR has worked with UN agencies, authorities and partners to provide free services to refugees at the RomExpo Integrated Service Hub in Bucharest and regional multi-purpose hubs in Braşov, Constanţa and Galaţi as well as cash enrolment centres in Iaşi and Suceava. These hubs serve as one-stop-shops allowing for refugees from Ukraine to receive critical services and support in one place. As cash assistance remains one of the most effective ways to support the most vulnerable, UNHCR continues to prioritize cash programmes as a vital protection intervention. In 2024, some 17,413 refugees were enrolled for cash assistance in Romania, with the large majority enrolled at RomExpo. In addition, at RomExpo, refugees can access essential services including employment and integration support, legal counselling, information on access to education, referrals to doctors and pre/post-natal assistance or other specialized services. Many of the hubs also host child and family-friendly spaces and on-site mental health and psychosocial support is provided in some locations. The one-stop-shops also offer space for national NGOs and refugee-led organisations to conduct occasional activities, including training, sensibilisation events, and other community-focused activities. Importantly, at RomExpo the General Inspectorate for Immigration, with EUAA support, registers refugees from Ukraine for temporary protection status, in what has become the main point of registration in the country, with some 52,500 refugees registering there since the end of March 2022.

Needs and plans for 2025

In 2025, UNHCR will seek to further sustain the governmental and humanitarian response to ensure the protection and inclusion of refugees from Ukraine. The total funding requirement for UNHCR in Romania is of **USD 39 million**. The priorities for 2025 are as follows:

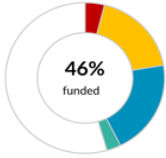
- Coordinate UNHCR's contribution to the refugee response with authorities, under the government leadership.
- More broadly, continue coordinating the humanitarian community's refugee response in support of Romania's response through the RRP for 2025-2026, inter alia, by ensuring the relevance, delivery capacity and functioning of the Inter-Agency structures.
- Enhance support for the most vulnerable refugees and promote social cohesion with the Romanian hosting communities.
- Promote socio-economic inclusion through job counselling, language courses and entrepreneurship grants.
- Strengthen community-based protection, focusing on the prevention of and response to gender-based violence, and child protection risks.
- Ensure localisation of the refugee response by strengthening the capacity and role of Romanian actors in delivering services and assistance.
- Provide cash assistance targeting the most vulnerable refugees.
- Facilitate mid-long-term protection and inclusion of refugees into Romanian society and maintain advocacy efforts towards the enjoyment of rights by refugees.
- Continue working closely with General Inspectorate for Immigration and the General Inspectorate of Border Police, notably ahead of the implementation of the EU Pact.
- Collaborate with civil society actors, media and academia to raise awareness and foster a favourable attitude.
- Enhance outreach and information provision to refugee communities, including through refugee-led organizations and both in-person and online channels.
- Maintain contingency preparedness in coordination with the government.

Funding Situation

As of 30 November 2024

\$54.3 million

UNHCR's financial requirements 2024



UNHCR is grateful for the support from our top government donors of unearmarked, softly earmarked, and earmarked funding:

[Austria](#) | [Belgium](#) | [Canada](#) | [Denmark](#) | [European Union](#) | [France](#) | [Germany](#) | [Ireland](#) | [Japan](#) | [Korea](#) | [Netherlands](#) | [Norway](#) | [Sweden](#) | [Switzerland](#) | [United Kingdom](#) | [United States of America](#)

UNHCR is also grateful for the generous contributions from private individuals and the private sector.

CONTACTS:

Alberto Bolzan
External Relations Officer
bolzan@unhcr.org

LINKS: [REGIONAL DATA PORTAL](#) – [ROMANIA PORTAL](#) – [UNHCR ROMANIA HELP PAGE](#) – [X](#) – [FACEBOOK](#)