



# Romania

September 2023

Since the start of the international armed conflict in Ukraine which has forced some 5.8 million people to flee their homes seeking safety, protection and assistance across Europe, more than 4.7 million border crossings into Romania have been recorded. The Government and partners including civil society, the private sector, volunteers, and international organizations 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 2023 Romania RRP is aligned with the Government National Plan of Measures (NPM) for the protection and inclusion of refugees from Ukraine.

UNHCR is leading the Inter-Agency platform comprising 34 appealing partners implementing humanitarian activities for the refugees from Ukraine. The Inter-Agency platform is currently working on the preparation of 2024 RRP and a kick-off meeting took place on 5 September 2023 with the participation of 43 potential appealing partners.

## KEY FIGURES\* (as of end September)

**5.8 M**

Individual refugees from Ukraine recorded across Europe

**4.7 M**

Border crossing into Romania

**85 K**

Refugees from Ukraine remaining in Romania

**144 K**

Refugees who obtained temporary protection in Romania

**57%**

Of refugees who obtained temporary protection are women and girls

## 2023 REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN (RRP) FOR THE UKRAINE SITUATION\*\*

**USD 153.6 M**

Financial requirements for the Romania response\*\*\*

**USD 57.8 M**

Funding received for the Romania response\*\*\*\*

**34**

Appealing partners in the Romania RRP

\*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 2023](#) for a breakdown of sectoral response priorities. \*\*\*See the [Romania Chapter of Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan 2023](#). \*\*\*\*See the [Refugee Response Financial Tracking \(RRFT\), Romania](#)

## Operational context

Since 24 February 2022, more than 5,8 million people from Ukraine have sought refuge across Europe. As of end September 2023, more than 4,7 million border crossings from Ukraine and Moldova into Romania have been recorded by border police, with some 85,006 people choosing to remain in the country. Around 144,152 Ukrainian (142,773) and Third Country Nationals (1,379) have obtained temporary protection, which enables access to healthcare, education, and the labour market. The number of refugees from Ukraine present in Romania has been decreasing, from its peak of 113,009 in February, to 85,006 (as of end September 2023).

On 5 September, UNHCR, together with the Prefecture of Timis County, organised an event to support the Refugee Coordination Network in Timisoara. The Coordination Network aimed at strengthening efforts of inclusion for refugees building on the pre-existing coordination initiatives both in Timis and Timisoara. Over 60 persons from local authorities, NGOs and civil society organisations participated in the event. Since 2022, UNHCR has reinforced or established local coordination networks in seven counties.

On 26 September, at the Civil Society Gala in Bucharest, UNHCR, in partnership with The Institute, awarded the “Hope away from Home” prize to the Dopomoha Project developed by Code for Romania. The Gala, brought together over 700 members of civil society and authorities. Some 20 projects supporting refugees were submitted for the refugee response award. A jury composed of the UN agencies that lead sectors in the Refugee Response Plan reviewed these projects based on a set of criteria and awarded the project that excelled in all those. UNHCR Representative Mr. Pablo Zapata, as the Inter-Agency Refugee Coordinator, in his statements during the award ceremony praised the whole-of-society response in Romania as effective, efficient and deeply humane.



### Spotlight on: eLiberare’s model of combatting human trafficking: Kompass

As part of the Ukrainian Crisis Response to address trafficking risks, eLiberare designed and piloted an innovative protection model: The Kompass Model. eLiberare is a women-led organization that works on developing project methodologies and tools that prioritize a women- and victim- centred approach. The Kompass model focuses on assisting refugees from Ukraine and has a primary goal to raise awareness about safety measures, to create individual safety plans for those at risk, and to offer assistance to those in need. The model was co-created with Ukrainian colleagues who joined the eLiberare team in April 2022 and is implemented in four steps, acting as a barrier against exploitation and human trafficking for both Ukrainians and third-country nationals seeking safety after leaving Ukraine in search of a safe place.

The initiative reached 336,000 people through online awareness campaigns, created 3,853 safety plans, provided counselling to 18,680 individuals through offline and online information sessions, trained 1,060 frontliners, assisted 50 people and distributed 25,000 safety cards and 1,839 flyers.

In recognition of its outstanding contribution to combating human trafficking through the utilization of data and technology, the Kompass Model received the prestigious Disruption of Recruitment Award at the Data to Disrupt Trafficking Awards held in London in October 2022. This recognition solidifies the model's status as a best practice in the fight against trafficking.

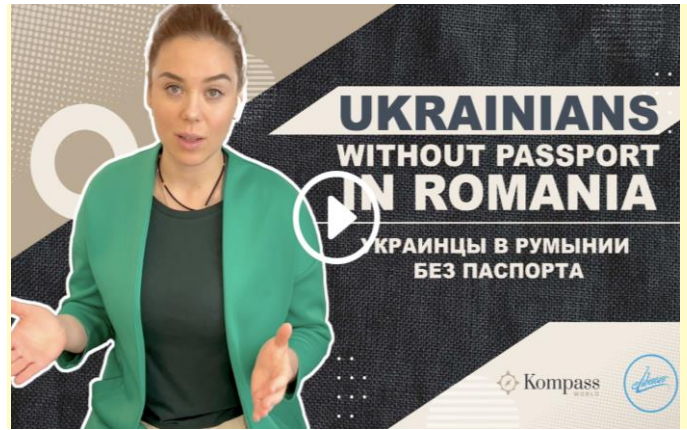
The model is composed of 4 steps:

### Step 1. Raising awareness about safety measures

In this step eLiberare focuses on raising awareness about safety measures for Ukrainians residing in Romania. This comprehensive approach encompasses both online and offline channels.

Online Outreach: The team utilizes the [Kompass.world](https://www.kompass.world) website to disseminate general safety information. Specific information about labour exploitation is made available on [robotainfo.com](https://robotainfo.com). So far, 54 informative videos have been posted, which contain **red flags** for labour exploitation and **safety measures**. Collectively, the videos have reached a total of 336,000 views on [Telegram](https://www.telegram.com), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) and [TikTok](https://www.tiktok.com). eLiberare's Telegram Channel has 2,013 subscribers, serving as a hub for community updates and crucial information. Additionally, the Instagram account hosts informative online info-sessions, while the TikTok account is dedicated to share engaging content tailored to the interests of Ukrainian youth.

Offline Engagement: eLiberare's offline efforts include the distribution of 1,839 flyers on a one-on-one basis across 30 locations and Safety Measures Cards, each containing 10 vital safety measures to be followed by individuals fleeing to safety. These cards also provide emergency contact numbers. In total, 25,000 cards have been distributed so far.



### Step 2. Capacity Building

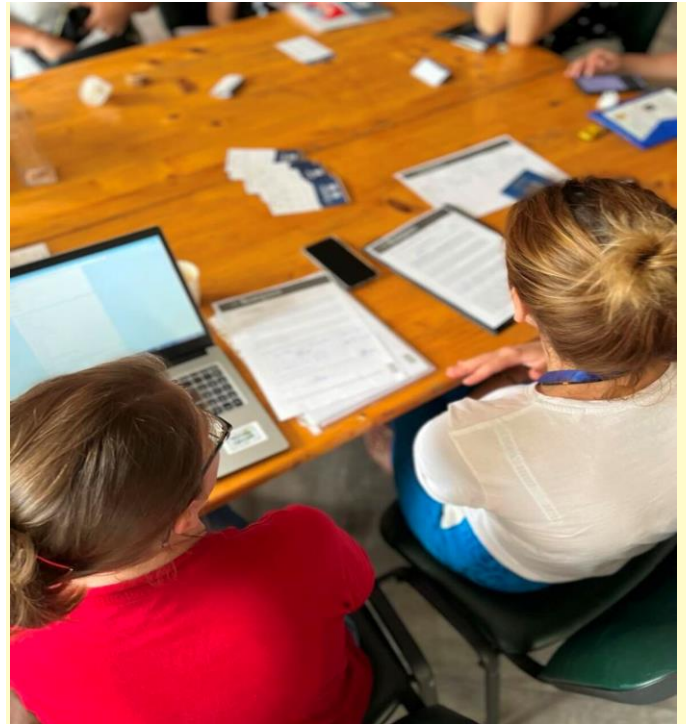
After raising awareness, the objective is to empower individuals to effectively implement the safety measures. Information sessions have been designed to provide comprehensive insights into rights and responsibilities, temporary protection, access to diverse services, safety protocols and information pertaining to the risks of human trafficking. As part of the safety sessions, participants receive backpacks containing essential items, including information materials, emergency contact information and guidance on accessing assistance through available services. To date, these information sessions, both offline and online, have provided counsel to a total of 18,680 individuals.

eLiberare also played a pivotal role in facilitating 70 training sessions for 1,060 professionals and volunteers engaged in refugee support. These training sessions are tailored to equip participants with a deep understanding of human trafficking indicators in the context of the Ukrainian crisis and to train them in effective response methods in potential trafficking cases.

### Step 3. Individual Safety Plans

In this step of the intervention process, the focus shifts to creating Individual Safety Plans (ISP), a crucial step in assisting individuals with their safe journey or stay in Romania. eLiberare has crafted a toolkit to aid in mapping the specific vulnerabilities of each person and evaluating the potential risks of exploitation they may face. Based on the vulnerabilities identified, tailored scenarios are developed to meet the unique needs of each individual.

The intervention team initiates the completion of an ISP by first having the individual sign a General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) agreement. Subsequently, a series of questions are posed to assess the individual's vulnerability level and requirement. Then, the team establishes a safety Password with the beneficiary and provides them with an information card containing essential crisis helpline. Finally, the individual is integrated into a Telegram group to facilitate ongoing support and communication. To date the team and their partners have successfully conducted 3,853 ISPs, contributing significantly to the overall effectiveness of the intervention.



### Step 4. Assistance mid and long term

The focus on this step is on providing mid and long-term assistance to individuals, especially those who are travelling to their final destinations. For those embarking on journey to other countries, the intervention team strategically establishes check-in points at various locations along the route. These checkpoints are essential for ensuring the safety of the travelers. If someone misses a check-in point, the team can promptly intervene through their extensive network of partners or collaborate with local authorities in the specific country of concern. The primary objective is to guarantee that every individual safely reaches their ultimate destination.

At the moment, eLiberare has 21 partners across Romania and 17 partners in Europe that serve as Safe Places in Albania, Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Republic of Moldova, Sweden, Turkey and Ukraine. These Safe Places serve as essential referral pathways for individuals who are traveling further and who face a higher level of risk during their journey.



For those individuals remaining in Romania, the intervention team ensures that they can recognize suspicious recruitment practices and potential situations of exploitation while providing the necessary support and assistance. eLiberare has established a range of essential services to address various needs, including social services, legal assistance for job seekers and workers, mediation, translation services, support for basic necessities, and referrals to specialized service providers.

During the Ukraine Crisis Response, eLiberare's Crisis Textline on WhatsApp emerged as a trusted information source for refugees. It became a platform where refugees could disclose potentially dangerous situations. Notably, this platform accompanied 600 individuals in accessing various services in Romania, and 1,209 individuals were reached for employment assistance. Additionally, the Crisis Textline served as a channel for reporting instances of abuse.

As a direct result of these assistance measures, eLiberare's dedicated team identified victims of gender-based violence (GBV), individuals exploited through labour, and thwarted attempted human trafficking cases, among others.

The Kompass model has been implemented by four other partners in various locations, including Timisoara, Oradea, Baia Mare, and Tulcea, as well as through one international partner based in Athens, Greece.



## Protection

### Achievements and Impact

- Protection monitoring and counselling remain key activities by protection partners to ensure newly arrived refugees are informed of their rights and available services in Romania. With the recent attacks near the Romania-Ukraine border, protection actors have maintained daily presence at the borders to assess the humanitarian needs of those arriving from Ukraine. In September, the Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) provided information and counselling remotely through its helplines to 290 refugees and supported 4,846 refugees from Ukraine on protection and integration at the border crossing points and in major urban centres. Save the Children continued to provide integrated services and counselling to refugees from Ukraine at the border crossings and in counselling hubs across the country.
- Protection partners continued to provide counselling on inclusion services and support to overcome the challenges affecting their economic inclusion in Romania. On 19 September, UNHCR published the result of a rapid assessment on the access of refugees from Ukraine to banking services in Romania. Opening a Romanian bank account is one of the main requirements to receive assistance through the government program adopted in May 2023. While some refugees expressed challenges to open a bank account, the survey found that 85 per cent of the respondents successfully opened a bank account. UNHCR also responded to nearly 1,800 inquiries (1,134 calls and 655 Telegram and WhatsApp messages) on cash assistance, temporary protection, accommodation and other critical information for refugees, particularly on the areas of inclusion and the government assistance program. SIPRI also counselled 650 refugees on information related to accommodation, education opportunities, MHPSS services and other critical services.
- Protection activities continued throughout locations across Romania. Terre des hommes (Tdh) continued its protection work in Bucharest, Brasov, and Constanta and is currently establishing protection activities in Baia Mare and Suceava. Tdh's efforts encompassed adapted information, referrals, translation, transport to services, Individual Protection Assistance (IPA), MHPSS and educational activities for both children and adults, reaching 495 adults. In Somcuta Mare, Save the Children provided information and advice and offered hygiene products to around 70 refugees from Ukraine and aided some refugees to obtain temporary protection.
- Addressing the needs of refugees who have been separated or lost contact from family members, the Romanian Red Cross (RRC), Restoring Family Links (RFL) bureau has trained 360 volunteers from the start of the year until now to identify cases in need of RFL assistance. Additionally, RRC brought awareness to its available RFL services to NGOs, authorities, and community leaders and 2,500 refugees.
- Four Change Association provided social integration services to children and families accommodated in the transit center for Ukrainian refugee managed by the Technical University of Construction in Bucharest. Counselling, information, and needs assessment services were provided to beneficiaries at the Transit Centre for accessing social services intended for refugees from Ukraine in Romania. These services aimed to facilitate their accommodation in Romania, access to community healthcare services, and access to social services based on the beneficiaries' needs and vulnerability. As a result, a complete application for disability status was submitted for one beneficiary, with plans to finalize applications for three more beneficiaries soon. Also, 141 hygiene and sanitation kits were distributed to beneficiaries at the Transit Centre.
- SIPRI conducted a community needs assessment survey, reaching 439 households, to track trends, needs in livelihoods and access to medical services and education, on-going psychosocial developments and intentions of the targeted community. The Romanian Red Cross initiated a needs assessment (21 August-13 October) through direct interviews with refugees and an online survey to better understand current needs in Romania, including RFL. As of 27 September, they have 677 respondents and aim to have around 1,000 by the conclusion of the exercise. Once finalized, the report will be circulated to protection partners.

- To enhance protection coordination and response for Ukrainian refugees, CNRR and UNHCR staff held working sessions focused on emergency response, child protection and reporting, as well as interactive sessions on advocacy, working with authorities, organizational values and self-care.
- From 4-15 September, two Ukrainian refugee artists residing in Romania participated in a two-week regional Training of Trainers (ToT) in community engagement through art, which was co-organized by UNHCR and Artolutions in Sofia, Bulgaria. During this ToT, the refugee artists received basic training on mental health support through art and they learned how to build a team, how to make a group art project and how to work with children. The ToT also served as an opportunity for refugees from different backgrounds to share their own experiences.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- As refugees struggled to gain employment and fulfil other conditions of the ongoing government housing support program, many were given eviction notices from government-supported centres, prompting them to search emergency housing elsewhere. This situation has put a strain on local government or non-governmental shelters in Bucharest, Braşov, Constanţa. Even though the number of newly arriving refugees remains relatively low, the main concern is the lack of medium-term housing in regions where transit centres are not available or are at full capacity.
- The challenges in ensuring a consistent implementation of enrollment conditions for the housing and inclusion support program continue. Many local authorities have rejected applications due to incompleteness, delays, or non-consecutive submissions. As a result, fewer refugees applied for support in September. Additionally, delayed payments of the housing support program led to the more requests for information about the payment schedule through helpdesks and counselling sessions and active demands for advocacy interventions to address this issue.
- The process of obtaining recognition for disability status and accessing disability support services remains difficult. Interpretations of the established procedures vary among county social assistance and child protection directorates, who insist on deduplication of assistance already provided by Ukrainian authorities, despite the issuance of explicit methodological instructions by the National Authority for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- Assessments indicate several protection challenges, including the scarcity of specialized social services for individuals and children with severe health issues. Additionally, refugees face difficulties when it comes to accessing administrative and bureaucratic procedures necessary for their accommodation in Romania. To address the needs of Ukrainian refugees effectively, there is a pressing need to adapt administrative processes within public institutions like ANOFM, DGASPC, and hospitals. This adaptation includes providing essential language translation support in Russian or Ukrainian to facilitate access to various services and ensure a smoother integration process.
- The vulnerabilities faced by refugees are on the rise as a result of delays in receiving support from the national programme. These delays make it increasingly difficult for refugees to cover the costs of living in Romania, ultimately forcing some of them to consider returning to Ukraine. Furthermore, eviction from their accommodations and heightened vulnerabilities have placed certain families at risk of homelessness within Romania.



## Child Protection

### Achievements and Impact

- In the integrated hubs and counselling centres located in Bucharest, Tulcea, Galati, Iasi, Suceava, Baia Mare, Targu Mures and Timisoara, Save the Children provided services to 1,250 children and 3,149 adults from Ukraine. Additionally, 210 children and 357 adults have benefited from case management services.

- Tdh continued its work in Bucharest, Brasov and Constanta, through MHPSS sessions, educational activities, adapted information, referral, and individual protection assistance (IPA). These interventions impacted 758 children residing across all three cities. Tdh mobile teams maintained their efforts across four permanent and semi-permanent centres, as well as within schools in Bucharest. Tdh is actively establishing activities in Baia Mare and Suceava, while their partner organization in Brasov, Cattia, has initiated collaborative efforts with Tdh. Notably, 68 children have already benefited from tele-medical services at the Cattia centre.
- The Resilience Innovation Facilities (RIFs), operated by Tdh in Bucharest and Brasov remained dynamic hubs of activity, granting children an avenue to explore the realms of 3D printing, vinyl cutters, and other tools, all complemented by a MHPSS component. Currently, Tdh is setting up another RIF in Baia Mare. Similarly, in Constanta, the Center for Civic Resources, embarked on similar RIF-type activities and sustained its work in providing IPA for both children and adults. Their contributions extended to facilitating group MHPSS sessions, such as: adolescent empowerment, a mothers' support group, art therapy, physiotherapy, group therapy for children, school preparation, and recreational activities. Furthermore, English language courses were offered. Their mobile MHPSS team also organized a psychosocial event.
- On 21 and 22 September, UNHCR, in collaboration with Tdh, organized two events for refugee children aged 10-13 and 14-17 in Bucharest as part of UNHCR's global refugee youth art contest. These events centred around the theme "Hope Away from Home" and engaged approximately 20 children who participated in various activities and submitted their artwork. On 28 September, UNHCR, in partnership with Estuar, hosted a similar event for the contest at the RomExpo integrated service hub. This event attracted children and youth aged 10-30, providing them with opportunities to create art and attend mental health and psycho-social support workshops, all aimed at combining art, relief, and hope. Over 40 children and youth submitted their artwork for the contest, with the winning designs set to be transformed into t-shirts by UNIQLO. The proceeds from the t-shirt sales will contribute to supporting displaced people globally.
- On 28 September, UNICEF collaborated with the General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPC) in Iasi to host an Autumn Festival at the Bucium Center. The centre is currently providing care to 39 Ukrainian children who were evacuated from a Ukrainian institution and are now under the supervision of the local authority. This festival served as a platform to facilitate and promote the integration of children and young people into the local community. It brought together approximately 300 Ukrainian and Romanian children residing in care facilities managed by DGASPC Iasi, along with government officials, educators, NGO service providers, and other community members. This initiative is part of a broader UNICEF regional project, supported by the Swiss Government, aimed at enhancing the integration of refugee and migrant children into the national child protection systems of EU host countries, ensuring they have access to high-quality support, care, and protection services.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Overall, there are ongoing difficulties in assisting refugee children to access appropriate quality social throughout Romania. This includes a lack of specialized and culturally adapted social services for Ukrainian refugee families at risk of child separation. The issue is being discussed and addressed with partners and relevant child protection authorities.



## Gender-Based Violence

### Achievements and Impact



- UNICEF partnered with women’s rights organization ANAIS to deliver GBV prevention sessions and GBV services to Ukrainian and host community women and adolescents. On 2 September, ANAIS held an information session titled: *“One Hundred Years of Women’s Rights Movement in Ukraine and Romania”* attended by young people. This was the last session of innovative and participatory GBV prevention sessions scheduled for the summer where over 500 participants, including adolescent girls and boys from Ukraine and the host community attended.
- The Sensiblu Foundation (SF) in collaboration with the Romanian Police has successfully conducted an awareness campaign aimed at Ukrainian refugee women who are at risk of experiencing GBV. The campaign, operating under the slogan of *“Safety is everyone’s right”*, delivers crucial messages focused on the prevention of GBV, human trafficking, Intimate Partner Violence and other forms of violence relevant to both the Ukrainian population and the host community. These informative sessions were carried out in multiple locations, including Bucharest, Vâlcea, Suceava, Cluj, Galați and Constanța. Additionally, SF conducted GBV support sessions benefiting 33 participants in locations near the Danube, Bușteni and Simion Bărnuțiu Park.
- In Suceava, Save the Children organized legal information sessions addressing the prevalence of domestic violence in society. These sessions had 19 women and 2 men in attendance. The sessions focused on highlighting the main forms of violence, the impact on children and the relevant legislative framework. Participants appreciated the theme and expressed their willingness to participate in future information session.



## Education

### Achievements and Impact

- When the school year came to an end in June, 27,662 refugee children from Ukraine (RCU) had officially registered with the national education system, largely as a result of the reform adopted through Government decision no. 368, adopted on 26 April 2023, which introduced a conditionality linked to compulsory education (either in Romanian schools or in alternative face-to-face education programmes registered with County School Inspectorates) in order for RCU and their families to qualify for finance assistance offered by the Government of Romania under the temporary protection scheme. 69 education hubs have also been officially registered with the Ministry of Education, providing alternative or complementary learning opportunities - including learning continuity by the Ukrainian curriculum - to reportedly an additional 10,067 RCU. While new administrative data on enrolment and participation of RCU is yet to be released by the Ministry of Education for the new academic year 2023/24 which started on 11th September 2023, preliminary information gathered from several county school inspectorates to date seems to suggest that up to one third of all RCU who had registered with Romanian schools have been attending on a regular basis since the new school year has started.
- Support continues to be provided in this context to ensure that all RCU can access quality education services and progressively integrate or transition to the Romanian education system, through diversified learning pathways including or combining inclusion into Romanian schools, online learning, special classes and after-school activities offering learning support ('education hubs'), and facilitating increasingly access to Romanian language classes to prepare and support integration in the national

education system. RRP partners continue to promote access primarily to classroom-type education modalities that encourage face-to-face learning and personal interactions, as well as to language courses in Romanian, MHPSS and recreational activities supporting their integration, and to facilitate access to online learning (in a complementary or alternative manner) when necessary.

- In September, activities have particularly focused on the implementation of a 'back-to-school' campaign, implemented in collaboration between RRP partners, the Ministry of Education, and County School Inspectorates (ISJs) encouraging all RCU to enrol with the Romanian education system, and supporting them to effectively participate and learn. The campaign was relayed on social media targeting local refugee communities and included a significant supply component targeting pupils (RCU and other vulnerable children in host communities), teachers and schools. This initiative has benefited about 43,000 children, 1,700 teachers/educators and 700 education units so far.
- Coordination in the education sector remains critical, both at national and decentralized levels, to extend the provision of educational services and ensure that refugee children can progressively transition to the Romanian education system. UNICEF has continued to assume the coordination of the Education Working Group in partnership with other UN sister agencies (IOM, World Bank, UNHCR), the Government of Romania (including the Ministry of Education in particular), as well as NGOs and other development partners supporting the delivery of educational services. JRS is co-chairing the Education Working Group. In this regard, efforts have mainly focused on the coordination of preparations for the new academic year, in collaboration with education authorities both at national and decentralized levels.
- UNICEF has prolonged its partnership with local NGOs to ensure continuity of education services, supporting also enrolment in Romanian schools in collaboration with County Schools Inspectorates (ISJs). In this respect, a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was concluded with the ISJ of Timis, bringing to 18 the total number of MoUs concluded with County School Inspectorates countrywide. UNICEF also largely contributed to the 'back to school' campaign, including through the procurement and delivery of 43,050 school bags, 522 school-in-a-box, 132 ECD kits, 488 recreation kits, as well as 1,928 laptops and 69 teaching kits (for Maths and Science especially). Step-by-Step NGO also contributed with an additional 1,000 laptops, and IOM through the prepositioning of 5,000 manuals on Romanian language training at the level of ISJs.
- CNRR has continued to offer counselling on access to education in Iasi, Galati, Suceava, Brasov, Constanta and Bucharest. This includes assisting beneficiaries with school/kindergarten enrolment procedure; procedure of recognition and equivalence of studies/diplomas; translation of documentation; and referral to Romanian language courses and other educational activities. On 25th September, CNRR also launched in Suceava a new Romanian language learning manual entitled "Limba română pentru ucraineni" (Romanian language for Ukrainians), developed in partnership with UNHCR.
- Tdh has been concentrating its efforts on various educational initiatives, including afterschool programs in Brasov and Bucharest and Resilience Innovation Facility (RIF) activities, as well as language classes in both Bucharest and Constanta. These efforts were made possible through its partnership with the Center for Civic Resources in Constanta. In Bucharest, Tdh conducted Romanian language classes for children at the Malva centre and the Resilience Innovation Facility. Similarly, in Constanta, the Center for Civic Resources delivered language classes in English for individuals of all ages, including children, youth, and adults. Tdh afterschool activities continued in both Bucharest and Brasov, based on the following modules: emotional and social wellbeing (Module 1); society, integration and healthy lifestyle (Module 2); geography and the universe (Module 3); mathematics and natural science (Module 4); technology (Module 5); and culture (Module 6). 93 individuals have benefited from language classes (8 adults and 85 children), 42 children participated in RIF (STEM) activities, and 63 children participated in afterschool-type of activities.
- To date, IOM has printed 5,025 Romanian language manuals and workbooks for adults and children who are attending language courses within IOM premises and across Romania. The manuals are distributed based on requests from County School Inspectorates, NGOs and partners. Furthermore, the materials are available in electronic format as well: [www.romaniaeacasa.ro](http://www.romaniaeacasa.ro). IOM continues to provide Romanian language courses for children and adults in several cities across Romania, including the capital city Bucharest, Brasov, Cluj-Napoca, Iasi, Galati, Oradea, etc. The courses may also be organized online for

beneficiaries who are living in remote areas or small cities. Up to now, 1,941 persons - adults and children – have been attending Romanian language courses. In addition, IOM provides cultural mediators (interpreters) to teachers in a few schools in Bucharest where Ukrainian children are enrolled, at the request of the schools. In coordination with the County School Inspectorates, IOM has also organized 8 training sessions up to now in Bucharest, Brasov and Constanta where a total number of 161 educators and teachers attended the training sessions on teaching Romanian language as a foreign language. The most recent training was organised on 6th to 8th September, for teachers from Bucharest and from the county of Ilfov.

- JRS continued to deliver regular non-formal educational programs in 17 dedicated learning centres in several locations: Bucharest, Constanta, Galati, Brasov, Ploiesti, Crevedia, and Medias to almost 1,700 Ukrainian children (884 girls and 814 boys, all of them being registered as audients) with the support of more than 130 Ukrainian teachers/social educators. These centres include 6 education hubs situated within public schools in Bucharest (3), Constanta (2) and Galati (1) – hosting 900 children. Furthermore, JRS provides support in RomExpo, engaging with more than 600 children on a weekly basis. In addition to these educational efforts, over 100 children received hot meals within early childhood centres located in Bucharest, Constanta, and Galati, and other activities were organized including interventions fostering interactions between Ukrainian and Romanian children, with a particular emphasis on peer-to-peer engagement. JRS also offered support to enrolment as audients into Romanian schools to all parents/children assisted and is committed to actively monitoring their attendance and supporting their integration. Furthermore, a team of 5 Ukrainian psychologists are present in education hubs ensuring that children receive necessary emotional and psychological support. One Ukrainian doctor is also visiting education hubs in Bucharest to offer direct medical assistance as well as referral to school cabinets for audient Ukrainian children who are present in the school. Romanian language classes are compulsory in all JRS education centres/hubs, including support provided by teachers and materials. Following Summer School events, certificates of language proficiency should be issued by the School Inspectorates of Bucharest and Constanta, respectively, where intensive Romanian language courses have been conducted for 298 children with the involvement of Romanian teachers.
- Four Change Association provided social integration services to children and families accommodated in the transit centre for Ukrainian refugee managed by the Technical University of Construction in Bucharest. In terms of education, 36 children aged 7-17 and 6 children aged 3-6 participated in educational activities, including remedial education program (Ukrainian language and literature, history; mathematics, science), Romanian language classes, pre-school activities (4h daily, Monday to Friday), non-formal education program (i.e., drama classes/ theatre courses aimed to develop self-discovery and resilience and music therapy). Additionally, counselling services were conducted regarding the importance of enrolling children in an educational institution in Romania, resulting in 11 children newly registered with local public schools.
- Furthermore, educational materials provided by UNICEF were distributed to children aged 3-17 years, which they can use during educational activities.
- In Sibiu, SUS INIMA has been supporting the provision of educational interventions for 68 children aged 6-14 and play workshops for 178 participants.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Some recent reports suggest increase in distress within refugee communities due to the lack of clarity with regards to public schooling accessibility for children. Several families have reported submitting enrolment requests back in May and June 2023, which are not yet processed by education authorities, leaving children not assigned to schools as yet. Adults are highly concerned that they may not be able to afford to stay if they have to quit their jobs in order to stay home with their children.
- For young children aged under 5, there is a shortage of places in creches and kindergartens in big cities and especially in rural areas, where there are less kindergartens and no educational hubs. This also affects parents who are looking for jobs because they cannot leave their children unattended.

- Children with disabilities located in small cities or rural areas have a hard time in registering in schools, reportedly due to limited capacity in schools and to the complexity of the procedure of disability recognition.
- In view of recent developments with escalating number of enrolment requests in Romanian schools, there are increasing concerns on the actual capacity of the Romanian education system to absorb and meet the educational needs of all RCU and adults. While alternative and complementary learning modalities (e.g. education hubs) have been supported since the beginning of the emergency crisis to reduce the burden on schools and help children transition progressively to Romanian schools, RRP partners encounter difficulties in securing funding for continuing their operations.
- Romanian language courses for both children and adults are critical to ensure social integration and smooth transitioning to the national education system. Their provision needs to be accelerated and sustained throughout the next academic year at school level in coordination with County School Inspectorates.
- Several communities and schools have expressed the need to assign cultural mediators (Ukrainian speaking educators who can facilitate communication with parents, children and teachers) in order to support the integration of Ukrainian refugee children in Romanian schools.
- More clarity in the procedures for certification and mutual recognition of studies is required. The mutual recognition of studies between Romania and Ukraine has been subject to a bilateral agreement which was signed earlier this year and is currently undergoing ratification in Romania.



## Health and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

- Unfamiliarity with the Romanian national systems continue to represent a significant barrier for Ukrainian's integrating into their local community, navigating the Romanian health system and accessing necessary care. WHO cultural mediators have sought to address these challenges through delivery of personal consultation and guidance on such topics as registering with a family doctor, receiving specialized care, accessing child vaccinations, receiving disability status and certification, signing up for temporary protection status, and enrolment procedures for school access. Throughout September, cultural mediators delivered individual guidance sessions for 280 Ukrainian refugees.
- The delivery of mental health and psychological support remains an essential component of WHO and partners response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis. In September, WHO cultural mediators delivered in person counselling sessions to 96 Ukrainian beneficiaries. Mures Hub additionally conducted 52 MHPSS activities and workshops during September, attended by 268 Ukrainian refugees.
- The Independent Midwives Association (AMI) provided over the phone medical guidance to 1,976 beneficiaries, including 140 consultations for complex medical and GBV cases. AMI also supported 88 adults and 44 children to register with a family doctor and provided translation services for 268 medical consultations.
- WHO midwives in Galati have extended their service availability to Constanta as of 27 September 2023, and WHO has appointed a further midwife to begin operations in RomExpo Bucharest. WHO midwives provide essential services to Ukrainian women, including but not limited to - antenatal advice including labour and birth planning, postnatal support plus advice on new-born care, referral support for family doctors and OBGYN, family planning, social care, and assistance in cases of bullying and domestic, social, financial, sexual, and other types of violence. The widened service coverage will enable more Ukrainians to access these essential services and help to address the significant need for effective sexual and reproductive healthcare within the refugee community. To spread awareness of the increased availability of WHO midwives, county coordinators and cultural mediators have conducted a targeted

communication campaign in Bucharest and Constanta, distributing leaflets advertising midwife services, location and contact details and sharing information via dedicated Telegram channels.

- WHO supported family doctors in Bucharest, Brasov, Galati and Suceava delivered a total of 329 primary care consultations to refugees from Ukraine. WHO have received reports of increasing difficulty faced by refugees in registering for and receiving primary healthcare services, due in part, to growing fatigue within the medical community towards the Ukrainian crisis, technical issues with the E-PIAS system and the significant administrative burden of treating Ukrainian beneficiaries. Family doctors supported by WHO are therefore a lifeline for thousands of Ukrainians and have provided over 2,500 primary care consultations in 2023 so far.
- To mark the World Sexual Health Day on 4 September, WHO distributed posters and leaflets with information on sexual health myths and misconceptions among its Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) partners. The materials are based on WHO's sexual health social media campaign and available in Romanian, Ukrainian and English. Improving awareness of SRH myths, including those related to contraception is essential to address the rising rates of adolescent pregnancy and the spread of STIs.
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### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Over the course of September, WHO county coordinators liaised with Romanian medical providers, key healthcare stakeholders and Ukrainian beneficiaries to map common issues and challenges faced by Ukrainian refugees when attempting to access healthcare in Romania. WHO Country Office representatives additionally met with the Director of the Cluj Health Insurance House, and three family doctors in Cluj to identify challenges. All identified issues are being compiled and will be presented to the National Health Insurance House during an in-person meeting in October. These include but are not limited to:
  - Several family doctors working with WHO have reported issues with using the NHIH E-PIAS platform. There has been a frequent issue re the platform not recognizing the insurance status for patients who have previously been approved for temporary protection status. Many patients have had their insurance status invalidated by the system, despite having accessed health services in the past.
  - Inability to correct data errors on the platform leading to invalidation of the appointment and the loss of reimbursement for family doctors.
  - Many Ukrainians have reported that Romanian medical providers have misunderstood refugee health entitlements, resulting in refusal to issue reimbursable prescription and refusal to provide primary consultations. Many Ukrainians have thus been forced to pay for healthcare out of pocket.
  - Language barriers represent a significant challenge to the delivery and access of care. To address this issue, some counties have implemented free of charge phone translation services. However, it has been reported that many clinics have refused to use these free services, insisting that physical interpreters must be present.
- In September, AMI identified several challenges confronting refugees, including: persistent language difficulties, exacerbated by a shortage of available interpreters. AMI received numerous requests for contraception from vulnerable Ukrainian girls, boys and women. Romanian continues to experience a notable shortage of free contraception option.
- Access to healthcare remains under strain due to multiple and continuous failures of the national information system used in the public health system, difficulties for refugees in finding specialist doctor appointments, as well as the various refusals of the service providers to provide consultations, treatment or medicine.



## Basic Needs

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR continues supporting refugees to address their basic needs, including through cash assistance and core relief items (CRIs). UNHCR and partners are also preparing to support refugees for winter (ex. child and adult clothing, heating appliances, etc.). As winter approaches, it is forecasted that refugees from Ukraine will come to Romania as a result of the impact of extreme cold weather.
- In the first week of September, UNHCR together with NGO partners Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) and World Vision delivered nearly 1,000 CRIs including hygiene kits and bedding to 600 vulnerable refugee families in Constanța, Galați and Suceava. Between 1-26 September, UNHCR in Galati delivered CRIs including 341 children clothing and 775 family hygiene kits to nearly 2,246 refugees in Constanta in cooperation with World Vision, JRS and the Civic Resource Center.
- Between 11-15 September, UNHCR in Suceava and Galati distributed more than 80 CRIs, including body towels, hygiene kits, pillows, and bed linen which benefited 62 refugees. On 13 September UNHCR delivered 60 pieces of Furniture (including sofas, chairs etc) procured from IKEA to operational partners in Satu Mare and Baia Mare. The items will support partners in their afterschool activities and receiving persons in need of protection. Additionally, for the month of September, UNHCR Suceava FO distributed around 1,425 CRIs, including 252 children set kit to RoUa HUB in Suceava in cooperation with Bucovina Institute, 57 individual hygiene kits in Suceava (with Sensiblu) as well as towels, pillows and quilts in Botosani (with Botoșani Youth Center), reaching a total number of 568 refugees.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Nicolina Centre in Iasi is running out of food to be distributed to refugees from Ukraine. Ongoing advocacy efforts are being undertaken with the municipality to subsidise food at Nicolina Centre.



## Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion

### Achievements and Impact

- Ateliere Fara Frontiere (AFF) organized a job fair in Bucharest on 30 September, aiming to link refugees to employers and available job opportunities in Romania. In preparation for the fair, AFF has organized weekly “job readiness” workshops throughout the month of September with refugees gathering to discuss CV building techniques, share job searching tips, and practice how to approach employers at the fair through role-play exercises.
- HEKS EPER provided career counselling to 29 refugees and enrolled 45 individuals into Romanian language courses. Since the start of the year, HEKS EPER has also linked a total of 130 refugees from Ukraine to vocational training courses. This month, 16 refugees were enrolled in manicure and chef assistant courses (both were 5-day intensive trainings).
- Jobs4Ukraine continues to provide information and support to refugee job seekers through their Telegram Group which reached 1,500 followers during the month of September. This month, 93 individuals and

eight employers also signed-up on Jobs4Ukraine's job platform ([www.jobs4ukr.com](http://www.jobs4ukr.com)) in Romania, and eight "job matches" were facilitated.

- SUS INIMA conducted a Community Needs Assessment Survey with 439 households (1300+ persons) responding. The survey aimed to get a better understanding of the community's needs as it relates to livelihoods and economics, basic needs, social integration aspects (incl. discrimination), cash assistance, overall vulnerability, access to medical services and education (incl. language training).
- The NGO Ukrainians in Iasi has continued to support with linking refugees from Ukraine to the labor market, facilitating three successful hires during the month of September.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The NGO Ukrainians in Iasi reported that several refugees above the age of 60 are actively seeking employment but facing age discrimination and struggling to find work.

## Cross-Cutting Priorities



### Cash-Based Assistance

#### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR provided cash assistance for 402 individuals as part of the Cash for Protection programme while continuing the assessment of previously registered vulnerable families as well as of newly arrived families in Romania. Salvati Copiii / Save the Children Romania offered financial support to a total of 1,975 individuals. This was accomplished through the distribution of 2,202 multifunctional vouchers, covering various sectors. Specifically, 355 vouchers worth 250 RON each were distributed to 355 Ukrainians and Romanians children for educational purposes. Additionally, 1,847 vouchers (worth 200 RON and 600 RON each) were distributed to 853 individuals to meet their basic needs. Good Neighbors Japan has assisted 508 new individuals with multi-purpose cash assistance. Each individual received 568 RON.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- While additional functions have been integrated into the UNHCR Deduplication Tool (RAIS), and more partners have begun utilizing it, technical challenges persist, preventing organizations from accurately reflecting the assistance they have provided. Ongoing endeavors are being undertaken in various aspects of the process to enhance its harmonization and effectiveness.



### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

#### Achievements and Impact

- On 7 September, UNHCR organised a day-long Training of Trainers on PSEA in Timisoara attended by 19 participants from NGOs and authorities. During the training, the work of the PSEA Network was presented and participants were invited to join the Network. UNHCR also conducted two awareness raising sessions on PSEA for more than 40 refugees residing in the Emergency Transit Center in

Timisoara and at the AIDRom service centre. A focus group discussion on safety and security risks and risk mitigation was also part of one of the sessions.

- On 15 September, UNICEF organized a face-to-face information session on PSEA for 20 NGO staff members who work in small sized, grass root level organizations that provide services to vulnerable communities in the county of Suceava. This training session was developed in partnership with DGASPC Suceava and aimed at reaching out with valuable information to those NGOs who act locally, and which have little resources to attend out of the county training courses. The half a day PSEA information session was moderated by UNICEF zone coordinator of the North/East region building on the PSEA IASC training pack. According to the feedback provided, the session was rated as very useful and relevant by participants. UNICEF's effort to bring knowledge to more remote locations and involving local level NGOs was particularly appreciated by county authorities. Future PSEA information sessions will be conducted for other public authorities in Suceava county till the end of 2023.
- SIPRI conducted a half-day PSEA training session in Sibiu, tailored specifically for humanitarian aid professionals, with a total of 32 participants. The training encompassed theoretical instruction, practical exercises, and concluded with an assessment test to evaluate comprehension, aiming to enhance and refine this module for future development.



## Trafficking in Persons

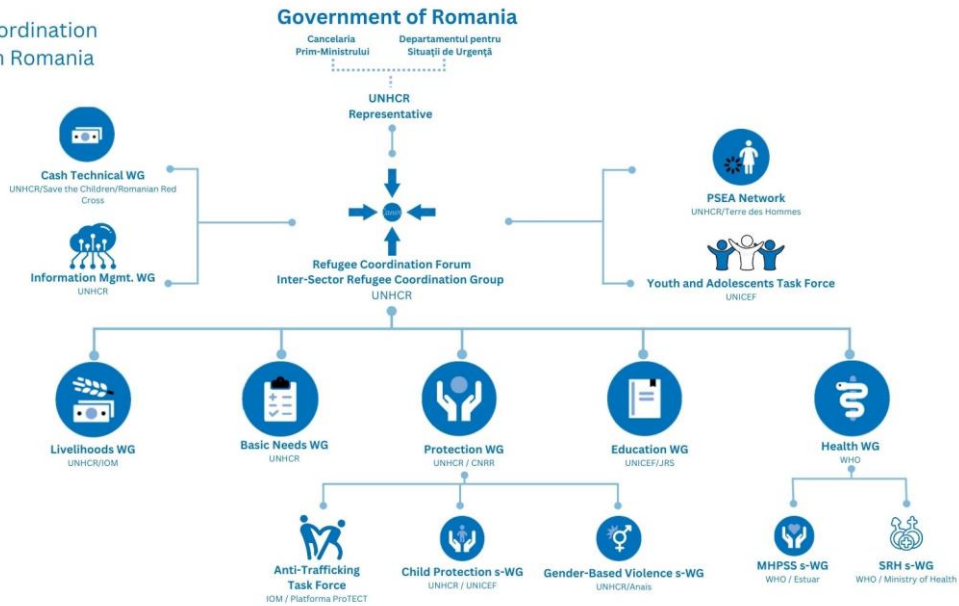
### Achievements and Impact

- IOM together with the National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons (ANITP) organized an event in Cluj-Napoca for 12 representatives of the Regional Centres of ANITP in order to put together a strategy to make the new National Identification and Referral Mechanism (NIRM) simpler to comprehend and easily accessible for different categories of professionals in order to improve the identification and referral of victims of trafficking in Romania.
- Partners from eLiberare continued to inform displaced people from Ukraine through in person and online info sessions and through tailored online content created by the Ukrainian social media manager. Information sessions were conducted in-person in Bucharest for 18 people and in Brasov. Three information sessions were conducted online which benefited 2,953 persons.
- The SUS INIMA Programmes for Refugee Integration, in collaboration with ECLER, delivered Human Trafficking training targeted at educational professionals. The training reached a total of 59 beneficiaries, with an age range of 25-56 years. The participants consisted of 98 percent females and 2 percent males, all representing public schools within Sibiu County, as well as DGASPC and public authority representatives.

## Working in partnership



Refugee Coordination Structure in Romania



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**LINKS**

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