Regional Refugee Response Plan
For the Ukraine Situation

Romania – Gender Based Violence Sub-Working Group
08.05.2025, 11.00 – 12.30

Location: Hybrid

Participants: ANES, Dr. Max Foundation, Plan International, EEIRH, UNHCR & Daniela Draghici – ESD Instructor

Key discussion points:

Updates on discontinuation of projects and ongoing funding constraints in the GBV sector in Romania

Dr. Max Foundation

- In **Suceava**, **Constanța**, and **Bucharest**, GBV services for refugees are still ongoing, while the **Vâlcea** location has been closed. Challenges persist due to other NGOs also stopping their assistance. There is a limited time frame for continuing activities, and it may not extend through the end of the year.
- Refugees are worried about the upcoming elections, raising concerns about their ability to remain in Romania in safety, as returning to Ukraine is not an option for them.
- The **Safe You** app, which provides services and support for women (not only survivors of violence), is still available. There are plans to expand the app by adding more consultants, and information sharing through the platform is crucial. The project will continue to move forward as it has not been affected by funding.

CNAS National Insurance House update

- Horatiu Moldovan, a doctor from Tg. Mures, has been appointed as the new head of the National Insurance House. EEIRH have had a longstanding and productive collaboration with him and expressed their positive feedback on future collaborations with him.

Presentation of report *Improving Access to Healthcare and Justice for Sexual Violence Survivors*

Carmen Niculescu from ANES presented the 2025 report **Improving Access to Healthcare and Justice for Sexual Violence Survivors. Sexual Violence Intervention Centres in Romania**. The report is based on a participatory approach involving expertise from Romanian and Norwegian stakeholders, including NGOs serving Roma populations, and was guided by the Council of Europe. Authored by Kilden genderresearch.no on behalf of the Norwegian expert group and supported by Aspacia Foundation, the report reflects expert consensus and was commissioned by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security. It is part of the "RoNor – Stronger Together Against Gender-Based Violence!" bilateral project, financed by the Norway Grants 2014–21 under the Justice Program, with ANES as the project promotor and the Norwegian Ministry of Justice as the project partner. Some highlights from the report include:

- One-third of women in Romania have experienced physical or sexual violence, a trend seen across Europe.
- Sexual violence has severe, long-term health consequences for individuals and society.

- Centres provide crucial support, including medical care, forensic examinations, and psychological support to victims.
- Since 2021, Romania has established ten sexual violence intervention centres, though challenges in funding, awareness, and accessibility persist. The first centre, located at the University Emergency Hospital Bucharest (SUUB), opened on May 10th, 2021. Additional centres have since been set up in Bucharest, Bacău, Târgu Mureș, Craiova, Constanța, Piatra-Neamț, Satu Mare, Slobozia, Sibiu, and Timișoara, all situated within emergency hospitals.

The project RoNor concluded in 2025 and ANES hosted a conference and a field visit to Tg. Mures on 23 of April. 34 professionals attended from accros the country.

There is hope to expand Sexual Violence Intervention Centres in Romania from the current 10 to every emergency hospital in the country. NGOs, social services and police acknowledge the need for these services in hospitals. The intervention center in **Bacău** shows good potential for improvement, with the hospital management aiming to build a team involving psychologists, doctors, and nurses for better response to GBV cases.

The report on the RoNor project will be shared with hospital managers and disseminated more widely, as it is crucial for the future of these centers.

Best practice model highlight 1: Târgu Mureș has been recognized by both ANES and EEIRH as a model of successful local cooperation and strong advocacy with the municipality. Thanks to EEIRH's local involvement and expertise, the centre in Târgu Mureș is considered one of the best in Romania, for its effective collaboration with local authorities. The centre has established direct referrals from the police, ensuring awareness of its role and services among law enforcement. The center meets all necessary standards, and the staff is trained to handle referrals effectively. Follow-up visits are conducted at 3 and 6 months to monitor progress. It follows established sexual violence protocols and guidelines, with **medical staff speaking Russian and Ukrainian**, making it easier for Ukrainian refugees to access services. The centre is located within the county hospital's emergency unit, ensuring immediate and accessible assistance.

Best practice model highlight 2: Empowerment through Self Defense Lead instructor Daniela Draghici conducted a 3-day-long ESD workshop in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. The workshop was expertly organized by the Reproductive Health Training Center (RHTC) / Centrul de Instruire în Domeniul Sănătăţii Reproductive (CIDSR), with support from the Embassy of Finland in Bucharest and Chișinău, as part of the project "Supporting Youth-Friendly Education and Awareness Raising on Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and Gender-Based Violence Prevention". The workshop was actively attended by 25 participants, most of them from Neovita's Youth-Friendly Health Clinics, who learned how to defend themselves and others in situations of violence and also become instructors to train their colleagues working in the field. The workshop was experiential, using role play and interactive exercises to develop self-defense skills. The workshop piloted an innovative model where a duo of **ESD trainer and psychologist co-delivered the sessions. There is also a training manual available, to be shared with the group.**

Info session on UNHCR Romania GBV Strategy 2025-2027

The document outlines UNHCR Romania comprehensive approach to preventing, mitigating, and responding to GBV. It defines GBV and details core actions, including prevention, risk mitigation, response, case management, and inter-agency coordination. The operational context in Romania is framed within the legal and policy landscape. The strategic priorities focus on strengthening the national GBV response

system, enhancing community-led prevention efforts, expanding risk mitigation across sectors, ensuring survivor-centered case management, and improving coordination among agencies. The document also highlights the design, validation, and operationalization of the UNHCR GBV Strategy 2025–2027, aiming to create a unified, effective response to GBV in the coming years.

Follow-up points

1. UNHCR to re-share the 2025 GBVsWG working plan for amendments to activities in light of the funding constraints
2. Organize a bilateral consultation with Daniela Draghici and ANES to organize free ESD sessions for the Ukrainian refugees in Romexpo, leveraging the expertise of the two ANES-trained ESD trainers.
3. Organize a bilateral consultation with ANES for organizing info sessions on GBV services in Romexpo.
4. UNHCR to support ANES in sharing the RoNor report to diverse audiences for better outreach.
5. Reports from the WG members for showcasing to the donors all the good work.

Additional resources:

Raport-tradus_FINAL-RO.pdf

Report_2025_Improving Access to Healthcare and Justice for Sexual Violence Survivors_web.pdf