Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

February 2026

INTER-AGENCY NEWSLETTER

REFUGEE COORDINATION FORUM | ROMANIA

Supporting inclusion, resilience and durable solutions for refugees in Romania.

© UNHCR | Government official speaking during the "Marking Four Years of Romania's Response to the Ukraine Refugee Situation" commemoration event at RomExpo, Bucharest.

$48.6M

2026 RRP APPEAL

43

APPEALING PARTNERS

201,119

Ukrainian Temporary Protection holders in Romania
(as of 31 January 2026)

Men	Women	Boys	Girls
73,213 (36%)	75,220 (37%)	27,058 (13%)	25,628 (13%)

APPEAL BY SECTOR (USD)

Protection	Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion	Basic Needs	Public Health and MHPSS	Education	Child Protection	Gender-based Violence
$16.5M	$16.2M	$15.7M	$10.1M	$9.3M	$8.7M	$6.3M

2026 TARGETS

3,800
Support for Public Authorities
personnel trained

10,800
Strengthening Social Cohesion
participants from both refugee and host communities in initiatives and events

1,800
Romanian courses for integration
people provided with Romanian languages classes

PEOPLE TARGETED BY SECTOR

Protection **35,300**	Education **3,300**
Child Protection **5,000**	Health and Nutrition **23,700**
Gender-Based Violence **28,000**	MHPSS **9.800**
Basic Needs **23,400**	Cash Assistance **20,700**
Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion **13,300**	

INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

© WHO Romania/Mihai Eremia

Operational Context

Within the framework of the Refugee Response Plan (RRP), UN agencies and their NGO partners maintain active coordination with national and local authorities through the Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) and its sectoral working groups. These joint structures are fundamental to delivering a unified, efficient, and all-encompassing response to refugee needs throughout Romania.

Since 24 February 2022, over 5.1 million Ukrainians have fled to countries across Europe.

According to data published by the Romanian General Inspectorate for Immigration (GII) as of 31 January 2026, a total of 203,684 Ukrainian nationals and third country nationals were granted temporary protection status in Romania.

This status that entitles holders to access healthcare services, the education system, and employment opportunities.

The response continues to prioritize protection, inclusion, and access to essential services for refugees, while promoting durable solutions, social cohesion, and greater national and local ownership of the response.

Marking four years of Romania's response to the Ukraine Refugee Situation

Four years after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Romania remains a country of safety and solidarity for those forced to flee. Since 2022, more than 201,000 Ukrainians have received Temporary Protection status, granting them access to healthcare, education, and the labour market. This response has been shaped by close coordination between Romanian authorities and 43 Refugee Response Plan partners, alongside many other actors, reflecting a strong model of national leadership reinforced by international solidarity. While notable progress in inclusion has been achieved, many refugee families continue to face serious vulnerabilities. One in three households experiences severe material deprivation, most rely on negative coping strategies to meet basic needs, and significant gaps remain in healthcare, housing, access to essential services, and language learning opportunities.

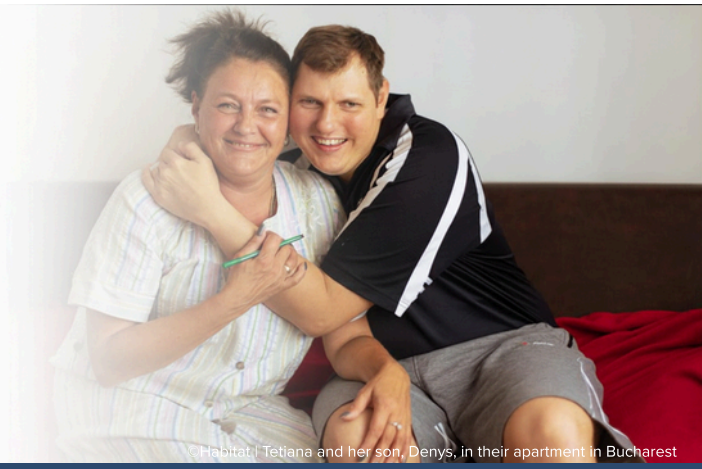
To mark four years of Romania's refugee response and the mid-cycle review of the 2025–2026 Refugee Response Plan, UNHCR — in its role as RRP Coordinator — together with the Department for Emergency Situations within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, convened a high-level commemorative event in Bucharest on 24 February 2026. The event was hosted at UNHCR's Community Center for Refugees at RomExpo, a hub that over the past four years has brought together Government institutions, UN agencies, and NGOs to deliver essential services to refugees. The event drew 125 participants, including representatives from 11 Romanian Government and local institutions, 25 RRP partners - UN agencies and national and international organizations, and 31 embassies.

The event opened with a keynote panel featuring senior Romanian officials: Ms. Diana Punga, State Counsellor for Relations with Civil Society, Presidential Administration; Mr. Dragoș Pîslaru, Minister of Investments and European Projects; Ms. Luminița Odobescu, State Counsellor for Foreign Policy and Security within the Prime Minister's Chancellery; and Dr. Raed Arafat, State Secretary and Head of the Department for Emergency Situations. Their interventions reaffirmed Romania's strong and continued commitment to refugees affected by the war in Ukraine, highlighting coordinated national responses, the provision of essential services, and the critical importance of sustained partnerships with international organizations and civil society. UNHCR Representative, Mr. Pablo Zapata subsequently presented the 2025–2026 RRP Mid-Cycle Review, outlining key achievements, strategic priorities, and concrete measures aimed at strengthening inclusion and ensuring sustainable, long-term support for refugees and host communities alike.

Spotlight story - RRP partner

Habitat for Humanity Romania

From emergency shelter to long-term stability for refugee families



© Habitat | Tetiana and her son, Denys, in their apartment in Bucharest

2,750 refugees provided with emergency accomodation

3,300 emergency kits distributed

35 apartments rented for refugees

3 refugee centres rehabiliated

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since the start of the war in Ukraine, Habitat for Humanity Romania has played a key role in supporting refugees on their path from emergency shelter to long-term stability.

In the first phase of the response, the organization provided immediate assistance for 2750 refugees with emergency accommodation and the distribution of 3300 emergency kits, reaching thousands of people in transit.

As needs evolved, the focus shifted toward sustainable housing solutions, including social rental programs, renting 35 Apartments for refugees and the rehabilitation of 3 refugee centres.

SUSTAINBALE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Habitat for Humanity Romania invests in solutions that provide refugee families with safe, adequate and affordable homes.

Through the Social Rental Program, the organization secures private apartments and supports families with the resources they need to rebuild their lives in dignity.

Rehabilitated refugee centres also offer transitional support for those with the most acute needs.

TETIANA'S STORY

One of the families supported through this intervention is Tetiana and her son, Denys, who fled the war from Bakhmut.

After months of displacement across Ukraine and several countries, they arrived in Romania exhausted and in need of stability. Living in overcrowded and temporary accommodations had a strong impact on Denys, who has Down syndrome, increasing his anxiety and emotional distress.

Through Habitat's Social Rental Program, the family was supported with a private apartment in Bucharest, offering them a safe and quiet environment. This stability proved transformative.

> "My son became calmer. For the first time, I can leave him alone for a few hours. We finally have the chance to live a normal life
>
> - Tetiana

IMPACT ON FAMILIES

Beyond housing, Habitat facilitated access to essential services, including medical support, contributing to the family's gradual recovery and integration.

This story reflects Habitat for Humanity Romania's broader approach: not only providing shelter, but creating the conditions for dignity, stability, and long-term inclusion. By combining emergency response with sustainable housing solutions, the organization continues to support refugee families in rebuilding their lives in safety.

HOUSING SUPPORT JOURNEY

Habitat for Humanity® România

Learn more Habitat for Humanity Romania

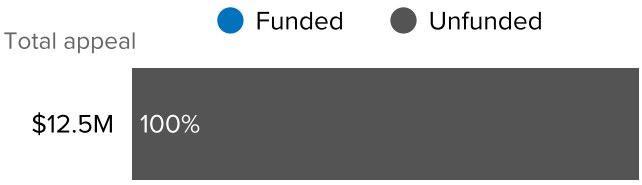
PROTECTION

Supporting Refugees Through Information, Access, and Advocacy

24
PARTNERS appealing

36,000
PEOPLE TARGETED in 2026

$12.5M
FINANCIAL REQUEST in 2026



WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Consiliul Național Român pentru Refugiați

KEY PARTNERS

JRS · Agenția Națională pentru Egalitatea de Șanse între Femei și Bărbați · Terre des hommes Helping children worldwide. · Salvați Copiii Save the Children Romania

unicef for every child · Crucea Roșie Română · Novapolis · Migrant Integration Center Brasov

Full list of sectoral appealing partner: ADPARE | City Makers | East European Institute for Reproductive Health (EEIRH) | EDNAE | FONSS | IOM | JRS Romania | Malva | Metropolitan Agency for Durable Development Brasov | Migrant Integration Centre Brasov | Necuvinte | Novapolis | PATRIR | Plan International | RomaJust | Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) | Save the Children Romania | Dr.Max Foundation | Sibiu Community Foundation | Terre des Hommes | Tineri Pentru Tineri | UNHCR | UNICEF | World Vision Romania

Advancing Statelessness Awareness and Community Well-Being

On 17 February, UNHCR organized a seminar marking 20 years since Romania's accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. The event brought together 17 participants from state and government institutions, civil society, and UN agencies, and highlighted Romania's obligations under both conventions while analysing the current level of implementation. UNHCR and an invited speaker from JRS raised awareness about the critical importance of establishing a dedicated procedure for determining statelessness and a legal status for stateless persons in Romania. The seminar also underscored that early identification of stateless persons and the recording of their claims is a requirement under the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum. Meanwhile, community engagement activities at the RomExpo Community Centre continued throughout February with the relaunch of the Romanian language speaking club, offering dedicated sessions for both children and adults. Sessions covered everyday conversational topics, as well as situational topics such as visiting a doctor, responding to emergencies, and preparing for job interviews. On 5 February, UNHCR also supported the launch of a community-led psychological support programme for refugee parents and caregivers at the RomExpo Community Centre. Created in direct response to needs expressed by the community itself, the programme consists of ten sessions facilitated by a Ukrainian psychologist, aimed at strengthening the emotional well-being of adults caring for children affected by war and forced displacement. By backing this initiative, UNHCR seeks to enhance family resilience and equip parents with practical tools to support their children while navigating the challenges of life in displacement.

Strengthening Protection Coordination and Advocacy

In February 2026, the Protection Working Group (PWG) held its first meeting of the year, co-chaired by CNRR, with 23 participants — a notably stronger turnout compared to recent months. The meeting featured a presentation by the Red Cross on its programmes for refugees in Romania, as well as the conclusions of an EU-funded project focused on the integration of refugee children, which provided technical support to local authorities in Timișoara and Bucharest. Participants also discussed and aligned on protection advocacy priorities for 2026. In parallel, UNHCR engaged actively in the legislative process following the Ministry of Internal Affairs' publication of a draft law on the establishment and ganization of screening centres, which aims to introduce legal modifications needed for the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.

Within the ten-day consultation window granted to UNHCR, civil society actors, and the general public, UNHCR — under the auspices of the Romania Protection Working Group — organized three coordination meetings with partners also submitting comments on the draft law and additionally discussed it during the monthly Child Protection Sub-Working Group meeting. UNHCR's submissions focused primarily on insufficient compliance with EU Pact principles relating to statelessness and child protection, on the role of UNHCR and NGO partners within the Romanian asylum system, and on the need for stronger safeguards in screening and border procedures, as well as in situations of restricted movement that could amount to de facto detention.

Delivering Essential Protection Services

During February 2026, CNRR provided direct assistance across multiple areas of need. A total of 172 forcibly displaced persons received support in applying for social services and benefits, while 167 Ukrainian temporary protection holders received tailored guidance on temporary protection permits, covering procedures such as obtaining, updating, or renouncing TP status, as well as general information on their rights and obligations. An additional 81 individuals were supported in accessing medical services spanning a wide range of needs, including oncology, chronic conditions, bedridden patients, and other vulnerable cases requiring specialized care.

CHILD PROTECTION

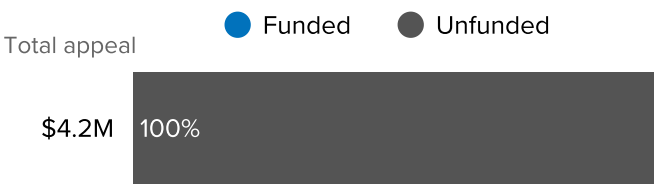
Protecting and Supporting Ukrainian Refugee Children in Romania

© SCOP Timișoara | SERA/Photographer Livia Mateiaș

9
PARTNERS appealing

4,957
PEOPLE TARGETED in 2026

$4.2M
FINANCIAL REQUEST in 2026



WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

unicef for every child

MINISTERUL MUNCII, FAMILIEI, TINERETULUI ȘI SOLIDARITĂȚII SOCIALE
Autoritatea Națională pentru Protecția Drepturilor Copilului și Adopție

KEY PARTNERS

JRS · Salvați Copiii · World Vision · Terre des hommes · Crucea Roșie Română · Novapolis

Full list of sectoral appealing partner: City Makers | Sibiu Community Foundation | Necuvinte | Plan International | Save the Children Romania | Terre des Hommes | UNHCR | UNICEF | World Vision Romania

Fostering Child Well-Being, Creativity, and Cultural Connection Through Safe Space Activities in February

UNHCR delivered a series of child-friendly recreational and cultural activities at the RomExpo Community Centre and Băneasa Hub, engaging children aged 6–14 across three sessions. Activities included a felt toy sewing workshop, a flower bouquet masterclass, and a traditional Ukrainian spring songs workshop ("Vesnianky"), each facilitated by Ukrainian community members. These sessions were designed to promote creativity, peer learning, and self-expression in a safe and inclusive environment, while also strengthening social cohesion between refugee and host community members through shared cultural exploration.

Sustaining Integrated Child Protection Services Across Multiple Locations

During February 2026, Save the Children and World Vision Romania collectively delivered child protection services to hundreds of refugee children and caregivers across Bucharest, Constanța, Baia Mare, Galați, Iași, and Suceava. Interventions included case management, individual counselling, documentation support, and inter-institutional coordination, facilitating access to health, social, and protection services. MHPSS support continued through individual and online psychological consultations. Mobile teams operated in collaboration with local authorities to extend outreach to vulnerable children.

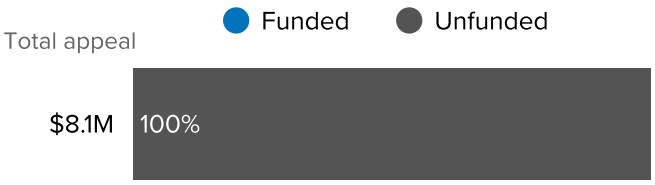
BASIC NEEDS

Supporting Refugees through Integrated Services, Emergency Aid, and Local Coordination

13
PARTNERS appealing

23,376
PEOPLE TARGETED in 2026

$8.1M
FINANCIAL REQUEST in 2026



WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Salvați Copiii Save the Children Romania

CRUCEA ROȘIE ROMÂNĂ

KEY PARTNERS

JRS Jesuit Refugee Service

EDNAE

fundația comunitară Sibiu

AIDROM Asociația Ecumenică a Bisericilor din România

Full list of sectoral appealing partner: ADPARE | AIDRom | ASSOC | EDNAE | FONSS | Habitat for Humanity | IOM | JRS Romania | Novapolis | RomaJust | SERA | UNHCR

Sustaining Essential Relief Distributions and Supporting Families at Risk of Eviction

Throughout February 2026, UNHCR maintained its commitment to meeting the essential needs of forcibly displaced persons through continued distributions of non-food items (NFIs) in partnership with the General Directorate of Social Assistance of Bucharest Municipality (DGASMB). Essential items including mattresses and undergarments were distributed to 90 people in Bucharest County, reflecting the ongoing dedication to preserving the dignity of displaced populations. As of the end of February 2026, UNHCR has cumulatively distributed more than 170,675 core relief items (CRIs) to approximately 46,910 Ukrainian refugees, including vulnerable third country nationals and members of the host community across Romania.

Responding to Eviction Risks Through Inter-Institutional Coordination

During the reporting period, UNHCR worked in close coordination with local authorities to support five families who were evicted or facing imminent risk of eviction. These households included single mothers with children, persons with disabilities, and older persons confronting heightened protection risks. Interventions focused on securing safe accommodation and providing counselling and referrals to facilitate access to social benefits and livelihood opportunities, with the aim of fostering greater self-reliance. Collaboration with the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPC), DGASMB, and civil society partners proved instrumental in enabling timely and coordinated responses. This strong inter-institutional framework contributed meaningfully to promoting access to stable accommodation and mitigating protection risks for the most vulnerable individuals and families.

Intensifying Advocacy for Sustainable Housing Solutions

In February 2026, UNHCR intensified its advocacy efforts with national authorities on behalf of Ukrainian refugees accommodated in private collective housing units facing immediate risk of eviction, following the expiry of the government assistance programme on 31 December 2025 and continued uncertainty around outstanding payments. UNHCR formally requested the support of both national and local authorities to review the situation and identify sustainable solutions to prevent and mitigate housing instability and the associated protection risks. The strengthened collaboration between humanitarian actors and public authorities has facilitated timely information sharing, joint risk assessments, and coordinated dialogue aimed at working toward longer-term accommodation solutions for vulnerable refugee households.

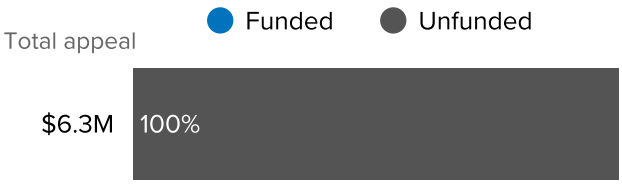
EDUCATION

Supporting the Inclusion of Refugee and Vulnerable Children Across Romania

24
PARTNERS appealing

23,376
PEOPLE TARGETED in 2026

$6.3M
FINANCIAL REQUEST in 2026



WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

unicef for every child

JRS JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE

KEY PARTNERS

MINISTERUL EDUCAȚIEI ȘI CERCETĂRII

Salvați Copiii Save the Children Romania

AIDROM ASOCIAȚIA ECUMENICĂ A BISERICILOR DIN ROMÂNIA

HELP Ukrainians

Migrant Integration Center Brasov Empowering Inclusion

Full list of sectoral appealing partner: ADPARE | AIDRom | AMI | Association Malva | City Makers | Civic Radauti Association | EDNAE | Sibiu Community Foundation | Help Ukrainians | IOM | JRS Romania | National Youth Foundation | Novapolis | PATRIR | Plan International | REF Romania | RomaJust | SECS | SERA | Terre des Hommes | UNICEF | Youth for Youth | YMCA

Sustaining Education Support and Inclusion Services for Ukrainian Refugee Children

Despite a continued reduction in the number of RRP partners actively operating in the education sector, comprehensive support was delivered throughout the reporting period to Ukrainian children and their families to facilitate meaningful integration into the Romanian education system. Interventions spanned remedial lessons, extracurricular activities, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), Romanian language courses, and social cohesion initiatives, ensuring a holistic approach to educational inclusion across multiple locations.

UNICEF Romania maintained active engagement with national, county, and local authorities and NGO partners, working in close collaboration with Step-by-Step, HOLTIS, and JRS Romania to sustain education support services in cities with significant refugee populations, including Bucharest, Brașov, Cluj, Constanța, Maramureș, Tulcea, and Vâlcea County. A central component of this support remains the operation of 14 early education centres functioning as Play, Learning, and Parenting Hubs (PLPHs), run in partnership with the Step-by-Step Center. These hubs delivered early education and care services at community level, providing young children with structured learning environments tailored to their developmental needs.

Beyond direct service delivery, Step-by-Step continued to offer technical assistance, pedagogical guidance, and context-specific consultations to educational personnel, strengthening staff capacity and ensuring consistent implementation across all hub locations.

Facilitating School Enrollment, Study Recognition, and Language Integration at the RomEXPO Education Desk

At the RomEXPO Education Desk, coordinated efforts with the Bucharest School Inspectorate (ISMB) continued to support equitable access to education for Ukrainian children in Bucharest, while assisting parents throughout the school integration process. During the reporting period, the Desk provided educational counselling to 263 Ukrainian citizens. Among them, 72 newly arrived children were assisted with auditor enrollment in Bucharest schools and kindergartens to facilitate rapid integration into the education system. The Desk also supported families with the recognition of Ukrainian studies for children transitioning from auditor to full enrollment status, assisting 12 schools in preparing compliant recognition files in line with national regulations.

EDUCATION

© UNICEF/IoanaMoldovan

Support was provided for organizing Romanian language proficiency tests for 102 Ukrainian citizens, encompassing logistics, methodological guidance, and procedural clarification. Following a notification from the Embassy of Ukraine, the Desk also provided targeted institutional guidance, informing ISMB and directing the concerned family toward the competent authority to complete the required legal steps. The Desk additionally participated in UNICEF-supported events at the Romexpo Community Centre, including the commemoration of four years since the start of the war in Ukraine, reaffirming the collective commitment to children's right to education.

Expanding Reach Through School Mediators and Intensive Daily Support

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), operating under the UNICEF-funded project, provided support to a total of 263 children during the reporting period, including 60 children at the RomEXPO Playground. A pool of 10 school mediators delivered assistance across Bucharest, where 191 children and 90 adults were supported, and Constanța, where 142 children and 84 adults received services, with activities carried out under formal protocols concluded with the local School Inspectorates in both cities.

School mediators provided intensive daily in-class assistance to children at the primary education level, including dedicated support for children with disabilities. The nature and volume of requests received reflect the depth of integration challenges faced by refugee children and their families. Children required translation of instructions, vocabulary clarification, individual support during lessons, structured homework guidance, and behavioral and adaptation support — all indicative of the sustained and intensive daily involvement of mediators in the school integration process. Requests for Romanian language courses and certificates remained consistent, with language proficiency continuing to serve as a critical condition for full integration into the Romanian educational system. Parents, meanwhile, sought structured guidance on a wide range of procedural matters, including initial school registration, zero-grade enrollment, status transitions from audient to student, inspectorate procedures, and language support during meetings with teachers, administrators, and school secretaries. Cases requiring longer-term mediation — including classroom conflicts, behavioral concerns, and teacher-parent misunderstandings — also emerged as a distinct and resource-intensive category of need.

Under the AMIF-funded project, JRS implemented a broad range of activities across the Constanța and Galați Regional Centres, with coverage extending to Tulcea and Brăila, including counselling on access to education, enrollment, social benefits, and language courses, as well as direct educational activities for more than 384 migrant children and 523 adults. Four teachers and one volunteer were engaged in organizing daily Romanian language courses across various formats. JRS also continued to provide structured learning activities for 45 preschoolers at its Bucharest venue, while under a separate ESF-funded project, additional educational activities were delivered for more than 200 children and adults in the capital.

Broadening Educational Support Through Save the Children Romania

Save the Children Romania (SCR) delivered educational activities for refugees from Ukraine and other vulnerable groups — including preschoolers, school-age children, and adolescents — across schools and educational centres during the reporting period. Interventions aimed to ensure access to education, support academic progress, and facilitate the inclusion of children from diverse cultural backgrounds. In February 2026, SCR provided educational support to 109 children across Bucharest, Baia Mare, Galați, Iași, and Suceava, delivering afterschool and remedial activities for 43 children and Romanian and English language classes for 87 children. SCR also actively facilitated the enrollment of refugee children into the Romanian educational system, strengthening pathways to long-term inclusion.

LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION

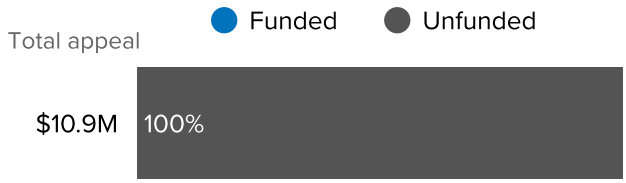
Promoting Refugee Inclusion Through Education, Employment, and Recognition of Qualifications

© UNHCR/IoanaMoldovan

25
PARTNERS appealing

13,321
PEOPLE TARGETED in 2026

$10.9M
FINANCIAL REQUEST in 2026



WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

World Vision

KEY PARTNERS

IOM UN MIGRATION | JOBS FOR UKRAINE | Salvați Copiii Save the Children Romania | Migrant Integration Center Brasov | fundația comunitară Sibiu | NOVAPOLIS | Commit GLOBAL

Full list of sectoral appealing partner: ADDJB | ADPARE | Association Malva | Ateliere fara frontiere | City Makers | Civic Radauti Association | Commit Global | Sibiu Community Foundation | Help Ukrainians | IOM | JRS Romania | Metropolitan Agency for Durable Development Brasov | Migrant Integration Centre Brasov | National Youth Foundation | Plan International | Project Voyager | REF Romania | Salvati Copiii | UNHCR | UNICEF | World Vision Romanian | YMCA

Supporting Labour Market Access and Socio-Economic Inclusion Through Counselling and Orientation Services

During the reporting period, partners continued to deliver a broad range of services supporting Ukrainian refugees' access to employment, language learning, and socio-economic integration across Romania. IOM Romania, through its Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs), provided integrated socio-economic inclusion services to displaced Ukrainians throughout February. A total of 58 adults received information and counselling services, 23 adults enrolled in Romanian language courses, 7 adults participated in labour market access activities, and 47 adults took part in socio-cultural and civic orientation activities. These services collectively support refugees in navigating the Romanian labour market, improving language skills, and accessing reliable information on employment rights and safe working conditions.

Facilitating Employment Connections and Job Search Support Through Digital Platforms

Jobs for Ukraine continued to facilitate employment connections through its Jobs4Ukraine platform during February, connecting 88 actors — including job candidates and company recruiters — and resulting in 66 matches with job opportunities, while 84 refugees registered their profiles on the platform. In addition, 30 individuals received individual counselling through email or phone to support their job search process, providing personalized guidance tailored to their circumstances and employment goals.

On 11 February, Jobs for Ukraine organized a webinar titled "How to start your job search in Romania," which attracted 106 registered participants, with 52 attendees joining the online session from more than 12 locations across Romania and two cities in Ukraine. The high level of participation and sustained engagement throughout the session demonstrated strong and widespread interest in employment-related guidance and practical labour market orientation among the refugee population.

Strengthening Evidence-Based Programming Through Community Consultations

On 25 February, UNHCR conducted two focus group discussions with 10 Ukrainian community members, exploring experiences and challenges related to employment and integration in Romanian society. These consultations contribute directly to evidence-based advocacy and programming under the Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion sector, ensuring that the perspectives and lived experiences of refugees inform the design and prioritization of support services. The insights gathered complement quantitative data from partner service delivery and provide a more nuanced understanding of the barriers refugees face in achieving sustainable economic inclusion.

CRITICAL GAPS IN PROTECTION, INCLUSION, AND SERVICE CONTINUITY FOR REFUGEES

© Plan International/ George Calin

Fragmented Education Integration and Systemic Barriers to Inclusion

Notwithstanding the breadth of support delivered, significant challenges persist in achieving full integration of refugee children into the Romanian education system. A fundamental gap remains in the availability of reliable, disaggregated data on children enrolled and actively attending classes, making it difficult to identify those requiring remedial support, improved language instruction, Latin script literacy development, or specialized services for children with disabilities or special educational needs. Without this data infrastructure, targeted and proportionate interventions cannot be effectively planned or scaled to meet actual demand.

Schools willing to integrate refugee children continue to lack adequate institutional support, including specialized teacher training on multiculturality and inclusive pedagogy, while the network of school mediators — despite delivering high-value, intensive services across multiple locations — remains insufficient relative to the scale and geographic spread of need at the national level. After-school and extracurricular programmes for children with employed parents remain scarce, and dedicated initiatives targeting adolescents and youth are largely absent. The regulatory framework governing intensive language courses, proficiency assessments, and final examinations for migrant children has yet to ensure parity with national students, representing a persistent systemic barrier to full academic participation, credential recognition, and long-term educational integration.

Persistent Barriers to Stable and Sustainable Employment

Partners continue to report strong and sustained demand for employment support and labour market orientation, including basic information on how to search for jobs, understand recruitment channels, and navigate the administrative procedures associated with formal employment in Romania. The high participation rates recorded in employment guidance webinars and counselling services underscore that a significant proportion of refugees remain in need of practical, accessible, and ongoing job search support.

Consultations with the refugee community and partner organizations have further highlighted persistent challenges related to job stability and labour market conditions. Counselling teams reported cases in which refugees employed for more than two years were informed that their contracts would not be renewed, as employers opted for lower-cost labour alternatives. These situations illustrate the structural vulnerability of refugees concentrated in lower-wage sectors and the acute risk of employment instability that many face even after establishing an initial foothold in the labour market.

Findings from UNHCR's focus group discussions point to continued and multifaceted barriers to sustainable labour market integration, including language limitations, difficulties accessing higher-skilled employment opportunities commensurate with refugees' qualifications and experience, and broader integration challenges that intersect with housing insecurity, childcare responsibilities, and limited social networks. Despite the ongoing efforts of partners across the sector, significant gaps remain in access to stable and adequately paid employment, targeted and individualized employment counselling, and Romanian language learning opportunities that are explicitly linked to labour market needs and professional development pathways.

Deteriorating Housing Security and Shrinking Emergency Shelter Capacity

Vulnerable refugees across Romania continue to struggle to meet their basic needs, driven largely by the reduced availability of humanitarian assistance and essential items. Many have reported growing concern over declining distributions of basic goods, compounded by delays in payments under the government support programme and deepening uncertainty about whether the programme will continue into 2026. This uncertainty is generating heightened anxiety among families who are increasingly unable to reliably plan monthly budgets or secure stable access to necessities.

Rising utility costs have become an additional and significant burden, with refugees seeking support to cover electricity, heating, and other essential services at a time when humanitarian programming is contracting.

CRITICAL GAPS IN PROTECTION, INCLUSION, AND SERVICE CONTINUITY FOR REFUGEES

© UNHCR/Ioana Moldovan | Description Ukrainian refugees waiting at the RomExpo Integrated Services Hub in Bucharest, Romania.

This confluence of pressures is already translating into an increase in evictions among vulnerable households — including single mothers, elderly persons, and children, among them children with disabilities — who face compounded and intersecting risks. The situation is further aggravated by the severely limited availability of government centres capable of providing emergency shelter to those who have lost or are at imminent risk of losing their accommodation, leaving a critical gap in the safety net for the most exposed individuals and families.

Weakening Child Protection Capacity and Persistent Language Barriers

The confirmed phase-out of World Vision Romania's child protection services leaves families with complex disability and health-related needs at risk of losing critical hands-on guidance, particularly for disability reassessment procedures required every six months under Romanian regulations. Persistent language barriers continue to hinder access to healthcare, education, and social benefits, underscoring the ongoing need for interpretation services and cross-institutional coordination.

Spotlight story - RRP partner

RomaJust
The Association of Roma Lawyers

Supporting refugees through legal aid, protection, and access to justice

© RomaJust

150+
refugees assisted through legal aid and information sessions

Documentation support
Helping refugees obtain identity documents

Wide range of cases
Traffic accidents, compensation claims,employments, housing, abusive arrests and more

Access to rights and services
Promoting dignity, protection and inclusion

PROJECT OVERVIEW

RomaJust – The Association of Roma Lawyers provides legal support and direct assistance to vulnerable refugees in Romania, with a particular focus on Roma refugees and those facing heightened risks of exclusion.

Through legal counselling, information sessions, and field interventions, the organization works to ensure access to fundamental rights and essential services

ACCES TO DOCUMENTATION

Over the past year, RomaJust has supported numerous refugees in obtaining identity documents, a critical step for accessing rights and public services.

Many beneficiaries initially lacked proper documentation, which prevented them from accessing healthcare, education, employment, or social benefits. Through legal assistance and mediation with authorities, RomaJust helped them regularize their legal status.

LEGAL AID AND MEDIATION

RomaJust also provides ongoing legal assistance in a wide range of cases affecting refugees' daily lives, including road traffic accidents, compensation claims, abusive arrests, employment counselling, and housing support.

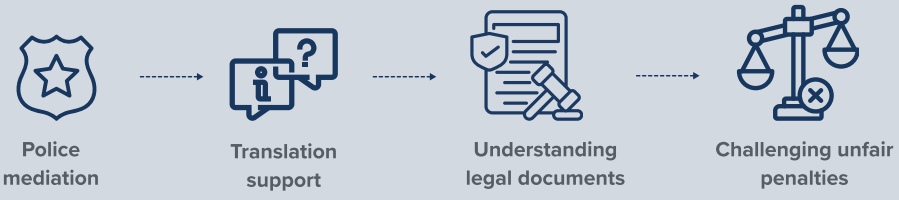
ANITA'S STORY

As one beneficiary, Anita Zlydar 35 years old (Ukraine), explains:

> Thank you for your help. I was involved in a traffic accident where I was wrongly blamed by a police officer and asked to sign a document in Romanian that I did not understand. I later discovered it included a large fine. The officer ignored my video evidence, and communication was very difficult. As a foreigner unfamiliar with Romanian law, I am grateful for your support in helping me understand and challenge this situation

Since the beginning of these activities, RomaJust has assisted over 150 refugees through legal aid and information sessions, promoting access to justice, dignity, and inclusion.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT CASE - ANITA'S STORY

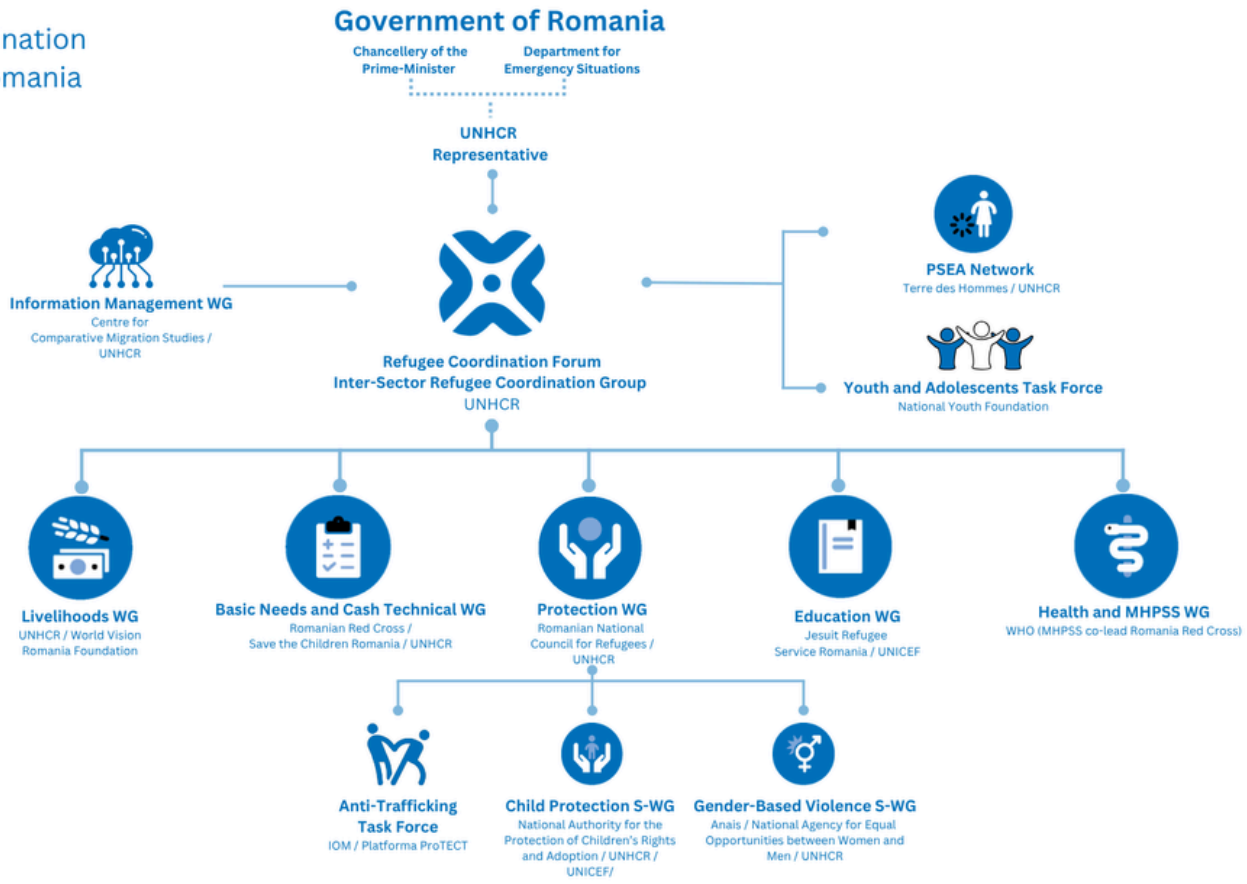


ROMAJUST
Asociația Juriștilor Romi din România

Learn more RomaJust

Working in partnership

Refugee Coordination Structure in Romania



In 2026, the Inter-Agency platform comprises of the following 43 appealing partners implementing humanitarian activities in Romania for refugees from Ukraine:

ADPARE | ADDJB | AIDRom | Asociația Moașelor Independente | ASSOC | Ateliere Fără Frontiere | City Makers | Civic Rădăuți Association | CNRR | Commit Global | Drumul Vieții | EDNAE | EEIRH | FONSS | Habitat for Humanity | Help Ukrainians | IOM | Jesuit Refugee Service Romania | MALVA | Metropolitan Agency for Durable Development Brașov | Migrant Integration Centre Brașov | National Youth Foundation | Necuvinte | Novapolis | ParentIS | PATRIR | Plan International | Project Voyager | Roma Education Fund | RomaJust | Save the Children Romania | SECS | Sensiblu Foundation | SERA | Sibiu Community Foundation | Terre des Hommes | Tineri pentru Tineri | UNFPA | UNICEF | UNHCR | WHO | World Vision Romania | YMCA Romania

For more information, please contact the Inter-Agency Coordination Unit:

Simina Costea
Assistant Inter-Agency Coordination Officer, Romania
Email: costea@unhcr.org

Ioana Davidescu
Inter-Agency Coordination Assistant, Romania
Email: davidesc@unhcr.org

LINKS:

Regional data portal
Romania Page
Ukraine Situation RRP
Refugee Funding Tracker
Romania Refugee Response Plan - Results