

Romania

February 2021

Context: Low interest in asylum, increased numbers of new arrivals, secondary movements towards Western Europe, modest awareness on refugee issues leading to misconceptions.

Priority: Strategic engagement with key stakeholders and various actors to expand protection and solutions and improve public perception, including via [Emergency Transit Centre](#) in Timisoara.

Results: Persons of concern have better access to protection environment and solutions. Refugees benefit from integration prospects and community support.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Refugees	3,660
Asylum-seekers	453
Stateless people	271

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Syria	1,976	Syria	124
Iraq	743	Afghanistan	73
Afghanistan	161	Iraq	68

Data source: UNHCR 2020 Mid-Year Statistical report and [UNHCR data finder platform](#)

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Advocacy results: Romania successfully called upon to keep the borders open for asylum-seekers during lockdown, as well as to include Persons of Concern (POCs) in the national vaccination programmes.

Inclusion of persons of concern: Refugees and asylum-seekers included in the national vaccination programme.

Communication with Communities: [Platforms](#) for information and support created to ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers have equal and non-discriminatory access to health and other basic services. Alternative channels of communication developed to ensure that protection risks, needs and gaps are properly monitored and addressed.

Health: UNHCR distributed prevention information, personal protective equipment, hygienic and disinfection materials, rapid tests to complement government's intervention.

Read the [COVID-19 Response Fact Sheet](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

6,158 asylum requests

submitted in 2020, the highest number recorded since the establishment of the Office in 1991. The trend is ascending in 2021, with 2,000 asylum-requests (30% from 2020's total).

3,300+ evacuated

Emergency Transit Centre provides a safety net when refugees are at risk and resettlements procedures cannot be completed in the first country of asylum.

1+ Million Reached

in 2020 on all UNHCR external communication platforms through organic and paid campaigns.

3 Refugee Scholarships

granted in Romania since 2019, by two top 5 universities, through newly developed partnerships with academia.



Refugee from Sudan Finds Salvation in Sewing

Sewing protective masks during the COVID-19 pandemic, has given one refugee in transit at the ETC new purpose in life ([Read more](#))

Key Priorities

- **Access to territory and procedures:** Monitoring and advocacy for unhindered access of people in need of protection to the territory and asylum procedure.
- Romania keeps its borders open for people in need of international protection as the number of arrivals via the border with Serbia remains high.
- Capacity building to strengthen the **asylum procedures** and improve the quality of decisions. Advocacy to ensure protection information, assistance, and representation available at all stages of the asylum procedure.
- **Reception conditions:** Monitoring, advocacy, and training to ensure adequate standards, including **alternatives to detention**, in law and practice.
- Working to mainstream gender-based violence/**GBV prevention**, identification, and response and to improve the existing mechanism to include multi-stakeholder response and effective case management.
- Advocating for coherent **child protection** legislation, and best interest procedures.
- **Resettlement and Complementary Pathways:** Advocacy and support to enhance Romania's resettlement programme and use of complementary pathways, as pledged at 2019 Global Refugee Forum.
- **Integration:** Advocacy, engagement, and capacity building to enhance refugees' access to housing, labour market, education, and language training. Providing support to refugees on naturalization, family reunification and access to integration services. Supporting refugee participation by fostering community empowerment initiatives.
- **Education:** Engagement with academia and other actors to facilitate access to education (i.e. Scholarships), and awareness (UNHCR Teaching Kit).
- **Public attitudes towards Persons of concern (PoCs):** Promote welcoming environment, create empathy, and mobilize action through conventional and social media engagement, public events and a variety of communications partnerships.

Working with Partners

- Supporting government and civil society to enhance their capacity of delivering quality protection and assistance to PoCs.
- Closely working with the General Inspectorate for Immigration and General inspectorate for Border Police (main UNHCR government counterparts). Engaging with relevant ministries, central/local authorities involved in asylum and integration.
- UNHCR works with NGOs such as AIDRom, Romanian National Council for Refugees and Jesuit Refugee Service Romania (funded partnerships), and Anais for GBV-related activities.
- UNHCR strengthens civil society capacity to advocate for and intervene in asylum through capacity building for partner NGOs, expansion of the pool of partners and support extended to the NGO Advocacy Coalition for the Rights of Refugees and Migrants.
- **External Engagement:** Strengthening and diversifying partnerships, including with municipalities, academia and research institutes to address the challenges of refugee integration.
- Various partnerships developed (private sector entities, high profile supporters, diplomatic community, and civil society allies) to preserve protection space by fostering public awareness of refugee protection and/or understanding of refugees and UNHCR's work.

Statelessness

- Advocacy for the lifting of Romania's reservations to the *1954 Statelessness Convention* and *1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness* and to establish the statelessness determination procedure.

UNHCR Presence in Romania

Staff:

9 National Staff
 2 International Staff
 7 Affiliate Workforce

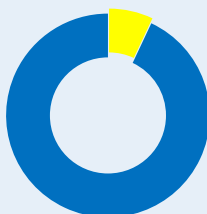
Offices:

1 Branch Office in Bucharest
 1 Field Unit in Timișoara

Financial information (February 2021)

Financial Requirements
USD 2.4 M

Funding gap
 93%
2.2 M



Funded
 7%
0.2 M

UNHCR is grateful to the major donors of unearmarked contributions* to the 2021 global programmes (USD, as of 23 February 2021):

Norway 80 M | Sweden 66.9 M | Netherlands 36.1 M | Denmark 34.6 M | Germany 22.1 M | Switzerland 16.4 M | Ireland 12.5 M | Belgium 11.9 M

*Unearmarked contributions allow UNHCR for critical flexibility in how best to reach populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Above are donors of USD 10 million or more.

UNHCR Romania thanks for the in-kind and financial contributions received from the following donors (as of February 2021):

Romania | Norway | Canada | Ikea (Romania)