



# Romania

March 2023

Since the escalation of the international armed conflict in Ukraine on 24 February 2022, more than 8.1 million people have fled their homes to seek safety, protection and assistance across Europe. Over 3 million people have crossed the border to Romania and were supported by the Government, civil society, private sector actors, international organizations and volunteer's hospitality and generosity.

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 first RCF of 2023 took place during the month of March to present the strategic priorities of the 2023 RRP sectors.

## KEY FIGURES\* (as of 31 March)

**8.1 M**

Individual refugees from Ukraine recorded across Europe

**3.1 M**

Border crossing into Romania

**106 K**

Refugees from Ukraine remaining in Romania

**126 K**

Refugees who obtained temporary protection in Romania

**60%**

Of refugees who obtained temporary protection are women and girls

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

**USD 1.69 B**

Overall financial requirements

**USD 153.6 M**

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

**34**

Appealing partners involved 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](#).

## Operational context

Since 24 February 2022, more than 8.1 million people from Ukraine have sought refuge across Europe. As of 31 March 2023, more than 3.1 million border crossings from Ukraine and Moldova into Romania have been recorded by border police, with some 106,234 people choosing to remain in the country. Around 126,711 Ukrainian (125,490) and Third Country Nationals (TCNs- 1,221) have obtained temporary protection, which enables access to healthcare, education, and the labour market. While most refugees are staying in large cities such as Bucharest, Constanta, and Brasov, many are in other counties and towns throughout the country.

On 10 March, the Inter-Agency team, organised a Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) in Bucharest to present the strategic priorities of the RRP sectors for 2023. The event counted with the participation of more than 50 representatives of RRP partners, authorities, civil society organisations and the international community. The 2023 Romania RRP comprising 34 appealing partners including 6 UN Agencies, 14 national NGOs and 14 international NGOs who are appealing for USD 153.6 million for their programmes in support of the National Plan of Measures in the country.

On 28 March, [the final report of the 2022 RRP for the Ukraine situation](#) was published with a dedicated chapter on the response in Romania. The report outlines the collective efforts and achievements of host governments, local communities, volunteer groups and partners in assisting refugees from Ukraine.

RRP partners have been closely following the amendments to refugee assistance Emergency Ordinance and its proposals to replace the current 50/20 programme for the refugees from Ukraine hosted in Romania. Romanian authorities are amending this programme with a view of maintaining sustainable support to refugees, encouraging inclusion in key areas, while ensuring that the financial assistance is delivered directly to refugees. Since the on-set of the crisis, UN Agencies and partners have complemented efforts of the authorities towards inclusion and protection through different protection-based programmes and aid, including cash assistance and distribution of core-relief items (such as blankets, quilts, hygiene materials and winter clothes). On 29 March, the Basic Needs working group organised an extraordinary meeting to better understand the new proposal and consult the new assistance scheme. Romanian authorities, RRP partners and UN Agencies active in different sectors such as Cash, Protection, Livelihood and Socio-Economic Inclusion participated in this meeting to discuss the emergency ordinance and preparations for its implementation.

### Spotlight on: The crucial role of cultural mediators in Romania's Ukrainian refugee response

After receiving refugees from Ukraine, the Romanian Government immediately recognized the needs of refugees to access health care and offered them the same level of care as Romanian citizens with health insurance. However, communication and language barriers, the unfamiliarity of the health-care system, and lack of knowledge and information created obstacles that impacted refugees' access to services.

In response, the WHO Country Office in Romania recruited 7 Ukrainian-speaking **cultural mediators** through the United Nations Volunteers programme. The cultural mediators have been deployed in Bucharest, Galați, Cluj, Târgu Mureș and Brașov, where there are significant populations of refugees from Ukraine.

Cultural mediation, a recognized profession in Romania, can ensure that people are able to access high-quality health care. The 7 cultural mediators have professional backgrounds in medical science, psychology and social science. They speak Ukrainian and Russian as well as English, and are attempting to master the Romanian language through classes or online learning applications.

The services are diversity-friendly and aim to prevent discrimination. They include psychological counselling and psychosocial support, introduction sessions on health system, awareness raising about health referral mechanisms and pathways, and health promotion. The cultural mediators also provide support related to sensitive topics such as human trafficking, sexual and labour exploitation, and gender-based violence. To

support the mediators' work, WHO has disseminated information about health-care access, availability of medicines, vaccination and proper antibiotic use.

WHO is also supporting **7 family-doctor clinics** and collaborating with civil society organizations to provide free-of-charge primary-care services to refugees, including sexual and reproductive health care, and mental health and psychosocial support. Since June 2022, around 2,200 refugees have accessed these services.



WHO Cultural Mediators providing services to a pregnant lady at WHO health clinic in Galati Blue Dot



Teenager at a MHPSS workshop on art and health organized by WHO Cultural Mediators at 'Cattia' refugee centre in Brasov city

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## Protection

### Achievements and Impact

- As in the previous months, Protection partners continued to focus on the provision of information and on awareness-raising activities at the borders, in urban centres, and through helplines. In March, the Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) provided protection support, advice, referrals, and information to over 5,195 refugees from Ukraine. CNRR also provided information and counselling remotely through their helplines to 323 refugees. UNHCR continued to run its helpline (calls, WhatsApp, and Telegram) and received over 2,000 calls and messages during the reporting period. Novapolis Association continued its protection activities in Constanta at ROUA Centre and registered 110 refugees from Ukraine and assisted a total number of 568 persons through social counselling, psychological support, group activities for children, labour market assistance and Romanian language courses.
- UNICEF and UNHCR launched campaigns targeting the Ukrainian population to promote access to information through the governmental call centre (+40 21 345 67 89). Almost 62,000 people viewed posts from the UNHCR campaign on Telegram. The call centre, supported by IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO, is available on weekdays (Mon-Fri, 8:00 – 16:00) and provides information on rights and services from the following areas: health, education, social protection and labour.
- To improve two-way communication with the Ukrainian community, CNRR organized four community consultations in Rădăuți, Iași and Botoșani, providing additional information on access to the medical system, on the possible changes on the housing support scheme, banking services, and on the available employment opportunities (including through the county employment agencies).
- Partners Terre des Hommes (TdH) and CNRR continued to assist refugees with interpretation and translation services including during medical visits and during visits with local service providers, such as the county school inspectorates and the county employment agencies.
- TdH continued its work in Bucharest, Brasov and Constanta (through their partnership with the Civic Resource Centre), through the provision of adapted information, referrals, Individual Protection Assistance (IPA), MHPSS and educational activities for both children and adults. Overall, 438 adults were supported in all three cities. 52 adults benefited from IPA through direct services or referrals (e.g., food, doctors' appointments, support for legal documents, translation, transport to services). In the transit centre, 79 adults were supported either through direct services (e.g., Psychological First Aid (PFA), translation, adapted information) or referrals. Predominantly, they have been referred to social welfare, legal assistance, housing, and community integration services.
- PATRIR's community centres, Ukraine House Cluj and Ukraine House Sighisoara, were used throughout the month by partners to provide capacity-building sessions, including on trauma-informed care, organizing a participatory community action plan, legal training, training with youth on equality projects, job fair readiness and job-related workshops, and health and reproduction services for women.
- The Migrant Integration Centre Brasov (MIC), supported by Solidar Suisse and Danish Refugee Council continued the protection monitoring and individual protection assistance, information dissemination and protection by presence. The MIC has registered and assisted 197 new refugees; offered direct assistance especially in the medical field to 298 persons; offered information and counselling on issues such as temporary protection, legal, education, medical system, work, accommodation, transport and other information to 105 persons; assisted 93 refugees with IPA and psychological group session through its mobile team in the communities outside of Brasov.
- To promote **social cohesion**, PATRIR organised cultural events at their community centres to foster inclusion, including youth events bringing together Ukrainian, Roma and local youth, and an activity

marking Mother's Day. UNICEF launched a campaign targeting both the host and the refugee communities with messages promoting and reinforcing positive behaviours which foster social cohesion. In total, so far, the campaign reached 185,000 people from both communities and engaged 12,000 people.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Partners reported heightened concerns about the end of the 50/20 program that financially supports hosts who accommodate refugees from Ukraine. The end of the 50/20 program, as well as delays with the disbursement of the housing costs for January and February 2023 to hosts/landlords, has led to an increase in evictions of refugees from their accommodation, often without prior notice. An increasing rate of such evictions could pose a serious challenge to the protection of many vulnerable refugees, especially in Constanța, Năvodari, and Bucharest. Refugees also demonstrate increased levels of stress
- Partners reported need for training additional staff of local partners as well as public authority personnel to support a common understanding of refugee protection, rights and corresponding policies.



## Child Protection

### Achievements and Impact

- Ensuring access to child protection services is important for RRP partners. World Vision Child Protection programming reached over 2,000 children and their caregivers in Bucharest, Brasov, Constanta, Cluj, Iasi, Suceava and Valcea, through integrated protection services provided within Happy Bubbles. In order to help improve the sense of security, well-being, and engagement of beneficiaries, services include educational support for online classes, non-formal education, child protection activities with embedded mental health and psychosocial support elements, as well as recreational and inclusive activities, occupational therapy, and parenting sessions. Approximately 400 teenagers and 50 adults from Bucharest, Brasov, Constanta, Cluj, Iasi, Suceava and Valcea are beneficiaries of the ongoing First Aid Art program. World Vision supported 125 families through CASH distribution for children with disabilities or children requiring regular medications. Novapolis Association provided psychological support and recreational activities for a number of 45 children at ROUA Centre in Constanta.
- In March, Salvati Copiii (SC) teams provided information, basic counselling, and NFIs to 15,828 children and 9,906 adults through Salvati Copiii Counselling and Integrated Services Centres across Romania relying on teams of social workers, cultural mediators, educational facilitators, MHPSS workers and legal counsellors.
- CNRR provided counselling to 175 children: 39 children aged between 0-4 years, 82 children aged between 5-11 years, and 54 children aged between 12-17 years, on topics such as access to education, healthcare, and cash assistance. Additionally, CNRR organized an online meeting on access to education, gathering 30 participants from the Ministry of Education and local School Inspectorates, representatives from the General Inspectorate for Immigration, Romanian language teachers, and civil society, in order to discuss the implementation of the new methodologies that regulate the access of refugees to education, Romanian language courses, the distribution of free Romanian language textbooks, and to the procedures for the recognition of studies.
- UNICEF continued to provide assistance and facilitated the registration and monitoring of refugee children from Ukraine, accompanied or unaccompanied, through PRIMERO, a platform administered by the National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption (ANPDCA) and operational

with UNICEF's support. Identification and child registration is under administration of General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPC). Sus Inima Programmes for Refugee Integration (SIPRI) has registered 73 households in March and continued visiting Ukrainian families for registration in the Primero case management system with representatives of ANPDCA (204 families in total by now, most of them have 2 children or more).

- To further strengthen capacity of the personnel working with and for refugees from Ukraine, World Vision provided training to 126 staff members on basic topics regarding child protection, education and psychological first aid. To ensure durability, 25 persons were selected and participated in a detailed training (training of trainers).

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The need for counselling regarding the registration of unaccompanied minors and legal representation of minors who are in Romania with someone other than family members/carers/guardians/coaches, continues to persist.
- One of the most pressing gaps is the limited availability of services for refugee children with disabilities and special needs. Children with disabilities have been further referred by government authorities to third party social services providers (NGOs) due to limited capacity of state authorities, mainly DGASPC.
- The number of unaccompanied minors or accompanied by a relative rather than parent has increased with the previous months. This is also visible in the data provided by GII and visualized on the [UNHCR Data Portal](#). A lack of coordination mechanism and screening has been mentioned by regional state authorities and Ukrainian authorities.
- There are many refugee children from Ukraine that are still undertaking online schooling in Ukraine due to language barrier. Those who are registered within the Romanian educational system as audients are not being supported with language classes to facilitate their full registration. School registration remains notably low, mainly including children who already spoke Romanian prior to their arrival.



## Gender-Based Violence

### Achievements and Impact

- UNFPA through its regional partner, the East European Institute for Reproductive Health (EIRH) and local partners in Romania have continued providing services to 2,120 women and girls refugees from Ukraine in the Women and Girls Safe Space (WGSS) in Baia Mare, Brasov, Bucharest and Targu-Mures. Through the WGSS services, 326 individual psycho-social support sessions, 68 group activities, 285 referrals to other specialized services, 226 dignity kits, three group information sessions on PSEA and 226 individual information sessions on PSEA were delivered.
- Sensiblu Foundation, UNHCR's GBV partner, has a long-term collaboration with the Romanian Police General Inspectorate. In the context of this collaboration, on March 25 (National Day of the Romanian Police), in an event open to the public in Bucharest, more than 1,200 informative materials on GBV including information on the available services for refugees residing in Romania were distributed.
- Sensiblu Foundation and its sub-partner ADIZMC organised two women socialisation groups to celebrate International Women Rights' Day in Suceava and Cluj. In Suceava, Sensiblu organised a card making workshop, where refugee women from Ukraine interacted with women from the local community and expressed themselves in a creative way, In Cluj, 36 women refugees from Ukraine shared their feelings and stories in the framework of the "Women's Café".

- Information, communication and education activities and/or materials about WGSS, SRH, GBV reached 24,073 persons.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Sensiblu foundation reported several concerns raised by teenager refugees regarding incidents of verbal and sometimes physical aggressions (hair pulled, pushed) that they experienced on public transportation and questions about how to stay safe and seek help. Similarly, adult women refugees reported their challenges related to children, especially when they are alone, on the street.



## Education

### Achievements and Impact

- As of 17 March 2023, 4,990 Ukrainian refugee children were officially enrolled in the national education system, (79 per cent audients): 1,789 at pre-primary level, 1,729 at primary level, and 1,472 at secondary level. Enrolments have hence continuously increased over the past few months due to various reasons including the situation of power shortage in Ukraine, which makes it difficult for children to follow classes offered through the Ukrainian online learning platform.
- Support continues to be provided with a view to ensure that all Ukrainian refugee children can access quality education services, through diversified learning pathways including or combining inclusion into Romanian schools, online learning, special classes and after-school activities offering learning support ('learning hubs') facilitated by Ukrainian-speaking educators or operating in a third language (e.g. English), and facilitating increasingly access to Romanian language classes to prepare integration in Romanian schools. 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 to support their integration, and to facilitate access to online learning when necessary.
- Coordination in the education sector is key, 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 pursues the coordination role in partnership with other sister agencies (IOM, World Bank, UNHCR), the Government of Romania, as well as NGOs supporting the delivery of educational services. In March, the School Inspectorate of Bucharest issued an instruction to all schools to ensure that Ukrainian refugee children enrolled as audients can receive documentation justifying of their enrolment status, thereby allowing them to access free transportation as pupils.
- In March, UNICEF has formalized its collaboration with 5 County School Inspectorates (Bucharest, Suceava, Valcea, Sibiu, and Cluj) to support their operations including e.g. for providing information on education services available and facilitating the processing of school enrolment requests through the Education Desk at RomExpo, in Bucharest. Further, IOM Romania is supporting teachers in schools from Bucharest where Ukrainian children are enrolled with cultural mediators (interpreters). On 24-26 March, IOM also organized a training session for 28 Romanian teachers and educators in coordination with the County School Inspectorate in Brasov.
- CNRR offered counselling to 120 people on access to education in Iasi, Galati, Suceava, Constanta and Bucharest. This includes assisting the beneficiaries with school/kindergarten enrolment procedure; procedure of recognition and equivalence of studies/diplomas; referral to Romanian language courses and other educational activities. CNRR has also started a collaboration with the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPC) "Blue Dot Sector 3" in Bucharest, to offer counselling and legal assistance to those who visit this centre, and has organized an online meeting on refugees'

access to education, with representatives from the Ministry of Education and County School Inspectorates, representatives from the General Inspectorate for Immigration, Romanian language teachers and members of various NGOs. The main topic of discussion was the implementation of the new methodologies that regulate the access of refugees to education, Romanian language courses, access to Romanian language textbooks, and procedures for the recognition of studies.

- UNICEF distributed learning support materials to 1,000 pupils participating in pre-primary education services, schoolbags and stationeries for 280 children, 3,000 multilingual reading support materials for young children, and 5,000 multilingual conversation guides for adolescents, teachers and adults. UNICEF also concluded a partnership agreement with Step by Step NGO with a view to support the installation of at least 20 Play, Learning and Parenting hubs in the coming months.
- IOM has printed 1,060 Romanian language manuals and workbooks for adults and children who are attending language courses within the County School Inspectorate and ROUA Centre in Constanta, and IOM Brasov premises. These educational materials have been disseminated in electronic format to School Inspectorates and to NGOs across Romania and are available at: [www.romaniaeacasa.ro](http://www.romaniaeacasa.ro). IOM also developed and printed bilingual educational poster with the Ukrainian and Romanian alphabet, which have been distributed to all 42 County School Inspectorates.
- IOM has continued to provide Romanian Language courses in IOM premises and through its implementing partners across Romania, including Bucharest. To date, 1,093 persons, adults, and children, have been attending Romanian language courses.
- In March, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Romania provided educational activities to 1,916 Ukrainian children (956 girls and 960 boys) in 20 learning centres, including 10 education hubs organized in public schools (which hosted in total 1,299 Ukrainian children). Hot meals were provided to more than 500 children in Bucharest (2 learning centres), Constanta (6), and Galați (3), with support from World Vision and UNICEF. Furthermore, more than 60 extracurricular activities (visits to museums, excursions etc.) were organised with 1,250 attendees (Ukrainian and Romanian children, with a focus on peer-to-peer activities). Activities focused also on advocating and conducting Romanian language classes offered in all learning centres, including support provided by teachers and materials.
- Save the Children Romania has extended learning opportunities to 661 children (330 girls and 331 boys) through educational programs implemented in Bucharest, Brasov, Constanta (Constanta and Navodari), Galati, Iasi, Mraramures (Baia Mare and Sighetul Marmăției), Tulcea and Suceava. Children benefited from school support or pre-school activities and participated in Romanian language classes as well as recreational activities.
- SIPRI has been providing educational services through kindergartens and schools infrastructure for 338 children. Language classes were provided also: in English for 108 adults, and in Romanian for 41 adults.
- TdH has carried out Romanian classes in Bucharest (in Mihai Viteazul for children and in TdH Resilience Innovation Facility (RIF) for both children and adults). In Lacul Tei centre, TdH began afterschool activities (e.g., mathematics, geography, etc.). In Constanta, TdH partner organization (CRC) continued with English and Romanian classes for children and youth. The RIF officially opened in Bucharest and Brasov, giving children the opportunity to explore 3D printing, vinyl cutters and other tools, combined with a MHPSS component. Overall, 192 individuals have benefited from language classes (35 adults and 157 children) and 144 children participated in RIF activities.
- World Vision Romania has extended learning opportunities to 577 children (315 boys, 262 girls) and their caregivers in Bucharest, Brasov, Constanta, Cluj, Iasi, Suceava and Valcea. The integrated education services provided within Happy Bubbles include educational support for online classes, non-formal education, child protection activities with embedded mental health and psychosocial support elements as well as recreational and inclusive activities, occupational therapy, and parenting sessions. In Cluj, Constanta and Suceava a total of 350 laptops were distributed to vulnerable school children from disadvantaged families or families with school aged children after a Cyberbullying workshop. The laptops are meant to support online schooling of Ukrainian children and ensure connection with family members and friends. Language lessons, in Romanian and English, are provided on a weekly basis to ensure integration of Ukrainian children and their caregivers. Within these lessons teachers include information



related to child protection. In Eforie, a mobile team is preparing to teach language classes and provide schooling assistance to children and psychosocial support to caregivers.

- Junior Achievement (JA) Romania has continued implementation of activities fostering entrepreneurial education and financial literacy skills acquirement on 3 interventional pillars, a) by JA staff in schools/hubs, b) by Ukrainian teachers in schools/hubs and c) by Romanian teachers working with Romanian students and Ukrainian audients in Romanian public schools. More than 270 young Ukrainian beneficiaries have been reached in the month of March on the three pillars, while an additional 14 Ukrainian teachers from Galați have been trained on JA's curriculum. Implementation by Ukrainian teachers is most consistent in Constanța, Bucharest and Galați. Romanian teachers working with Ukrainian audients come from all six major development areas in Romania. Educational materials and digital infrastructure support (in the form of laptops, beginner-friendly educational platforms) have also been provided. JA Romania has also piloted an Innovation Camp combining the JA entrepreneurship curriculum with UNICEF's UPSHIFT Methodology. The camp was organized with the support of Romanian Angel Appeal in Bucharest, with a mixed participation of Romanian and Ukrainian youth. A steady collaboration has been achieved between JA Romania, Romanian Angel Appeal, ONCR and the JRS. The gaps in reaching the target group are greatly impacted by structural factors, such as the heterogenous level of enrolment and inclusion of Ukrainian children and youth in Romanian schools and population mobility, among others.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- There are increasing concerns on the actual capacity of the Romanian education system to absorb and meet the educational needs of all Ukrainian refugee children and adults. While alternative and complementary learning modalities (e.g. education hubs) have been established to reduce the burden on schools and help children transition progressively to Romanian schools over the past few months, RRP partners are now facing serious difficulties to secure funding for continuing their operations beyond the current school year, hence facing the risk of having to discontinue the provision of such services from September 2023 onwards, unless additional resources can be mobilized urgently in the next few months.
- 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 in coordination with County School Inspectorates – as well as through online modalities.
- SIPRI conducted a survey to better appreciate the needs and challenges regarding socioeconomic inclusion and education in Sibiu County, covering 809 households (2,553 family members in total, 796 of whom were children), which highlighted the persisting need to further extend the provision of education services to children (especially young children) so that parents have the possibility to work.
- If mutual recognition of diplomas and studies between the Governments of Romania and Ukraine is now adopted for university level, similar provisions should be extended for under-university levels.
- There is a lack of adapted educational material for learning Romanian and insufficient adapted sensitive content tailored to Ukrainian cultural acceptance.



## Health and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

- At the request of the Romanian Government to strengthen the hospital level care, WHO donated 200 monitors of the patients' vital functions to hospitals in Bârlad, Brașov, Bucharest, Constanța, Cluj, Galați, Iași, Maramureș, Sibiu, Suceava, Timiș, Tulcea and Vaslui. UNICEF provided 95 laptops for community health network in border counties per the request of Local Public Health Authorities. IOM distributed

medical equipment to 5 hospitals located in Bucharest, Brasov, Radauti, and medicines in 4 collective centres.

- UNICEF continues to invest in children and mothers' health-related initiatives. It supported the capacity-building of 231 family physicians, midwives and nurses on the latest and most effective practices regarding antenatal care, health literacy, public health measures, postnatal education, breastfeeding counseling and support, medical care and prevention for newborns and children, promotion of vaccination for the pediatric population in Romania, including the refugee population and combating sexual and gender-based violence. UNICEF implementing partners provided infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counselling sessions in Bucharest and surroundings to 1,012 caregivers.
- Within the framework of the assistance provided to the National Agency for Equality of Opportunities between Women and Men (ANES), EEIRH with the support of WHO, organized five two-day training courses on Clinical management of rape survivors at the Centres for Intervention for Rape Survivors set up by ANES in Bucharest, Constanta, Satu Mare, Sibiu, and Timisoara. Another training was organized in Piatra Neamt on 30-31 March 2023. A total of 155 professionals participated in the five trainings, including health care providers of services to rape survivors from the Hospital Emergency Units, gynaecological ambulatory, forensic services, mental health and psychosocial support services.
- UN agencies in close cooperation with their implementing partners, continued to provide access to primary health care and specialised services. In March, WHO provided 325 primary care services at WHO refugees' health clinics and supported family doctors' clinics. 840 unique beneficiaries received primary health care services, such as medical evaluations, medicines, support for additional investigations, registration with family physicians, through UNICEF supported mechanisms. IOM provided medical evaluations, prescriptions for medication, referrals to specialists for further investigations and counselling to 213 beneficiaries with 526 medical services in eight cities across Romania. The IOM counsellors accompanied 72 beneficiaries to hospitals and registered 42 persons with family physicians.
- The Independent Midwives Association (AMI) provides Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) medical services, counselling and integration in primary care services. AMI facilitated enrolment to family doctors for 215 persons in Bucharest and access to gynaecological and obstetrical services for 43 women for morphofetal imagistic investigations, gynaecological consultations and interventions. AMI provided other medical consultations and courses with midwives and doctors (home visits for new-borns and breastfeeding counselling, family planning, baby massage courses, sexual reproductive health classes for teenagers, health education modules at collective centre and diverse specialists) for 194 persons. AMI also offers access to safe abortions, in Bucharest and Constanta, and facilitated 10 abortions and 30 consultations for abortion care in private health care system due to significant barriers to abortion care access in public health system.
- SIPRI, a department of the organization SUS INIMA, focuses on medical assistance and social assistance. SIPRI performed a study to determine what family doctors and specialists are willing to register Ukrainian refugees. The results were disseminated within the Ukrainian refugee community, leading up to an increase in access to health services. SIPRI provided guidance and assistance in finding medical specialists for over 67 chronic patients.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Access to primary health care services is difficult for Ukrainian children and caregivers, due to several barriers (language, information, financial, administrative). According to the recent study done by WHO among refugees, access to information and the language barrier remain the two biggest issues preventing refugees from accessing Romanian healthcare system.
- Access to the Romanian healthcare system through registration with a family doctor is an ongoing need. Doctors face challenges in being remunerated for treating refugees from Ukraine and those who had previously agreed to take on refugee patients started to report overwhelming amounts of work, which made them gradually refuse new registrations. Furthermore, partners reported frustration by doctors at refugees not keeping appointments when referred to secondary healthcare services. Additionally,

refugees continue to face language barriers in accessing healthcare due to the lack of interpreters. Local advocacy efforts to promote the employment of medical interpreters are ongoing.

- Family doctors are unable to get reimbursed by National Health Insurance House for all the services they provided to the children and adults.



## Basic Needs

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR in coordination with partners and local authorities, distributed 20,000 items, like winter clothes, blankets, hygiene kits, pillows, bed linen, and antiseptic wipes to more than 2,000 individuals in Constanza, Medias, Sibiu, Sighisoara, and Targu Mures.
- UNHCR is supporting Radauti Transit Centre in Suceava county with hot meals in line with the official request from the Department for Emergency Situations (DSU). Residents of Radauti Transit Centre are some of the most vulnerable refugees, the majority of whom are women and children, as well as elderly people who are unable to work. The number of persons provided with food is varying between 110 and 170 persons daily. The temporary support is provided from 26 December 2022 until the end of April 2023.
- IOM continued procuring and distributing shelter materials and Non-Food Items (NFIs) and hygiene kits to refugees in the collective centres/shelters coordinated by the Department of Emergency Situations (DES), local authorities and other organizations recognized by the Government. To date, IOM reached a total of 12,151 beneficiaries and distributed 63,052 bottles of water in the border areas and collective centres.
- Under the Airbnb agreement, IOM provided 1,926 people with accommodation in several cities across Romania. In total, IOM has provided people fleeing the conflict in Ukraine with 17,281 safe nights of accommodation through Airbnb. Additionally, 561 people fleeing the war in Ukraine have been provided with housing outside the Airbnb agreement.
- UNICEF Water/ sanitation sector have installed 3 new sanitary containers at the RomExpo site in Bucharest with 1 cabin for female users & 1 cabin for male users with 1 being dedicated to staff with a total of 9 toilet cubicles. It was connected to water & wastewater tanks. A further wheel-chair access toilet cabin is being procured for same site. UNICEF continued distribution of clothes for Ukraine refugees in Constanta, Iasi, Galati, & Suceava.
- SIPRI has distributed a variety of NFI's to almost 3,000 beneficiaries: CRI's to 729 households (roughly 2400) in Sibiu, Mures, Alba Iulia counties; fully equipped UNICEF backpacks to 250 children enrolled in the educational infrastructure; winter clothes items provided by Rotary Club to 189 persons; winter clothes and shoes provided by UNICEF to 137 children.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- There are small communities that live in more remote areas with no possibility to travel and need NFI's.
- The Basic Needs Working Group continues to closely monitor the potential impact of the amendments to the 50/20 program – particularly on accommodation and food needs – in close collaboration and coordination with the Protection Sector and the Cash Technical Working Group.



## Livelihoods and Socio-Economic Inclusion

### Achievements and Impact

- Self-reliance is crucial for promoting inclusion of refugees from Ukraine in Romania. In March, HEKS/EPER in coordination with AJOFM assisted 35 refugees to access two job fairs with the participation of 77 employers. A database was developed to identify the needs of employers in Cluj to better connect refugees under Temporary Protection (TP) with earning job offers. 23 new refugees under TP benefited from counselling and coaching services. The first nail technical/manicure qualification course was completed for 10 graduates enabling them to earn employment. A total of 16 applicants applied for six business start-up grants offered under the project and their applications are being assessed and processed.
- On 24 March, the “Comunitaria” Constanta for Ukraine Community Center hosted the job fair held by the Civic Resource Center (CRC) in partnership with the Constanta Companies Association (AFCT) and with the support of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS). In total, 22 companies were present at the job fair, offering more than 120 jobs in various fields including the cleaning industry, spa industry, food production, industrial production, and freight transportation. Approximately 220 refugees from Ukraine living in Constanta County participated in the event and dozens were hired on the spot. Moreover, around one hundred refugees from Ukraine have scheduled interviews with employers in the coming days as a result of the fair.
- As part of their efforts focused on the social inclusion of refugees, the Constanta for Ukraine Community Center, with the support of IOM, organized a trip to Bucharest on 18 March where over 80 refugees from Ukraine visited the Grigore Antipa Natural Science Museum and the Parliament Palace. UNHCR has found that these types of social cohesion activities are effective in developing an interest in employment.
- Novapolis Association assisted 42 refugees at ROUA Centre by providing labour market mediation including CV writing assistance, employment counselling and personalized support based on their needs. MIC in Brasov organized socio-cultural/educational activities such as visit to museums, local trips and attend sports and cultural events for 200 refugees from Ukraine.
- Overcoming the language barrier for refugees from Ukraine is key to improve their self-reliance and integration in Romania. HEKS/EPER with UNHCR’s support continued to facilitate access to kindergarten classes for 152 children previously enrolled throughout March with the intention to accelerate their parent’s integration into formal employment opportunities and enable access to Romanian language classes and employment assistance services.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Between February to the middle of March 2023, HEKS EPER conducted an assessment with over 100 employers through which they identified 154 available jobs for refugees from Ukraine. Results showed that employers are mainly looking for job candidates with some English or Romanian language ability, and that there are few available opportunities for refugees who speak neither of these languages.
- SIPRI also conducted a survey for a detailed understanding of the actual needs and challenges in regards to social economic inclusion and education for the local community in Sibiu county, reaching 809 households (2553 family members in total, 796 of whom are children). The survey identified an ongoing need of providing alternative educational infrastructures for children, so that parents have easier access to employment.

## Cross-Cutting Priorities



## Cash-Based Assistance

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR finished the enrolment for the winterization cash assistance on 27 March and now is finalizing the concept for “cash for protection” program. In March, UNHCR provided USD 600,000.00 financial assistance to almost 2,000 new families (4,000 individuals).
- Salvati Copiii / Save the Children Romania provided non-reimbursable financial assistance to 614 refugees from Ukraine (234 HH members) through a cash transfer of 568 lei per person for a period of 3 months and a top up for children under 2 years old of 185 lei for the total amount of USD 221,558.77. It also provided 662 multifunctional vouchers to 221 HH members of 200 lei per family member.
- SIPRI organized registration for UNHCR’s cash assistance program in the SIPRI Ukrainian Info Centre which 116 households (372 beneficiaries) attended.
- World Vision registered 455 individuals to receive 3 payments of 568 lei per person from April through its multipurpose Cash Assistance Program in Bucharest, Constanta, Suceava and Iasi. 800 individuals benefited from 550 lei per person Winterization Cash Assistance Program funded by the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) for school going children aged 0 -17 years old in Bucharest, Constanta, Valcea, Brasov, Galati, Suceava, Iasi, Cluj-Napoca. 147 Ukrainian children and 250 Romanian children from vulnerable families and rural areas are being selected for the Cash Assistance Program to receive a one-off transfer of 240 lei per beneficiary in April. Under the Cash Assistance for Health Program funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), 150 children 0 -17 years with health complications and need for special medical attention have been targeted and received 598.8 lei per month for 6 months from January.
- Novapolis Association has assessed 568 refugees from the beginning of the project and will offer one-time financial support through voucher distribution with a value of Euro 100 per person to 300 individuals. It also distributed first incentive Euro 85 per person to 61 participants in the Romanian language course.
- The MIC in Brasov has restarted the cash assistance program with a target of 2,500 persons and assisted around 287 persons.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The Cash technical Working Group continues to closely monitor the potential impact of the amendments to the 50/20 program – particularly on accommodation and food needs – in close collaboration and coordination with the Protection Sector and the Basic Needs Working Group. Increasing vulnerability expected for some categories of refugees following the transition from 50/20 program.



## Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

### Achievements and Impact

- In an effort to raise awareness on the topic of safeguarding and PSEA, the Safeguarding Hub Eastern Europe (SHEE) organized a national roundtable with representatives from 17 organizations of and for persons with disabilities (OPDs – OfPDs) to present the key findings of the needs assessment conducted by the Hub regarding the risks of people with disabilities from Ukraine. The roundtable also served as an opportunity to outline and consult on the strategic objectives and activities the Hub wishes to implement in relation to OPDs and OfPDs helping refugees from Ukraine until October 2023. SHEE continued to focus on building the capacity of local CSOs by producing and publishing the podcast “Introduction to safeguarding” in Romanian language and opening the [Helpdesk](#) service which provides fast and free

advice in Romanian about any aspect of safeguarding. Additionally, it has published the [Tip sheet: Conducting safeguarding due diligence checks on organisations or individuals you are contracting to provide services](#), [Tip sheet: How to consider language when researching sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment \(SEAH\)](#), [Tip sheet: Engaging survivors of safeguarding incidents](#), the [How-to-note: Voluntary Informed Consent for any research or data collection activity](#) and [How to keep data and individuals safe materials](#). SHEE has also published “The Romania Country Assessment: safeguarding support for Ukrainian refugees”. This is a summary report that provides an overview of safeguarding for refugees from Ukraine, including the risks, legal protections, stakeholders, and initiatives to address safeguarding from SEAH. Whilst the original country assessment provided recommendations to the SHEE, this summary adapts those recommendations, so that they are relevant for safeguarding in all state and civil society organisations engaged in the humanitarian response to the Ukraine refugee crisis.

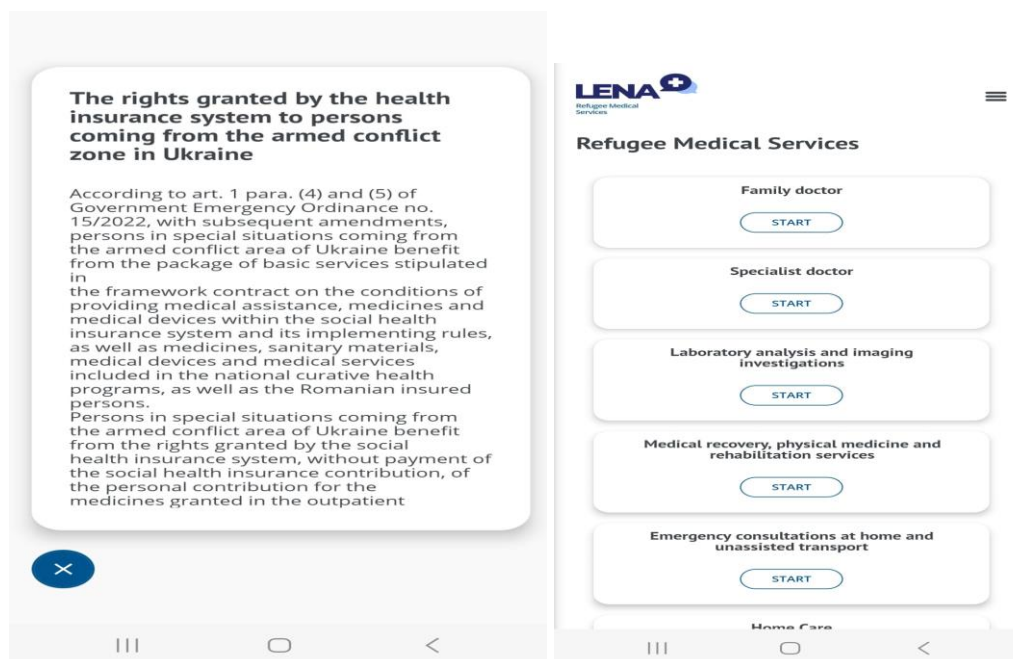
- PSEA awareness raising remains a high priority for UN agencies, UNICEF conducted an online survey to assess knowledge and awareness among refugees from Ukraine on issues related to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment from 27 to 31 March. The survey has also captured the extent to which the Ukrainian community is familiar with available reporting channels for PSEA. Results will be disseminated to UN partner agencies and other relevant stakeholders next months.
- During the month of March, UNHCR organized 2 all day trainings on PSEA for all its staff based in Bucharest. During these two trainings, 65 UNHCR staff enhanced their understanding on PSEA and reiterated their commitment to contribute to a protection environment free from SEA. Additionally, UNHCR facilitated a PSEA training session for 20 of its partner staff, during a GBV training organized by Sensiblu Foundation.
- On 8 March WHO carried out a hybrid PSEAH training session with partners, mostly SRH and Health partners with the participation of a total of 19 persons.
- IOM is strengthening the capacity of its staff to dive deeper into participatory approaches to SEA risk mitigation through participation in a series of internationally organised webinars: In March, 334 IOM staff members from 82 country offices, including Romania, participated in the Cash-Based Interventions and Protection from SEA. Additionally, a series of PSEA modules were translated in Romanian language and the technical testing of the micro modules that will be available online for IOM staff, collaborators and IP took place. IOM staff, partners and contractors can complete the IOM PSEA micro-modules in English, in French and in Spanish and soon in Romanian.



## Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

### Achievements and Impact

- To better familiarize refugees with available MHPSS services, IOM translated into Romanian the Manual on Community-Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support which will be available on the IOM website from April 2023. WHO conducted the fourth round of MHPSS Service mapping, that was also shared with the MHPSS sub working group partners. WHO launched a new chapter in LENA App for Android to assist the Ukrainian displaced people to navigate the Romanian Medical system.



- Demands for receiving MHPSS services continue to increase. IOM, in close cooperation with its implementing partners, continued to promote and facilitate the access to mental health and psychosocial well-being for Ukrainians and third country nationals (TCNs) residing in several cities across Romania (e.g., Bucharest, Brasov, Iasi, Cluj-Napoca, Craiova, Oradea, Tg. Mures, Constanta, etc.). The support provided by the team included: individual counselling for 41 adults and 48 children (totalling 73 sessions); 17 group sessions for 72 persons, adults and children; non-formal activities and community engagement socio-relational activities (arts and craft, dance, music, etc.) for 185 persons (adults and children). They also provided psychosocially informed counselling to 348 Ukrainians and supported their interaction with the local authorities and host community; depending on the identified needs, they were referred for additional assistance, including individual counselling and sociocultural activities. Novapolis Association through ROUA Centre conducted psychological support for 62 beneficiaries (children and adults). WHO conducted MHPSS activities in Tirgu-Mures, Brasov, Galati and Bucharest through their Cultural Mediators network. In Tirgu-Mures, Mures Hub assisted 223 refugees from Ukraine through approximately 200 MHPSS activities. In Brasov, 24 events were held which 12 men, 114 women and 96 children participated. In Cluj, WHO conducted emotional 15 support groups for 73 Ukrainian women and adolescents. The Cultural Mediator in RomExpo offered specialized MHPSS services to 28 Ukrainian beneficiaries. UNICEF has continued to provide consultations for mental health and psychological support to 82 beneficiaries, through implementing partners. MIC Brasov organized 47 individual and 11 group MHPSS sessions which benefited 91 persons.
- Action Contre la Faim and ParentIS have supported 373 new cases of beneficiaries in Iasi, through MHPSS and Care Practice activities. 265 referrals to other services such as psychosocial support, mental health, and employability services have been made. At the same time, ParentIS has integrated an FSL component to the MHPSS activities, providing one-off CASH assistance to vulnerable cases of beneficiaries within the framework of a holistic action plan. Furthermore, a border monitoring visit took place in Sculeni crossing point, where the need to train firefighters and paramedics from DSU on PFA has been pointed out and ACF is already planning respective trainings. For the upcoming period, the activities will expand to include the host community, aiming at the integration of refugees and social cohesion. At the same time, a pilot project on MHPSS risk communication and community engagement will be initiated in collaboration with ParentIS.
- Salvați Copiii/ Save the Children Romania has successfully reached out to 1500 beneficiaries, both children and adults in 8 Counselling centres (București, Galați, Iași, Suceava, Baia Mare, Timișoara, Târgu Mureș, Tulcea), 3 transit points (RomExpo, Gara de Nord, E-gros Iași) and 2 mobile camps (Rădăuți, Huși). The services provided included psychoeducational, recreational, and community mobilization activities implemented by MHPSS workers, social workers trained on PFA and MHPSS.

Individual and group counselling sessions were delivered by psychologists in the counselling centres in Bucharest, Iași, Suceava, Târgu Mureș and Timișoara. Spring-themed workshops were organised at the start of the month, with children engaging in nature-inspired arts and crafts activities, cooking classes, outdoor games and cultural exchange activities. Weekly social emotional learning workshops were hosted in Timisoara for preschool-aged children and teenagers, while in Suceava, the local team delivered weekly interactive parenting sessions for refugee families and PFA for children orientation sessions for over 50 teachers. In Baia Mare, weekly yoga classes were provided to promote physical health and mindfulness, while photography workshops implemented for teenagers offered a creative outlet for self-expression. With the assistance of a psychologist, 4 art therapy sessions were conducted for children in Iași. In addition, TeamUP sessions were delivered to 200 children aged between 6 and 17 years old.

- Based on the needs identified, TdH psychologist started carrying out a support group for adults residing outside the centres in Bucharest: 297 group and 45 individual MHPSS sessions were organized for 1,090 beneficiaries (829 children and 261 adults. In the transit location in Bucharest (Gara de Nord), 31 individuals benefited from PFA. In March, TdH supported 1,185 children in Bucharest, Brasov and Constanta, through MHPSS sessions, educational activities and individual protection assistance (IPA).
- SIPRI in partnership with A.L.E.G organised eight MHPSS related workshops for adults and teenagers for 140 people. SIPRI held 27 individual and 146 group therapy sessions. There are currently 7 children with special needs enrolled in SIPRI educational infrastructure (3 in kindergarten, 1 in secondary, 3 in primary schools). SIPRI has reached 868 beneficiaries: 694 beneficiaries (aged 6-18) and 174 beneficiaries (19-55+) through its programme SUSINIMA-PLAYS which includes events, workshops and trainings.
- World Vision provided psychological support to families and children through programs that meet their immediate needs and aid their integration into host communities. In March, over 1,100 individuals received mental health and psychosocial support. This included awareness-raising activities for 120 adults, community-based support activities for 968 children, referrals for specialized support for 100 individuals, and focused individual and group psychosocial support for 400 people. Training was also provided to personnel involved in child protection, emergency education, and mental health and psychosocial support. Additionally, 34 individuals were assigned to support groups.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Children and adults living in the independent apartments do not have access to many opportunities for MHPSS activities. There is need for stability in conducting events so beneficiaries can have consistency and plan accordingly.
- Refugees also demonstrate increased levels of stress due to anxiety over the 50/0 program – as seen from chat rooms and as expressed to WHO Cultural mediators.
- There is a need for developing a calendar of events for MHPSS activities by all partners in Brasov and organizing centralized MH support centre with on going daily activities for people in Cluj.
- The linguistic barriers, especially for MHPSS support services, continue to pose a challenge in the refugee response. The referral system towards psychiatrist and neurologist encounters gaps especially in Galati.



### Trafficking in Persons

#### Achievements and Impact

- It is crucial to enhance the capacity of staff, partners and authorities on protection and human trafficking issues. IOM organized a final event and training session for Romanian prosecutors and judges, on 30-



31 March to introduce a toolkit on trauma-informed, victim-centric approach to combatting trafficking for victims from Romania, Ukraine and other third country nationals. The toolkit developed together with the National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons (ANITP) and the Directorate for the Directorate for Investigating Organized Crime and Terrorism (DIICOT) aims at providing a theoretical background and practical guidance for the authorities and NGOs with roles in the investigation, prosecution and assistance of victims of human trafficking. The toolkit is based on the best practices and case studies put together after years of assistance provided to victims by IOM together with its partners. SIPRI in partnership with ECLER organized a GBV/TIP/PSEA information session for 47 refugees from Ukraine.

- On 16 March, ECLER organized the Freedom Day in Arges county - a large awareness session on the main risks of human trafficking and prevention of PHSEA. It gathered about 350 high school students and teachers and about 50 students were actively involved to present posters and short plays about "lover boy" modus operandi. This event was supported by the County Council, through the County Centre for Educational Resources and Assistance, and the Romanian-American University, having main media partners as the [Romanian Public Television](#), G4Media, [EduPedu](#), [PressHub](#) etc.
- During 17-19 March, ECLER trained [38 local journalists](#) on the main risks and challenges of human trafficking in the context of the conflict in Ukraine. On 22 and 29 March, ECLER delivers online workshops for 52 high school teachers, as well as child protection employees on the identification of potential human trafficking cases.
- eLiberare in partnership with UNICEF have developed a comprehensive project, addressing the needs of the Ukrainian community on various levels, in the context of the refugee crisis. On one hand, it has developed trainings for frontline workers to equip them to better understand the signs of human trafficking and ways to respond, as well as practical skills to interact with people who experienced traumatic events. In March, eLiberare organized six trainings which benefited 100 participants; it has also done the followings within the Kompas model: Individual Safety Plans for 159 beneficiaries, including from Suceava, Galati, Brasov and Bucharest; Info Sessions for 462 beneficiaries in Suceava, Galati, Brasov and Bucharest; Capacity building for 74 persons working with Ukrainian refugees in Suceava, Galati, Brasov, Bucharest; Urban Sitings for 52 UA refugees in Bucharest and for 55 UA refugees in Brasov.
- IOM organized a training with the aim to provide a common understanding of the essential aspects of protection for 28 IOM staff working directly with refugees from Ukraine on 28-29 March.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- There is an immediate need for protection and support of refugees from Ukraine as the 50/20 program is going to be changed in a very short period, without proper and due information of the refugees. This measure generates insecurity, mainly among refugee families with many children, persons with disabilities and elders. It may put this vulnerable group in a high risk of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

### Other: Youth and Adolescents

- On 24 March, the Inter-Agency team and the Youth and Adolescence Task Force, co-facilitated a workshop on assisting youth and adolescent refugees in Romania. Nearly 20 participants from various actors, including Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations for Children (FONPC), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), ActionAid, Plan International, UNICEF and UNHCR highlighted the need for mobilising funds for youth-led initiatives, ensuring academic recognition, enhancing access to language courses, employment opportunities, preventing human trafficking and promoting psycho-social services including recreational activities.

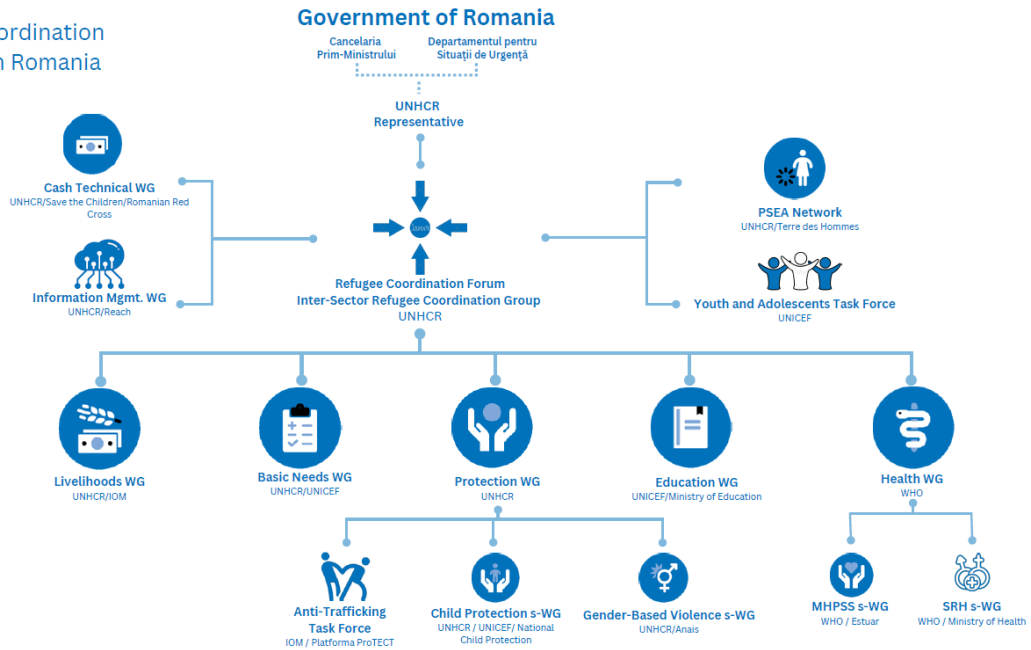
### Other: Accountability

- UNICEF Romania collected feedback from nearly 800 people displaced from Ukraine who received services at the Blue Dots and the other centres supported by UNICEF in Bucharest, Brasov, Galati, Iasi

and Sighetu Marmatiei. As in the previous months, most of the respondents found the assistance they needed and were satisfied with the services received, but there are still needs for material support or access to health services that are yet to be met.

## Working in partnership

Refugee Coordination  
Structure in Romania



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## LINKS

Regional data portal – [Romania Page](#) – [Ukraine Situation RRP](#) – [Refugee Funding Tracker](#)