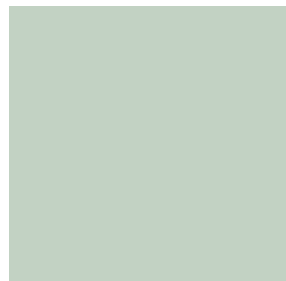


UPDATE ON 2024



ROMANIA



COUNTRY REPORT

AUGUST 2025

Acknowledgements & Methodology

This 2024 update to the country report was written by JRS Romania and was edited by ECRE. The TPD annex to this report was written by JRS Romania.

The information in this report draws upon statistics and further information provided by the General Immigration Inspectorate (IGI), Ombudsman Institution, National Employment Agency, UNHCR Romania, Romanian NGOs (JRS Romania, Save the Children, The Romanian National Council for Refugees).

The information in this report is up to date as of 31 December 2024, unless otherwise stated.

The Asylum Information Database (AIDA)

The Asylum Information Database (AIDA) is managed by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE). It aims to provide up-to date information which is accessible to researchers, advocates, legal practitioners and the general public through the dedicated website www.asylumineurope.org. It covers 25 countries, including 19 EU Member States (AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, ES, FR, GR, HR, HU, IE, IT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, and SI) and 6 non-EU countries (Egypt, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom). The database also seeks to promote the implementation and transposition of EU asylum legislation reflecting the highest possible standards of protection in line with international refugee and human rights law and based on best practice.

The 2024 update to the AIDA country report on Romania was shared with the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) to provide an opportunity for comments. Any feedback received was reviewed by the author and, where appropriate, incorporated into the final version of this report.



This report is part of the Asylum Information Database (AIDA) funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and ECRE. The contents of the report are the sole responsibility of the author and ECRE and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



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Glossary & List of Abbreviations

Public custody centre	Detention centre for persons facing removal or transfer under the Dublin Regulation. There are two such centres, located in Otopeni and Arad.
Regional centre	Regional Centre for Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers (“reception centre”). There are six such centres, located in: Timișoara, Șomcuta Mare, Rădăuți, Galați, Bucharest and Giurgiu.
AIDRom	Ecumenical Association of Churches from Romania Asociația Ecumenică a Bisericilor din România
AJOFM	County Employment Agency Agenția Județeană Pentru Ocuparea Forței de Muncă
AJPIS	County Agency for Payments and Social Inspection Agenția Județeană Pentru Plăți Și Inspecție Socială
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
ANOFM	National Employment Agency Agenția Națională Pentru Ocuparea Forței de Muncă
CAS	Health Insurance House Casa de Asigurări de Sănătate
CJAS	County Health Insurance House Casa Județeană de Asigurări de Sănătate
CNRED	National Centre for Recognition and Validation of Diplomas Centrul Național Pentru Recunoașterea Și Echivalarea Diplomelor
CNRR	Romanian National Council for Refugees Consiliul Național Român pentru Refugiați
DGASPC	Directorate-General for Social Assistance and Child Protection Direcția Generală de Asistență Socială Și Protecția Copilului
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EDAL	European Database of Asylum Law
EU	European Union
EUAA	European Union Agency on Asylum
IGPF	General Inspectorate of Border Police Inspectoratul General Poliția de Frontieră
ITPF	Territorial Inspectorate of Border Police Inspectoratul Teritorial al Poliției de Frontieră
IGI	General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări
IGI-DAI	General Inspectorate for Immigration – Directorate for Asylum and Integration Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări – Direcția Azil Integrare
IML	Institute of Legal Medicine Institutului de Medicină Legală
IOM ROMANIA	International Organisation for Migration – Romania Office

IPJ	County Police Inspectorate Inspectoratul de Poliție Județean
ISJ	County School Inspectorate Inspectoratul Școlar Județean
ISR	Social Reference Index Indicator Social de Referinta
ITM	Labour Inspectorate Inspecția Muncii
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service Romania
LADO	Human Rights Defence League Liga Apărării Drepturilor Omului
LOGS	Social Initiatives Group Grupul de Inițiative Sociale
NAC	National Authority for Citizenship
NIML	National Institute of Legal Medicine Institutului National de Medicina Legala
ROI	Internal Rules and Regulations Regulamentul de Ordine Interioară

Statistics

Overview of statistical practice

Detailed statistics are not available in the annual reports published on the website of the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) Directorate for Asylum and Integration (DAI); they were provided based on the official request of the AIDA expert.

Applications and granting of protection status at first instance: figures for 2024 (1)

Regarding data collection, the system managed by the General Inspectorate for Immigration allows for obtaining statistical information based on the following criteria:

- ❖ Statistics on applicants and pending concern people including children and dependents;
- ❖ Applicants in 2024 refers to the total number of applicants and not only to first-time applicants;
- ❖ Total decisions refer to decisions to admit and to reject the asylum applications (the IGI do not uses as criteria in merit rejection/in merit admission);
- ❖ Total number of persons who were granted refugee status, subsidiary protection by IGI-DAI;
- ❖ “-” indicates that the authorities did not provide this information.

These numbers present slight divergences with the data presented in Eurostat, which are also provided by the authorities, but these do not lead to any substantial changes. This may be due to correction of data sent to Eurostat, as it is published later than when the expert received the data presented below from the authorities.

Country of origin (1)	Applicants in 2024 (2)	First-time asylum applicants in 2024 (IGI-DAI) (3)	First-time Applicants in 2024 ¹ (Eurostat) (4)	Pending applicants at end of 2024 (5)	Total decisions in 2024 (6)	Total rejection (7)	Refugee status	Subsidiary protection
Total	2,467	2,344	2,265	393	1,932	1,208	242	482
Breakdown by main countries of origin of the total numbers								
Syria	785	759	715	124	605	305	30	270
Iraq	215	232	205	45	140	105	15	20
Nepal	210	206	205	N/a	200	200	0	0
Bangladesh	125	126	125	N/a	110	105*	0*	0*

¹ Eurostat, *Asylum applications – annual statistics*, data extracted 14 March 2025, available [here](#).

Palestinian Authority in Occupied Territories	120	117	120	N/a	145	5	80	60
Ethiopia	115	N/a	95	24	90	90	0	0
Sudan	95	N/a	90	N/a	90*	10*	5*	80*
Pakistan	80	N/a	75	N/a	85	80	5	0
Türkiye	75	N/a	75	N/a	80	65	10	0
Sri Lanka	55	N/a	55	N/a	55	55	0	0

*Source: Information provided by the General Inspectorate for Immigration, 23 January 2025 and extracted from the Eurostat database, available [here](#).

Note 1: statistics on applicants and pending concern people, including children and dependents bases on their country of origin. The rest of the columns concern a number of decisions as that is usually the (only) data available.

Note 2: “Applicants in year” refers to the total number of applicants, and not only to first-time applicants.

Note 3: Statistics regarding first time asylum applicants according to IGI-DAI.

Note 4: Statistics regarding first time asylum applicants from Eurostat website – information on Romania 2024.

Note 5: Statistics regarding pending asylum application at the end of 2024 according to IGI-DAI.

Note 6: Statistics regarding total decision provided for the asylum application according to IGI-DAI (total) and Eurostat (national breakdown). Statistics on decisions cover the decisions taken throughout the year, regardless of whether they concern applications lodged that year or in previous years.

Note 7: Statistics regarding total decision rejecting asylum application according to IGI-DAI. Statistics on decisions cover the decisions taken throughout the year, regardless of whether they concern applications lodged that year or in previous years.

Note 8: IGI-DAI does not provide a full numerical breakdown by main countries, but only lists them by name. While both IGI-DAI and Eurostat offer data on first-time asylum applications, the figures differ and remain incomplete.

* Some figures may not reflect the exact number of cases, as Eurostat rounds data to the nearest multiple of five (e.g. 5, 10, 15). As a result, small variations may not be visible in the reported values.

Applications and granting of protection status at first instance: rates for 2024

The information in the table below is calculated by ECRE based on data provided by the General inspectorate for Immigration presented in the table above.

	Overall protection rate	Refugee rate	Subsidiary protection rate	Overall rejection rate
Total	37.46%	12.52%	24.94%	62.54%
Syria	49.2%	4.6%	44.6%	50.4%
Iraq	25%	10.7%	14.3%	75%
Nepal	0%	0%	0%	100%
Bangladesh	0%*	0%*	0%*	95.5%*
Palestinian Authority in Occupied Territories	96.6%	55.2%	41.4%	3.4%
Ethiopia	0%	0%	0%	100%
Sudan	94.5%*	5.6%*	88.9%*	11%*
Pakistan	5.9%	5.9%	0%	94.1%
Türkiye	12.5%*	12.5%*	0%*	81%*
Sri Lanka	0%	0%	0%	100%

Source: The recognition rates are calculated by the authors of the report, based on the table above.

* Some figures may not reflect the exact number of cases, as Eurostat rounds data to the nearest multiple of five (e.g. 5, 10, 15). As a result, small variations may not be visible in the reported values.

Gender/age breakdown of the total number of applicants: 2024

	Men	Women
Number	492	1,975
Percentage	19.94%	80.06%

	Adults	Children	
		Accompanied	Unaccompanied
Number	1,954	463	50
Percentage	82.78%	15.54%	1.68%

Minor Asylum Seeker	
Gen	TOTAL
F	165
M	348

Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers	
Gen	TOTAL
F	1
M	49

Source: Information provided by the General Inspectorate for Immigration, 23 January 2025.
Note: The gender breakdown (Men/Women) applies to all applicants, not only adults.

First instance and appeal decision rates: 2024

There were 1208 rejections of asylum applications in first instance in 2024.² The only data received indicated that there were 375 negative decisions, with the appeals confirming the IGI's rulings.³ Moreover, there were 53 decisions establishing the termination of the form of protection granted (27 decisions for refugee status and 26 decisions for subsidiary protection).⁴

² Information provided by the General Inspectorate for Immigration, 23 January 2025.
³ Information provided by the General Inspectorate for Immigration, 23 January 2025.
⁴ Information provided by the General Inspectorate for Immigration, 23 January 2025.

Overview of the legal framework

Main legislative acts on asylum procedures, reception conditions, detention and content of international protection

Title (EN)	Original Title (RO)	Abbreviation	Web Link
Act No. 122 of 4 May 2006 on Asylum in Romania <i>Last updated: 08 March 2024</i>	Legea nr. 122 din 4 mai 2006 privind azilul în România <i>Formă actualizată: 08 martie 2024</i>	Asylum Act	https://bit.ly/45ONEkW (RO)

Main implementing decrees, guidelines and regulations on asylum procedures, reception conditions, detention and content of international protection

Title (EN)	Original Title (RO)	Abbreviation	Web Link
Government Decree No. 1251 of 13 September 2006 regarding the Methodological Norms for Applying Act 122/2006 <i>Last updated: 18 March 2022</i>	Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 1251 din 13 septembrie 2006 privind Normele Metodologice de aplicare a Legei 122/2006 <i>Formă actualizată: 18 martie 2022</i>	Asylum Decree	https://bit.ly/4ePg6XL (RO)
Government Emergency Ordinance No. 194 of 12 December 2002 regarding the regime for foreigners in Romania <i>Last updated: 22 March 2024</i>	Ordonanță de urgență nr. 194 din 12 decembrie 2002 privind regimul străinilor în România <i>Formă actualizată: 22 martie 2024</i>	Aliens Ordinance	https://bit.ly/3VSkf4u (RO)
Government Ordinance No. 44 of 29 January 2004 regarding the social integration of foreigners granted international protection or a right of residence in Romania, as well as the citizens of the Member States of the European Union, the European Economic Area and the citizens of the Swiss Confederation <i>Last updated: 10 October 2019</i>	Ordonanța Guvernului Nr. 44 din 29 ianuarie 2004 privind integrarea socială a străinilor care au dobândit protecție internațională sau un drept de ședere în România, precum și a cetățenilor statelor membre ale Uniunii Europene, Spațiului Economic European și a cetățenilor Confederației Elvețiene <i>Formă actualizată: 10 octombrie 2019</i>	Integration Ordinance	https://bit.ly/3XR0Pzl (RO)

Decision No. 945 of November 5, 2020 for the approval of the Methodological Norms for the application of the Government Ordinance no.44/2004 regarding the social integration of foreigners who have acquired a form of protection or a right of residence in Romania, as well as of the citizens of the state's members of the European Union and the European Economic Area <i>Last updated: 12 November 2020</i>	Hotărâre nr. 945 din 5 noiembrie 2020 pentru aprobarea Normelor metodologice de aplicare a Ordonanței Guvernului nr. 44/2004 privind integrarea socială a străinilor care au dobândit protecție internațională sau un drept de ședere în România, precum și a cetățenilor statelor membre ale Uniunii Europene, Spațiului Economic European și a cetățenilor Confederației Elvețiene <i>Formă actualizată: 12 noiembrie 2020</i>	Integration Decree	https://bit.ly/4cIlwIF (RO)
Ordinance No. 441 of 4 April 2008 for determining the attributions of the authorities responsible for implementing the data in the Eurodac system and for establishing the practical methodology of cooperation in the application of European regulations, with amendments and additions <i>Last updated: 22 July 2015</i>	Ordinul Ministrului Afacerilor Interne nr.441/2008 din 4 aprilie 2008 pentru stabilirea atribuțiilor autorităților responsabile cu implementarea datelor în sistemul Eurodac și pentru stabilirea metodologiei practice de cooperare în vederea aplicării regulamentelor europene în domeniu, cu modificările și completările ulterioare <i>Formă actualizată: 22 iulie 2015</i>	Ordinance 441/2008	https://bit.ly/4bwng0a (RO)
Regulation of Internal Order in the Regional Centres of Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers of 25 August 2016	Regulamentul de ordine interioară al centrelor regionale de proceduri și cazare a solicitanților de azil din 25.08.2016 Aprobat prin Ordinul Ministrului Afacerilor Interne nr. 130/2016	ROI	https://bit.ly/3RS9MVR (RO)
Regulation of Centres for Aliens Taken into Public Custody of 30 July 2014	Regulamentul centrelor de cazare a străinilor luați în custodie publică din 30.07.2014 Aprobat prin Ordinul Ministrului Afacerilor Interne nr. 121/2014	Public Custody Centres Regulation	https://bit.ly/3XO4Chm (RO)
Decision no. 1.596 of 4 December 2008 regarding the resettlement of refugees in Romania <i>Last updated: 12 February 2024</i>	Hotărâre nr. 1.596 din 4 decembrie 2008 privind relocarea refugiaților în România <i>Formă actualizată: 12 februarie 2024</i>	Resettlement Decision	https://bit.ly/45OaokQ (RO)

Overview of the main changes since the previous report update

The previous update was published in **July 2024**.

International protection

Asylum procedure

- ❖ **Key statistics:** In 2024 the number of asylum applications submitted in Romania significantly dropped compared to 2023: 10,346 applications were submitted in 2023, compared to only 2,467 in 2024.⁵ The profile of asylum applicants also changed. In 2023, Bangladesh was the main nationality present in the asylum system (with 2,821 applications), whereas in 2024 Syrians (759) and Iraqis (232) were the first nationalities of asylum applicants; Bangladesh was 4th in 2024, with only 126 claims. The number of children reaching the country also dropped, going from 933 in 2023 (of whom 159 were unaccompanied) to 348 (157 UAM) in 2024.
- ❖ **Legal reform:** In 2024, the Asylum Act (Law No. 122/2006) was amended to enhance coherence and align more effectively with evolving EU asylum and return standards, with its latest version published on 8 March 2024. The Aliens Ordinance (OUG 194/2002) was re-published in July 2024 with updated provisions. These reflect Romania's alignment with evolving EU asylum and return standards. A revised Resettlement Decision in February 2024 established a new relocation quota for 2024–2025. The number of case officers in IGI-DAI decreased from 39 in 2023 to 24 in 2024, despite Romania's participation in key EU pilot projects. Romania submitted its National Implementation Plan for the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum in December 2024, with formal approval by Memorandum in January 2025.
- ❖ **Borders:** In 2024, a substantial decrease in the number of recorded crossings was registered at Romania's border with Serbia. While other countries along the Western Balkan route experienced rising arrivals, Romanian authorities observed a 67% drop in the number of persons prevented from entering the country via the Serbian border - falling from 803 in 2023 to just 259 in 2024. This decrease might be the result of coordinated actions with Serbian authorities, intensified surveillance operations, as well as of overall changes in the migration route crossing the Western Balkans. The Romanian Border Police refers to have increased border surveillance, and reinforced joint patrols. Additionally, the number of individuals readmitted to Serbia under the EU–Serbia Readmission Agreement fell to fewer than 40 persons, compared to 214 in 2023.
- ❖ **Interpretation:** In 2024, interpretation services continued to be provided, including through videoconference systems, especially for rare languages. While the number of complaints regarding interpretation quality slightly decreased, some asylum seekers still reported difficulties in understanding proceedings via video links, describing the process as impersonal. According to CNRR, certain Regional Centers lacked interpreters for key languages such as Amharic, Somali, or Kurdish Sorani, resulting in delays in the processing and examination of cases. The problem was more acute at the second instance level, where certified interpreters are required, although in practice, trusted individuals are occasionally used instead. Authorities allow applicants to request interpreters of a specific gender, and interpretation services are frequently ensured in cooperation with NGOs. Child protection

⁵ Eurostat, *Asylum applications – annual statistics* (data extracted 14 March 2025), available [here](#).

authorities do not have dedicated interpreters and rely entirely on NGO support for language assistance.

- ❖ **Dublin procedure:** In 2024, Dublin transfers to Bulgaria were re-established, marking the resumption of returns under the Dublin Regulation. A total of four transfers to Bulgaria were carried out throughout the year.
- ❖ **Accelerated procedure:** In 2024, 22.5% of asylum applications (556 out of 2,467) were processed under the accelerated procedure — a lower percentage compared to 2023, when 38.5% (3,988 out of 10,346) of applications were handled in the same manner, according to IGI-DAI.
- ❖ **Legal representation of unaccompanied minors:** In 2024, the number of trainings was limited, largely due to a funding gap of at least six months in the availability of AMIF support.

Reception conditions

- ❖ **Reception conditions:** The accommodation capacity was expanded, with 540 new reception places introduced in 2024 (240 in Arad and 300 in Galați). Some of the centres were refurbished.
- ❖ **Transfers of asylum seekers between regional centres:** In 2024, transfers between reception centres continued, with a particular focus on relocating vulnerable cases from the Bucharest Reception Centre to the one in Galați, due to renovation works taking place in Bucharest.
- ❖ **Access to the labour market:** In 2024, access to the labour market for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection became even more difficult - not only due to persistent language barriers and limited qualifications, but likely also influenced by stronger anti-migrant discourse at the national and European level.

Detention of asylum seekers/migrants

- ❖ **Detention of vulnerable applicants:** In 2024, the Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) reported no cases of vulnerable persons being placed in public custody.
- ❖ **Reception conditions in detention:** In 2024, the **Arad** detention centre's capacity increased to 400 places with the addition of a new EU-funded wing offering improved material conditions, including air conditioning, gender-separated rooms, and recreational areas. In 2024, poor conditions persisted in parts of the **Otopeni** detention centre, including lack of access to outdoor spaces, worn-out walls, and outdated tiling.

Content of international protection

- ❖ **Integration program:** In 2024, following a 6–7-month funding gap, NGO-implemented integration projects resumed. This temporary interruption had affected the availability of key services for beneficiaries of international protection.
- ❖ **Travel documents:** In 2024, according to the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI), all individuals who requested travel documents successfully received them.
- ❖ **Cessation of protection status:** In 2024, IGI-DAI issued 53 cessation decisions - 27 for refugee status and 26 for subsidiary protection - primarily affecting nationals from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Ukraine. This marks a decrease from 84 decisions recorded in 2023

- ❖ **Family reunification:** In 2024, a total of 295 applications for family reunification were submitted, up from 245 in 2023, but only 96 were approved, marking a significant drop in approval rates. The average waiting time remained between 6 and 9 months.
- ❖ **Access to the labour market:** In 2024, beneficiaries of international protection in Romania continued to face major obstacles in accessing the labour market, including language barriers, lack of study documents, and social stigma. They remained mainly employed in low-paid jobs in hospitality and construction. Despite existing legal access, distrust from society and exploitative labour practices persist, as noted by JRS and CNRR.
- ❖ **Access to healthcare:** In 2024, one of the key difficulties faced by beneficiaries of international protection was finding a family doctor willing to register them, even when they had valid health insurance. This issue, alongside persistent language barriers, long delays in accessing specialist care, and limited knowledge of the healthcare system, continues to hinder access to adequate medical services.

Temporary protection

The information given hereafter constitute a short summary of the 2024 Report on Temporary Protection, for further information, see [Annex on Temporary Protection](#).

Temporary protection procedure

- ❖ **Key temporary protection statistics:** Romania continued to host a significant number of Ukrainian nationals in 2024, with 179,737 temporary protection holders registered in the country by the end of the year. Bucharest issued 31% of the total number of TP permits at the national level, while top five counties represented almost 70% of the issuance offices throughout the country.⁶
- ❖ **Unaccompanied and separated children:** In 2024, 1,674 temporary protection permits were issued to unaccompanied and separated children.

Content of temporary protection

- ❖ **Changes to the housing support program:** In 2024, the government overhauled its housing assistance for Ukrainian refugees. The former “50/20” daily allowance scheme was replaced by a new mechanism offering 2,000 RON per month per family (750 RON for single persons) for accommodation and 600 RON per person per month for food, generally provided up to four months. Emergency Ordinance No. 96/2024 extended this support into mid-2024 and tied continued aid to refugees’ employment or school enrolment.
- ❖ **Employment:** In 2024, Romania introduced a dedicated procedure to facilitate the employment of Ukrainian refugees (Order No. 1,938 of 30 July 2024). Nevertheless, many refugees continued to face challenges entering the labour market due to language barriers and limited childcare options, underscoring the need for Romanian language courses and better support for single parents seeking work.
- ❖ **Access to education:** Access to education for children from Ukraine remained a priority in 2024. By mid-2024, 97.44% of Ukrainian minors under temporary protection (48,767 children) were enrolled in Romanian preschools or schools. Additionally, Romania ratified an agreement with Ukraine on mutual recognition of educational documents (Law No. 23/2024)

⁶ UNHCR Data Portal available [here](#).

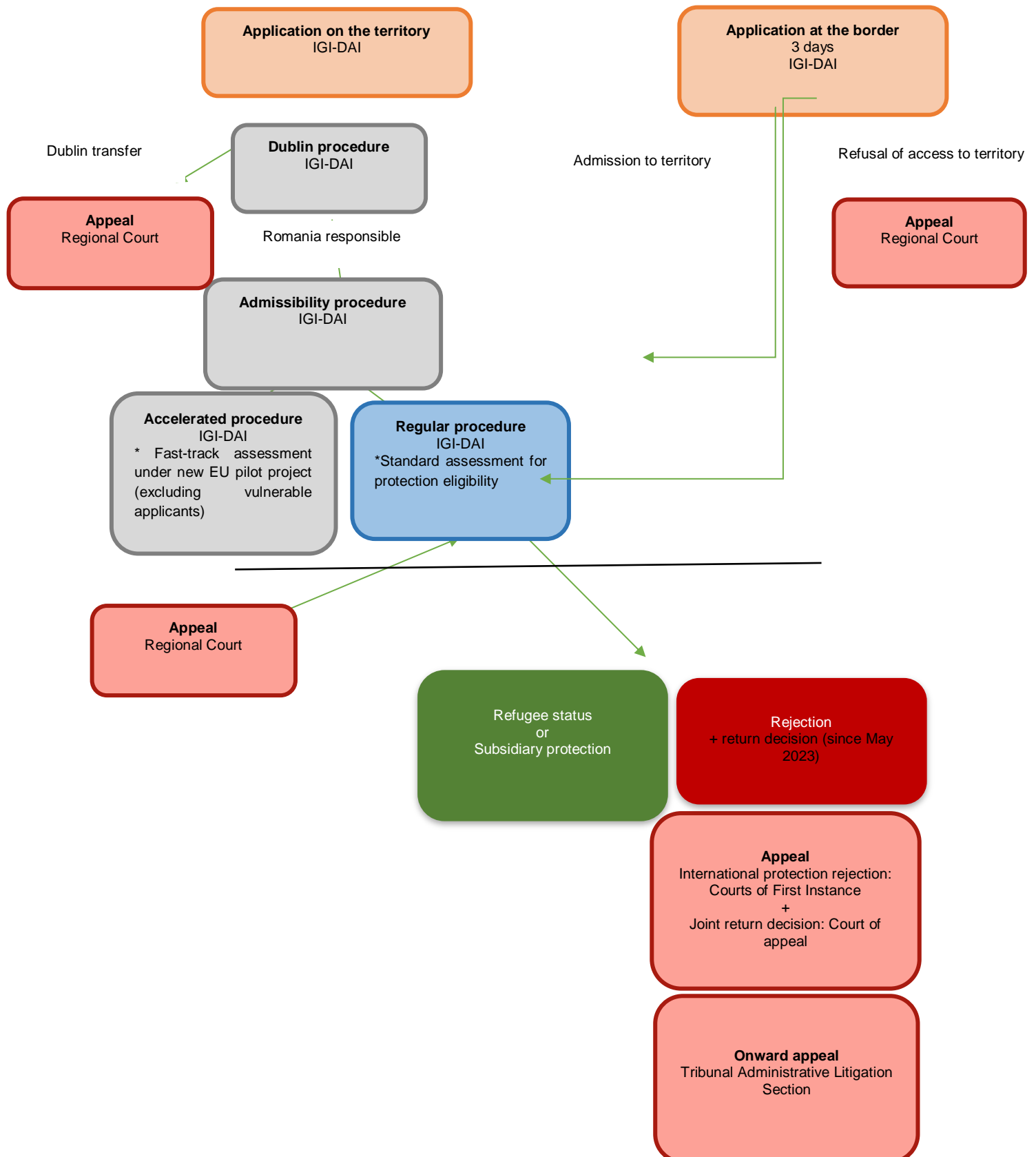
and established a special commission to help assign refugee pupils to schools and provide them with counselling support.

- ❖ **Child financial aid:** In 2024, authorities ensured that Ukrainian families who obtained temporary protection before 1 July 2024 became eligible for the standard child allowance and other social benefits on par with Romanian citizens. Those receiving protection after that date were instead provided a one-time financial support for four months before transitioning to the regular benefit system.
- ❖ **Access to basic benefits:** In 2024, beneficiaries of temporary protection in Romania continued to face obstacles in accessing financial and in-kind assistance. Although state-funded accommodation and food support remained available, the restructuring of the housing support program led to reduced coverage and delays in implementation. Moreover, assistance provided by NGOs also declined, largely due to cuts in international funding and GAPS in AMIF funds, further limiting support for vulnerable individuals.

Asylum Procedure

A. General

1. Flow chart



2. Types of procedures

Indicators: Types of Procedures

1. Which types of procedures exist in your country?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ❖ Regular procedure: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Prioritised examination: ⁷ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Fast-track processing: ⁸ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Dublin procedure: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Admissibility procedure: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Border procedure: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Accelerated procedure: ⁹ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Other: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |

2. Are any of the procedures that are foreseen in the law, not being applied in practice?

- ☐ Yes ☒ No

3. List of authorities that intervene in each stage of the procedure

Stage of the procedure	Competent authority (EN)	Competent authority (RO)
Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ At the border ❖ On the territory 	General Inspectorate for Immigration – Directorate for Asylum and Integration (IGI-DAI)	Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări – Direcția Azil și Integrare (IGI-DAI)
Dublin	General Inspectorate for Immigration – Directorate for Asylum and Integration (IGI-DAI)	Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări – Direcția Azil și Integrare (IGI-DAI)
Refugee status determination	General Inspectorate for Immigration – Directorate for Asylum and Integration (IGI-DAI)	Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări – Direcția Azil și Integrare (IGI-DAI)
First appeal (at the same time with appeal against the joint return decision)	Regional Court	Judecatorie Secția Civilă, materie: Contencios Administrativ și Fiscal
Appeal against return decision issued jointly with the international protection rejection decision	Regional Court of Appeal	Curtea de Apel materie: Contencios Administrativ și Fiscal
Onward/Second appeal	County Tribunal Administrative Litigation Section	Tribunal Secția de Contencios Administrativ și Fiscal
Subsequent application	General Inspectorate for Immigration – Directorate for Asylum and Integration (IGI-DAI)	Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări – Direcția Azil și Integrare (IGI-DAI)
Revocation and withdrawal	General Inspectorate for Immigration – Directorate for Asylum and Integration (IGI-DAI)	Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări – Direcția Azil și Integrare (IGI-DAI)

⁷ For applications likely to be well-founded or made by vulnerable applicants.

⁸ Accelerating the processing of specific caseloads as part of the regular procedure.

⁹ Labelled as “accelerated procedure” in national law.

4. Determining authority

Name in English	Number of staff	Ministry responsible	Is there any political interference possible by the responsible Minister with the decision making in individual cases by the first instance authority?
General Inspectorate for Immigration – Directorate for Asylum and Integration (IGI-DAI)	24 ¹⁰ decision-case officers	Ministry of Internal Affairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

The General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) is a government agency operating under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This agency is responsible for overseeing the asylum process through DAI, which is responsible for decisions on asylum applications. Additionally, IGI-DAI manages the Regional Centres for Asylum Seekers, also known as reception centres, as well as specially designated closed areas within these centres. IGI-DAI may request necessary documentation from public institutions, agencies, or organizations operating in Romania to assess the applicant's situation and make a decision, while respecting confidentiality rules. In these cases, the applicant's consent is not required.¹¹

The Head of IGI, known as the General Inspector, is appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs.¹² The head is assisted by two Deputy General Inspectors, selected through a competitive examination organized by IGI, in accordance with the law.¹³ IGI-DAI includes a director and a deputy director. These positions are filled through an exam, the reassignment from a different location or by direct designation.¹⁴ Both the institutional structure and the IGI's mandate are prescribed by Government Decision no. 639 of 20 June 2007.¹⁵

At the regional level, IGI-DAI operates six regional centres that are specifically designed for the accommodation of asylum seekers and the processing of their asylum cases. Each centre is managed by a director and a deputy director, supported by integration officers, personnel responsible for fingerprinting and photographing applicants, officers who conduct preliminary interviews, and case officers tasked with interviewing applicants and drafting decisions. Each centre also engages staff members specializing in logistics, finance, and medical services. Notably, the same case officers who oversee the regular procedures are responsible for managing border and accelerated procedures as well. Furthermore, the legal counsellors represent IGI in court for matters pertaining to asylum cases.¹⁶

¹⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

¹¹ Article 49(2) Asylum Act.

¹² Art.2(1) DECISION no. 639 of 20 June 2007 (amended) on the organizational structure and attributions of the General Inspectorate for Immigration.

¹³ Law no. 360/2002 on the Status of the Police Officer, available [here](#).

The Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs no. 140/2016 on the human resources management activity in the Ministry, the General Manager's Order of the General Directorate of Human Resources Management no. II/1620/15.09.2015 on procedures and forms used in human resource management activity by the Ministry of Internal Affairs

¹⁴ Law 360/2002 on the Status of the Police Officer.

¹⁵ Government Decision No. 639 of June 20, 2007 on the organizational structure and duties of the General Inspectorate for Immigration, available in Romanian [here](#).

¹⁶ According to art. 5 b. 4. Government Decision No. 639 of June 20, 2007 on the organizational structure and duties of the General Inspectorate for Immigration, available in Romanian [here](#).

In both 2022 and 2021, IGI-DAI had 29 case officers.¹⁷ In 2023, the number of case officers qualified to conduct preliminary interviews increased to 39,¹⁸ but in 2024 the number of case officers dropped to 24.¹⁹ According to IGI-DAI, all case officers receive specific training, through the organisation of seminars, the processing of guidelines, ad-hoc meetings, monitoring visits and quality assessment.²⁰

Besides, information provided in individual cases if requested. Case officers are provided information regularly through the specialised department within IGI-DAI and through the materials developed by UNHCR and the European Union Agency for Asylum.²¹

According to the IGI 2024 report, alongside its national duties IGI was also actively engaged at the European level in 2024, notably through its participation in a pilot project coordinated with the European Commission, EU agencies, and international partners. Additionally, it played a significant role in supporting Romania's efforts to join the Schengen Area. The institution's ability to handle migration and asylum matters was underscored by its leadership in completing the National Implementation Plan for the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.²²

EUAA involvement in decision making

Starting in May 2023,²³ competence to examine asylum applications was extended to the experts of the European Union Agency for Asylum, in accordance with article 16(2)(c) of the EUAA Regulation (EU) 2021/2303, including activities of interviewing and analysing pending asylum procedures. According to the reasoning provided by the initiator of this change, the Ministry of Internal Affairs,²⁴ the proposed addition takes into account the situation generated by the armed conflict in Ukraine, the increase in the presence of people displaced from Ukraine on the territory of Romania and who were registered as beneficiaries of temporary protection pursuant to the Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of the Council (approximately 180,000), and who can at any time request the granting of a form of international protection, either of their own volition or if they had to so following the expiration of temporary protection. In this context, it is necessary to highlight that EUAA experts are not given decision-making tasks or power: they carry out interviewing and file analysis activities, but do not directly take decisions (see further under [Registration of the asylum application](#) and [Regular procedure – Personal interview](#)).

5. Short overview of the asylum procedure

Application

Access to the asylum procedure is guaranteed to any foreign national or stateless person who is either on Romanian territory or at the border, from the moment they express their intention to request protection from the Romanian state, whether in writing or orally. An asylum application can be submitted at the border or within the country.²⁵

¹⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, on the 11 March 2022 and on 22 February 2023.

¹⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

¹⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025. However, art. 48 (4) of the Asylum Act (as modified on 18 May 2023) provides that the interviewing and analysis of the reasons invoked may also be carried out by experts of the European Union Agency for Asylum, according to art. 16 para. (2) letter c) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2.303.

²⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² According to the *Assessment of the activity of the general inspectorate for immigration in the year 2024* of the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI), published in April 2025, summarizing its operations during 2024. Official source [here](#).

²³ On 18 May 2023, article 48 of Section 1, Chapter V was supplemented by Point 4, Article I of Emergency Ordinance no. 35 of May 17, 2023, published in the Official Gazette no. 436 of May 18, 2023, available in Romanian [here](#).

²⁴ Ministry of Internal Affairs, *Notă de fundamentare, Ordonanță de urgență pentru modificarea și completarea unor acte normative privind domeniul străinilor și azilului în România*, available in Romanian [here](#).

²⁵ Article 4 Asylum Act.

In addition to IGI-DAI, several other authorities are authorized to receive asylum applications. These include Border Police offices, police units (including those in pre-trial detention and detention centres), and structures of the National Administration of Penitentiaries under the Ministry of Justice.²⁶ The IGI-DAI must register an asylum application within a maximum of 3 working days if the application is submitted directly to them.²⁷ If the application is made to another competent authority, it must be registered within a maximum of 6 working days.²⁸ In cases of a mass influx of applications for international protection submitted to any of these authorities, the registration period may extend to 10 working days from the date the application is filed.²⁹

First instance procedure

The first instance procedure is carried out by IGI-DAI, with support from the EUAA starting from May 2023. This phase involves an administrative procedure where asylum seekers are photographed, fingerprinted, and issued a temporary identity document³⁰ that includes a personal numeric code.³¹ This temporary identity document is subject to periodic renewal.

Upon the registration of the asylum application, a preliminary interview is conducted to collect essential information regarding the applicant's personal details, as well as information about family members, relatives, or other relevant individuals. The interview also seeks to ascertain the applicant's journey from their country of origin to Romania, any prior asylum applications made in other Member States or third countries, and any identity or travel documents that the applicant possesses.³² Should there be evidence indicating that another Member State holds responsibility for assessing the asylum claim, the Dublin Regulation procedure is activated, resulting in the suspension of the asylum process in Romania.

Subsequently, a case officer from IGI-DAI conducts a personal interview with the applicant. According to the law, a decision must be issued within 30 days following the assignment of the case file to the designated case officer.³³ In the event of a negative decision, the applicant is entitled to appeal to the Regional Court within 10 days of receiving the decision, with the appeal being effective in suspending any action until a resolution is reached.³⁴ Since May 2023, Romania has implemented legislative changes, based on which return decisions be issued simultaneously with negative asylum decisions.³⁵ This means that individuals whose asylum applications are rejected also receive a return decision, obliging them to leave Romania.³⁶ If they wish to challenge the rejection, they must also request the suspension of the return decision. Notably, appeals against return decisions are filed with the Court of Appeals within the jurisdiction of the Regional Reception Centre that issued the decision, differing from the courts handling asylum appeal cases. For details see [Return procedure](#).

Accelerated procedure

²⁶ *ibid.* Article 36¹(2) citing Article 35.

²⁷ Article 36¹(1) Asylum Act.

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ *ibid.*, citing Article 35 Asylum Act.

³⁰ Article 17(1)(h) Asylum Act. Such a document is not issued to applicants: (i) who have applied for asylum at a border crossing point, as long as they have not been granted access to the territory by a decision of IGI-DAI; (ii) detained in public custody for reasons of national security and public order requesting asylum, as long as this measure is maintained; and (iii) who are taken into public custody due to a "significant risk of absconding" in a Dublin procedure.

³¹ Article 17(1¹) Asylum Act.

³² *ibid* Article 43(1).

³³ *ibid* Article 52(1).

³⁴ *ibid* Article 55(1).

³⁵ EMERGENCY ORDINANCE No. 35 of May 17, 2023 for the amendment and completion of certain normative acts regarding the field of foreigners and asylum in Romania, available [here](#).

³⁶ Art. 70 Asylum Act.

The Asylum Act establishes an accelerated procedure for handling manifestly unfounded asylum applications. This includes applications from individuals who, due to their activities or affiliation with a specific group, pose a threat to national security or public order in Romania, as well as applications from individuals arriving from safe countries of origin.³⁷ The accelerated procedure can be initiated during the regular process if the case officer identifies sufficient grounds for it.³⁸ A decision must be made within 3 days from the start of the accelerated procedure.³⁹ If a negative decision is issued in the accelerated procedure, it can be appealed within 7 days of receiving the decision. If the appeal is submitted within this timeframe, it automatically suspends the decision.⁴⁰ The court's ruling on the appeal is considered final and cannot be contested.⁴¹

In 2023, Romania participated in a European Commission pilot project aimed at fast-tracking asylum and return procedures. This initiative led to an enhanced application of the accelerated procedure, with a focus on swiftly identifying both eligible cases and applicants with vulnerabilities. Notably, vulnerable individuals were exempted from the accelerated process and referred for appropriate support.⁴²

The accelerated procedure received renewed interest in Romania through the pilot initiated re. crossings at the Serbian-Romanian border (see [The European Commission pilot with Romania and cooperation with Frontex](#) and [Accelerated procedure](#)). The pilot project ended in October 2023, showing positive outcomes and identifying best practices. As a result, Romania and the European Commission decided to extend and broaden this collaboration into 2024, further improving the expedited asylum procedures and border management methods.⁴³

According to IGI-DAI,⁴⁴ in 2024 a total of **556** asylum applications were analysed in an accelerated procedure.

Accelerated Asylum Procedure Data		
No.	Country of origin	Asylum Requests Processed Under Accelerated Procedure (first five countries of origin)
1	Nepal	173
2	Bangladesh	94
3	Pakistan	46
4	Ethiopia	40
5	Sri-Lanka	38

According to The Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR), in several cases, the applicant understands their case has been channelled in an accelerated procedure only after receiving a negative decision.⁴⁵

Border procedure

³⁷ *ibid* Article 75(1). Note: Romania does not have a list of safe countries of origin. This is related also to diplomatic relations between Romania and third countries. However, Romania considers EU countries to be safe.

³⁸ Article 78 Asylum Act.

³⁹ *ibid*. Article 79.

⁴⁰ *ibid*. Article 80(1).

⁴¹ *ibid*. Article 81(2).

⁴² EUAA, 'Accelerated Procedures', Asylum Report 2024, available [here](#).

⁴³ European Commission, 'Reporting on the results of the Pilot Project for fast asylum and return procedures with Romania', 26 June 2024, available [here](#).

⁴⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁴⁵ Meeting with NGOs during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 17 March 2025.

The border procedure applies to asylum and subsequent applications submitted at a border-crossing point. The law stipulates a 3-day deadline for issuing a decision regarding the border procedure.⁴⁶ Similar to the accelerated procedure, if a negative decision is made, it can be appealed within 7 days from the date of notification. The court's decision in this case is final and cannot be overturned.⁴⁷

Appeal

The second phase of the asylum procedure consists of a two-instance judicial review procedure. The Regional Court has jurisdiction as first-instance judicial review. The County Tribunal, Administrative Litigation Section (Administrative County Court), has jurisdiction over the area of the Regional Court whose decision is appealed. These courts are not specialised in asylum.⁴⁸

B. Access to the procedure and registration

1. Access to the territory and push backs

Indicators: Access to the Territory

1. Are there any reports (NGO reports, media, testimonies, etc.) of people refused entry at the border and returned without examination of their protection needs? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Is there a border monitoring system in place? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Who is responsible for border monitoring? ☐ National authorities ☒ NGOs ☒ Other (UNHCR)
4. How often is border monitoring carried out? ☒ Frequently ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

According to Romanian Border Police reports, asylum seekers arrive in Romania mainly by land through the south-western border with Serbia,⁴⁹ through the southern border with Bulgaria,⁵⁰ and through the northern border with Ukraine.⁵¹ In 2024, Romanian authorities intercepted multiple cases of attempted irregular border crossings through the Danube river, including a group of 19 Syrian migrants crossing by

⁴⁶ Article 82 Asylum Act.

⁴⁷ *ibid.* Article 86(2).

⁴⁸ Articles 64 and 67 Asylum Act.

⁴⁹ Border Police, 'Doisprezece migranți din India și Pakistan, sprijiniți de un cetățean român, depistați la granița cu Serbia', 14 February 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Doisprezece cetățeni din Afganistan și Pakistan, depistați de polițiștii de frontieră timișeni', 23 April 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Cetățean sârb cercetat în stare de arest preventiv pentru trafic de migranți', 25 November 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁵⁰ Border Police, 'Cetățean libian, depistat ascuns într-un autocamion la PTF Giurgiu', 26 January 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Doi cetățeni străini depistați ascunși în cabina unui autocamion, sub o saltea', 19 January 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Un migrant în stare de hipotermie, ascuns pe șasiul unui autocamion, salvat de polițiștii de frontieră doljeni', 14 February 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Patru cetățeni afgani ascunși printre covoare, depistați de polițiștii de frontieră doljeni', 26 March 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Trei cetățeni afgani, ascunși într-un TIR încărcat cu piese auto', 09 March 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Cinci cetățeni străini ascunși printre conserve și sucuri, descoperiți în P.T.F. Giurgiu', 06 June 2022, available in Romanian at [here](#); 'Șoferul unei autoutilitare arestat preventiv pentru trafic de migranți', 04 June 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Doi cetățeni sirieni depistați ascunși în podeaua unui autoturism la PTF Calafat', 08 August 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Șoferul unei autoutilitare cercetat în stare de arest preventiv pentru trafic de migranți', 19 September 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Opt cetățeni sirieni, ajutați de doi cetățeni români, descoperiți de polițiștii de frontieră giurgiuveni în timp ce încercau să treacă ilegal frontiera', 26 November 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁵¹ Border Police, 'Depistați din elicopter când au trecut ilegal frontiera', 21 April 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

boat, while dismantling a large smuggling network facilitating irregular transit via the river; no casualties were reported.⁵² In 2023, no incidents were reported on the Black Sea or Danube. In 2022, migrants were also intercepted by the Romanian Coast Guard in the Black Sea; according to Border Police reports 157 persons were rescued.⁵³

The Border Police have reported that persons who are detected by border guards in connection with an unauthorised crossing of the state border and who do not make an asylum claim are returned to the neighbouring state, either on the basis of readmission agreements concluded by the European Union with third countries (Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia), or on the basis of bilateral treaties (Bulgaria, Hungary). They receive an entry ban for 5 years which is communicated and includes information on the reason and possibility to challenge the measure. This information is provided with the help of an authorised interpreter.⁵⁴

In 2024, CNRR established a daily presence at Border Crossing Points (BCPs) with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, specifically at Sighetu Marmăției, Siret, and Isaccea for Ukraine, and at Sculeni, Albita, and Galați for Moldova. In addition to this daily presence, CNRR conducted 16 independent monitoring missions at the borders with Ukraine, Moldova, and Bulgaria, as well as at international airports. The border monitoring activities are based on thorough assessments, taking into account previous reports, alleged incidents, statistical data, and other information collected directly from the Border Police, IGI, FDSPs, or through third parties. The visits are announced in advance to ensure the availability of relevant stakeholders.⁵⁵ During the visits, CNRR has access to the BCP, but not to the transit zone.⁵⁶

1.1 Readmissions to neighbouring countries

Over the years, according to the information provided by IGI-DAI,⁵⁷ the Romanian Government has concluded readmission agreements with countries such as: Republic of Moldova, Albania, Lebanon, North Macedonia, Türkiye, Russia Federation, Georgia, Ukraine, India, Iraq, Armenia and China. These agreements were concluded by the Romanian Government for a non-determined period of time. According to CNRR, both returns and readmissions are made based on protocols, so these decisions are based on legal provisions and notified to the persons in question.⁵⁸

In recent years, Romania has seen a significant decline in the number of returns to neighbouring countries under readmission agreements. According to the Border Police, 1,396 individuals were returned in 2022, compared to 831 in 2021.⁵⁹ However, by 2023, this number dropped sharply to 214, with returns decreasing notably at the borders with Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, and the maritime border.⁶⁰ In 2024, under the readmission agreement with Serbia, less than 40 individuals were returned, marking a significant decrease compared to previous years.⁶¹ According to the AIDA Serbia 2024 report In 2024, a total of 20 individuals were officially readmitted from Romania to Serbia under the EU–Serbia

⁵² Agerpres, 'O navă s-a scufundat în Marea Neagră, în apropiere de Sf. Gheorghe; opt persoane salvate, trei dispărute', 18 May 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁵³ Border Police, 'Ambarcațiune cu migrantă interceptată de polițiștii de frontieră români, în apropierea țărmului românesc al Mării Negre', 19 August 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); 'Misiune de salvare a vieții omenești pe mare a unor migrantă depistați într-o ambarcațiune din apele teritoriale românești la Marea Neagră', 02 June 2022, available in Romanian [here](#); '27 de migrantă ajutați de două călăuze, cu o ambarcațiune turcească, descoperiți de polițiștii de frontieră din cadrul Gărzii de Coastă', 17 May 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁵⁴ Information provided by Border Police, 3 March 2021.

⁵⁵ Information provided by CNRR, February 2025.

⁵⁶ Meeting with NGOs during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 17 March 2025.

⁵⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁵⁸ Information provided by CNRR, 7 February 2023.

⁵⁹ Information provided by Border Police, 6 April 2023.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 16 January 2024.

⁶¹ Meeting with the General Inspectorate of the Border Police (IGPF) during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 18 March 2025.

Readmission Agreement, including 15 adult males, 1 underage male, 2 adult females, and 2 underage females.⁶²

1.2 Access to Romanian territory and asylum: statistics and practices

In 2024, a significant decrease (over - 60%) in the migratory pressure at the Romanian border with Serbia was observed, despite other countries in the region seeing an increase in the number of arrivals. In 2024, the Border Police reported that 259 people were prevented from entering the country, the indicator decreasing by 67% compared to 2023.⁶³ In the past years, significantly less arrivals were registered on the border near Timișoara compared especially to the period between 2016 and 2021. According to the Border Police, the decrease in the number of arrivals at this border is due to an increased focus on migration management at this border and to the collaboration with border authorities of Serbia to prevent the irregular crossing of migrants from the neighbouring country.

This shift, however, is likely also to be attributed to an overall shift of the Balkan migratory route. Following Croatia's Schengen accession, migration routes shifted, as it became easier and more cost-effective for irregular migrants to travel through Croatia instead of entering Romania and transiting through Hungary.⁶⁴

According to IGPF,⁶⁵ in 2024, Romanian border authorities identified 18,396 foreign nationals attempting to irregularly cross into Romania. This number includes more than 14,800 Ukrainians who entered the country seeking protection from the Romanian government.⁶⁶ Moreover, 2,389 foreign nationals were found trying to irregularly leave Romania, mostly at the Hungarian border. In most of these cases, the individuals had originally entered Romania legally with work visas and were attempting to continue their journey toward Western Europe.⁶⁷ The main nationalities of the people attempting to cross the border are Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Nepal, Bangladesh, Turkey, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and India.⁶⁸

In 2023, at the level of the state border of Romania, the following aspects can be highlighted regarding border crossings: 19,793 foreign citizens were registered as having irregularly crossed a border (6,712 accessing the country, and 12,278 trying to exit). Compared to 2022, there was a decrease at the entry by 30% (from 9,944 to 6,712 detected persons), and an increase of 93% with regard to exiting the territory (from 6,357 to 12,278 detected persons). A significant decrease was also reported when looking at the number of persons prevented from entering Romania: from 27,524 in 2022 to 803 in 2023 (representing 97%). The main ways of crossing irregularly the border in 2023 were: 5,755 (85%) were detected at the green border upon entry, while 8,533 (70%) were found hidden in various means of transport while attempting to exit the country. The top five countries of origin for those detected with irregular entries or exits by the border police were Ukraine (4,410), Bangladesh (4,208), Syria (3,184), Pakistan (1,803) and Nepal (1,219).

As a comparison with 2023, the total number of registered irregular crossings in 2024 decreased slightly (18,396 in 2024 vs. 19,793 in 2023), but the proportion of protection-seeking individuals, especially Ukrainians, increased. The number of irregular exits in 2024 (2,389) dropped substantially compared to 2023 (12,278), possibly due to enhanced border controls or shifting migration routes. Even though migration patterns indicate a shift, Romania remains a transit country, especially for legally employed migrants attempting secondary movement toward Western Europe.

⁶² Information provided by the Ministry of Interior of Serbia, Department for Readmission, 07–2/25 and 07–34/24, cited in AIDA, *Country Report: Serbia – 2024 Update*, July 2025, available [here](#).

⁶³ Romanian Border Police, *Evaluarea activității Poliției de Frontieră Române desfășurate în anul 2024*, 19 February 2025, available [here](#).

⁶⁴ Meeting with IGPF during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 18 March 2025.

⁶⁵ Romanian Border Police, 'Analiza activității Poliției de Frontieră Române pe anul 2023', 13 February 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁶ Romanian Border Police, *Evaluarea activității Poliției de Frontieră Române desfășurate în anul 2024*, 19 February 2025, available [here](#).

⁶⁷ *ibid.*

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

According to ITPF Timisoara, in 2024, it was more common to observe individuals attempting to leave Romania and cross irregularly into other countries. Many of these individuals enter the country on work visas but do not comply with the intended purpose of their stay.⁶⁹ The 78% decrease in irregular exit attempts from Romania between 2023 and 2024 suggests a decline in the number of people entering with work visas and subsequently seeking to move onward. Notably, since 2017, there have been no incidents involving the use of firearms or complaints related to excessive force by ITPF Timisoara.⁷⁰ More recently, a decrease in both arrivals and exit attempts has been observed, potentially as a result of shifts in migration routes and enhanced border surveillance measures implemented by the Romanian Border Police.⁷¹

1.2.1 People detected crossing or attempting to cross the border entering Romania and people apprehended for irregular entry

In 2024, the European Union recorded a 38% decline in the number of irregular border crossings compared to the previous year, according to data published by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex). The national border police identified a total of 18,396 foreign nationals who entered the country by irregularly crossing the border, approximately the same number as in 2023. This figure includes over 14,800 Ukrainian citizens who sought protection from the Romanian state upon their arrival.⁷²

Over 351 people, Romanian and foreign citizens, were charged for being involved in migrant smuggling by supporting foreign citizens in their attempt to illegally cross the border. Regarding the nationality of the people detected while attempting an irregular border crossing, most of those detected were nationals of the following countries: Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Nepal, Bangladesh, Turkey, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India.⁷³

If we refer to the mode of action at the border in relation to the total number of people detected crossing or attempting to cross, 85% of migrants were detected attempting to irregularly cross a green border. 12% tried to cross borders by hiding in means of transport. 2% attempted to cross at maritime and river areas using boats. 1% were detected trying to irregularly cross using other methods, such as false travel documents and visas, person substitution, or avoiding border controls.⁷⁴

Persons apprehended for irregular entry	
2019	2,048
2020	6,658
2021	9,053
2022	4,966
2023⁷⁵	19,793 ⁷⁶
2024	18,396

⁶⁹ Meeting with ITPF Timisoara during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 20 March 2025.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*

⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁷² Romanian Border Police, Evaluarea activității Poliției de Frontieră Române desfășurate în anul 2024, 19 February 2025, available [here](#). However, according to the General Inspectorate for Immigration, a number of 4,507 Ukrainian citizens have been registered as asylum-seekers in Romania between 24 February 2022 and 31 December 2024, available [here](#).

⁷³ Romanian Border Police, Evaluarea activității Poliției de Frontieră Române desfășurate în anul 2024, 19 February 2025, available [here](#).

⁷⁴ *ibid.*

⁷⁵ Information provided by Border Police, 16 January 2024

⁷⁶ Ministry of Internal Affairs, 'Main results of the activities carried out by MAI structures in 2023 for crime prevention and combating, as well as citizen protection', available in Romanian [here](#).

According to the Romanian Border Police, the countries of origin of those apprehended at the border in 2024 included Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Nepal, Bangladesh, Turkey, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and India. However, no disaggregated statistical breakdown per nationality was made publicly available in the official report.⁷⁷

At the regional level, ITPF Timișoara strengthened border control measures and collaborated with Serbian authorities to address migration challenges.⁷⁸

In 2024, irregular border crossings further declined. Only 76 migrants attempted to enter Romania from Serbia, a 7% decrease from 2023. Of these, 38 were returned to Serbia, while 38 applied for asylum. Additionally, 24 readmission requests were submitted under the Romania-Serbia Readmission Agreement, all approved. At the same time, illegal exits from Romania into Serbia increased by 21%, with 34 individuals (mainly from Nepal) apprehended in 11 cases. A joint patrol system led to the detention of 20 individuals.⁷⁹

Romanian authorities also prevented 268 illegal entries in 2024, a 67% decrease from 2023 (804 cases) and a striking 99% drop from 2022 (27,469 cases). According to the border police, this was due to improved surveillance, including the use of thermal cameras, Frontex's "Sparrow2" aerial missions, and real-time data exchange with Serbia. Secondary migration toward Hungary also dropped by 77%, with only 18 cases involving 56 migrants, compared to 38 cases and 244 migrants in 2023.⁸⁰

To combat smuggling, the judicial police at ITPF Timișoara targeted trafficking networks, leading to 16 individuals being investigated while at liberty and legal measures against 45 individuals—11 arrests and 34 placed under judicial supervision. These efforts reflect Romania's ongoing commitment to securing its borders and addressing irregular migration through surveillance, cooperation, and enforcement.⁸¹

According to ITPF Timisoara, Following Romania's entry into the Schengen Area, two internal borders remain in place, where the Border Police has continued to allocate personnel and resources. Joint operations are being conducted in coordination with both Hungarian and Bulgarian authorities to combat irregular migration networks, supported by effective inter-agency communication. Additionally, Romania has contributed 40 police officers to the joint deployment at the Turkish-Bulgarian border, alongside Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria. These coordinated efforts have contributed to a noticeable decrease in irregular migration between Bulgaria and Romania.⁸²

1.2.2 Pushbacks: refusals of entry and people 'prevented from entering' Romania

In 2024, Romanian border authorities denied entry to 10,266 foreign nationals who did not meet the legal requirements for entering the country, representing an increase by 41.7% compared to 2023.⁸³

⁷⁷ The information is based on the Romanian Border Police's official 2024 activity report. For detailed data and context, see the *Evaluation of the Activities of the Romanian Border Police in 2024* (March 19, 2025), Available [here](#).

⁷⁸ Timisoara Border Police Territorial Inspectorate, Evaluarea activității Inspectoratului Teritorial al Poliției de Frontieră Timișoara pe anul 2024, 20 February 2025, available [here](#).

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ *ibid.*

⁸¹ *ibid.*

⁸² *ibid.*

⁸³ The information is based on the Romanian Border Police's official 2024 activity report. For detailed data and context, see the *Evaluation of the Activities of the Romanian Border Police in 2024* (March 19, 2025), Available [here](#).

Persons issued refusals of entry into Romania	
2019	7,640
2020	12,684
2021	11,232
2022	9,044
2023	7,089
2024	10,266 ⁸⁴

According to ITPF Timișoara, which oversees border security in Timiș, Caraș-Severin, and Mehedinți counties, the statistics for individuals stopped from entering the country in this region alone were as follows:

Persons prevented from entering Romania according to the ITPF Timișoara	
2019	6,107
2020	34,938
2021	75,303
2022	27,469
2023	803
2024	268 ⁸⁵

According to IGPF,⁸⁶ in 2023, only 803 persons were prevented from entering Romania (called “whose travel direction was interrupted”), down from 27,524 in 2022. In 2024, a significant decrease (over 60%) in the migratory pressure at the border with Serbia was observed, regardless of the high number of arrivals that were still registered by other countries in the Western Balkans region. In 2024, only 259 people were prevented from entering the country at the border with Serbia, which represented a 67% decrease compared to 2023.⁸⁷ As previously mentioned, in recent years, arrivals have dropped significantly, largely due to migration routes shifting after Croatia’s Schengen entry, reducing pressure on the once-busy Timișoara border.⁸⁸ Also, this decline is due to a police operation in Serbia that took place in the end of 2023 during which migrants were forcibly evacuated from the entire northern border area with Hungary and Romania. 7,000 people were relocated to different camps in southern areas without being informed of their destination.⁸⁹

Refusal of entry procedure and appeal

Pursuant to the Aliens Act, refusal of entry is motivated by the Border Police authorities and it is immediately communicated to the person concerned, using the form provided in Part B of Annex V of the

⁸⁴ The information is based on the Romanian Border Police’s official 2024 activity report. For detailed data and context, see the *Evaluation of the Activities of the Romanian Border Police in 2024* (February 19, 2025), Available [here](#).

⁸⁵ Timisoara Border Police Territorial Inspectorate, Evaluarea activității Inspectoratului Teritorial al Poliției de Frontieră Timișoara pe anul 2024, 20 February 2025, available [here](#).

⁸⁶ Romanian Border Police, ‘Analiza activității Poliției de Frontieră Române pe anul 2023’, 13 February 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁸⁷ Romanian Border Police, Evaluarea activității Poliției de Frontieră Române desfășurate în anul 2024, 19 February 2025, available [here](#).

⁸⁸ Meeting with the General Inspectorate of the Border Police during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 18 March 2025. See also: ECRE/AIDA, Country Report on Serbia – Update on 2024, July 2025, available [here](#).

⁸⁹ Pushed, beaten, left to die, European Pushback Report 2024, February 2025, available [here](#).

Schengen Borders Code and the National Visa Centre within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁹⁰ This form is provided to the person concerned in Romanian and English.⁹¹

As the Aliens Act does not foresee a special remedy against the decision of refusal of entry, general administrative law applies.⁹² As a result, the person concerned may lodge an action against the decision before the Administrative Court with territorial jurisdiction over the area in which the issuing body of the contested administrative act is located.⁹³

Prior to lodging an appeal at the Administrative Court, the person, who considers that their rights have been breached by an administrative act issued by a public institution, shall appeal to the issuing public authority within 30 days. The complaint should be addressed to the hierarchically superior body if there still is one (for example when the act had already been taken by a superior there might no longer be a hierarchically superior body).⁹⁴ The appeal is assessed in 30 days.⁹⁵ An appeal lodged to the Administrative Court without fulfilling this prior procedural step will be declared inadmissible. The complaint and the appeal to the Administrative Court have no suspensive effect.

The applicant may request the suspension of the administrative act to the competent court, when lodging the prior appeal,⁹⁶ or when appealing to the court.⁹⁷

The Aliens Act prescribes that the foreigner against whom the measure of non-entry to Romania has been taken has the possibility to voluntarily leave the border crossing point within 24 hours. The term is calculated from the time when the measure of non-entry to Romania was ordered.⁹⁸

Upon the expiration of the 24-hour term, the decision of refusal of entry to Romania is enforced by the Border Police, taking into account the state of health of the person concerned. The person is sent to the country of origin or to another destination accepted both by the person and the third state concerned, except Romania.⁹⁹ The consequence of this provision is that the foreigner against whom a decision of refusal of entry was taken has only 24 hours to lodge the appeal against the decision.

If the Border Police needs more than 12 hours to carry out the removal from the border-crossing point, the individual is accommodated in a space arranged for this purpose in the transit area, or, if this is not possible, to another location established outside the border-crossing point with transit area status.¹⁰⁰

The Aliens Act prescribes a special procedure when the foreigner declares to the Border Police authorities that, in case they were forced to leave the border crossing point, they would have to go to a state where they fear that their life is endangered or they will be subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment and they do not submit an asylum application.¹⁰¹ When this occurs the Border Police officers shall immediately inform IGI-DAI, which, within maximum of 10 days, shall analyse the situation of the foreigner and determine whether the declaration is well-founded.¹⁰² If a person's statement is unfounded, IGI-DAI communicates the decision to the border police authorities, which will inform the person concerned in this respect.¹⁰³

⁹⁰ Article 8(4) Aliens Act.

⁹¹ Information provided by Border Police, 12 February 2020.

⁹² Act 554/2004 on Administrative Litigation.

⁹³ *ibid.* Articles 6-18.

⁹⁴ *ibid.* Article 7(1).

⁹⁵ *ibid.* Article 7(4) in conjunction with Article 2(1) g).

⁹⁶ *ibid.* Article 14.

⁹⁷ *ibid.* Article 15.

⁹⁸ Article 9(1) Aliens Act.

⁹⁹ *ibid.* Article 9(2).

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.* Article 9(3).

¹⁰¹ *ibid.* Article 9(5).

¹⁰² *ibid.* Article 9(6).

¹⁰³ *ibid.* Article 9(7).

If the foreigner's declaration is well-founded, IGI-DAI will enforce the decision of refusal of entry to Romania by removal under the escort of the foreigner. The provisions of the Aliens Act on removal under the escort, public custody of foreigners and toleration status on the territory of Romania apply accordingly.¹⁰⁴

Reported pushbacks

In parallel, in 2022, UNHCR Serbia reported 1,232 pushbacks from Romania.¹⁰⁵ The number has decreased significantly in comparison with 2020, when 13,409 were collectively expelled from Romania to Serbia. In a report published in May 2024, the Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN) reported incidents of pushbacks at the Serbia-Romania border. In spring, the Serbian organization InfoPark revealed details of a violent pushback from Romania, where a man from Kazakhstan claimed he was subjected to physical violence by Romanian police before being forcibly returned to Serbia.¹⁰⁶ UNHCR received information on five incidents of lack of access to an asylum procedure where the person concerned reported to have asked for international protection at the border.¹⁰⁷

As regards the border incidents, UNHCR Romania reported that on three occasions in January 2023, Romanian government authorities at the border with Serbia pushed back refugees and asylum seekers from third countries transiting through Serbia.¹⁰⁸ The US Department of State 2023 report mentioned that according to NGOs, several incidents of harassment, discrimination, abuses against refugees and asylum seekers, pushbacks, and deviations from asylum procedures at border areas occurred throughout the year. Most incidents were not reported because of fear, lack of information, inadequate support services, and inefficient redress mechanisms. CNRR reported¹⁰⁹ that persons claimed that potential abuses at the border were notified to the border police, and the institutional response was hesitant, including denial of access to potential beneficiaries at Otopeni Airport, while there were gaps in access to the territory and the asylum procedure, mainly in situations involving other nationals than Ukrainians (Russian Federation or Belarus) who were allegedly 'discouraged entry to Romania' by Border Police officers.

According to UNHCR Romania, in interviews conducted with almost 2,000 asylum-seekers between June 2022 and November 2023,¹¹⁰ when asked about attempts to enter Romania, 5% of total respondents declared that they had had at least one failed attempt. Out of this 5%, 77% of people had made more than one attempt to enter, with 20 attempts being the highest number mentioned and 34% of respondents having attempted to cross twice. 95% of respondents reported having been prevented from crossing by the border police. Out of 5% of total respondents who reported at least one failed attempt to enter the country, 80% reported not having been asked by the authorities if they wish to apply for asylum. However, 83% of respondents reported having been informed of the right to seek asylum through NGOs, other refugees/asylum seekers as well as through asylum authorities. While 89% of total respondents reported that they were not subject to any form of violence during the process, 11% reported experiencing incidents including property confiscation / destruction, physical abuse / mistreatment, and unwanted sexual attention. It should be noted that these incidents may be attributable to either authorities (Romanian or Serbian) or private persons on either side of the borders.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.* Article 9(8).

¹⁰⁵ UNHCR, *Country Reports Serbia*, available [here](#).

¹⁰⁶ BVMN, *Balkan Regional Report*, May 2024, available [here](#).

¹⁰⁷ Meeting with UNHCR during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 19 March 2025.

¹⁰⁸ US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania*, April 2024, available [here](#).

¹⁰⁹ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024, 2023*, available [here](#).

¹¹⁰ UNHCR Romania, *Regional protection monitoring report - Romania 2022/2023*, March 2024, available [here](#).

1.2.3 Applications for asylum at border crossing points

In 2023, 772 third-country nationals applied for asylum at the border crossing points.¹¹¹ According to IGI-DAI, a total of 45 applications for international protection were processed under a border procedure, in accordance with Article 43 of Directive 2013/32/EU.¹¹² The top five countries of origin for applicants in this procedure were: the Palestinian Authority in Palestine, with 31 applications, followed by Uzbekistan (3 applications), Ukraine (2 applications), Syria (2 applications), and the Russian Federation (2 applications).¹¹³

According to the Border Police, asylum applications are generally not submitted at border crossing points, as legislation restricts access to Romanian territory, permitting a maximum stay of 20 days within transit zones.¹¹⁴ When a third-country national is apprehended for irregular crossing and submits an asylum claim, the border police may detain the individual for up to 24 hours solely to conduct a preliminary interview related to the irregular entry.¹¹⁵ Upon receipt of an asylum request, the IGI is promptly notified, and the border police also inform the UNHCR implementing partner accordingly.¹¹⁶

1.2.4 Issues related to exiting Romania

While irregular entry or stay in Romania committed by persons who have been granted a form of protection is not punishable,¹¹⁷ irregular exit from the country is punishable under the Criminal Code by imprisonment from 6 months to 3 years or a fine.¹¹⁸

According to the General Inspectorate of Border Police (IGPF),¹¹⁹ in 2023, 12,278 foreign citizens were involved in irregular migration exiting Romania. Compared to 2022, it was an increase of 93% with regard to exiting the territory (from 6,357 to 12,278 detected persons). 8,533 (70%) were found hidden in various means of transport while attempting to exit the country. The top five countries of origin for those detected with irregular entries or exits by the border police were Ukraine (4,410), Bangladesh (4,208), Syria (3,184), Pakistan (1,803) and Nepal (1,219). In 2024, 2,389 foreign citizens were detected while attempting to irregularly cross a border into neighbouring countries, with most of them being detected at the border with Hungary. In these cases, it is mostly about the migration towards Western European Countries of the labour force coming from foreign countries to Romania, meaning individuals who entered the country legally, with work visas.¹²⁰

1.2.5 Measures taken by Romanian authorities to “close migration routes” and limit irregular entries

In 2024 according to the Romanian Border Police, 259 migrants were prevented from entering Romania via the Serbian border—a 67% decrease compared to the 803 prevented in 2023. Illegal border crossings declined by over 60% following enhanced collaborative measures with Serbian authorities.¹²¹

¹¹¹ Information provided by the Border Police, 16 January 2024.

¹¹² Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

¹¹³ *ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Meeting with the General Inspectorate of the Border Police during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 18 March 2025; Art. 87 Asylum Act.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Article 11 Asylum Act.

¹¹⁸ Article 262(1) Criminal Code.

¹¹⁹ Romanian Border Police, ‘Analiza activității Poliției de Frontieră Române pe anul 2023’, 13 February 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

¹²⁰ Romanian Border Police, ‘Evaluarea activității Poliției de Frontieră Române desfășurate în anul 2024’, 19 February 2025, available [here](#).

¹²¹ The information is based on the Romanian Border Police’s official 2024 activity report. For detailed data and context, see the *Evaluation of the Activities of the Romanian Border Police in 2024* (March 19, 2025)

In 2024, Romanian authorities intensified efforts to combat migrant trafficking along key border segments, particularly those with Serbia and Hungary. According to the Romanian Border Police, a total of 728 individuals suspected of being involved in migrant smuggling networks (guiding, transporting, facilitating illegal entry) were identified and detained—representing a 30.5% increase compared to the previous year. This significant rise occurred despite an overall drop in irregular migration figures, suggesting more targeted law enforcement and intelligence-led operations.

These efforts were supported by a comprehensive package of measures, including:¹²²

- ❖ Reinforced surveillance along the western and southern borders;
- ❖ Joint patrols and operations with the National Police, Gendarmerie, and the General Inspectorate for Immigration;
- ❖ Mobile controls in key transit areas such as the vicinity of Timișoara’s North Station, a known hotspot for secondary movement;
- ❖ The deployment of aerial surveillance missions, supported by FRONTEX and the Ministry of Internal Affairs;
- ❖ Participation in the Joint Operation Terra 2023, extended into 2024, focused on external EU border control with Serbia, Ukraine, and Moldova.

In 2024, as mentioned above, the overall number of arrivals from the Serbian border further dropped compared to the previous year. Beyond a general decrease in the number of arrivals on the route, the Romanian Border Police also implemented a series of measures directed at curbing irregular arrivals at this specific border, such as deploying new technology, strengthening surveillance at key borders, increasing patrols with advanced equipment, and conducting aerial surveillance and joint operations with national security forces.¹²³ According to the Border Police, in 2024, irregular crossings at the Romania-Serbia border showed more departures from Romania to Serbia than entries from Serbia. This shift is likely due to challenges in Hungary and easier access through Croatia. Fingerprints taken upon entry to Romania increase the risk of people being identified and returned from other EU countries. Authorities recorded 125 detection events involving 526 third-country nationals: 172 attempts to exit Romania irregularly, 30 entries from Serbia, 59 unauthorized presences in the border zone, 251 irregular stays in Romania, and 34 readmissions from Serbia.¹²⁴

1.2.6 The European Commission pilot with Romania and cooperation with Frontex

Starting in March 2023, Romania implemented a six-month pilot project initiated by the European Commission. The pilot included a “border management and international cooperation” component, given the Terra Joint Operation with Frontex across all of Romania’s external land borders, especially that with Serbia which is “considered of critical importance” by the Commission. The Commission made available EUR 10.8 million to Romania for reinforcement of the management of the EU’s external borders, in addition to Romania’s national allocations under the BMVI, which is of EUR 129.77 million for the period 2021-2027. The Commission considers recent activities at Romania’s border with Serbia to be good practices to be further enhanced through:

- ❖ Continued “successful management” of the external border with Serbia, with “continued activities for prevention of irregular migration” through common patrols with Serbian authorities;
- ❖ Europol continued support to the Romanian Police and Border Police, to be extended;
- ❖ Romania maintaining “maximum hosting capacity for Frontex standing corps officers for border surveillance” at the border with Serbia, and expanding their access to databases for a “more efficient use of the standing corps”

¹²² The information is based on the Romanian Border Police’s official 2024 activity report. For detailed data and context, see the *Evaluation of the Activities of the Romanian Border Police in 2024* (March 19, 2025), available [here](#).

¹²³ Romanian Border Police, *Evaluarea activității Poliției de Frontieră Române desfășurate în anul 2024*, 19 February 2025, available [here](#).

¹²⁴ Meeting with the General Inspectorate of the Border Police during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 18 March 2025.

- ❖ Deployment of Frontex mobile surveillance vehicles operation for border surveillance as Frontex aerial surveillance.
- ❖ The Commission is to assess potential needs for funding for more equipment in order to maintain “a high level of border surveillance and control at the Romanian-Serbian border”.

The pilot also included aspects related to asylum, particularly the [Accelerated procedure](#) and a [joint return decision](#) together with the international protection rejection; and other measures to streamline return, the enhancement of voluntary returns.

In October 2023, at the end of the 6-month pilot, the European Commission reported¹²⁵ “solid results” and “best practices identified” in all three aspects of the pilots. Regarding border management specifically, according to the European Commission,¹²⁶ Romania continued to demonstrate “successful management” of its external borders with Serbia, based on activities for prevention of irregular migration with the Serbian authorities. The following activities, realised in those 6 months, were highlighted as “good practices” by the European Commission:

- ❖ Joint patrol missions: a total of 448 joint patrols on the territory of both States were carried out.
- ❖ Joint “ad hoc” patrols: 140 cases with 422 people were registered and following exchanges of information with the Serbian authorities, 34 migrant smugglers were identified and further investigated by the relevant authorities. Where there is concrete operative information or other indications regarding a border event, the signatory parties can organise joint “ad hoc” patrols. Supporting the activities in question can also be carried out with the help of some means of aerial surveillance (Frontex surveillance aircraft, helicopter, drones).
- ❖ International cooperation with Serbia: according to agreed procedures, the Romanian and Serbian authorities constantly exchange information about any aspects related to irregular migration, in order to prevent and combat cross-border criminality through Common Contact Point Portile de Fier I. At the same time, Romania is an active host of the Joint Operation Terra by Frontex that covers the entirety of its external land border sections with Serbia, Ukraine and Moldova. The border section with Serbia is considered of critical importance and deployments for green border surveillance “fully meet” the operational needs agreed between Frontex and Romania.

At a public event, an official from the Ministry of Internal Affairs described the pilot as enabling Romanian authorities to identify groups of migrants approaching the Serbian-Romanian border and thus to notify Serbian authorities “long before they reach the border”. According to him, the Serbian authorities then have an obligation to intervene, and manage to do so most of the time. These preventive activities contribute to reducing “illegal” flows. According to the statistics presented, only 221 “aliens having entered illegally through Serbia” submitted asylum applications to the border police in 2023, as opposed to 1,455 in 2022, i.e. an over 80% decrease. The project is presented as a “whole of route cooperation” initiative that involved Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Austria and the European Commission. It has allowed for improved cooperation with the Serbian authorities but also with Frontex, whose staff, through a change in legislation in May 2023, can now access all relevant databases.¹²⁷

Given the “positive achievements” according to the Commission, continued cooperation in the framework of the pilot project was decided.¹²⁸

Following the “solid results” of the 2023 EU pilot project, Romania continued in 2024 to strengthen its border management capacities and deepen cooperation with both Frontex and Serbian authorities. The

¹²⁵ European Commission, *Reporting on progress made the Pilot Project for fast asylum and return procedures with Romania*, October 2023, available [here](#).

¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹²⁷ Presentation by the Head of Risk Analysis Department, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Romania, in Panel 3, ‘A new system for the border’, at the *EMN Belgium Presidency Conference*, 25 June 2023, video available [here](#).

¹²⁸ European Commission, *Reporting on progress made the Pilot Project for fast asylum and return procedures with Romania*, October 2023, available [here](#).

Romanian Border Police maintained the strategic approach established during the pilot, including coordinated patrols, real-time data exchange, and targeted risk-based controls at the border with Serbia, which remains a critical area for the EU's external border policy.

These developments reflect Romania's continued alignment with EU priorities on border governance and migration control, and the institutionalization of practices initially introduced under the 2023 pilot.¹²⁹

As regards border management, among other things, Romania continued to implement a "strategic approach to apprehensions and border controls" with the aim of addressing irregular migration and preventing secondary movements, to ensure a constant level of preparedness at the external borders, and building on the cooperation established between Romania and Frontex in the context of the pilot project and going forward.¹³⁰ In June 2023, FRONTEX launched operation Centurion, as a new pilot project in Romania taking into account the rapidly growing number of officers, the agency considered it needs to take steps to reinforce the command in the field and decentralise some of its activities for better coordination and communication with host country authorities.¹³¹

In 2024:

- Romania sustained its role as an active host for the Joint Operation Terra, with deployments covering all external land borders with Serbia, Ukraine, and Moldova.¹³²
- The Commission confirmed ongoing support for Romania's green border surveillance activities, building on the operational framework established during the pilot phase.¹³³
- FRONTEX operation Centurion, launched in 2023, was further consolidated in 2024 as a mechanism to reinforce field command and improve direct coordination with Romanian border authorities.¹³⁴
- Legislative reforms enacted in 2023 allowing Frontex officers access to relevant Romanian databases were fully operationalized in 2024, facilitating more effective cooperation on surveillance and return.¹³⁵
- According to the personnel at Moravita BCP, there are always 2 Frontex border guards that work in shifts with different areas of expertise.¹³⁶

1.2.7 III-treatment at the border

2024: According to the Border Violence Monitoring Network (via InfoPark), in spring 2024 a man from Kazakhstan reported being physically assaulted by Romanian police before being forcibly returned to Serbia. This represents one of the few documented incidents, and while overall pushback figures are low, the presence of physical violence - including alleged beatings - remains a serious concern.¹³⁷

2023: For the year 2023, CNRR¹³⁸ states that, based on discussions its legal counsellors had with asylum seekers, some of them said that they had been hit or had experienced other abusive behaviour on the Romanian territory, for example at border crossings in the western region of Romania. The abuse behaviour described by them consisted in using a high tone of voice, applying strokes (in the

¹²⁹ The information is based on the Romanian Border Police's official 2024 activity report. For detailed data and context, see the *Evaluation of the Activities of the Romanian Border Police in 2024* (March 19, 2025)

¹³⁰ European Commission, *Cooperation framework between the European Commission, the EU Agencies and Romania*, 2023, available [here](#).

¹³¹ FRONTEX, 'Frontex launches new pilot project in Romania', 18 June 2023, available [here](#).

¹³² The information is based on the Romanian Border Police's official 2024 activity report. For detailed data and context, see the *Evaluation of the Activities of the Romanian Border Police in 2024* (March 19, 2025), available [here](#).

¹³³ *ibid.*

¹³⁴ *ibid.*

¹³⁵ *ibid.*

¹³⁶ Meeting with the Border Police at Moravita BCP, 21 March 2025.

¹³⁷ As documented in the Border Violence Monitoring Network's May 2024 report, a Kazakh national reported being physically assaulted by Romanian police before being forcibly returned to Serbia, available [here](#).

¹³⁸ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

abdomen/legs area), not granting permission to use the toilet for a certain period of time. For example, in Timisoara, a Russian citizen, who applied for asylum at the Moravita Border Crossing Point, during the asylum procedure at the border, stated that the Romanian authorities did not show respect towards him, the border police officers displaying a disrespectful attitude.

Most of the incidents related to Romania were reported on by various organisations mainly present in Serbia. KlikAktiv¹³⁹ reported cases of “formalised push-backs” between Romania and Serbia which clearly violated the people’s right to seek asylum and the principle of non-refoulement with deportations of higher numbers of third country nationals, including people seeking international protection, back to Serbia by applying the readmission agreement between the EU and Serbia without an effective assessment of protection needs or asylum claims. One person seeking international protection was deported from Romania to Serbia immediately after he was caught on Romanian territory. Were also documented cases of people transferred back to Romania under Dublin further deported to Serbia based on the readmission agreement. Also, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung¹⁴⁰ reported that several dozen thousand persons were pushed back from Croatia and Romania.

CNRR received reports from people claiming potential abuses at the border, which were subsequently brought to the attention of the border police. The answer of the authorities to these claims remained limited. For instance, CNRR was not granted access to potential beneficiaries of international protection at Otopeni Airport, despite having notified the relevant authorities of possible rights violations.¹⁴¹

1.2.8 International reactions regarding access to the Romanian territory

In 2023, the UN Committee for the Prevention of Torture¹⁴² noted that there is a lack of experienced, qualified interpreters to assist in victim identification processes, and in the asylum system more generally and recommended that the authorities ensure access to its territory and sufficient and effective protection from *refoulement* at borders by making sure that people seeking asylum at the border receive appropriate information about their rights, including information on procedures, appeal mechanisms and legal aid, immediately and in a language that they understand.

In 2022, GREVIO¹⁴³ reported delayed access to legal representatives, NGOs and UNHCR of people apprehended at the border (in some cases, they have received information about people apprehended at the border who may need international protection, only after they had been readmitted to neighbouring countries or denied access to Romanian territory) and asked that the authorities ensure effective provision of accessible, easy-to-understand and gender-sensitive information on protection measures, to persons apprehended at the borders, prior to their application for readmission/return procedures.

1.3 The bipartite agreement on border monitoring

In Romania there is a framework on border monitoring, which takes place under a bipartite agreement between UNHCR and IGPF. CNRR is UNHCR’s implementing partner as described in the Memorandum of Understanding. The border monitoring activities include: formal meetings with the authorities, monitoring missions at border crossing points and public custody centres, and counselling sessions on international protection with people who request assistance at the border.

¹³⁹ KlikAktiv, Pro Asyl (Network of German refugee councils), *Formalizing Pushbacks – The use of readmission agreements in pushback operations at the Serbian-Romanian border*, 2023, available [here](#).

¹⁴⁰ Nikola Kovačević, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, *Human Rights Pushbacks in the Western Balkans*, December 2023, available [here](#).

¹⁴¹ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#).

¹⁴² UN committee for the Prevention of Torture, CAT/C/ROU/CO/3/23.08.2023, *Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Romania*, August 2023, available [here](#).

¹⁴³ Council of Europe GREVIO Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, *Baseline Evaluation Report Romania [GREVIO/Inf(2022)6]*, June 2022, available [here](#).

When carrying out monitoring activities, there were no major obstacles. However, when immediate intervention is needed, the access of the counsellors is delayed by formal notifications and prior approvals. CNRR will have further meetings with the Border Police to discuss a quicker way of accessing persons of concern in urgent cases.

Visits are usually conducted at border crossing points where a relevant number of entries or exits was registered. The number of visits conducted depends on the circumstances, such as the number of arrivals, influx of migrants.

In case of regular monitoring visits, the Border Police is notified in advance. In case of emergency interventions regarding specific asylum cases, the Border Police is notified on the same day or shortly before the visit is conducted.

In 2023, a total of 77 monitoring visits were conducted by CNRR at the border, of which 69 visits were conducted at the Serbian, Bulgarian and Hungarian borders, 8 at the Moldovan and Ukraine borders. None of the monitoring visits were conducted jointly with UNHCR. In 2024, there were 16 monitoring visits at the borders with Ukraine, Moldova, and Bulgaria, as well as in International Airports. The visits were carried out by CNRR, as implementing partner of UNHCR, based on a memorandum of understanding among the three parties.¹⁴⁴ In addition, Frontex maintained its presence through regular monitoring, conducting more than four to five visits annually to ITPF Timisoara.¹⁴⁵

1.4 Information provision, interpretation at the border and NGO access

Information provision

According to the Asylum Act, if there are elements that indicate that a foreigner intends to apply for international protection in Romania in the context of pre-trial detention or detention facilities, penitentiaries, border crossing points or transit area, the competent authorities for the asylum application provide information on the possibility of submitting the request.¹⁴⁶

As regards the information about the possibility to make an asylum application, the Border Police stated that the territorial structures of the Border Police have leaflets in several international languages in circulation, including Arabic, Kurdish, Pashto, Farsi. The leaflets cover information on the rights and obligations of asylum seekers and information regarding the assistance provided by NGOs.¹⁴⁷

The Border Police reported that they provide information both orally and in writing. The available leaflets in English, French, Arabic and different dialects of the Arabic are made by UNHCR. No interpreter is present at the information session.¹⁴⁸

In 2024, CNRR had daily presence in BCPs with Ukraine and Republic of Moldova, namely Sighetu Marmatiei, Siret and Isaccea (with UA) and Sculeni, Albita and Galati (with MD). Information on asylum is available at the BCPs via UNHCR-placed visibility materials. However, given the chosen location of the materials, it is not always accessible to those who may be in need of protection and do not receive access to territory. The information is complemented with CNRR-designed flyers on the asylum procedure, available in 6 languages. Governmental materials on asylum are not available at the BCPs, nor a language-sensitive information.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ UNHCR, CNRR and IGPf. Information provided by CNRR, February 2025.

¹⁴⁵ Meeting with ITPF Timisoara, 20 March 2025.

¹⁴⁶ Article 35^1 Asylum Act.

¹⁴⁷ Information provided by Border Police, 2 March 2022.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 6 April 2023.

¹⁴⁹ Information provided by CNRR, February 2025.

In 2023, CNRR reported that, following consultations with UNHCR on the information needs at the border with Ukraine and Moldova, 10,000 leaflets with information on the asylum procedure were drafted and translated into Ukrainian and distributed at border crossing points with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova in order to increase access to accurate information on the RSD procedure. In 2022, leaflets with *DOPOMOHA*¹⁵⁰ were distributed by CNRR to the people coming from Ukraine. The leaflet promoted the DOPOMOHA platform which contained official and secure information. Also, it indicated contact data for all the relevant Romanian authorities.¹⁵¹

CNRR discovered that there were no updated information leaflets on the asylum procedure in other languages. The team started working on a new leaflet on the right to ask for asylum in Romania to disseminate in 2023. Leaflets can only be displayed at border-crossing points with prior approval by the authorities (Border Police). CNRR stated that any person detained at the border for illegal crossing or who presents themselves at a border-crossing point, following hearings by the judicial police officer, is informed that they have the right to make an asylum application. In 2024, CNRR counsellors provide leaflets on the asylum procedure in several languages of interest in Reception centres and detention centres, alongside the videos about the asylum procedure are also displayed in the Regional Centres. Leaflets were distributed at the borders as well in 2024 during the monitoring visits.¹⁵²

CNRR counsellors observed that few reports were received regarding the information provision at the Bulgarian, Serbian and Hungarian borders. However, at the Otopeni International Airport, three people reported that they did not have access to information during their detention in the transit area. They also stated that the Border Police officers ignored their requests and did not call interpreters when needed.¹⁵³

Interpretation

CNRR mentioned that any interview, hearing or investigation made by the authorities (Border Police) is accompanied by an interpreter.

In 2024 According to CNRR, at the border when a person requests asylum, interpretation is in most cases provided and the procedure is explained verbally by representatives of the Border Police and, when available, by CNRR counsellors.¹⁵⁴

The representatives of ITPF Timișoara declared that an interpreter is called when foreigners are apprehended. Foreigners are informed about the right to make an asylum application immediately verbally in English or in writing through FRONTEX leaflets. The Border Police has access to interpreters in all languages spoken by apprehended migrants and in case of need they can contact the embassies for guidance.

According to the Border Police, when an interpreter is not available, they use special translation devices to communicate with the people apprehended at the border.¹⁵⁵

Access to NGOs

At this stage, NGOs have access to border-crossing points only once third-country nationals have submitted the asylum application. Furthermore, NGOs need to be informed about the migrant's presence

¹⁵⁰ DOPOMOHA (means help in Ukrainian) is a web support and information platform for migrants fleeing the war in Ukraine. It is a project created by Code for Romania in partnership with the Department for Emergency Situations (DSU), The UN Refugee Agency, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the National Romanian Council for Refugees (CNRR), more information is available on the website [here](#).

¹⁵¹ Information provided by CNRR, 7 February 2023.

¹⁵² *ibid.*, February 2025.

¹⁵³ *ibid.*, 7 February 2023.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Meeting with the General Inspectorate of the Border Police during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 18 March 2025.

directly by the Border Police, through UNHCR Romania or by the migrant's family or friends or by him/herself. Given the Memorandum of Understanding between the UNHCR and the General Inspectorate of the Border Police, the representatives will mutually notify each other when immediate intervention is needed at the border crossing-point/transit area, via telephone/e-mail.¹⁵⁶

According to CNRR in 2024 the access is nominal for CNRR staff, based on needs, and includes regular access for areas covered by CNRR with daily presence, as well as access-upon-request for other monitoring activities. Given the continuous collaboration with authorities at the border with Ukraine and Republic of Moldova, access is granted without impediments. However, there have been situations where limitations have been imposed, including when requesting to offer counselling on protection procedures, upon beneficiary's request.¹⁵⁷

1.5 Legal access to the territory

Between 2018 and 2022, Romania resettled refugees primarily from Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon, with quotas varying by year.¹⁵⁸ In 2023, Romania transferred 154 Syrian refugees—54 from Turkey, 25 from Jordan, and 78 from Lebanon. These refugees could access Romania's integration program, which facilitates employment, education, housing, medical care, and social assistance.¹⁵⁹ Each institutional stakeholder (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Justice, Ministry of Health) is responsible for the integration of foreigners in its area of activity; the coordination and monitoring of the policies are the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior through the General Inspectorate for Immigration. The program includes Romanian language courses, cultural orientation, job and education assistance, and psychological support.¹⁶⁰ For 2024-2025, Romania should have accepted 200 refugees in need of resettlement.¹⁶¹ There were no resettlements in 2024.

In the context of complete joining to the Schengen, in March 2024, Romania adopted several measures in a speedy procedure (Emergency Ordinance 25/2024) in conjunction with the need to ensure the control of illegal migration and the reduction of secondary movements¹⁶². The justification was related also to the full application of the Schengen acquis by Romania involving the need to increase measures to ensure public order and safety, especially in relation to the contingent of 100,000 foreign workers newly admitted to the labor market (in 2024), given that Romania faced a wide range of illegal migration methods, given its geographical position, at the confluence of the East - as the area of departure for migrants, and the West - as the destination area for illegal migration. The main forms of illegal migration identified on the territory of Romania refer to illegal entry into the territory, legal entry and, subsequently, remaining on the territory after the expiry of the term granted by the entry visa, established in the documents abolishing the visa regime or granted by the temporary residence permit, all followed by detection in illegal situations and the imposition of restrictive measures. Some of the foreigners detected in the situations may request a form of international protection on the territory of the state, which leads to the creation of artificial pressure on the national asylum system by delaying or preventing the implementation of the restrictive measures. Therefore, the law was amended by providing that the measure of revocation of the visa may be ordered by the authorities in inter alia if the individual employment contract was not concluded within 15 working days from the entry of the foreigner into the territory of Romania or, as the case may be, from obtaining the new employment permit, in the case of a long-stay visa for employment; this shall not be ordered in the situation where the failure to

¹⁵⁶ Meeting with the General Inspectorate of the Border Police during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 18 March 2025.

¹⁵⁷ Information provided by CNRR, February 2025.

¹⁵⁸ IGI-DAI, Annual Activity Report of 2019, available in Romanian [here](#). Information provided by IGI-DAI, 20 February 2020. Information provided by IGI-DAI, 16 February 2021. Information provided by IGI-DAI, 11 March 2022. Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

¹⁵⁹ Article 20 Asylum Act.

¹⁶⁰ Information provided by the IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

¹⁶¹ DECISION no. 87 of 8 February 2024 to supplement art. 3⁴¹ of Government Decision no. 1596/2008 on the resettlement of refugees in Romania, available [here](#).

¹⁶² Substantiation Note of the Emergency Ordinance 25/21.03.2024 for the amendment and completion of certain normative acts in the field of foreigners and the border, available [here](#).

conclude the individual employment contract is due to the fault of the employer (Art. 33 of the Emergency Ordinance 25/2024¹⁶³).

2. Preliminary checks of third country nationals upon arrival

Indicators: Preliminary checks at the arrival point

1. Are there any checks that are applied systematically or regularly at the point of entry when a person enters the territory? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Is the person considered under law to have entered the territory during these checks? ☐ Yes ☒ No

OUG 194/2002 governs the legal regime applicable to foreign nationals in Romania. Articles 8 and 9 specifically address the conditions under which foreign nationals may be denied entry into Romania.

A third country national who has been denied entry into Romania has up to 24 hours to voluntarily leave the border crossing point. If the person does not leave within this timeframe, the Romanian Border Police will enforce the denial of entry, while having to take into account the individual's health condition and follow relevant legal provisions. If the departure process requires more than 12 hours, the foreign national will be housed in a designated area within the transit zone at the border crossing point. If no such space is available, they will be accommodated in another designated location outside the border crossing point, which functions as a transit area.¹⁶⁴

The General Inspectorate of the Border Police establishes the location of these facilities outside the border points, sets internal regulations for foreigners housed there, and organizes access, security, and escort arrangements. Other authorities, including those from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (IGI) and local administration, provide support as needed for the management of these locations.

While housed in the designated locations, foreign nationals are entitled to food, emergency medical care, and basic treatment for illnesses. Vulnerable persons receive special consideration.

In the event of a detected or imminent 'mass influx of migrants', the IGPF is authorized to establish one or more Integrated Centres. These centres may be set up through an official order and serve as facilities for border control, public health protection, and clarification of the legal status of foreign nationals arriving at Romania's borders.¹⁶⁵

Integrated Centres are designated facilities that operate under the legal framework of transit zones. Their primary functions include:

- Epidemiological Screening – Assessing and identifying potential public health risks among arriving migrants.
- Border Control – Conducting checks to determine whether individuals meet the legal requirements for entry into Romania.
- Processing International Protection Requests – Receiving, registering, and assessing asylum applications submitted by foreign nationals.

¹⁶³ Emergency Ordinance 25/21.03.2024 for the amendment and completion of certain normative acts in the field of foreigners and the border, available [here](#).

¹⁶⁴ Article 9 Aliens Ordinance.

¹⁶⁵ Article 4 Emergency Ordinance 53/2015 on establishing measures applicable in the event of a massive influx of immigrants appearing at the Romanian state border.

- Clarification of Legal Status – Determining the legal situation of foreign nationals who do not seek international protection and deciding on the appropriate measures to be taken.
- Accommodation – Providing temporary housing for foreign nationals while their status is being assessed.
- Other Specific Activities – Carrying out any additional procedures necessary to clarify the situation of foreign nationals present in the centres.¹⁶⁶

In order to ensure public order and safety, during the border control process at the integrated border centres, the Romanian Border Police personnel will collect fingerprints and facial images of all foreign nationals who, according to the documents presented or their declarations, are at least 14 years old.¹⁶⁷

Third country nationals subject to activities carried out within the integrated centres are entitled to accommodation, food, medical assistance, preventive measures, and personal hygiene materials, which are provided free of charge. These provisions will be granted, as far as possible, in respect of their religious, philosophical, and cultural beliefs, regardless of their legal status.¹⁶⁸

Third country nationals accommodated in the integrated centres have the right to be informed, in a language they understand or are reasonably assumed to understand, about the internal rules they must follow within the centres, about their rights and obligations during their stay in the centres, as well as about the consequences of illegally crossing Romania's state border.¹⁶⁹

The centres are administered by the Border Police.¹⁷⁰

After the border control is completed, the head of the crossing point takes measures to inspect the transit area. If persons are found illegally present in this area, measures are taken to verify their situation. Foreign nationals in the transit areas who do not meet the conditions for entry into Romania are returned to the neighbouring state or are placed on the ships or aircraft from which they disembarked, for return to the state from which they were embarked, in accordance with the provisions established by the legislation on the regime of foreigners in Romania.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.* Article 5.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.* Article 12.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.* Article 19.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.* Article 20.

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁷¹ Art. 14 METHODOLOGICAL RULES of 9 May 2002 for the application of Government Emergency Ordinance no. 105/2001 on the state border of Romania, available [here](#).

3. Registration of the asylum application

Indicators: Registration

1. Are specific time limits laid down in law for making an application? ☐ Yes ☒ No
 ❖ If so, what is the time limit for making an application?
2. Are specific time limits laid down in law for lodging an application? ☐ Yes ☒ No
 ❖ If so, what is the time limit for lodging an application?
3. Are registration and lodging distinct stages in the law or in practice? ☐ Yes ☒ No
4. Is the authority with which the application is lodged also the authority responsible for its examination? ☒ Yes ☐ No
5. Can an application be lodged at embassies, consulates or other external representations? ☐ Yes ☒ No

In Romania, asylum applications are registered by IGI-DAI within 3 working days if submitted directly to IGI and within 6 days if filed with other authorities such as the Border Police, police staff in detention centres, or the National Administration of Penitentiaries within the Ministry of Justice.¹⁷² In cases of high number of applications, registration can take up to 10 working days.¹⁷³

At border crossings, detention centres, or units subordinated to the National Administration of Penitentiaries within the Ministry of Justice, applications are recorded in special registers before being sent to the Regional Centres for Asylum Seekers, along with any relevant documents.¹⁷⁴ At the border, applicants fill out a form in a language they understand, receive information on their rights via an interpreter, and their application is sent to IGI-DAI.¹⁷⁵ If submitted at an airport or land border, the application is accompanied by details such as arrival time, documents, and accompanying persons.¹⁷⁶

In 2024 IGI-DAI mentioned that only few asylum seekers have their claim assessed in border procedures, as this can be applied only for those applying for asylum at border crossing points. Those who apply for asylum after being apprehended in the context of an irregular crossing are instead brought to centres on the territory.¹⁷⁷

There is no legal time limit for filing an asylum application, and authorities cannot reject an application solely due to the fact it was submitted late.¹⁷⁸ Once an application is registered in IGI-DAI's database, the applicant is fingerprinted, photographed, and issued a temporary identity document, which is periodically renewed.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷² Article 36^1(2) Asylum Act, citing Article 35 Asylum Act.

¹⁷³ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.* Article 38(5) citing Article 35.

¹⁷⁵ Information provided by Border Police, 27 August 2018.

¹⁷⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 21 August 2018.

¹⁷⁷ Meeting with the General Inspectorate for Immigration – Asylum and Integration Directorate during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 18 March 2025.

¹⁷⁸ Article 36(3) Asylum Act. Article 13(3) Asylum Act.

¹⁷⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 21 August 2018.

For unaccompanied minors, applications are recorded in a special register, but they can only be formally lodged after a legal representative is appointed. If a minor applies through an authority other than IGI-DAI, they are immediately transferred to a competent Regional Centre.¹⁸⁰

In 2023, the total number of asylum applications was 10,346, of which 10,158 were first-time asylum applications.¹⁸¹ In 2024, there were 2467 asylum applications, marking a 76% decrease compared to the previous year.¹⁸²

There were no cases where IGI-DAI refused to have the asylum application lodged. Applicants receive a plastic temporary identity document containing a photograph, personal details and a registration number, similar to a residence permit, which replaced the previous paper format in 2021.¹⁸³

EUAA involvement

In March 2022, the EUAA signed its first operational plan with Romania, within the context of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine and subsequent displacement. A new operating plan was signed in December 2022 to cover the year 2023.¹⁸⁴ In December 2023, the 2023 operational plan was amended and extended until 31 December 2024.¹⁸⁵ In December 2024, the EUAA and Romania agreed on an operational plan for 2025-2026, with support in temporary protection, asylum procedures and reception.¹⁸⁶

In 2024, the EUAA deployed 61 experts in Romania,¹⁸⁷ mostly external experts (37) and Member State experts (20). The majority of these experts were asylum registration experts (18), junior asylum registration experts (17) and case experts (10) as well as other program and support staff.¹⁸⁸

As of 11 December 2024, there were 35 EUAA experts present in Romania, out of which 16 were junior asylum registration experts, 9 case experts, and 3 registration experts.¹⁸⁹

In 2024, the EUAA carried out a total of 933 registrations of international protection applications. 79% of these were related to the top 10 citizenships of applicants, mainly nationals from Syria (318), Nepal (74) and Iraq (68).¹⁹⁰

In 2024, the EUAA carried out 23,820 registrations for temporary protection in Romania, a decrease from 32,359 in 2023.¹⁹¹ Nevertheless, Romania remained by far the country where the EUAA registered the highest number of persons under temporary protection in 2024. In 2024 over 162,000 beneficiaries of temporary protection were issued by the Romanian authorities.¹⁹²

In 2024, the EUAA delivered 32 training sessions to a total of 251 local staff members.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁰ Article 39(3) – (4) Asylum Act. Information provided by IGI-DAI, 21 August 2018.

¹⁸¹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

¹⁸² *ibid.*, January 2025.

¹⁸³ A template can be found [here](#).

¹⁸⁴ EUAA, *Operational Plan 2023 agreed by the European Union Agency for Asylum and Romania*, December 2022, available [here](#).

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ EUAA personnel numbers do not include deployed interpreters by the EUAA in support of asylum and reception activities.

¹⁸⁸ Information provided by the EUAA, 14 March 2025.

¹⁸⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *ibid.*

¹⁹² According to the *Assessment of the activity of the general inspectorate for immigration in the year 2024* of the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI), published in April 2025, summarizing its operations during 2024. Official source [here](#).

¹⁹³ Information provided by the EUAA, 14 March 2025.

B. Procedures

1. Regular procedure

1.1 General (scope, time limits)

Indicators: Regular Procedure: General

1. Time limit set in law for the determining authority to make a decision on the asylum application at first instance: 30 days
2. Are detailed reasons for the rejection at first instance of an asylum application shared with the applicant in writing? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Backlog of pending cases at first instance as of 31 December 2024: 393

The law foresees a 30-day deadline to issue a decision, starting from the moment when the file is handed over to the case officer.¹⁹⁴

The timeframe of 30 days provided in Article 52(1) of the Asylum Act shall be suspended during:

- (a) the Dublin procedure for determining the Member State responsible for examining the asylum application;
- (b) the [First Country of Asylum](#) procedure;
- (c) the [Safe Third Country](#) procedure; or, where appropriate,
- (d) the European safe third country procedure.
- (e) When the reason for suspension no longer exists, the assessment period cannot be less than 20 days.¹⁹⁵

The 30-day time limit shall be extended successively with further periods of no more than 30 days, and not exceeding 6 months from the lodging of the asylum application in total¹⁹⁶: if the assessment of the case requires additional documentation, which makes it impossible to carry out the activities necessary to decide on the asylum application or could lead to the non-observance of the guarantees recognised by the law due to causes not imputable to the applicant.

However, if the maximum timeframe of 6 months is exceeded, the applicant should be informed of the delay and shall receive, upon request, information on the reasons of the delay and the time limit for the decision to be taken on their application.¹⁹⁷

The term of 6 months may be extended successively for new cumulative periods, not exceeding 9 months, when:¹⁹⁸

- ❖ The asylum procedure involves complex elements of fact and/or law;
- ❖ A large number of applications for international protection are lodged, making in practice very difficult to assess the claims within 6 months.

Exceptionally, in duly justified cases, a further extension may be applied for a maximum of 3 months.¹⁹⁹

In practice, in 2022 in the Regional Centres for Procedures and Accommodation for Asylum Seekers at Rădăuți, Galați, Timișoara, Șomcuta Mare (Maramureș) and Giurgiu the 30-day term was respected. In exceptional cases, the 30-day deadline to issue a decision was extended. According to data provided by

¹⁹⁴ Article 52(1) Asylum Act.

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.* Article 52(4).

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.* Article 52(2).

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.* Article 52(3).

¹⁹⁸ *ibid.* Article 52(5).

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.* Article 52(6).

IGI-DAI, in 2023, the 30-days deadline to process an application and issue the decision was respected. However, in exceptional cases, the term can be extended, thus resulting a 60-days period of time necessary to process the application and issue a decision²⁰⁰. This was still the case in 2023 at least in **Galați**.²⁰¹ According to IGI-DAI statistics, in 2024 the average duration was between 30 and 60 days (1-2 months) in the regular asylum procedure.²⁰²

In 2024, CNRR observed regional discrepancies in decisions issued to asylum seekers, likely due to variations in legal interpretation and case-specific factors.²⁰³ In Galați, JRS representatives reported that all asylum seekers undergo two interviews as part of the procedure, usually conducted promptly. However, delays may occur when interpreters for rare languages are unavailable or when asylum seekers leave the CRPCSA Galați before their interview. The interviews are carried out by IGI staff in collaboration with EUAA personnel.²⁰⁴

1.2 Prioritised examination and fast-track processing

According to the law, priority is given to asylum applications lodged by unaccompanied children.²⁰⁵ IGI takes all the necessary measures for the appointment of a legal representative, who will assist the unaccompanied asylum-seeking child in all stages of the asylum procedure, as soon as possible.²⁰⁶ In practice, IGI-DAI instructs the Directorate-General for Social Assistance and Child Protection in writing to appoint a legal representative for the unaccompanied child, who will assist them during the asylum procedure. The notification is sent the next day or in a maximum of 3 days after the application is registered and the unaccompanied child has been accommodated in one of the Regional Centres.

In case of vulnerable asylum seekers who are placed in specially designated closed spaces in the Regional Centres (see [Detention of Asylum Seekers](#)), the identity check and the assessment of their applications should be done with priority.²⁰⁷ There have been no reported cases of this situation in practice. In 2023, according with IGI-DAI, there were situations when the examination of the asylum application and issuing the decision took less than 30 days, in special cases of vulnerable persons, but no further details were provided.²⁰⁸

According to CNRR, in 2023 most of the asylum applications from vulnerable persons were assessed with priority by the authorities. However, at the Regional Centre for Procedures and Accommodation for Asylum Seekers **Timisoara**, there were cases where applications submitted by unaccompanied minors were not assessed with priority.²⁰⁹

In 2024, CNRR observed that, across all Regional Centres where it provides legal counselling, priority is given to vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors, pregnant women, the elderly, and individuals with severe disabilities— a practice in place since 2022.²¹⁰ However, other cases may also be prioritized if deemed well-founded by the determining authority. For instance, during 2024, asylum seekers transferred between camps or those previously held in designated closed spaces were often interviewed immediately after their relocation or accommodation.²¹¹

²⁰⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 16 January 2024.

²⁰¹ Experience of JRS Romania, April 2024.

²⁰² Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

²⁰³ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

²⁰⁴ Information provided by JRS representative in Galați in February 2025.

²⁰⁵ Article 16(1) Asylum Act.

²⁰⁶ *ibid.* Article 16(2).

²⁰⁷ *ibid.* Article 19^11.

²⁰⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 16 January 2024.

²⁰⁹ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

²¹⁰ *ibid.* February 2025 and 7 February 2023.

²¹¹ *ibid.*

1.3 Personal interview

Indicators: Regular Procedure: Personal Interview

1. Is a personal interview of the asylum seeker in most cases conducted in practice in the regular procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 - ❖ If so, are interpreters available in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. In the regular procedure, is the interview conducted by the authority responsible for taking the decision? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Are interviews conducted through video conferencing? ☐ Frequently ☒ Rarely ☐ Never
4. Can the asylum seeker request the interviewer and the interpreter to be of a specific gender? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 - ❖ If so, is this applied in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No

According to the law, an interview is conducted in order to assess the elements of an application for international protection.²¹² Although the general rule is that an interview should be held in order to correctly assess the asylum claim, there are two situations where the interview is not mandatory:²¹³

- ❖ When IGI-DAI may take a decision to grant refugee status on the basis of evidence in the file;
- ❖ When there are serious doubts about the capacity of the adult asylum seeker.

All personal interviews, assessments of the reasons invoked by the asylum seeker and decisions are conducted by a designated case officer of IGI-DAI.²¹⁴

In 2022, 3,696 interviews were conducted, of which 329 were through videoconference. IGI-DAI reported that they had no statistics on the number of asylum applications assessed without an interview.²¹⁵

For the year 2023, the situation is as follows according to the data provided by IGI-DAI: all interviews were conducted individually. In the case of children, the parent or legal representative was present at the interview. IGI-DAI uses indicators and guidelines that facilitate the identification of vulnerable persons among asylum seekers, but no details on these indicators and guidelines were provided. In 2023, a total of 260 interviews were conducted via videoconference. In 2024, 185 interviews were conducted through videoconference. IGI-DAI reported that they had no statistics on the total number of interviews conducted and on asylum applications assessed without an interview in 2024.²¹⁶

In 2024, the EUAA continued to support the Romanian asylum system by deploying caseworkers and interpreters in several Regional Centres, including Bucharest, Timișoara, Șomcuta Mare and Galați. EUAA experts were involved in conducting personal interviews and drafting first-instance assessments, complementing the work of IGI-DAI officials. Additionally, the Agency facilitated the development of national standard operating procedures and templates for interviews and decisions, contributing to greater consistency and procedural alignment. A quality feedback exercise led by the EUAA's Quality Procedures and Tools Sector was also carried out, culminating in a workshop and the production of a podcast summarising key findings for use by national caseworkers. These actions, coupled with training and capacity-building measures, aimed to enhance the quality and efficiency of the regular procedure.²¹⁷

²¹² Article 19^6(2) Asylum Act.

²¹³ *ibid.* Article 45(3).

²¹⁴ *ibid.* Article 48.

²¹⁵ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 11 March 2022.

²¹⁶ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

²¹⁷ EUAA, *Evaluation Report – Operational Support to Romania 2023–2024*, June 2025, available [here](#).

According to the EUAA, despite a marked decrease in the number of applications in 2024, a dedicated needs assessment confirmed the necessity to maintain support, particularly in the areas focusing on effective implementation of temporary protection, enhanced capacity for the processing of asylum applications and enhanced capacity to provide reception conditions in line with the CEAS.²¹⁸

In 2024, EUAA caseworkers carried out interviews concerning 479 applicants, of which 78% related to the top 10 citizenships of applicants interviewed by EUAA, mainly concerning nationals from Syria (136), Nepal (62), Iraq (42) and Sudan (31).²¹⁹

The EUAA drafted 1,091 concluding remarks, of which 83% related to the top 10 citizenships of applicants in concluding remarks drafted by the EUAA, mainly concerning applicants from Syria (311), Bangladesh (138), Nepal (119), Pakistan (75) and Iraq (72).²²⁰

Interviews are conducted individually, with members of the same family being interviewed separately. When there are underage children in a family, they are interviewed in the presence of a parent. For children under 12 or even 14 years old (or when the child's age, maturity, and understanding do not permit), the presence of the child is not mandatory, and the IGI officer may decide to interview only one of the parents. Interviews are tailored to the child's age, level of education, and understanding. The staff is trained in all legal instruments related to interviewing and assisting children.²²¹

In its Concluding Observations adopted in May 2025, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child welcomed the legislative amendments that explicitly include asylum-seeking children and children under international protection among the beneficiaries of Law No. 272/2004 on child rights. The Committee recommended effective implementation of the law and urged Romania to ensure the participation of children in decisions affecting them, including in asylum procedures.²²²

According to CNRR, in 2024 all asylum seekers were interviewed, and no cases were recorded in which refugee status was granted only based on documents present in the personal file. During the same year, both officers designated under Article 48, para. (2) of the Asylum Act and EUAA experts (para. (4) of the same article) conducted interviews with asylum seekers, with most decisions being made solely by case officers at the Regional Centre. Asylum legislation does not require the applicant's consent for the video conference system but does require consent for conducting the interview with a trusted interpreter for translation and/or interpretation. The video conference system was used for applicants speaking rare languages (e.g., Lingala) when interpretation services were not available from the EUAA or in exceptional cases when the interpreters were on vacation.²²³

Courts also use the video conference system, particularly for rare languages. Some asylum seekers have reported that the quality of interpretation via videoconference was poor, making it difficult to understand, and the process felt impersonal.²²⁴ Whenever possible, if requested by the applicant, both the officer and the interpreter will be of the same gender as the person being interviewed. This is generally implemented in practice, though it depends on the availability of interviewers and interpreters.²²⁵

According to CNRR, JRS, and UNHCR, the reports containing the analysis and recommendations of EUAA officers are not communicated to applicants together with the rejection decision issued by IGI.

²¹⁸ European Union Agency for Asylum, *Country overview 2025 – Romania*, February 2025, available [here](#).

²¹⁹ Information provided by the EUAA, 14 March 2025.

²²⁰ *ibid.*

²²¹ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

²²² UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding observations on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Romania*, CRC/C/ROU/CO/6-7, 5 June 2025, available [here](#).

²²³ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

²²⁴ *ibid.*

²²⁵ *ibid.*

The Committee further encouraged the State to establish procedures ensuring that asylum-seeking, refugee, unaccompanied and separated children are systematically consulted in decisions that affect them. It also underlined the need for detailed procedural safeguards, clear mandates for representatives assisting unaccompanied children, and child-friendly complaint mechanisms.²²⁶

1.3.1 Interpretation

Article 45(2) of the Asylum Act sets out the rules regarding the right to have an interpreter during the personal interview. At the request of the applicant and when deemed necessary for presenting all the reasons for the asylum application, the interview shall be carried out by the case officer, with the support of an interpreter, in the language indicated by the applicant or in a language they understand and can communicate clearly. As far as possible, if the applicant requests it, both the case officer and the interpreter will be of the same gender as the interviewee.²²⁷

Availability of interpreters and double interpretation

In 2024, translators receive RON 30.91 / hour (approx. EUR 8.14) for interpreting services foreign languages – Romanian and RON 44.82 / page (approx. EUR 9.14) for translation of documents, according to the legal provisions stipulated in Order no.2907/C/2340/2020.²²⁸ These rates do not include VAT.²²⁹ These amounts can be increased according to art. 7 of the Law no. 178/1997 for the authorisation and payment of interpreters and translators,²³⁰ as follows:

- ❖ by 50% for translations from or into an oriental language (Japanese, Chinese, etc.) or rarely used language;
- ❖ by 50% for translations carried out on an urgent basis (24-48 hours);
- ❖ by 100% for simultaneous translations performed at the hearing, in courts, criminal investigation bodies and prosecutors' offices;
- ❖ by 100% when interpreters and translators are required on the weekend, public holidays or between 10 PM and 6 AM.

Quality and conduct

Several problems regarding the quality of the interpretation and conduct of interpreters have been reported. Interpreters are not sufficiently trained and, therefore, they are not impartial. Related problems were also pointed out:

- ❖ Some interpreters still have private conversations with the asylum seeker and do not translate the conversation, or they express emotions, however not at the same scale as in previous years;
- ❖ Asylum seekers complained that an interpreter selected the documents that the asylum seeker should present at IGI-DAI, and translated only a summary of what is written on the page and not the whole interview (question and answer).
- ❖ Asylum seekers complained that the transcript was not read at the end of the interview in most of the centres.

In 2023, there was also an issue related to the role of interpreters in the interview at **Galați**, which affected how interpretation was done and had a clear impact on the quality of the asylum process.

²²⁶ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding observations on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Romania*, CRC/C/ROU/CO/6-7, 5 June 2025, available [here](#).

²²⁷ Article 45(2) Asylum Act.

²²⁸ Order no. 2907/C/2340/2020, available in Romanian [here](#).

²²⁹ *ibid*.

²³⁰ Law no. 178/1997 for the authorization and payment of interpreters and translators, available in Romanian [here](#).

According to CNRR,²³¹ in 2023 as in previous years, there were cases in which asylum seekers expressed concern regarding interpretation during their interview to determine a form of protection. In 2024, CNRR observed some discrepancies from one region to another regarding the decisions issued to the asylum seekers. The reasons could be differences in the interpretation of the law, as well as the individual elements of each case. During CNRR legal counselling sessions with applicants, some of them claimed that the interpreters did not exactly translate their answers, gave another meaning to statements in the interview, or had a biased attitude towards them. According to the procedure, the interview note must be read at the end, however applicants often declare that this step didn't happen, nor were they given the opportunity to express their will for this to occur. Moreover, there are cases where asylum seekers' interview (in the administrative phase) or hearing (in the judicial phase) are postponed due to the lack of interpreters, mostly in cases of very rare languages or dialects. Besides that, there are also financial reasons for the lack of interpreters. Some of the interpreters complained about low fees, payment delays, or lack of payment for their services.

In 2023, CNRR²³² made specific efforts to ensure that interpreters received training. In February 2023, CNRR organised a specific training session for the interpreters with which it collaborates in order to respond to the imperative needs of improving language assistance in the asylum procedure. In 2024, as a consequence of a gap in the provision of AMIF funds at the national level, no trainings for interpreters were organised. Information materials were also made available on the methods and techniques for interviewing persons undergoing the asylum procedure, the glossary of terminology related to the field and the UNHCR recommendations on communication and interpretation techniques in cases of vulnerable persons, with particular reference to unaccompanied minors.

According to CNRR, while interpreters were available in 2024, some Regional Centres lack coverage for key languages such as Amharic, Somali, or Kurdish Sorani, which has caused delays in the asylum process and in the examination of several cases.²³³ The unavailability of interpreters can lead to delays in the process. The problem is more pronounced at the second instance level, where interpreters must be certified - although, in practice, trusted individuals are sometimes used instead.²³⁴ Although there was a decrease in the number of reported issues with interpretation quality in 2024, some asylum seekers still raised concerns. Interpreters are trained and required to adhere to a code of conduct.²³⁵ CNRR has observed that applicants may request interpreters of a specific gender. Interpreters collaborate with them, and authorities rely on NGOs to provide interpretation services. Additionally, child protection authorities lack their own interpreters and must also depend on NGOs for language support.²³⁶

Representatives of JRS in Galati have noted that EUAA interpreters are used in interviews during the asylum process. They have hired interpreters for languages such as English, French, Arabic, Kurdish, Somali, Russian, and Ukrainian. However, challenges arise with asylum seekers from Afghanistan, as CRPCSA Galati does not have interpreters on staff for this language. It takes longer to find an interpreter, which complicates the asylum process and leads to delays in decision-making.²³⁷

1.3.2 Recording and report

The law does not prescribe audio/video recording of the personal interview. Personal interviews and preliminary interviews are not audio/video recorded.

²³¹ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#).

²³² Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

²³³ *ibid.* February 2025.

²³⁴ Meeting with CNRR during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 17 March 2025.

²³⁵ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

²³⁶ Meeting with CNRR during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 17 March 2025.

²³⁷ Information provided by JRS Representative in Galati in February 2025.

Court sessions are recorded according to the Civil Procedure Code.²³⁸ The rules concerning the recording of court hearings are set out in Article 13 of Act 304/2004 on Judicial Organisation, which provides that:

- ❖ The court hearings are recorded by video or audio technical means or recorded by stenography. Recordings are immediately transcribed;
- ❖ The clerk or the stenographer shall record all the affirmations, questions and submissions of those present, including the president of the court panel;
- ❖ Upon request, the parties may receive a copy of the transcript of the Registrars, minutes or notes of the Registrar.

In 2023, 260 interviews were conducted through videoconferencing in total in all the regional centres.²³⁹ In 2024 according to CNRR the videoconference system is also used by the courts, mainly in the case of rare languages. There were cases when some asylum seekers stated that the quality of the interpretation through video conferencing was not that good, they had troubles understanding and the process was quite impersonal.²⁴⁰

Transcript

The case officer conducting the interview transcribes the questions and the answers/statements *verbatim*. The transcript includes at least the following data: identification data of the applicant, the name of the case officer who performs the interview, the name of the interpreter and, as the case may be, of the legal representative, the counsellor and/or the lawyer assisting the applicant, the language of the interview, the reasons for the request for international protection, as well as the applicant's statement that all the data and information presented at the interview are correct. Where appropriate, the interview note shall also include the applicant's explanations of the failure to present elements to be considered when examining the asylum application and/or clarification of inconsistencies or contradictions in their statements.²⁴¹

At the end of the interview, the transcript of the interview is orally translated by the interpreter to the applicant.²⁴² The applicant has the possibility to formulate observations and/or to offer clarifications relating to any errors of translation or misunderstanding, which will be recorded in the interview transcript.²⁴³ After this, the transcript is signed on every page by all the persons present at the interview.²⁴⁴ A copy of the transcript is given to the asylum seeker or legal representative, their lawyer or counsellor, as the case may be, which assisted them at the interview, after the document was signed.²⁴⁵ If the applicant refuses to sign the transcript, the reasons for their refusal will be mentioned on the transcript. The applicant's refusal to sign the transcript does not prevent IGI-DAI from taking a decision on the asylum application.²⁴⁶

²³⁸ Article 231(4) Civil Procedure Code: The court will record the court hearings. If the parties are challenging the content of the clerk's notes, it will be verified and, if necessary, supplemented or rectified based on the records of the court hearing.

²³⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

²⁴⁰ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

²⁴¹ Article 45(5) Asylum Act.

²⁴² *ibid.* Article 45(7).

²⁴³ *ibid.* Article 45(6).

²⁴⁴ *ibid.* Article 45(8).

²⁴⁵ *ibid.* Article 45(9).

²⁴⁶ *ibid.* Article 45(10).

1.4 Appeal

Indicators: Regular Procedure: Appeal

1. Does the law provide for an appeal against the first instance decision in the regular procedure?

☒ Yes ☐ No

❖ If yes, is it

☒ Judicial

☐ Administrative

❖ If yes, is it suspensive

☒ Yes

☐ Some grounds

☐ No

2. Average processing time for the appeal body to make a decision:

1-3 months (see a detailed overview per Regional Court below)

The decision taken (admission or rejection) by IGI-DAI is communicated, immediately, to the asylum seeker in writing, through direct communication by the representatives of the IGI-DAI if the asylum seeker lives in the Centre, or by post at the last declared residence of the applicant.²⁴⁷ The decision may be communicated to the lawyer or NGO representative representing the asylum seeker, upon request from the asylum seeker.²⁴⁸

The decision is accompanied by written information, in Romanian and in a language that the applicant understands or is reasonably supposed to understand, related to the admission or rejection of the asylum application and the conditions under which the decision may be appealed, as the case may be.²⁴⁹ In practice, the justification of the decision is written in Romanian and is translated by NGO representatives.

The decision taken by IGI-DAI may be challenged in a two-instance judicial review procedure.

According to CNRR,²⁵⁰ asylum seekers face many challenges in the appeal process: bureaucracy, short deadlines, inaccessible information. This makes them heavily reliant on the guidance provided by NGOs in this phase. There are many situations where asylum seekers do not receive the court's notification (due to their own fault or not) and they miss the hearing. An asylum seeker's absence from the hearing is most of the time interpreted by the court as a lack of responsibility, and it may influence the decision to some extent. Accessing the file in court is also very difficult for asylum seekers due to the language barrier. Moreover, they do not benefit from legal representation in court, due to the lack of financial means to hire a lawyer or because they are not aware of their right to ask for a legal aid lawyer or the court rejects their legal aid request.

These problems persist in 2024 as well. When asylum seekers contacted CNRR after receiving a negative decision on their application, the reasons for the denial were explained and translated for them by staff of the organisation, along with the mandatory deadline for filing a complaint. Based on CNRR's experience in 2024, the asylum seekers they assisted did not face obstacles when appealing a decision. The communication received by applicants includes details about the decision, the deadline for filing a complaint, and the competent court, all translated into a language the applicant is presumed to understand. In 2024, the average processing time for the reviewing body to make a decision was between one and three months, although some cases took up to four months (for both instances).²⁵¹

Asylum seekers who receive a rejection during the first instance stage have the opportunity to file a complaint and have their case moved to the judicial phase. They are informed about this option, given sufficient time, and receive support in submitting their complaint. If necessary, they are assisted by a CNRR legal advisor or a lawyer. However, many asylum seekers do not reach this stage of the process

²⁴⁷ *ibid.* Article 54(1).

²⁴⁸ *ibid.* Article 54(1[^]1).

²⁴⁹ *ibid.* Article 54(1).

²⁵⁰ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#).

²⁵¹ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

either because they receive a favourable decision or because they leave the CRPCSA before a decision is made.²⁵²

1.4.1 Appeal before the Regional Court

The Regional Court (*Judecătoria Secția Civilă*) has jurisdiction in asylum cases, as the first-instance judicial review. The Regional Court rules in a single judge composition. The judges are not specialised in asylum law. UNHCR and CNRR organized seminars for judges in 2024.²⁵³ Although the initiative was met with interest, there remains a strong need for specialized judges. Training for lawyers is planned for 2025, as legal counsellors cannot formally represent asylum seekers and this role may be fulfilled by ex officio bar lawyers who often lack specialization.²⁵⁴ According to CNRR, judges are not open to attend the training sessions, one of the reasons being the presence of IGI personnel at the sessions.²⁵⁵

The appeals, as well as the other procedural acts regarding the resolution of the appeal, are exempt from legal taxes and legal expenses cannot be demanded.²⁵⁶

In 2022, a total of 678 appeals against IGI-DAI decisions were filed before the Regional Courts.²⁵⁷ According to the information provided by the Regional Courts the number of appeals in 2022 was 544. This was a significant decrease in comparison with last year, when a total of 1,489 appeals were made. In 2023, a total of 674 appeals against IGI-DAI decisions were filed before the Regional Courts. In 2024, a total of 616 appeals against IGI-DAI decisions were filed before the Regional Courts.²⁵⁸

Time limits

The deadline for lodging an appeal is 10 days from the day the decision was communicated.²⁵⁹ The appeal has automatic suspensive effect, if it was lodged within the term prescribed by law.²⁶⁰ Since May 2023, a return decision is issued together with the negative administrative decision in the asylum procedure. If the person wants to file a complaint against the rejection decision, they must also request the suspension of the return decision (see above, [Appeal](#)).

The law contains a procedural safeguard in case of appeals lodged after the time limit set out in the law.²⁶¹ Therefore, in case of filing the appeal or onward appeal after the deadline, the applicant may request the suspension of the execution of the return decision. The request for suspension shall be settled within 7 days from its registration, by the competent court, which shall pronounce the decision in the council chamber, without the parties being summoned, by an irrevocable decision.²⁶² While the review is pending, the applicant cannot be removed from the country.²⁶³

If the court admits the request to suspend the execution of the removal decision, the foreigner has the right to remain in the country pending the outcome of the request for reinstatement of the legal term to appeal.²⁶⁴ The foreigner will benefit from all the rights provided by Articles 17 and 18 of the Asylum Act from the moment the court admits the request for reinstatement of the legal term to appeal.²⁶⁵

²⁵² Information provided by JRS Galati in February 2025.

²⁵³ Information provided by UNHCR in March 2025.

²⁵⁴ Meeting with UNHCR during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 19 March 2025.

²⁵⁵ Meeting with CNRR during ECRE fact-finding visit to Romania, 17 March 2025.

²⁵⁶ Article 65 Asylum Act.

²⁵⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

²⁵⁸ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

²⁵⁹ Article 55(1) Asylum Act.

²⁶⁰ *ibid.* Article 55(2).

²⁶¹ *ibid.* Article 69.

²⁶² *ibid.* Article 69(1).

²⁶³ *ibid.* Article 69(2).

²⁶⁴ *ibid.* Article 69(3).

²⁶⁵ *ibid.* Article 69(4).

The appeal has to be motivated in fact and in law.²⁶⁶ It may be lodged at IGI-DAI, which has issued the decision or directly to the competent court.²⁶⁷ The appeal has to be accompanied by a copy of the IGI-DAI decision and other documents or elements on which the appeal is based.²⁶⁸ The court carries out an assessment of both points of facts and law. The decision of the first instance court incorporates the reasons in fact and law on which it is based.²⁶⁹

In general, there are no problems in appealing a decision, if asylum seekers consult the legal counsellor of an NGO.²⁷⁰ In **Bucharest**, when communicating the decision, IGI-DAI also provides the asylum seeker with the postal address of the Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) in English. Asylum seekers are told by the representative of IGI-DAI who communicates the decision, that they have to go to CNRR for legal counselling and assistance for lodging an appeal. This practice has been in place since 2017.

Article 62 of the Asylum Act provides that asylum cases should be dealt with priority before other civil matters.²⁷¹ The court should take a decision on the appeal within 30 days.²⁷² The court has to motivate its decision within 5 days of it being pronounced.²⁷³

In 2020, IGI-DAI statistics refer to 1 to 2 months average duration of the appeal procedure.²⁷⁴ For 2021, IGI-DAI reported that there are no statistics on the duration of the procedure.²⁷⁵ The same was stated for 2022.²⁷⁶ In 2023, IGI-DAI statistics indicate that on average, appeal procedures lasted 60 days. In 2024, IGI-DAI statistics indicate that on average, appeal procedures lasted 60 days.²⁷⁷

Hearing

The law establishes that the court may order the hearing of the asylum seeker when it considers that it is useful to settle the case.²⁷⁸

There is no updated information available for 2024 regarding the number or scheduling of hearings in appeal procedures; the courts did not provide any further data following the 2023 reporting period. The only information provided for 2024 was from the Bucharest Bar, where they had 151 requests for legal assistance.²⁷⁹

At the national level, there is a court portal available online,²⁸⁰ and since 2022 asylum cases registered at the Regional Courts (Giurgiu, Rădăuți, Giurgiu, Timișoara, Baia Mare, Galați, and Bucharest) are no longer published on it.

According to Law No. 122/2006, and in line with the confidentiality of asylum procedures, case files uploaded to the national electronic system are not public. In practice, neither the General Inspectorate for Immigration nor the applicants themselves have direct access to these files without prior approval.

²⁶⁶ *ibid.* Article 57(1)(c).

²⁶⁷ *ibid.* Article 56.

²⁶⁸ *ibid.* Articles 56(1) and 57.

²⁶⁹ Article 425(b) Civil Code.

²⁷⁰ Information provided by CNRR, 9 January 2018.

²⁷¹ Article 62(1) Asylum Act.

²⁷² *ibid.* Article 64(2).

²⁷³ *ibid.* Article 64(3).

²⁷⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 16 February 2021.

²⁷⁵ *ibid.* 11 March 2022.

²⁷⁶ *ibid.* 22 February 2023.

²⁷⁷ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

²⁷⁸ Article 63 Asylum Act.

²⁷⁹ Information provided by Bucharest Bar, 16 February 2021.

²⁸⁰ Ministry of Justice, *Portalul instanțelor de judecată*, available in Romanian [here](#).

The practice shows that with no support from NGOs or attorneys, it is impossible for asylum seekers to find out the decision of the appeal courts. In certain instances, even for the NGO representatives and attorneys it is a hurdle. This has a direct effect on their access to onward appeal. Thus, in order to learn the decision of the court, the legal counsellor has to go or call the Court's Registry.

1.4.2 Onward appeal

IGI-DAI reported that, in 2022, there were 303 onward appeals before the Administrative County Courts.²⁸¹ According to the information provided by the Administrative County Courts the number of onward appeals was 307. In 2023, according to the information provided by the courts, the number of appeals was 354. For 2024, we do not have any information from the Courts.

The law prescribes the possibility to appeal the decision of the Regional Court.²⁸² The competent court is the County Tribunal, Administrative Litigation Section (Administrative County Court), which has jurisdiction over the area of the Regional Court whose decision is appealed.²⁸³ The Administrative County Court is composed of three judges. The onward appeal has to be lodged within 5 days from the day the Regional Court decision was pronounced and has automatic suspensive effect, if it is lodged in due time.²⁸⁴

In 2021 and 2022, IGI-DAI reported that there were no statistics on the average duration of the onward appeal.²⁸⁵ In 2023, IGI-DAI reported an average duration of 3 months. No information on 2024 was provided.

The onward appeal does not look at facts but examines if the appealed decision is compliant with the applicable rules.²⁸⁶ As a consequence, the onward appeal has to include the grounds for illegality on which the appeal is based.²⁸⁷ The decision has to be motivated within 10 days from the day it is communicated by the Regional Court.

According to the Civil Procedure Code, the attorney who has represented or assisted the party during the hearing may, even without a mandate, take any action for the preservation of rights subject to a term and appeal against the judgment, that may be lost by failing to do so on time. In these cases, only the party will handle all the procedural documents. The support of the appeal can only be based on a new power of attorney.²⁸⁸

Therefore, attorneys can appeal the Regional Court decision even without a mandate in this regard, in order to preserve the rights of their client, which are subject to a term and will otherwise be lost by failure to act in time. The provision emphasises that the attorney may also appeal against a judgment without having a mandate. It also mentions that a new power of attorney is needed for representing/ arguing the appeal in the higher court. Therefore, the law makes a difference between declaring/filing an appeal and representing/arguing it.

Decisions

According to IGI-DAI, in 2022 364 onwards appeals were finalised, of which 283 were favourable for IGI-DAI and 81 for the asylum seekers.²⁸⁹ However, the Administrative County Courts reported a total of 302

²⁸¹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

²⁸² Article 66 Asylum Act.

²⁸³ *ibid.* Article 67.

²⁸⁴ *ibid.* Article 66(2) and (4).

²⁸⁵ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 11 March 2022 and 22 February 2023.

²⁸⁶ Article 483(3) Civil Procedure Code.

²⁸⁷ *ibid.* Article 486(1)(d).

²⁸⁸ *ibid.* Article 87(2)(3).

²⁸⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

decisions issued. According to statistics provided by the courts, in 2023, a total of 272 decisions were issued. There is no information provided for 2024.

1.5 Legal assistance

Indicators: Regular Procedure: Legal Assistance

1. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice?
☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No
❖ Does free legal assistance cover: ☒ Representation in interview
☒ Legal advice
2. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance on appeal against a negative decision in practice?
☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No
❖ Does free legal assistance cover ☐ Representation in courts
☒ Legal advice

According to Article 17(1)(e) of the Asylum Act, the asylum seeker has the right to counselling and assistance from a representative of a Romanian or foreign NGO, in any phase of the asylum procedure. The asylum seeker has the right to be given, upon request, legal and procedural information, including information on the first instance procedure, in line with the provisions on public judicial assistance in civil matters, taking into account their personal situation.²⁹⁰

The law sets out the right of the asylum seeker to be provided, upon request, according to the legislation on public judicial assistance in civil matters and taking into account the personal situation of the foreigner, information on the motivation of the rejection of the asylum application, the procedure for challenging the ordinance through which the measure of placement in a specially closed space was taken, as well as the possibility to challenge the decision which granted, reduced or withdraw the material reception conditions.²⁹¹

Legal assistance at first instance

There are no restrictions or conditions for accessing legal counselling at first instance.

In the administrative phase of the procedure, free legal counselling and assistance is provided by NGOs through projects funded by the national Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) scheme and UNHCR Romania. The Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) provides specialised legal counselling and assistance to all asylum seekers upon request in the 6 Regional Centres for Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers, through a project funded by the national Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) program. CNRR's legal counsellors have an office in the regional centres where they are available every weekday for 8 hours per day.

IGI-DAI stated that they did not have information on the total number of legal assistance requests submitted by applicants for international protection in 2024 in the context of the first instance procedure, nor on the breakdown of these requests by type of procedure (regular procedure, accelerated procedure, border procedure, Dublin procedure) or by outcome (granting or refusal of legal assistance) for each type of procedure.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ Article 17(1)(s) Asylum Act.

²⁹¹ *ibid.*

²⁹² Information provided by IGI in January 2025.

According to the Bucharest Bar Association, a total of 151 requests for legal assistance were submitted by applicants seeking international protection during the first-instance procedure in 2024.²⁹³

Through the "Advocacy for access to the territory, information regarding international protection, child protection and refugee integration" project, implemented by CNRR, UNHCR Romania has the possibility to grant lawyers' fees for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, based on their vulnerability, complexity or strategic interest for advocacy campaigns. Through this project 14 attorneys' fees were awarded in 2022.²⁹⁴ In 2023 and 2024, CNRR continued with the implementation of this project and provided advice and information to asylum seekers and migrants who met the conditions for submitting a new asylum application. Concerning the procedure, it assisted in the drafting and submission of procedural documents and provided legal assistance in court through specialised lawyers. CNRR also provided legal assistance in court through lawyers to beneficiaries of international protection when their rights were violated. In this respect, in 2023 CNRR awarded a total of 24 fees to lawyers in this project: specifically, 21 fees on Output 1 - Access to territory (in the asylum procedure and for access to a new asylum procedure) and 3 fees on Output 3 - Child protection (in the asylum procedure). In 2023, 18 lawyers were remunerated for legal advice/assistance activities.²⁹⁵ No updated information was available for 2024.

Legal representation by a lawyer under the Legal Aid Act includes representation in the administrative phase of the procedure.²⁹⁶ According to Article 35 of the Legal Aid Act, legal aid may also be extra-judicial and consist in consultations, filing of applications, petitions, referrals, initiation of other related legal steps, as well as representation before public authorities or institutions other than judicial or with jurisdictional powers, with a view to achieving the individual's legitimate rights or interests. This was confirmed by the National Union of Romanian Bar Associations.²⁹⁷ However, according to the head of the Judicial Assistance Service at the Bucharest Bar Association no legal aid applications for representation in the administrative phase of the procedure had been lodged until now in any of the regional centres.

In all other cases, the asylum seeker has to pay the lawyer's fee if they wish to be represented by a lawyer during the personal interview.

According to CNRR, in 2024, as in previous years, applications for public legal aid were accepted, and asylum seekers were assigned an *ex officio* lawyer. These lawyers may have experience in asylum law (including those from the CNRR network) or may be trainee lawyers. No documentation was required to verify the applicant's income. Asylum seekers reported that one issue with *ex officio* lawyers was the lack of interaction before the court hearing, and the lawyers appeared unfamiliar with the case and provided superficial assistance.²⁹⁸ JRS representatives in Galati noted that a limitation on legal assistance for asylum seekers is the duration of the projects that fund this support. Asylum seekers receive legal aid through NGOs that implement such projects. However, during gaps between projects, when there is a break in funding, ensuring continuous legal assistance for asylum seekers becomes problematic.²⁹⁹

Legal assistance in appeals

In court proceedings, legal aid may only be provided by CNRR, who have limited funds for legal representation.

As in previous years, in 2023 CNRR collaborated with lawyers to provide legal assistance to asylum seekers. Legal assistance was not provided at the administrative phase of the asylum procedure before

²⁹³ Information provided by the Bucharest Bar Association in January 2025.

²⁹⁴ Information provided by CNRR, 7 February 2023.

²⁹⁵ *ibid.* 16 January 2024.

²⁹⁶ Government Emergency Ordinance 51/2008.

²⁹⁷ Information provided by the National Union of Romanian Bar Associations, 8 January 2018.

²⁹⁸ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

²⁹⁹ Information provided by JRS Galati in February 2025.

the IGI-DAI, instead it was ensured during the legal phase at courts that have competencies in the asylum procedure: 60 lawyers ensured legal assistance in first instance and 40 lawyers in the appeal. According to CNRR, in 2023 there were cases where asylum seekers stated that the legal assistance provided by the ex officio lawyers was superficial, with applicants claiming that the lawyers did not discuss their case with them or did not show a willingness to know their situation thoroughly. In some cases, the ex officio lawyers did not perform the necessary procedure to file an appeal within the time limit provided by the law.³⁰⁰ Other information on legal assistance and lawyers was not provided by organisations and institutions. No updated information was available for 2024.

2. Dublin

2.1 General

In the outgoing procedure, in 2024 Romania sent 248 requests, of which 190 were accepted and 7 transfers were implemented, marking a 3.7% outgoing transfer rate; the country received 3,122 requests in the incoming procedure, of which 2,004 were accepted, and 161 were then transferred, marking a 8% incoming transfer rate.

Outgoing procedure				Incoming procedure			
	Requests	Accepted	Transfers		Requests	Accepted	Transfers
Total	248	190	7	Total	3,122	2,004	161
Bulgaria	174	159	4	Germany	849	601	75
Switzerland	44	29	11	Italy	415	362	1
Germany	17	11	1	France	339	152	9
Italy	15	3	0	Greece	230	138	n/a
France	10	8	1	Netherlands	94	64	5
Netherlands	6	4	1	Austria	91	78	26
Croatia	4	N/a	1	Czech Republic	24	18	10

Source: IGI – DAI, 23 January 2025.

In 2024, IGI mentioned that under the outgoing Dublin “take back” procedure, a total of 7 effective transfers were carried out. The breakdown of these transfers by recipient country is as follows: Bulgaria (BG) – 4, Germany (DE) – 1, Croatia (HR) – 1, and Netherlands (NL) – 1. Meanwhile, under the incoming Dublin “take back” procedure, the total number of effective transfers was 161. These transfers were received from the following countries: Austria (AT) – 26, Belgium (BE) – 5, Switzerland (CH) – 11, Czech Republic (CZ) – 10, Germany (DE) – 75, France (FR) – 9, Italy (IT) – 1, Netherlands (NL) – 5, Norway (NO) – 2, Poland (PL) – 8, Sweden (SE) – 5, and Slovakia (SK) – 4.

Outgoing and incoming Dublin requests by criterion: 2024		
Dublin III Regulation criterion	Outgoing	Incoming
Family provisions: Articles 8-11	18	8
Regular entry: Articles 12 and 14	29	885
Irregular entry: Article 13	7	46
Dependent persons and humanitarian clause: Articles 16 and 17(2)	4	1
“Take back”: Articles 18 and 20(5)	187	2,176

³⁰⁰ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

Total	245	3,116
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Source: IGI-DAI, information provided upon request, 23 January 2025.

Outgoing Dublin requests by criterion: 2024		
Dublin III Regulation criterion	Requests sent	Requests accepted ³⁰¹
"Take charge": Articles 8 to 17	58	30
Article 8 (minors)	11	6
Article 9 (family members granted protection)	2	4
Article 10 (family members pending determination)	5	1
Article 11 (family procedure)	0	0
Article 12 (visas and residence permits)	29	16
Article 13 (entry and/or remain)	7	1
Article 14 (visa free entry)	0	0
"Take charge": Article 16	0	0
"Take charge" humanitarian clause: Article 17(2)	4	2
"Take back": Articles 18 and 20(5)	187	157
Article 18 (1) (b)	187	96
Article 18 (1) (c)	0	12
Article 18 (1) (d)	0	49
Article 20(5)	0	0

Source: IGI – DAI, 23 January 2025.

According to Immigration in 2024 on the basis of articles 8-17(2), in 2024, according to IGI the total number of outgoing Dublin "take charge" requests was 60, out of which 48 were first-time requests and 12 were re-examination requests. The breakdown of these requests by recipient country is as follows: Austria (AT) – 2, Belgium (BE) – 5, Bulgaria (BG) – 11, Switzerland (CH) – 1, Cyprus (CY) – 2, Germany (DE) – 11, Spain (ES) – 2, Finland (FI) – 1, France (FR) – 8, Italy (IT) – 11, Netherlands (NL) – 6, and Poland (PL) – 1.

According to Immigration in 2024 on the basis of articles 18-20(5), in 2024 according to IGI the total number of outgoing Dublin "take back" requests was 188, of which 183 were first-time requests and 5 were re-examination requests. The breakdown of these requests by recipient country is as follows: Austria (AT) – 2, Belgium (BE) – 1, Bulgaria (BG) – 163, Cyprus (CY) – 1, Germany (DE) – 6, Denmark (DK) – 1, France (FR) – 2, Greece (GR) – 2, Croatia (HR) – 4, Italy (IT) – 4, Liechtenstein (LI) – 1, and Latvia (LV) – 1.

According to Immigration in 2024 on the basis of articles 8-17(2), in 2024 IGI stated that the total number of accepted Dublin "take charge" requests was 32. The breakdown of these accepted requests by recipient country is as follows: Bulgaria (BG) – 7, Belgium (BE) – 2, Switzerland (CH) – 1, Germany (DE) – 8, Spain (ES) – 1, France (FR) – 7, Italy (IT) – 2, and Netherlands (NL) – 4.

According to Immigration in 2024 on the basis of articles 18-20(5), in 2024 IGI mentioned that the total number of accepted Dublin "take back" requests was 158. The breakdown of these accepted requests by the recipient country is as follows: Bulgaria (BG) – 152, Germany (DE) – 3, France (FR) – 1, Italy (IT) – 1, and Latvia (LV) – 1.

³⁰¹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

Incoming Dublin requests by criterion: 2024		
Dublin III Regulation criterion	Requests received	Requests accepted
“Take charge”: Articles 8 to 17	946	748
Article 8 (minors)	1	0
Article 9 (family members granted protection)	3	2
Article 10 (family members pending determination)	0	0
Article 11 (family procedure)	4	0
Article 12 (visas and residence permits)	883	721
Article 13 (entry and/or remain)	46	23
Article 14 (visa free entry)	2	0
“Take charge”: Article 16	0	0
“Take charge” humanitarian clause: Article 17(2)	1	0
“Take back”: Articles 18 and 20(5)	2,176	1,256
Article 18 (1) (b)	2,150	1,239
Article 18 (1) (c)	2	1
Article 18 (1) (d)	23	15
Article 20(5)	1	1

Source: IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

According to Immigration in 2024 on the basis of articles 8-17(2), in 2024, IGI stated that the total number of incoming Dublin “take charge” requests was 946. The breakdown of these requests by sending country is as follows: Austria (AT) – 91, Belgium (BE) – 10, Switzerland (CH) – 16, Czech Republic (CZ) – 21, Germany (DE) – 129, Denmark (DK) – 1, Finland (FI) – 7, France (FR) – 24, Greece (GR) – 172, Croatia (HR) – 2, Ireland (IE) – 1, Italy (IT) – 415, Netherlands (NL) – 24, Luxembourg (LU) – 1, Norway (NO) – 9, Poland (PL) – 5, Sweden (SE) – 11, Slovenia (SI) – 1, and Slovakia (SK) – 6.

According to Immigration in 2024 on the basis of articles 18-20(5), in 2024, IGI mentioned that the total number of incoming Dublin “take back” requests was 2,176. The breakdown of these requests by destination country is as follows: Austria (AT) – 128, Belgium (BE) – 42, Bulgaria (BG) – 2, Switzerland (CH) – 43, Czech Republic (CZ) – 3, Germany (DE) – 720, Denmark (DK) – 4, Estonia (EE) – 1, France (FR) – 315, Greece (GR) – 58, Croatia (HR) – 4, Hungary (HU) – 3, Ireland (IE) – 39, Italy (IT) – 697, Netherlands (NL) – 70, Luxembourg (LU) – 1, Latvia (LV) – 1, Norway (NO) – 6, Poland (PL) – 14, Sweden (SE) – 8, Slovenia (SI) – 11, and Slovakia (SK) – 7.

According to Immigration in 2024 on the basis of articles 8-17(2), in 2024, IGI stated that the total number of accepted Dublin “take charge” requests was 748. The breakdown of these accepted requests by sending country is as follows: Austria (AT) – 78, Belgium (BE) – 8, Switzerland (CH) – 15, Czech Republic (CZ) – 16, Germany (DE) – 96, Denmark (DK) – 1, Finland (FI) – 7, France (FR) – 16, Greece (GR) – 108, Italy (IT) – 362, Netherlands (NL) – 18, Luxembourg (LU) – 1, Norway (NO) – 5, Poland (PL) – 2, Sweden (SE) – 10, and Slovakia (SK) – 5.

According to Immigration in 2024 on the basis of articles 18-20(5), in 2024, IGI mentioned that the total number of accepted Dublin “take back” requests was 1,256. The breakdown of these accepted requests by sending country is as follows: Austria (AT) – 114, Belgium (BE) – 19, Bulgaria (BG) – 0, Switzerland (CH) – 28, Czech Republic (CZ) – 2, Germany (DE) – 505, Denmark (DK) – 2, France (FR) – 136, Greece (GR) – 30, Croatia (HR) – 1, Hungary (HU) – 2, Italy (IT) – 342, Netherlands (NL) – 46, Norway (NO) – 2, Poland (PL) – 11, Sweden (SE) – 5, Slovenia (SI) – 4, and Slovakia (SK) – 7.

2.1.1 Application of the Dublin criteria

To prove family links, the asylum seeker is not required to present original documents or to undertake DNA tests. In general, they present copies of the family book, birth certificate, residence permit of the relative with whom they would like to be reunited and, in the case of unaccompanied children, the relative's desire to be reunited with the unaccompanied child, expressed in writing. According to legal counsellors, family unity is the most frequent criterion applied in practice, with the majority of cases concerning reunion with family outside Romania.

According to data provided by IGI-DAI,³⁰² for the year 2023, the situation was as follows:

- ❖ Bucharest: 11 adults and 2 unaccompanied children transferred to Germany, Bulgaria, Finland and Poland.
- ❖ Giurgiu: 0 persons.
- ❖ Galati: 2 adults transferred to Austria and Germany.
- ❖ Suceava: 4 adults transferred to Germany and Bulgaria.
- ❖ **Șomcuta Mare**: 0 persons.
- ❖ Timisoara: 3 unaccompanied children transferred to Germany.

There is no information available for 2024. According to CNRR, before the interview, all asylum seekers are asked whether they have relatives in another Member State. If they confirm this, IGI-DAI staff provides information on the Dublin procedure; CNRR also provides legal counselling on the process. The primary evidence required by the authorities includes original documents proving family ties, such as birth certificates, marriage certificates, and residence permits. Based on cases observed in 2024, there were no reported instances where authorities conducting the Dublin procedure refused to apply the family provisions.³⁰³

2.1.2 The dependent persons and discretionary clauses

In 2022, Romania issued one outgoing request and received two incoming requests based on the humanitarian clause. No outgoing nor incoming requests based on the dependent persons' clause were issued or received in 2022. The sovereignty clause was not applied in 2022.³⁰⁴ No information was provided by IGI-DAI for 2023, nor for 2024.

2.2 Procedure

Indicators: Dublin: Procedure

1. Is the Dublin procedure applied by the authority responsible for examining asylum applications?
☒ Yes ☐ No
2. On average, how long does a transfer take after the responsible Member State has accepted responsibility?
6 months

According to IGI-DAI, in 2023, the outgoing and incoming requests were processed within the terms stipulated in the Dublin III Regulation.³⁰⁵ According to IGI in 2024, the average duration of the Dublin procedure from the issuance of an outgoing request to the actual transfer to the responsible Member State was **6 months**. Similarly, the average duration from the acceptance of responsibility by another Member State to the actual transfer was also **6 months**.

Article 119 of the Asylum Act states that, if after lodging an application for international protection and before taking a decision in the national asylum procedure, IGI-DAI discovers proof or circumstantial

³⁰² Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

³⁰³ Information provided by CNRR February 2025.

³⁰⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

³⁰⁵ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

evidence which indicates the responsibility of another Member State to examine the application under the Dublin Regulation, it shall initiate the Dublin procedure.

All asylum seekers are fingerprinted, photographed and checked against the Eurodac database. In practice, there were cases where asylum seekers refused to be fingerprinted but, after they were explained that this was necessary for the asylum procedure and, in case of refusal, they would have been detained, they agreed to it. In case the applicant does not comply with the obligation to be photographed and fingerprinted,³⁰⁶ according to IGI-DAI, a coercive restraint may be applied (details about this measure were not provided).³⁰⁷

The use of these measures must be non-punitive, proportionate and applied only for the necessary period, if there is no other way of determining the asylum seeker to cooperate with the staff of IGI-DAI.³⁰⁸

According to CNRR, all asylum seekers are fingerprinted, except for minors under the age of 14. Of the applicants counselled, none stated that they refused to be fingerprinted. In cases of family unity criteria the authority conducting the Dublin procedure requests documents - resident permit and other similar documents of the relatives from the other Member State.³⁰⁹

2.2.1 Individualised guarantees

The decisions issued by IGI-DAI in Galați and Giurgiu do not mention any information regarding the fact that individual guarantees were requested by the Romanian Dublin Unit or any information regarding the state of play of the applicant's asylum procedure in the respective Member State. According to the director of Regional Centre Timișoara and Galați the Dublin Unit does not seek individualised guarantees but requests information regarding the stage of the procedure prior to a transfer. For 2023, IGI-DAI indicated that the Dublin Unit does not seek to request individualised guarantees; further details were not provided.³¹⁰ There was no information given or available for 2024.

2.2.2 Transfers

According to Article 127 of the Asylum Act, an asylum seeker who is subject to the Dublin procedure has the same rights and obligations as an asylum seeker in the regular procedure until the date when the transfer is effectively carried out. This means that they have the right to stay in the regional centres until the date they are actually transferred to the responsible Member State.

Nevertheless, IGI-DAI may reduce or withdraw the material reception conditions of asylum seekers, including asylum seekers subject to the Dublin procedure. The motivated decision may be challenged in court.³¹¹

The restrictive measures prescribed by law, which may be imposed to the asylum seeker subject to Dublin procedure are:

- ❖ The obligation to report at IGI;³¹²
- ❖ Designation of their residence in a Regional Centre of Procedures for Asylum Seekers;³¹³
- ❖ Placement or, as the case may be, remaining in public custody (detention).³¹⁴

³⁰⁶ In accordance with Article 19(a) Asylum Act.

³⁰⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

³⁰⁸ Article 18(3) Asylum Decree.

³⁰⁹ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025. Information confirmed by JRS Galați in February 2025.

³¹⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

³¹¹ Article 19^1(1) -(2) Asylum Act.

³¹² *ibid.* Article 19^2(1)(a).

³¹³ *ibid.* Article 19^2(1)(b).

³¹⁴ *ibid.* Article 19^2(1)(d).

The only restrictive measure not applicable to asylum seekers subject to Dublin procedure is the placement in specially designated closed places, which are defined as alternatives to detention but in practice consist of detention rooms in the Regional Centres.³¹⁵ Reporting duties and residence in a specific place may be imposed in order to ensure the transfer.³¹⁶ Detention for the purpose of a transfer is discussed in [Grounds for Detention](#).

If after the asylum seeker is placed in detention, one of the deadlines provided by Article 28(3) of the Dublin Regulation expires, the measure ceases to have effect. IGI draws up a notice on the cessation of the measure, which is communicated to the applicant.³¹⁷ In general, asylum seekers subject to the Dublin procedure are not placed in detention, this was also confirmed by the IGI-DAI director from Timișoara.

According to IGI-DAI, the average duration of the Dublin procedure between the issuance of a request and the transfer is 2-3 months. The average duration of the process between acceptance of responsibility and transfer takes one month.³¹⁸ In Bucharest, and Șomcuta Mare the stakeholders reported no transfers. For 2023 and 2024, IGI-DAI did not indicate an average duration of the process.

Romania issued 551 requests and implemented 11 transfers in 2022, thereby indicating a transfer rate of 1.99 %.³¹⁹ Based on the numbers communicated by IGI-DAI for 2023, with 1,288 requests and 99 transfers, the transfer rate was of 7.69% in 2023. No data were available for 2024.

2.3 Personal interview

Indicators: Dublin: Personal Interview

☐ Same as regular procedure

1. Is a personal interview of the asylum seeker in most cases conducted in practice in the Dublin procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. If so, are interpreters available in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Are interviews conducted through video conferencing? ☐ Frequently ☐ Rarely ☒ Never

According to the law, if during the preliminary interview the answers of the asylum seeker indicate the necessity to start the Dublin procedure, the preliminary interview is conducted pursuant to Article 5 of the Dublin Regulation.³²⁰

As of 2022, in Șomcuta Mare the Dublin interview is held during the preliminary interview; there is a special column dedicated to questions related to the Dublin procedure asking whether they had previously applied for asylum in another Member State. The officer in charge of fingerprinting and photographing the asylum seekers holds the interview. In Rădăuți, the Dublin interview is held after the preliminary interview. In Galați the interview is conducted after the preliminary interview by the officer in charge of fingerprinting and photographing the applicants, also in 2023. In Giurgiu, the Dublin interview is conducted when, on the basis of the applicant's statements and other documents, the officers determine the need to start the Dublin procedure; this is usually decided after the applicant's preliminary interview. In Timișoara, according to the director of IGI-DAI Timișoara, the Dublin interview is an annex to the preliminary interview. The annex includes questions regarding presence in the respective Member State, knowledge

³¹⁵ *ibid.* Article 19[^]2(3).

³¹⁶ *ibid.* Articles 19[^]3 and 19[^]4.

³¹⁷ *ibid.* Article 19[^]14(10).

³¹⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 11 March 2022.

³¹⁹ *ibid.* 22 February 2023.

³²⁰ Article 43(3) Asylum Act.

of any decision taken on their application, willingness to return there. The interview is carried out by the same officer who conducts the preliminary interview.

The interview in the Dublin procedure takes place faster than in the regular procedure, even on the same day as the preliminary interview. A copy of the transcript of the interview is not handed over to the asylum seeker after the interview. However, they may request it under the provisions of the Asylum Act.³²¹ The modalities are the same as the regular procedure as regards the other aspects. There is no available or update information in this matter for 2024.

2.4 Appeal

Indicators: Dublin: Appeal

☐ Same as regular procedure

1. Does the law provide for an appeal against the decision in the Dublin procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No

❖ If yes, is it ☒ Judicial ☐ Administrative

❖ If yes, is it suspensive ☐ Yes ☒ No

Article 121 of the Asylum Act establishes the conditions of appeal in case of the Dublin procedure. The decision rejecting access to the asylum procedure in Romania and ordering the transfer to the responsible Member State may be challenged within 5 days of its communication. The transfer to the responsible Member State shall be suspended until the expiry of the legal deadline for filing the appeal.

In contrast with the regular procedure, lodging the appeal in the Dublin procedure does not have automatic suspensive effect. When appealing, the applicant may also request the suspension of the implementation of the transfer decision.³²² The request for suspension is decided urgently in the council chamber by final conclusion, and the parties are summoned.³²³ The implementation of the transfer decision is suspended until the court decides on the request for suspension.³²⁴

In situations that could not have been taken into consideration at the moment of issuing the decision, the case officer may, ex officio, decide to suspend the transfer decision until the court has ruled on the appeal. The measure is communicated to the applicant, according to the provisions on communication of decisions in the regular procedure.³²⁵

The court shall settle the case within maximum 30 days.³²⁶ The competent court is the Regional Court (Judecatoria) with territorial jurisdiction over the area in which IGI has issued the decision.³²⁷ The decision of the court is final.³²⁸

³²¹ Article 17(1) (f¹) sets out the right to have access, personally or through a representative, to the information contained in the personal file, unless the disclosure of the information or sources, from which it was obtained would jeopardize the national security, the organisations or persons who provided that information, or if it would be prejudicial to the examination of the application for international protection. Access to the information in the personal file is based on a request addressed to the specialised asylum structure of IGI. At the request of the applicant for international protection, copies of documents from the personal file may be issued free of charge, in accordance with the provisions of the present law.

³²² Article 121(3) Asylum Act.

³²³ *ibid.*

³²⁴ *ibid.* Article 121(4).

³²⁵ *ibid.* Article 121(5).

³²⁶ *ibid.* Article 121(6).

³²⁷ *ibid.* Article 121(2).

³²⁸ *ibid.* Article 121(7).

If the court admits the appeal and decides that the application for international protection in Romania should be resumed and the applicant has already been transferred to the responsible Member State, IGI shall take the necessary steps to readmit them to the territory of Romania.³²⁹

No appeals were registered by the Regional Courts, according to the information provided. In 2023, according with data provided by IGI-DAI³³⁰, a total of 21 appeals were formulated by asylum seekers subjected to transfer to another country as part of the Dublin procedure (10 in Bucharest, 2 in Rădăuți and 9 in Timisoara). No further details were provided. There is no information available for 2024.

2.5 Legal assistance

Indicators: Dublin: Legal Assistance

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice?

☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No

❖ Does free legal assistance cover:

☒ Representation in interview

☒ Legal advice

2. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance on appeal against a Dublin decision in practice?

☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No

❖ Does free legal assistance cover

☐ Representation in courts

☒ Legal advice

According to Article 127 of the Asylum Act, an asylum seeker subject to the Dublin procedure has the same rights and obligations as an asylum seeker in the regular procedure until the date when the transfer is effectively carried out. Hence, they also have access to free legal assistance.

Asylum seekers have the same conditions to access legal assistance in the Dublin procedure as those subject to the regular procedure (see [Regular Procedure: Legal Assistance](#)). The only difference, which might be problematic, is the 5-day deadline to lodge an appeal against a Dublin decision. Nevertheless, legal counsellors have not reported any problems in filing appeals against negative decisions.

2.6 Suspension of transfers

Indicators: Dublin: Suspension of Transfers

1. Are Dublin transfers systematically suspended as a matter of policy or jurisprudence to one or more countries?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Greece: Romania resumed Dublin procedures to Greece as of 1 October 2018.³³¹ 73 outgoing requests were made to Greece in 2022, according to the statistics provided by IGI-DAI and no transfers to Greece were carried out.³³² The directors of the regional centres stated that transfers to Greece are not carried out. In 2023, transfers to Greece were not carried out.³³³ In 2024, although Romania continued to submit outgoing Dublin requests to Greece (a total of 2 take back requests, as indicated by IGI), no transfers to Greece were carried out, maintaining the trend observed in previous years.³³⁴

³²⁹ Article 121(8) Asylum Act.

³³⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

³³¹ *ibid.* 5 March 2019.

³³² *ibid.* 22 February 2023.

³³³ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

³³⁴ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

Bulgaria: The highest number of “take back” requests (205) were issued to Bulgaria in 2022 but only two transfers were carried out.³³⁵ In 2023, one request was sent and one transfer was implemented. For 2024 there was no information provided. In 2024, Romania submitted a total of 163 “take back” requests and 11 “take charge” requests to Bulgaria. According to IGI data, a total of 174 requests were issued, and 4 transfers to Bulgaria were effectively carried out, indicating a modest increase in actual transfers compared to previous years.³³⁶

2.7 The situation of Dublin returnees

The Asylum Act includes provisions concerning cases of express and tacit withdrawal of an asylum application.³³⁷ An implicit or tacit withdrawal of an asylum application occurs when the applicant is not present on the scheduled time for the preliminary interview or personal interview, without presenting good reasons for their absence.³³⁸ In case of tacit withdrawal, IGI-DAI writes a report regarding the absence of the asylum seeker from the interview.³³⁹ In these cases, the decision to close the file shall be issued after the expiration of a period of 30 days from the date of the aforementioned report.³⁴⁰

When the asylum seeker expressly withdraws their asylum claim, this is considered an explicit withdrawal of the asylum application.³⁴¹ The asylum seeker shall be informed of the consequences of their withdrawal in a language they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand.³⁴²

When an asylum application was tacitly withdrawn and the asylum procedure was discontinued (i.e. the case of a person who left Romania and moved to another EU Member State), if the person makes an asylum claim within 9 months of the decision to close the file issued for implicit withdrawal, the asylum procedure may be continued.³⁴³ If the time limit has expired, the asylum claim is considered a [Subsequent Application](#).

The legal framework is different when a person has left the territory for at least 3 months or had been removed to a third country or to the country of origin under Articles 19(2) and (3) of the Dublin Regulation and, consequently, the asylum procedure was discontinued by a decision closing the file. In this case, a new claim lodged successively in Romania is not considered as a subsequent application.³⁴⁴

Therefore, persons who expressly withdrew their asylum applications without leaving the territory of the EU or being returned to a third country or the country of origin, cannot continue their asylum procedure in case of return to Romania. As a consequence, they will have to lodge a subsequent application.

It should be noted that the Asylum Act does not fully comply with Article 18(2) of the Dublin Regulation, which allows applicants whose claims have been withdrawn to have access to the procedure without lodging a subsequent application.

For persons returned to Romania who have been previously interviewed and received a negative decision in the administrative phase of the procedure and have not sought judicial remedy, the asylum procedure does not continue. They may only lodge a subsequent application. For persons returned to Romania who have not been previously interviewed the asylum procedure continues.

³³⁵ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

³³⁶ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

³³⁷ Article 51 Asylum Act.

³³⁸ *ibid.* Article 51(1)(b).

³³⁹ *ibid.* Article 51(3).

³⁴⁰ *ibid.* Article 51(5).

³⁴¹ *ibid.* Article 51(1)(a).

³⁴² *ibid.* Article 51(2).

³⁴³ *ibid.* Article 94[^]1.

³⁴⁴ *ibid.* Article 94[^]1(1)(a).

In 2022 Romania received 306³⁴⁵ incoming transfers, compared to 600³⁴⁶ incoming transfers in 2021. In 2023, Romania received 4,851 requests, and 344 incoming transfers. In 2024, Romania received 3,122 incoming Dublin requests and carried out 161 incoming transfers, according to official data provided by IGI, reflecting a decrease in transfers compared to 2023.³⁴⁷

In 2023, KlikAktiv and ProAsyl³⁴⁸ reported cases of “formalised push-backs” between Romania and Serbia which clearly violated people’s right to seek asylum and the principle of non-refoulement with deportations of third country nationals, including people seeking international protection, back to Serbia by applying the readmission agreement between the EU and Serbia without an effective assessment of protection needs or asylum claims. One person seeking international protection was deported from Romania to Serbia immediately after he was identified on Romanian territory. Cases of Dublin returnees transferred back to Romania then being further deported to Serbia based on the readmission agreement were also reported. No cases were reported in 2024.

3. Admissibility procedure

3.1 General (scope, criteria, time limits)

An application is inadmissible where the applicant:

- ❖ Has been granted international protection by another Member State;³⁴⁹
- ❖ Comes from a [First Country of Asylum](#);³⁵⁰
- ❖ Comes from a European safe third country which has agreed to their readmission;³⁵¹
- ❖ Comes from a [Safe Third Country](#);³⁵²
- ❖ Makes a subsequent application without new elements.³⁵³

The grounds relating to international protection granted by another Member State and safe country concepts were introduced in 2015.

According to IGI-DAI, Romania has no list of safe countries of origin, European safe third country or safe third country.³⁵⁴

The law does not mention any specific time limits for taking a decision on the admissibility of the application.

In 2024, IGI-DAI stated that they do not have statistical data regarding the distribution of the total number of inadmissibility decisions based on the reasons for inadmissibility (Article 33 of Directive 2013/32/EU). According to IGI-DAI, since 2022 until 2024 there were no applications dismissed as inadmissible because the applicant came from a First Country of Asylum, European safe third country or safe third country, because Romania has no list of safe countries.³⁵⁵

³⁴⁵ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

³⁴⁶ *ibid.* 11 March 2022.

³⁴⁷ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

³⁴⁸ KlikAktiv, Pro Asyl, *Formalizing Pushbacks – The use of readmission agreements in pushback operations at the Serbian-Romanian border*, 2023, available [here](#).

³⁴⁹ Article 50¹ Asylum Act.

³⁵⁰ *ibid.* Article 95 Asylum Act.

³⁵¹ *ibid.* Article 96 Asylum Act.

³⁵² *ibid.* Article 97 Asylum Act.

³⁵³ *ibid.* Article 91(b) Asylum Act, in conjunction with Article 88(2)(a)-(b).

³⁵⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 20 February 2020 and 11 March 2022.

³⁵⁵ *ibid.* 22 February 2023.

3.2 Personal interview

Indicators: Admissibility Procedure: Personal Interview

☐ Same as regular procedure

1. Is a personal interview of the asylum seeker in most cases conducted in practice in the admissibility procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 - ❖ If so, are questions limited to nationality, identity, travel route? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 - ❖ If so, are interpreters available in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Are interviews conducted through video conferencing? ☐ Frequently ☒ Rarely ☐ Never

Pursuant to Article 97³⁵⁶ of the Asylum Act, the applicant is given the opportunity to present, in an interview, their personal situation in order to determine whether the safe country concepts are applicable. The responsible authority is IGI-DAI. The law does not prescribe specific requirements for the interview as part of the admissibility assessment.

An inadmissibility decision on first country of asylum, European safe third country or safe third country is issued without a substantive examination of the applicant's request and shall be communicated under the general provisions of the law.³⁵⁶ After communicating the decision, IGI-DAI informs the authorities of the European safe third country or, as the case may be, of the safe third country, in the language of that country, that the applicant's application has not been assessed on the merits.³⁵⁷

In case the conditions provided by the law are not fulfilled, IGI-DAI grants access to the asylum procedure on the basis of a reasoned decision and examines the asylum application on the merits.

3.3 Appeal

Indicators: Admissibility Procedure: Appeal

☐ Same as regular procedure

1. Does the law provide for an appeal against an inadmissibility decision?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
❖ If yes, is it	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judicial <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative
❖ If yes, is it automatically suspensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Some grounds <input type="checkbox"/> No

The appeal in case of the first country of asylum, European safe third country and safe third country is the same as in the *Accelerated Procedure*.³⁵⁸ The deadline for submitting the appeal is 7 days from the notification of the decision. The appeal has suspensive effect if it is filed within the deadline.

3.4 Legal assistance

The rules and practice applicable in the [Regular Procedure: Legal Assistance](#) apply.

³⁵⁶ Article 97¹(2) Asylum Act.

³⁵⁷ *ibid.* Article 97¹(4).

³⁵⁸ *ibid.* Article 97¹(3).

3.5 Suspension of returns for beneficiaries of protection in another Member State

According to the information provided by IGI-DAI, Romania did not suspend returns of BIPs to any particular country in 2023.³⁵⁹ There is no relevant national jurisprudence on the matter of returns of beneficiaries of protection. The information provided by the courts for the year 2023 showed that they had no such cases, while no information was provided for 2024.

4. Border procedure (border and transit zones)

4.1 General (scope, time limits)

Indicators: Border Procedure: General

1. Do border authorities receive written instructions on the referral of asylum seekers to the competent authorities? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. Where is the border procedure mostly carried out? ☐ Air border ☒ Land border ☐ Sea border
3. Can an application made at the border be examined in substance during a border procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
4. Is there a maximum time limit for a first instance decision laid down in the law? ☒ Yes ☐ No
❖ If yes, what is the maximum time limit? 20 days
5. Is the asylum seeker considered to have entered the national territory during the border procedure? ☐ Yes ☒ No

According to the law, the border procedure applies to asylum applications made at a border-crossing point. The asylum application made at the territorial border offices of the Romanian Border Police at a border crossing point is immediately submitted or forwarded to the competent structure of IGI-DAI, which examines it and issues a decision within 3 days.³⁶⁰ In addition, foreigners are also subject to the border procedure when, after a first asylum procedure in Romania, they have made a subsequent application at a border crossing point.³⁶¹

The substance of the application is assessed during the border procedure, if the case officer decides to do so, based on the statements of the asylum seeker during the interview. According to the law, after the interview and the assessment of the reasons invoked for granting international protection and country of origin information, IGI-DAI may: (a) grant a form of protection; (b) grant access to the territory and the regular procedure if the application is not manifestly unfounded or if there are indications that [Dublin](#) or [Admissibility](#) grounds apply; or (c) reject the application as manifestly unfounded and not grant access to the territory.³⁶²

According to Article 87 of the Asylum Act, an asylum seeker shall remain in the transit area of the border-crossing point until a decision granting access to the territory or a final decision rejecting the asylum

³⁵⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

³⁶⁰ Article 82 Asylum Act.

³⁶¹ *ibid.* Article 83(3).

³⁶² *ibid.* Article 83(1)(a), (b) and (c).

application is issued. This period cannot exceed 20 days.³⁶³ However, if the asylum application is still pending after the 20-day deadline, the asylum seeker is granted access to the territory.³⁶⁴

The asylum seeker may be accommodated in special reception and accommodation centres near the border-crossing points, established by order of the Minister of Internal Affairs and having the legal status of a transit area.³⁶⁵ Asylum seekers accommodated in these centres receive 3 meals a day free of charge, under conditions established by a Government Decision.³⁶⁶ The dispositions referring to the amounts owed for nutrition are not applicable to the asylum seeker subject to border procedure.³⁶⁷

The asylum seeker shall be immediately provided information in writing, in a language that they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand, on the border procedure, granting or not granting access to the territory, their rights and obligations during the procedure, the possibility to challenge the decision issued by the case officer, as well as the possibility to request legal aid according to the law.³⁶⁸ In 2023 and 2024³⁶⁹, CNRR distributed leaflets in all Regional Centres for Procedures and Accommodation for Asylum Seekers, as well as at the CNRR headquarters in Bucharest. Leaflets about asylum procedure and Dublin procedure, material available in Pashto, Arabic, Kurdish, French, English, Amharic, Somali, Bengali, Urdu, Turkish. Leaflets about rights and obligations of asylum seekers during the asylum procedure, translated into 7 languages: English, French, Arabic, Kurdish, Pashto, Urdu, Turkish.³⁷⁰

In practice, asylum seekers subject to the border procedure are accommodated in specially designed places, which officially should exist at every border crossing point:

- ❖ Moravița: There are two rooms specially designed for the border procedure. There is no courtyard where asylum seekers may go out.
- ❖ Timișoara “Traian Vuia” Airport: There is a separate building designed for the border procedure. The building has three rooms, each of the rooms have 4 or 5 beds, 2 toilets, 4 showers and a kitchen. The building has a courtyard where people may go out, but only under supervision, as they are under a closed regime.
- ❖ Bucharest Henri Coandă Airport / Otopeni: There are three rooms in the basement; two are communal and the third one is separated. Women are accommodated in separate rooms. There is no possibility to go outside.

Concerning the structure of the centres mentioned above, the Border Police³⁷¹ stated that there are sufficient accommodation spaces until IGI-DAI grants access to territory for the asylum seekers subject to the border procedure. No further details were provided.

According to the director of the Regional Centre of Timișoara, there was one asylum application made in 2022 at the border-crossing Moravita and it was rejected. There was no available data for 2023.

In 2022 there were 551 asylum applications processed under the border procedure, according to IGI-DAI. The main countries of origin of the applicants were Ukraine, Afghanistan, Syria, Russia and Cuba.³⁷² In 2023, according to the Border Police,³⁷³ 772 asylum applications were made at border crossing points, but no details were provided on how many applications were accepted and how many rejected. In 2024,

³⁶³ *ibid.* Article 87(1).

³⁶⁴ *ibid.* Article 87(5).

³⁶⁵ *ibid.* Article 87(2).

³⁶⁶ *ibid.* Article 87(3).

³⁶⁷ *ibid.* Article 87(3).

³⁶⁸ *ibid.* Article 87(7).

³⁶⁹ Asylum procedure leaflets CNRR, available [here](#).

³⁷⁰ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

³⁷¹ Information provided by Border Police, 16 January 2024.

³⁷² Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

³⁷³ Information provided by Border Police, 16 January 2024.

according to IGI-DAI, there were 45 applications under the border procedure. The main countries of origin of the applicants were Palestinian Authority in Palestine (31), Uzbekistan (3), Ukraine (2), Syria (2) and the Russian Federation (2).³⁷⁴

4.2 Personal interview

Indicators: Border Procedure: Personal Interview

☐ Same as regular procedure

1. Is a personal interview of the asylum seeker in most cases conducted in practice in the border procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No

❖ If so, are questions limited to nationality, identity, travel route? ☐ Yes ☒ No

❖ If so, are interpreters available in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No

2. Are interviews conducted through video conferencing? ☐ Frequently ☐ Rarely ☒ Never

As a general rule, a decision is taken by the case officer of IGI-DAI after an interview and assessment of the reasons invoked by the asylum seeker against the country of origin information.³⁷⁵ However, the law also establishes the possibility to deliver a decision without conducting an interview, if it is possible to issue a decision to grant access to the regular procedure on the basis of the personal file.³⁷⁶ In case of subsequent applications, there is no interview. The decision is issued on the basis of a written application.

The interview is conducted at the border by a case officer of the territorially competent branch of IGI-DAI, under the same rules as the personal interview in the regular procedure. The only difference relates to the place where the interview is conducted and to the swiftness of the procedure. According to the Director of the Regional Centre of Timișoara, the personal interview in case of border procedure is the same as the personal interview in the regular procedure. The asylum seeker is asked about their reasons for fleeing. The case officers decide whether to go into details on the merits of the case.

Access to legal representation by a lawyer or UNHCR during the interview in the border procedure is difficult, given the 3-day time limit for issuing a decision. NGOs are only aware of the cases subjected to the border procedure if IGI-DAI informs them directly or through UNHCR.

According to Law 122/2006, IGI officers travel to border crossing points to conduct an interview with the asylum seeker. Following the interview, a decision is made to either grant a form of protection and access to the territory, or grant access to the territory and the ordinary procedure, or reject the asylum application and not grant access to the territory.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

³⁷⁵ Article 83(1) Asylum Act.

³⁷⁶ *ibid.* Article 83(4).

³⁷⁷ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025. Articles 82–83 of Law No. 122/2006 on asylum in Romania regulate the border procedure. *When an asylum application is lodged at a border crossing point, the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI-DAI) must assess the claim within 3 days. Following the interview, the case officer may decide to:*

(a) grant international protection and access to the territory;

(b) allow access to the territory and to the regular asylum procedure if the application is not manifestly unfounded; or

(c) reject the application as manifestly unfounded and deny access to the territory.

Access to legal representation by a lawyer or UNHCR during the interview in the border procedure is difficult, given the 3-day time limit for issuing a decision. NGOs are only aware of the cases subjected to the border procedure if IGI-DAI informs them directly or through UNHCR.³⁷⁸

4.3 Appeal

Indicators: Border Procedure: Appeal

☐ Same as regular procedure

1. Does the law provide for an appeal against the decision in the border procedure?

☒ Yes

☐ No

❖ If yes, is it

☒ Judicial

☐ Administrative

❖ If yes, is it automatically suspensive

☒ Yes

☐ Some grounds ☐ No

The asylum seeker has the possibility to challenge the decision issued by IGI-DAI within 7 days from the day the decision was communicated.³⁷⁹ The competent court to decide on the appeal is the territorially competent Regional Court.³⁸⁰ The provisions on submission of the appeal in the regular procedure apply accordingly.³⁸¹

The court shall take a decision on the appeal within 5 days.³⁸² The decision has to be motivated and it is irrevocable. The court may decide: (a) to grant access to the territory and the regular procedure; or (b) to uphold the decision of IGI-DAI.³⁸³

If the court rejects the appeal, the General Inspectorate of the Romanian Border Police (IGPF) will take the necessary measures to remove the foreigner from the territory,³⁸⁴ as the foreigner subject to the border procedure must leave Romania as soon as the asylum procedure has finished.³⁸⁵ The border procedure is considered completed on the date when the decision of the court is delivered.

According to the legal counsellor of JRS, asylum seekers do not face problems lodging an appeal. Asylum seekers subject to the border procedure were assisted by the NGOs and UNHCR. The NGOs that provided responses did not reported problems in lodging an appeal in 2023.

According to CNRR, in some specific cases in 2024, language barriers and the short time limits represented obstacles to lodging an appeal at the border.³⁸⁶

4.4 Legal assistance

Indicators: Border Procedure: Legal Assistance

☐ Same as regular procedure

³⁷⁸ Information provided by UNHCR, March 2025.

³⁷⁹ Article 85(1) Asylum Act.

³⁸⁰ *ibid.* Article 85(2).

³⁸¹ *ibid.*

³⁸² *ibid.* Article 86(1).

³⁸³ *ibid.*

³⁸⁴ *ibid.* Article 86(3).

³⁸⁵ *ibid.* Article 17(1)(a).

³⁸⁶ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

1. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice?
☐ Yes ☒ With difficulty ☐ No
- ❖ Does free legal assistance cover: ☒ Representation in interview
☒ Legal advice
2. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance on appeal against a negative decision in practice?
☐ Yes ☒ With difficulty ☐ No
- ❖ Does free legal assistance cover ☐ Representation in courts
☒ Legal advice

According to the law, asylum seekers subject to border procedure have the same rights to free legal assistance as the asylum seekers subject to the [Regular Procedure: Legal Assistance](#).

What is particularly problematic for asylum seekers in the border procedure is the swiftness of the procedure and lack of access to legal counselling. As the deadline for delivering a decision is only 3 days, it is hard to get access to legal assistance; it depends on the willingness of IGI-DAI and the Border Police to inform the NGOs about these cases. In addition, the examination of applications cannot be effectively conducted within such a short time limit.

CNRR stated that all asylum seekers shall benefit from legal assistance. CNRR can provide free legal assistance at border crossing points, when an asylum application is lodged.³⁸⁷

5. Accelerated procedure

European Commission pilot project

The European Commission, given Romania's relatively low number of asylum applications in 2022 and the fact that many of those received could be handled under an accelerated procedure, considered Romania a good country to test "innovate practices", as a direct follow-up to the EU Action Plan on the Western Balkans. Thus, the following measures/actions were proposed as part of a 6 month a pilot project launched in March 2023 as innovative practices related to accelerated procedure:³⁸⁸

- ❖ fast processing of applications where the grounds foreseen for the accelerated procedure by national legislation – applicants coming from safe countries of origin, applicants posing a threat to the public security and applications likely to be unfounded since many of the applicants come from countries with low protection approval rates – are applicable by testing the use of the accelerated procedure “in an enhanced manner”.
- ❖ The pilot should also serve to identify “best practices to promote an effective use of the accelerated procedure”, while respecting all applicable guarantees, including for vulnerable applicants. This objective particularly focuses on good practices re. the initial screening and verifications made upon apprehension to identify cases that can be processed in an accelerated procedure.
- ❖ The pilot makes an explicit link with the EUAA support operation in Romania, and particularly highlights “targeted assistance to enhance processing capacity at the reception centre in Timisoara, where applicants undergoing the accelerated procedure following irregular crossing of the border from Serbia will be transferred to for the duration of the asylum procedure”. The pilot

387 Information provided from CNRR in February 2025.

388 European Commission, *Joint Pilot Project in Romania annex, Ref. Ares(2023)2001138-20/03/2023*, March 2023, available [here](#).

also mentions exploring possibilities for cooperation and support from the EUAA regarding transportation from the border to the reception centre.

The pilot also included measures to streamline return, including with the enhancement of voluntary returns, and border management measures (see [Access to the territory – The European Commission pilot with Romania and cooperation with Frontex](#)).

In October, at the end of the 6-month pilot, the European Commission reported³⁸⁹ “solid results” and “best practices identified”. Firstly, it considered that Romania testing the “enhanced” accelerated procedure allowed for “swift processing of claims”, and “led to good practices for fast identification of eligible cases for the use of the accelerated procedure” and their rapid transfer to other regional centres on the territory for swift processing, all of which prevented overburdening of regional centres both for processing and reception, a fair and efficient balance of workload amongst regional centres, and swift in-merits processing.

Out of 5,985 applications during the pilot, 2,493 were rejected under the accelerated procedure. 139 vulnerable applicants were identified (unaccompanied minors, single parent families) out of all rejected asylum applications, whether under the normal or accelerated procedure. The Commission particularly highlighted as good practices the extensive use of Eurodac machines, vulnerability screening based on standard operating procedures, the exemption of vulnerable applicants from the accelerated procedure when adequate support could not be provided in that framework, immediate referral and guardians for unaccompanied minors, constant medical assistance present and the involvement of NGOs to provide free legal assistance, integration and psychological support through every phase of the administrative procedure thanks to AMIF funding.

In 2024, the Romanian Ombudsman visited border transit facilities—specifically the triage centres operated by the Territorial Border Police in Constanța and Tulcea—to assess conditions and compliance with asylum-related procedures.³⁹⁰ In 2023, the Romanian Ombudsman visited the triage room at the Territorial Border Police’s transit centre in Călărași, conducting an on-site assessment to evaluate procedural compliance and facility conditions.³⁹¹

The Commission also highlighted the strengthened cooperation with the EUAA as the May 2023 legislation changes also allowed EUAA experts to directly participate in registration and assessment of applications; additional support was given through registration and case experts, and interpreters. The experts were immediately involved in facilitating registrations, and have been involved in preliminary asylum interviews since July 2023.

Given the positive achievements obtained by the pilot according to the Commission, continued cooperation in the framework of the pilot project was decided.³⁹²

5.1 General (scope, grounds for accelerated procedures, time limits)

In 2024, according to IGI-DAI, a total of 566 asylum applications were processed in the accelerated procedure. IGI-DAI stated that they do not have statistical data based on the legal grounds underlying the decisions on asylum applications in the accelerated procedure.³⁹³

³⁸⁹ European Commission, *Reporting on progress made the Pilot Project for fast asylum and return procedures with Romania*, October 2023, available [here](#).

³⁹⁰ Ombudsman, *Centres for migration 2024 reports*, available [here](#).

³⁹¹ Ombudsman, *Centres for migration 2023 reports*, available [here](#).

³⁹² European Commission, *Reporting on progress made the Pilot Project for fast asylum and return procedures with Romania*, October 2023, available [here](#).

³⁹³ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

Under Article 75(1) of the Asylum Act, the grounds for assessing an asylum claim into an accelerated procedure are:

- ❖ Manifestly unfounded applications;
- ❖ Asylum applications of persons who, through their activity or membership of a particular group, pose a threat to national security or public order of Romania;
- ❖ Asylum applications of persons coming from a [Safe Country of Origin](#).

An asylum application is considered manifestly unfounded if the applicant:³⁹⁴

- ❖ Has no well-founded fear of being persecuted or exposure to serious risk in the country of origin as they:
 - Have not claimed any fear of persecution or risk of serious harm;
 - Have not provided data or information to support a fear of persecution or serious risk, or their statements do not contain circumstantial or personal details;
 - Clearly lack credibility, meaning that their statements are incoherent, contradictory or flagrantly inconsistent with the situation in their country of origin;
- ❖ Has misled the authorities or has submitted the application in bad faith by:
 - Filing an asylum application with a false identity or presenting false or falsified documents as authentic;
 - Deliberately submitting false information after the asylum application has been lodged;
 - Destroying, damaging or disposing of travel documents or a relevant document for their application, either to establish a false identity for the purpose of seeking and granting refugee status, or to obstruct the assessment of their claim;
 - Deliberately concealing previous asylum applications in one or more countries, especially when they used a false identity;
 - Making an asylum application for the obvious aim of preventing the enforcement of return, extradition or removal proceedings, after having been given the opportunity to make an asylum application;
 - Entering the territory of Romania unlawfully or prolonging their stay unlawfully and, without good reason, not presenting themselves to the authorities, or not lodging the application as soon as possible given the circumstances of their entry.

According to stakeholders in **Galați, Rădăuți, Șomcuta Mare** and **Giurgiu**, most of the cases examined in the accelerated procedure are manifestly unfounded asylum applications. In practice, manifestly unfounded asylum applications are predominantly applications made by economic migrants (Șomcuta Mare, Galați, Rădăuți), or applicants who lack credibility (Giurgiu). IGI DAI indicated that this statement remains valid for the year 2023.³⁹⁵ IGI DAI clarified that in 2024 not all decisions issued under the accelerated procedure concern manifestly unfounded asylum applications.³⁹⁶

The responsible authority for taking decisions at first instance on asylum applications in the accelerated procedure is IGI-DAI.

The accelerated procedure may be triggered during the regular procedure at the date when the case officer determines the existence of one of the grounds for applying an accelerated procedure.³⁹⁷ Article 79 of the Asylum Act provides that after the interview and the assessment of the reasons invoked in support of the asylum application, a decision should be issued within 3 days from the start of the accelerated procedure. Therefore, the trigger for the accelerated procedure may not coincide with the date of the personal interview. However, cases where the accelerated procedure is triggered after the interview are very rare.

³⁹⁴ Article 76 Asylum Act.

³⁹⁵ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

³⁹⁶ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

³⁹⁷ Article 78 Asylum Act.

IGI-DAI reported that 566 applications were assessed under the accelerated procedure in 2024, which represented a decrease compared with previous years. Although the number of asylum applications registered in 2024 declined, their overall share for the year remained unchanged. The main countries of origin were Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Ethiopia and Sri-Lanka. IGI-DAI stated that Romania does not have a list of safe countries of origin, safe third countries, or safe third countries. However, EU member states are considered safe countries of origin (Article 77, paragraph 1 of Law No. 122/2006). Asylum applications submitted by citizens from a safe country of origin are subject to the accelerated procedure, as one of the reasons. As previously mentioned, they do not have statistical data based on the legal grounds underlying the decisions on asylum applications in the accelerated procedure.³⁹⁸

In 2023, according with IGI-DAI,³⁹⁹ a total of 3,988 asylum applications were analysed in an accelerated procedure. IGI-DAI reported that 2,306 applications were assessed under the accelerated procedure in 2022, up from 1,968 in 2021 and more than double compared to 2020 when 885 were reported, up from 315 in 2019, 167 in 2018 and 382 in 2017.⁴⁰⁰ The main countries of origin were India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Morocco and Nepal.

Asylum seekers who sought CNRR assistance after being notified of a rejection decision in the accelerated procedure had primarily cited economic reasons during their asylum interviews. In most cases courts upheld the IGI decisions, with only a few exceptions where complaints were accepted, and the cases were transferred to the ordinary procedure for further review. Minors were not subjected to the accelerated procedure.⁴⁰¹

5.2 Personal interview

Indicators: Accelerated Procedure: Personal Interview

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Is a personal interview of the asylum seeker in most cases conducted in practice in the accelerated procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No

❖ If so, are questions limited to nationality, identity, travel route? ☐ Yes ☒ No

❖ If so, are interpreters available in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No

2. Are interviews conducted through video conferencing? ☐ Frequently ☒ Rarely ☐ Never

The Asylum Act requires a personal interview of asylum seekers in the accelerated procedure. Article 79 of the Asylum Act clearly states that a decision is made after an interview and after examination of the reasons invoked by the applicant. In practice, the personal interview is always conducted by IGI-DAI. The same rules as in the [Regular Procedure: Personal Interview](#) apply.

5.3 Appeal

Indicators: Accelerated Procedure: Appeal

☐ Same as regular procedure

³⁹⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

³⁹⁹ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

⁴⁰⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 14 February 2018, 5 March 2019, 20 February 2020, 16 February 2021, 11 March 2022 and February 2023.

⁴⁰¹ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

1. Does the law provide for an appeal against the decision in the accelerated procedure?

☒ Yes ☐ No

❖ If yes, is it

☒ Judicial ☐ Administrative

❖ If yes, is it suspensive

☒ Yes ☐ Some grounds ☐ No

The law provides for the appeal against a negative decision in the accelerated procedure, which must be submitted within 7 days from the notification of the decision. If the appeal is filed within the deadline, it has automatic suspensive effect.⁴⁰²

There were no problems reported in relation to lodging an appeal in the accelerated procedure, as the deadline for submitting an appeal against a negative decision in the accelerated procedure was increased from 2 days to 7 days with the 2015 reform of the Asylum Act.

According to CNRR, in the past year, asylum seekers who received a rejection decision in the accelerated procedure received prompt assistance, including support in drafting their complaints. As a result, no obstacles were encountered in submitting appeals within the required seven-day deadline. In some instances, asylum seekers approached CNRR's office just before the deadline expired, yet they were still able to file their complaints on time. The language barrier did not pose a challenge, as CNRR collaborates with a network of interpreters.⁴⁰³

5.4 Legal assistance

Indicators: Accelerated Procedure: Legal Assistance

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice?

☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No

❖ Does free legal assistance cover: ☒ Representation in interview

☒ Legal advice

2. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance on appeal against a decision in practice?

☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No

❖ Does free legal assistance cover ☐ Representation in courts

☒ Legal advice

The law provides for access to free legal assistance for asylum seekers during the accelerated procedure in the same conditions as the asylum seekers subject to the [Regular Procedure: Legal Assistance](#). However, if asylum seekers are in detention in one of the two detention centres (Arad and Otopeni), there is no permanent access to legal counselling.

According to the information provided by the CNRR⁴⁰⁴ for the year 2023, legal advice is ensured, in the detention centres, upon request for asylum seekers. The CNRR counsellor goes to the centre when notified that there are asylum seekers who request legal advice, there is no person present daily for the asylum seekers. Information is communicated in English or the asylum seeker's mother tongue with the help of available interpreters. In the case of migrants who are in public custody but have not applied for

⁴⁰² Article 80(1) Asylum Act.

⁴⁰³ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁴⁰⁴ *ibid.* 16 January 2024.

asylum, the CNRR counsellor is present daily for 6 hours/day to ensure legal advice. Legal assistance was provided by CNRR also in 2024.

Whereas prior to 2015 the Aliens Ordinance required the release of foreigners from detention as soon as a first application for international protection was lodged, the Aliens Act now prescribes that an asylum seeker is only released when they are granted access to the regular procedure (see [Detention of Asylum Seekers](#) and [Legal assistance for review of detention](#)).

6. National protection statuses and return procedure

6.1. National forms of protection

Romania does not have national forms of protection. However, there is a special status, called toleration for staying on the territory of Romania, which is an alternative to detention. The tolerated stay refers to a temporary (exceptional) legal status granted to a foreign national (non-EU) who, for objective reasons, cannot be removed/returned from Romanian territory, although they do not have a legal right of stay.⁴⁰⁵ This status is not equivalent to a residence right.

The objective reasons include:⁴⁰⁶

- Exit from Romania is not allowed under Art. 15(1) and no other legal stay applies;
- The foreigner's public custody ended, but removal was not possible;
- The foreigner's temporary presence is required for significant public interest;
- Return is forbidden under Art. 82(1) (non-refoulement), yet residence conditions are unmet;
- Return is suspended under Art. 96(1);
- Escort removal is not feasible within 24 hours, and detention is not necessary;
- Other unforeseeable, independent, and unavoidable circumstances prevent departure.

If there are serious grounds to believe that a foreigner is a victim of human trafficking or if the presence is necessary for a criminal investigation or trial, tolerated stay must be granted by a prosecutor (by ordinance) or court (by ruling).⁴⁰⁷

Tolerated stay in Romania is granted for an initial period of up to six months and may be renewed for successive six-month intervals for as long as the underlying objective reasons for toleration persist.⁴⁰⁸ In cases involving victims of human trafficking, the duration of tolerated stay is extended by the competent prosecutor (through an ordinance) or by the court (through a judicial ruling), and remains in effect until the conclusion of the relevant criminal proceedings.⁴⁰⁹

Foreign nationals granted tolerated stay in Romania, are permitted to access the labor market under the same legal conditions applicable to Romanian citizens.⁴¹⁰ This right is contingent upon the validity of the tolerated stay and ceases automatically upon the termination of such status.⁴¹¹ During the period of toleration, the individual is subject to specific obligations and territorial limitations, these include the duty to report in person to the territorial office of the General Inspectorate for Immigration at two-month intervals or whenever summoned, to notify any change of residence, and to remain within the jurisdictional area of

⁴⁰⁵ Art. 106[^]1 Aliens Ordinance.

⁴⁰⁶ Article 106[^]1 (2) Aliens Ordinance.

⁴⁰⁷ *ibid.* Article 106[^]1 (4).

⁴⁰⁸ *ibid.* Article 106[^]2 (1).

⁴⁰⁹ *ibid.* Article 106[^]1 (4).

⁴¹⁰ *ibid.* Article 106[^]2 (3).

⁴¹¹ *ibid.* Article 106[^]2 (4).

the IGI unit that issued the toleration certificate.⁴¹² Any travel outside this area is permissible only with prior approval from the competent immigration authority.⁴¹³

Tolerated stay in Romania ceases in any of the following situations: the granting or extension of a right of residence under national immigration legislation; the granting of permission to remain on Romanian territory; or the voluntary return of the foreign national from Romanian territory.⁴¹⁴ Furthermore, the General Inspectorate for Immigration may withdraw tolerated stay through a justified decision if it finds that the individual has, by their own fault, breached the legal obligations associated with this status, including failing to report as required or violating the territorial limitations imposed.⁴¹⁵ Importantly, the granting of tolerated stay does not extinguish the foreigner's obligation to leave the country. Upon the cessation of the circumstances that justified toleration, the period for voluntary departure or, where applicable, the enforcement of removal under escort resumes from the date on which the immigration authority, prosecutor, or court confirms the termination of such grounds and duly notifies the individual.

A refusal by IGI to grant tolerated stay may be appealed before the territorial Court of Appeal within five days of receiving the notification. The court is required to issue a decision within thirty days, and this judgment is final and binding.⁴¹⁶

According to JRS Romania, approximately 120 individuals were granted tolerated status in 2024.

6.2 Return procedure

Since May 2023, Romania has implemented a legislative amendment establishing that a return decision is issued at the same time as a negative decision in the asylum procedure. If an asylum seeker wishes to challenge the rejection decision, they must also request the suspension of the return decision.⁴¹⁷

This amendment was mainly introduced to align national legislation with European priorities regarding return procedures. As part of the EU Action Plan on the Western Balkans, Romania was identified as a suitable country to test new practices, including issuing return decisions alongside negative asylum decisions. The European Commission assessed that this approach has contributed to a more efficient return process and has helped limit absconding and secondary movement.⁴¹⁸ Between 18 May 2023 and 30 September 2023, 1,162 joint decisions were issued, while the common current standard is to issue both decisions in case of rejected asylum-seekers in the administrative procedure.

At the moment of adoption, the authorities mentioned that the decision was taken following the assessments carried out at the level of the General Inspectorate for Immigration under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as it was deemed necessary to amend the legislation in order to issue the return decision from the moment the asylum application is rejected in the administrative phase, for compliance with the Schengen acquis⁴¹⁹. In this sense, issuing the return decision, at the time of rejection of the asylum application in the administrative phase, correlated with the application of Regulation (EU) 2018/1860, will lead to achieving the European objective of effectively ensuring the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice

⁴¹² *ibid.* Article 106² (5) -(6).

⁴¹³ *ibid.* Article 106² (6).

⁴¹⁴ *ibid.* Article 106² (9).

⁴¹⁵ *ibid.* Article 106² (10).

⁴¹⁶ *ibid.* Article 106¹ (3).

⁴¹⁷ OUG 35/2023, available [here](#).

⁴¹⁸ European Commission, *Joint Pilot Project in Romania annex, Ref. Ares(2023)2001138-20/03/2023*, March 2023, available [here](#).

⁴¹⁹ Explanatory note to Government Emergency Ordinance No. 35/2023 amending and supplementing certain normative acts regarding the field of foreigners and asylum in Romania, available [here](#).

from the perspective of combating illegal migration on European territory. The reasoning also mentioned the CJEU decision C181/16.⁴²⁰

However, civil society organizations, including CNRR, have raised concerns about the impact of these changes on fundamental rights. The simultaneous issuance of asylum rejection and return decisions has led to procedural complexities, particularly due to the fact that this leads to different court jurisdictions and separate judicial proceedings being conducted in parallel.⁴²¹ The European Commission Recommendation (EU) 2023/682 of 16 March 2023 suggested that appeals against return decisions and asylum rejections should be lodged before the same court or, at a minimum, within the same timeframe.⁴²² Since May 2023, the Romania's system was aligned to the recommendation, and the procedure of issuing both decision, rejection of the asylum application and return at the same time is in place.⁴²³

Under the current legal framework, asylum seekers whose international protection requests are rejected at the first-instance administrative level receive a return decision. The deadline to appeal any type of return decision, whether for voluntary departure or removal under escort, is 10 days.⁴²⁴ While the return decision's effects are suspended pending a final ruling on the asylum claim, the obligation to separately contest the return decision remains. Jurisdiction over return decisions lies with the Court of Appeal, whereas appeals against asylum rejections are handled by the Courts of First Instance, each operating under distinct procedural rules.⁴²⁵

In practice, this dual-track system requires rejected asylum seekers to manage two concurrent legal processes before different courts, often located in separate jurisdictions, with identical appeal deadlines but differing schedules and procedures. This situation creates significant difficulties, especially for individuals lacking legal expertise or representation. Additional barriers, such as language difficulties, cultural differences, and the absence of legal assistance, further complicate their access to justice. CNRR has highlighted that these procedural burdens undermine the effectiveness of legal remedies available to asylum seekers. A fundamental aspect of an effective remedy is accessibility, ensuring that individuals can exercise their rights without undue hardship.⁴²⁶

Moreover, the new procedure has resulted in inconsistencies in judicial practice, and led to overburdening the Courts of Appeal, the competent court to rule on the complaints against the return decision. In practice, so far, CNRR has observed that some courts prefer to suspend the proceedings on the complaints against return decisions until the end of the judicial phase of the asylum procedure (pursuant to article 413 of the Code of Civil Procedure),⁴²⁷ which leads instead to a longer return procedure than before the

⁴²⁰ CJEU decision C181/16 available [here](#).

⁴²¹ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#). Information provided by CNRR February 2025.

⁴²² EC Recommendation 2023/682 of 16 March 2023, available [here](#).

⁴²³ Since May 2023, when a rejection decision is issued by the GII, a return decision is also issued. If the person wants to file a complaint against the rejection decision, they must also request the suspension of the return decision. In this sense, an appeal is filed against the return decision, the jurisdiction being the Court of Appeals within the territorial scope of the Regional Reception Centre that issued the decision.

⁴²⁴ Article 85 Aliens Ordinance Appealing the return decision

(1) The return decision provided for in art. 83 paragraph (1) may be appealed within 10 days from the date of notification to the court of appeal within whose territorial jurisdiction the structure of the General Inspectorate for Immigration that issued the return decision is located. The court shall resolve the appeal within 30 days from the date of receipt thereof. The court's decision shall be final.

(2) The return decision provided for in art. 83 paragraph (2) may be appealed within 10 days from the date of notification to the court provided for in par. (1), if the alien is not taken into public custody, or to the court of appeal within whose territorial jurisdiction the accommodation center is located, if the alien is taken into public custody. The court shall resolve the appeal within 5 days from the date of receipt thereof. The court's decision shall be final.

⁴²⁵ *ibid.* and Article 67 Asylum Act

⁴²⁶ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#).

⁴²⁷ Article 413 Code of Civil Procedure: (1) *The court can suspend the trial: 1. when the solution of the case depends, in whole or in part, on the existence or non-existence of a right that is the object of another judicial proceeding; [...] (2) The suspension will last until the decision adopted in the case that caused the suspension becomes definitive.*

amendments. At the same time, there are national Courts that reject the complaints against the return decision before the final decision on the asylum request. In these cases, if the asylum request was to be admitted by the court, a paradoxical situation in which the person will have a form of protection but also a final return decision would generate.

Given these challenges, CNRR has observed that ensuring asylum seekers fully understand their legal options is key. Many individuals do not initially realize they must manage two separate legal cases, each requiring appeals to different courts. Therefore, timely and clear legal counselling is essential to help asylum seekers navigate the complex procedural requirements and comply with deadlines. Ultimately, while the legislative amendment was intended to enhance the efficiency of Romania's return system, it has introduced new legal and procedural difficulties. The divergence between Romania's approach and EU recommendations underscores the need for further legislative adjustments to ensure fair and accessible legal remedies for asylum seekers.⁴²⁸

For those who failed in obtaining a legal status in Romania in 2024, IGI issued 2,894 voluntary return decisions, 1,599 escorted return decisions, and carried out the escorted removal of 1,095 people in an irregular situation in the country.⁴²⁹

From the practice encountered in 2024, JRS Romania observed that asylum seekers do not understand from the beginning that they will have two separate files for both decisions and two different Courts who will decide over their complaints. The return decision is issued jointly with the asylum rejection, but does not impact the opportunity to file a complaint in the asylum procedure.⁴³⁰

According to JRS Romania in 2024, the counsellors must assure that the asylum seekers understood exactly where they have to submit the appeal against the return decision and the complaint against the IGI decision, in order to respect the deadlines. Counselling offered immediately after the communication of decisions is very important, to emphasize the fact that the effects of the return decision will only occur upon completion of the asylum procedure and to explain to them all the steps they have to take in both procedures.⁴³¹

A. Guarantees for vulnerable groups

1. Identification

Indicators: Special Procedural Guarantees

1. Is there a specific identification mechanism in place to systematically identify vulnerable asylum seekers?
☒ Yes ☐ For certain categories ☐ No
❖ If for certain categories, specify which:
2. Does the law provide for an identification mechanism for unaccompanied children?
☒ Yes ☐ No

The law defines an applicant in need of special procedural guarantees as an applicant whose ability to benefit from the rights and fulfil their obligations is limited as a result of individual circumstances that may be due, *inter alia*, to age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, serious illness, mental illness or disorder, or torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence etc.⁴³²

⁴²⁸ Information provided by CNRR February 2025.

⁴²⁹ General Inspectorate for Immigration, "2.800 de decizii de returnare voluntară și aproximativ 1.600 de decizii de returnare sub escortă emise în anul 2024", 20 march 2025, available available [here](#).

⁴³⁰ Information from JRS Romania in March 2025.

⁴³¹ *ibid.*

⁴³² Article 2(1) (b¹) Asylum Act.

This clause may be interpreted as a non-exhaustive list of persons who may be considered in need of special procedural guarantees.

Article 5¹(2) of the Asylum Act lists the following categories of vulnerable persons: minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of human trafficking, persons suffering from serious illnesses, people with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, or persons in other special circumstances.

1.1 Screening of vulnerability

Romanian law provides that the assessment of who belongs to a category of vulnerable people is done after an asylum application has been lodged, as soon as possible, by IGI specialists, based on an individual assessment. In order to carry out the individual assessment and take appropriate measures to ensure the rights and guarantees provided by this law, the competent authorities shall provide special support at the request of IGI.⁴³³

The Asylum Decree completes this provision by stating that the specialised personnel of IGI cooperates with UNHCR and relevant NGOs to identify asylum seekers who may be included in the category of vulnerable persons referred to in Article 5¹(2) of the Act.⁴³⁴ In order to assess the vulnerability of asylum seekers, specialists within IGI, in cooperation, where appropriate, with experts from other institutions and authorities competent in the field, make an assessment of the special needs of foreigners.⁴³⁵

Depending on the specific needs of each asylum seeker identified as a vulnerable person, IGI-DAI notifies and cooperates with authorities and specialised agencies to provide necessary assistance.⁴³⁶ IGI-DAI may collaborate with NGOs to assist asylum seekers identified as vulnerable.⁴³⁷

There are no further explanations in the law on how the individual assessment is carried out in practice or who are the specialists conducting the assessments. The law also does not include guidelines on how the cooperation between the IGI-DAI and UNHCR, on the one hand, and IGI-DAI and NGOs on the other hand, should work in practice in order to adequately identify such persons.

In practice, there is a special form that is filled in from the moment an application is lodged, while the preliminary interview and personal interview also have questions related to vulnerabilities. IGI-DAI has internal guidelines on early identification, but these guidelines are only for internal use and are not publicly available. According to the Director of Regional Centre of Timișoara, the identification mechanism has been developed together with UNHCR Romania. UNHCR Romania confirmed that in 2013 it worked together with IGI-DAI in developing a pilot mechanism to identify, refer and assist vulnerable asylum seekers, defined as such by the recast Reception Conditions and Asylum Procedures Directives. At that time, all staff of IGI-DAI dealing with reception and procedures were trained by UNHCR and other agencies. Further information was not provided by UNHCR or IGI-DAI in 2023. According to UNHCR, IGI is using a format to identify vulnerabilities. EUAA organized trainings in 2024 which aimed at 1) strengthening capacity to identify victims of trafficking and 2) identification of and support to vulnerable children, directed to immigration officials as well as border police (for the first one).⁴³⁸

As of 2022, the majority of the stakeholders interviewed by the author in Bucharest, Șomcuta Mare Timișoara and Rădăuți said that they are still not aware of the content of the IGI-DAI identification mechanism in place to systematically identify vulnerable asylum seekers.

⁴³³ *ibid.* Article 5¹(3).

⁴³⁴ Article 5(1) Asylum Decree.

⁴³⁵ Article 5(2) Asylum Decree.

⁴³⁶ *ibid.* Article 5(3).

⁴³⁷ *ibid.* Article 5(4).

⁴³⁸ Information provided by UNHCR in March 2025.

Article 12⁴¹ of the Asylum Act prescribes that staff training programs shall include, *inter alia*, methodology on the assessment of asylum applications made by vulnerable persons and identification mechanisms and assistance for vulnerable persons.

In 2022, IGI-DAI reported 2,586 minors, of whom 268 unaccompanied minors, seven persons with disabilities, 509 elderly persons, five pregnant women, 506 single parent families, one victim of human trafficking, six persons with mental disabilities, and eight persons who had experienced torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence were identified.⁴³⁹

In 2024, IGI-DAI reported 544 vulnerable persons: 348 minors, separately 157 unaccompanied minors, 10 elderly persons, 10 pregnant women, 18 single parent families, 1 persons subjected to a form of violence (the type of violence was not specified). IGI-DAI mentioned that in 2024, in the case of vulnerable persons, more precisely unaccompanied minors, there were no situations of asylum applications examined under the accelerated procedure.⁴⁴⁰

In 2024, CNRR highlighted that IGI has a mechanism for the early identification of vulnerable individuals. They also pointed out that each applicant's file includes an observation sheet, which records information provided by the applicant regarding factors such as age, gender, family situation (e.g., single-parent family, potential risk of gender-based violence, elderly person living alone, etc.), pregnancy, physical or mental health issues/diagnosed conditions, disabilities, substance abuse, experiences of torture (if the applicant has indicated any such experiences), or human trafficking (based on the applicant's statements or indications). Additionally, the sheet includes other concerns, such as difficulty concentrating, emotional distress, agitation, crying, etc. This information is gathered at various stages of the procedure, including at the time of the asylum application submission, during accommodation at the Reception Centre, through the preliminary questionnaire, the interview, or the court phase. The caseworker will evaluate whether it is necessary to inform the integration officer about the case to implement any special assistance measures.⁴⁴¹

1.2 Age assessment of unaccompanied children

The Asylum Act foresees that an age assessment can be carried out in case there are doubts as to the alleged age of the applicant or if the unaccompanied minor cannot prove their age.⁴⁴² In these cases, before a decision is delivered at first instance, IGI-DAI requests forensic expertise to assess the applicant's age, with the prior written consent of the minor and their legal representative.⁴⁴³

If the asylum seeker and/or the legal representative refuse to carry out the age assessment examination and no conclusive evidence regarding age is provided, the applicant shall be considered an adult.⁴⁴⁴ The person shall be deemed to have reached the age of 18 at the time of lodging the asylum application.⁴⁴⁵ However, if a psychologist of IGI-DAI determines, after an evaluation, that the grounds for refusal to carry out the age assessments examination are well-founded, the asylum seeker will not be considered an adult.⁴⁴⁶

The law provides that the interpretation of the examination results shall be carried out taking into account the principle of the best interests of the child.⁴⁴⁷

⁴³⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

⁴⁴⁰ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

⁴⁴¹ Information provided by CNRR, 3 February 2025.

⁴⁴² Article 41(2) Asylum Act.

⁴⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴⁴ *ibid.* Article 41(3).

⁴⁴⁵ *ibid.* Article 41(4).

⁴⁴⁶ *ibid.* Article 41(5).

⁴⁴⁷ *ibid.* Article 41(6).

The asylum application cannot be refused on the sole ground that the person did not consent to the age assessment and cannot prevent IGI-DAI from granting international protection to the respective asylum seeker.⁴⁴⁸

According to the law, IGI-DAI informs the legal representative and the asylum seeker unaccompanied minor in writing, in a language that the latter understands or is reasonably supposed to understand, about the possibility of carrying out an age assessment. This information should also include details of the medical examination methods, the possible consequences of the outcome of the examination and the effects of any refusal to undergo medical examination.⁴⁴⁹ The law also prescribes that the medical examination shall be carried out in full respect of the minor's dignity, using the least invasive methods to obtain, as far as possible, a reliable result.⁴⁵⁰

The Asylum Act does not, however, prescribe for a method on how the age assessment should be carried out. When an age assessment is ordered by IGI-DAI, this is carried out by the National Network of Legal Medicine, which comprises of the National Institute of Legal Medicine “Mina Minovici” in Bucharest (NIML), 5 Institutes of Legal Medicine (IML) in Iași, Cluj-Napoca, Craiova, Târgu Mureș and Timișoara, 36 County Legal Medicine Services and 11 Forensic Offices.⁴⁵¹

According to the Procedural Rules on expert assessments and findings and other forensic work for establishing the age of a person, the forensic findings and forensic expertise related to living persons, at the request of the judicial bodies, consist of clinical and complementary radiological, haematological, serological, bacteriological, anthropological, dermatological, genetic exams and other.⁴⁵² The Procedural Rules also prescribe that minors are examined in the presence of one of the parents, or their legal representative or, in their absence, in the presence of an adult family member of the same sex.⁴⁵³

According to the stakeholders interviewed by the author, the method used by IML to assess age in all cases is bone measurement.

The law does not prescribe the possibility to challenge the age assessment decision. However, it is possible to request a new expert opinion, which will be also conducted by IML and the cost should be covered by the person requesting it. There has been no such case in practice.

As of 2024, the Institute of Legal Medicine (IML) in Romania continues to primarily utilize bone measurements for age assessments. This approach involves radiographic analysis of skeletal development to estimate an individual's age. However, recent studies have explored alternative methods, such as analysing Hounsfield Units (HU) from pelvic CT scans, which may offer non-invasive and potentially reliable means for age estimation in the Romanian population.⁴⁵⁴ Despite these advancements, the current legal framework in Romania does not mandate a multidisciplinary approach to age assessment. The law does not prescribe the possibility to challenge the age assessment decision. In summary, while bone measurement remains the standard procedure for age assessment in Romania as of 2024, there is a growing recognition of the need for a more holistic, multidisciplinary approach to align with international standards and improve the accuracy of such assessments.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁴⁸ *ibid.* Article 41(7).

⁴⁴⁹ *ibid.* Article 16(4)(c) in conjunction with Article 22 Asylum Decree.

⁴⁵⁰ *ibid.* Article 16(4^1).

⁴⁵¹ National Network of Legal Medicine, *Tipuri de expertize medico-legale*, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁴⁵² Article 26(a) Procedural Rules of 25 May 2000 on expert assessments and findings and other forensic work.

⁴⁵³ *ibid.* Article 14(2).

⁴⁵⁴ Stan E, Enache A, Muresan CO, Ciocan V, Ungureanu S, Motofeala AC, Voicu A, Costachescu D. Age Estimation through Hounsfield Unit Analysis of Pelvic Bone in the Romanian Population. *Diagnostics (Basel)*. 2024 Sep 23;14(18):2103, available [here](#).

⁴⁵⁵ Information provided by JRS representative in February 2025.

In 2023, IGI-DAI reported that 5 age assessments were made at IML Galati county hospital⁴⁵⁶. No further details and explanations were provided on why such a low number of age assessments were performed in 2023. In 2024, no information is available from IGI-DAI regarding the number or outcome of age assessment examinations.

2. Special procedural guarantees

Indicators: Special Procedural Guarantees

1. Are there special procedural arrangements/guarantees for vulnerable people?

☒ Yes ☐ For certain categories ☐ No

2.1 Adequate support during the interview

Pursuant to Article 5¹(4) of the Asylum Act, in cases where vulnerable persons with special needs are identified, specialised staff of IGI-DAI carry out assessments to identify specific needs and decide on appropriate steps to ensure the rights and guarantees provided by the law during the asylum procedure.

Romanian law provides an important safeguard in respect of procedural guarantees for vulnerable persons: in the administrative phase of the asylum procedure, documents drafted before the identification of special needs will be amended and/or supplemented only where it is necessary to adequately examine the asylum application.⁴⁵⁷

The law also foresees a specific monitoring obligation throughout the entire asylum procedure in line with Article 22(1) of the recast Reception Conditions Directive.⁴⁵⁸

The interview of vulnerable asylum seekers shall be carried out by case officers specialised in this respect, taking into account the special situation of these persons.⁴⁵⁹

In 2023, according to data provided by IGI-DAI,⁴⁶⁰ in the case of asylum-seeking vulnerable persons, reports issued by psychologists working for non-governmental organisations (e.g. ICAR Foundation) are accepted. In 2024 there was a gap in AMIF funding, so ICAR interventions were limited.⁴⁶¹

CNRR stated that, based on their experience in 2024, most asylum seekers did not report concerns about the proper consideration of special procedural guarantees. However, there were instances where some asylum seekers claimed they were not identified as vulnerable persons (such as LGBTQ+ individuals or victims of torture) in a timely manner.⁴⁶²

2.2 Exemption from special procedures

According to Article 75(2) of the Asylum Act, applicants in need of special procedural guarantees or with **Special Reception Needs** maybe subjected to the **Accelerated Procedure** or the **Border Procedure** only if they represent a threat to national security or public order, due to their activity or membership to a certain group.⁴⁶³ In practice, according to IGI-DAI, unaccompanied children or persons in need of special procedural guarantees are not channelled in the accelerated or border procedure.⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁵⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁴⁵⁷ Article 5¹(5) Asylum Act.

⁴⁵⁸ *ibid.* Article 5¹(6). IGI-DAI monitors the situation of applicants with special needs upon reception and, together with the competent authorities, will ensure that assistance is given throughout the entire asylum procedure.

⁴⁵⁹ *ibid.* Article 46.

⁴⁶⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁴⁶¹ Information provided by JRS Romania June 2025.

⁴⁶² Information provided by CNRR February 2025.

⁴⁶³ Articles 75(2) and 84 Asylum Act.

⁴⁶⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 14 February 2018.

In 2022, in Rădăuți a woman who was HIV positive was assessed in an accelerated procedure, she appealed the decision and was also rejected by the court. There were no cases to report on in 2023 or 2024. No such cases were reported in the other regional centres.

3. Use of medical reports

Indicators: Use of medical reports

1. Does the law provide for the possibility of a medical report in support of the applicant's statements regarding past persecution or serious harm?
☒ Yes ☐ In some cases ☐ No
2. Are medical reports taken into account when assessing the credibility of the applicant's statements?
☒ Yes ☐ No

Romanian legislation explicitly refers to the use of medical reports in asylum procedures. Article 49⁴⁶⁵ of the Asylum Act provides that, when IGI-DAI deems it relevant for the assessment of an asylum application, the asylum seeker will be subject with his consent to medical examination concerning signs that might indicate past persecution or serious harm.⁴⁶⁵ The applicant's refusal to undergo the medical examination shall not prevent IGI-DAI from taking a decision on the application for international protection.⁴⁶⁶

Medical examinations shall be carried out by the legal medicine institutions and the result shall be transmitted immediately to IGI-DAI. The coverage of the expenses is ensured by the Ministry of Internal Affairs through the budget allocated to IGI in this respect.⁴⁶⁷ If the medical examination is requested by IGI-DAI, it is therefore paid by IGI-DAI.

When no medical examination is carried out, IGI-DAI informs applicants that they may, on their own initiative and at their own cost, arrange for a medical examination concerning signs that might indicate past persecution or serious harm.⁴⁶⁸ The results of the medical examination are assessed by IGI-DAI in corroboration with other elements of the application for international protection.⁴⁶⁹

Moreover, as a general rule, an applicant is not expected to provide written evidence but they are obliged to hand over to the authorities all the documents at their disposal which are relevant to their personal situation.⁴⁷⁰ The Asylum Decree provides that the examination of the asylum application must be carried out individually and taking into account, *inter alia*, the relevant documents submitted by the applicant, including information on whether they have been subjected to persecution or the possibility of being persecuted or of being exposed to a risk of serious harm.⁴⁷¹ This means that the asylum seeker may submit relevant documents with regard to past persecution but also with a view to the possible future persecution and serious harm.

In addition, the Asylum Act foresees that when there are serious doubts regarding the adult's asylum seeker legal capacity, specialised staff at IGI-DAI request a medical examination.⁴⁷² If the medical examination reveals lack of legal capacity of the asylum seeker, the case officer in charge of the case, requests the appointment of a counsellor, under the same conditions as for Romanian citizens.⁴⁷³ The asylum procedure is suspended until the appointment with the counsellor. During this period of

⁴⁶⁵ Article 49⁴⁶⁵(1) Asylum Act.

⁴⁶⁶ *ibid.* Article 49⁴⁶⁶(2).

⁴⁶⁷ *ibid.* Article 49⁴⁶⁷(3).

⁴⁶⁸ *ibid.* Article 49⁴⁶⁸(4).

⁴⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁷⁰ *ibid.* Article 19(c).

⁴⁷¹ Article 16(1)(b) Asylum Decree.

⁴⁷² Article 42(1) Asylum Act.

⁴⁷³ *ibid.* Article 42(2).

suspension, the applicant benefits from the rights set out in the law.⁴⁷⁴ The asylum application of an asylum seeker who has no capacity is filed by the counsellor after their appointment.⁴⁷⁵ When conducting the personal interview, the counsellor will inform the asylum seeker of the purpose and possible consequences of this interview and will take the necessary steps to prepare the applicant for the interview.⁴⁷⁶ The interview of an asylum seeker without legal capacity shall be carried out in the presence of the counsellor.⁴⁷⁷

According to the directors of the centres, in Galați, Rădăuți, Șomcuta Mare and Timișoara there were no cases in which a medical examination under Article 49¹ was requested by IGI-DAI in 2022. In Bucharest instead, the IGI-DAI requested a medical examination (psychiatric expert opinion) regarding the establishment of the degree of disability of a person. There are no updates on the case.

IGI-DAI accepts medico-legal expert opinions issued by officially recognised experts enrolled on the lists drawn up by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice, with the approval of the Board of Forensics.⁴⁷⁸ After a one-year gap in the provision of medical assistance for asylum seekers, the ICAR Foundation launched in December 2024 the project SERISSA – Integrated Health Services for Asylum Seekers (AMIF). Continuing its commitment to support individuals in the asylum procedure, the ICAR Foundation is implementing a 24-month program through multidisciplinary specialist teams, offering a comprehensive package of services including information sessions, individual and group social counselling, psychological support, as well as medical examinations and treatments. Project activities are carried out in six cities—Bucharest, Galați, Giurgiu, Rădăuți, Șomcuta Mare, and Timișoara—within the Regional Integration Centres and the Regional Centre for Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers.⁴⁷⁹

In general, asylum seekers submit medical reports from the country of origin either to IGI-DAI or the court. In 2022 no reports were submitted in Timișoara, Șomcuta Mare, Galați, Rădăuți, Giurgiu, except Bucharest, according to the directors of these centres.

In 2023, at IGI-DAI in Bucharest, there were 2 cases in which the asylum seekers submitted medical reports issued by authorities from their countries of origin; further details were not provided.⁴⁸⁰

In 2024, CNRR stated that if medical reports exist, and the case officer/judge considers that the documents are relevant for the procedure, they will be analysed and taken into account when assessing the credibility of the applicant's statements. However, they do not have information if all the reports are based on the methodology laid down in the Istanbul Protocol.⁴⁸¹

4. Legal representation of unaccompanied children

Indicators: Unaccompanied Children

1. Does the law provide for the appointment of a representative to all unaccompanied children?

☒ Yes ☐ No

⁴⁷⁴ *ibid.* Article 42(3).

⁴⁷⁵ *ibid.* Article 42(4).

⁴⁷⁶ *ibid.* Article 42(5).

⁴⁷⁷ *ibid.* Article 42(6).

⁴⁷⁸ According to Article 34 Regulation implementing Government Ordinance 1/2000 approved by Government Decree 774/2000 as last amended by Government Decree 1204/2002, a medico-legal expert: (a) is a Romanian citizen and is fluent in Romanian; (b) has full legal capacity; (c) is a graduate of a medical university; (d) has a postgraduate specialisation courses in forensics; (e) practices this specialisation; (f) has not been convicted of an offence committed in circumstances related to their profession; and (g) is certified as an medico-legal expert at the Board of Forensics, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁴⁷⁹ ICAR Foundation, Comunicat lansare proiect, 11 December 2024, available [here](#).

⁴⁸⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁴⁸¹ Information provided by CNRR, 3 February 2025.

Regulatory changes

Based on the amendments to the child protection law⁴⁸² brought by the Law 191/2022 (specifically including unaccompanied children asylum-seekers under its scope, as well as extending protection during the return proceedings), thus regulating practical gaps, in August 2023 the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Family, Youth and Equal Opportunities adopted a Joint Order⁴⁸³ regulating and clarifying the appointment, the attributions and the requirements of professional experience and training for persons designated as legal representatives for migrant unaccompanied or separated children, as well as their cooperation with the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI). The new regulation introduces the notion of “representative” instead of legal guardian.

Notably, a representative for unaccompanied foreign children may only be responsible for a maximum of 100 children.

Moreover, according to the Joint Order, specialists from NGOs or private social service providers have the opportunity to qualify and be appointed as representatives for unaccompanied foreign children. Special agreements will be concluded to facilitate this process.

The obligation to train people appointed as representatives is entrusted to the national authority ANPDCA through the development of a framework curriculum, which will include training on the child protection system in Romania, as well as the asylum procedure and international protection in its various forms. The Joint Order introduces the representative’s obligation to conduct monitoring visits to the unaccompanied and separated children who are left in the care of third parties. The representative must respect the monitoring visits schedule mentioned in the Joint Order regardless of the child’s whereabouts, including for children housed in their community and who are in the care of the adults with whom they left their country or to escape the conflict in Ukraine.

In 2023 according to CNRR,⁴⁸⁴ the joint order represents good progress but there are also some concerns. The most problematic provisions are those concerning unaccompanied and separated children who are placed in the care of third parties with whom they left their country of origin. This possibility is poorly defined and lacks sufficient safeguards, potentially exposing children to a wide range of risks, including neglect, human trafficking, and exploitation.

General framework

The law provides for the appointment of a legal representative to an unaccompanied child.⁴⁸⁵ IGI-DAI shall take the necessary steps, as soon as possible, to appoint a legal representative to assist the unaccompanied minor applying for asylum during the procedure, including during the admissibility and Dublin procedure as the case may be.⁴⁸⁶

The law prescribes it is not necessary to appoint a legal representative for the unaccompanied minor asylum seeker if they are to reach the age of the majority within 15 days of the filing of the asylum application.⁴⁸⁷

The law also foresees that IGI shall:

⁴⁸² Law no. 272/2004 on protection and promotion of the rights of the child, republished in Official Gazette no. 159 of 05.03.2014, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁴⁸³ Order no. 119/20.643/2023, published in Official Gazette no. 749 of 17.08.2023, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁴⁸⁴ CNRR (Romanian National Refugee Council), *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#).

⁴⁸⁵ Articles 16 and 40 Asylum Act.

⁴⁸⁶ *ibid.* Article 16(2).

⁴⁸⁷ *ibid.* Article 16(3).

- ❖ Ensure that the legal representative is given the opportunity to inform the unaccompanied child about the significance and possible consequences of the personal interview and, as the case may be, about the preparation for the personal interview;
- ❖ Provide procedural legal information, including information on the withdrawing of international protection, both to the child and to their legal representative;
- ❖ Inform the legal representative and the unaccompanied child, in a language that the latter understands or is reasonably supposed to understand, about the possibility of carrying out an age assessment. This information should also include details of the medical examination methods, the possible consequences of its outcome and the consequences of any refusal to undergo this examination.⁴⁸⁸

Timing of appointments

According to the modified Article 1(4)(4), the General Inspectorate for Immigration informs the legal representative and the unaccompanied minor asylum seeker, in a language that they know, regarding the possibility of performing a medical examination to determine age. This information must also include information on the methods of medical examination, the possible consequences of the result of this examination and the effects of any refusal to undergo medical examination.

Neither the Asylum Act nor the Child Protection Act prescribes an exact time limit for the appointment of the legal representative. However, the Asylum Act prescribes that after registering the asylum claim of the unaccompanied child, IGI-DAI shall immediately notify the competent authority, the Directorate General for Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPC) territorially competent for the area in which the Regional Centres located, in order to start the appointment procedure of a legal representative. The Asylum Decree complements these provisions, stating that the officer in charge of the registration of the asylum claim of the unaccompanied child shall immediately notify the relevant DGASPC branch office in order to initiate the procedure of appointment of a legal representative.⁴⁸⁹ Once established, the legal representation of the unaccompanied asylum-seeking child continues to operate for as long as the child benefits from international protection in Romania.⁴⁹⁰

In the case of an unaccompanied child who has expressed the intention to apply for asylum, in writing or orally, they shall be registered as an asylum seeker and the asylum application will be lodged at the moment of appointment of the legal representative.⁴⁹¹ The asylum procedure is suspended until the appointment of a legal representative. During the period of suspension of the asylum procedure, the child benefits from the rights provided by law.⁴⁹²

According to the information provided by IGI-DAI, after registering the unaccompanied minor as an asylum seeker, this institution will immediately notify the competent authority (General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection) in whose territorial area the accommodation centre where the asylum application is to be lodged is located, in order to initiate the procedure for appointing a legal representative. The legal representation of the unaccompanied minor, once established, continues to operate for as long as they benefit from international protection in Romania. In the case of an unaccompanied minor asylum seeker, the asylum procedure is suspended until the appointment of a legal representative. The time from the moment of sending the request for appointment of a representative until the actual appointment is according to them around 3-6 days.⁴⁹³

In 2024, the representatives of the institution of The Ombudsman, carried out visits in 4 of the Regional Centers for Procedures and Reception for Asylum Seekers (Rădăuți, Maramureș - Șomcuta Mare, Giurgiu

⁴⁸⁸ *ibid.* Article 16(4).

⁴⁸⁹ Article 21(3) Asylum Decree.

⁴⁹⁰ Article 40(1) Asylum Act.

⁴⁹¹ *ibid.* Article 39(3).

⁴⁹² *ibid.* Article 40(2).

⁴⁹³ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

and Timișoara), at the Territorial Service of the Border Police Constanta and Tulcea, and at the Otopeni Public Custody Center.⁴⁹⁴ In 2023, according to the information provided by Ombudsman,⁴⁹⁵ no monitoring visits were carried out in the regional centres. The Ombudsman pointed out that, in 2022, its representatives, according to their competence, monitored the respect of the rights of asylum seekers in the Regional Centres for Procedures and Reception for Asylum Seekers (visits were made and information was requested at all 6 centres - Bucharest, Rădăuți, Maramureș - Șomcuta Mare, Giurgiu, Galați and Timișoara). The reports of the visits carried out by the Ombudsman in 2022- 2024 are available in Romanian language on the [institution website](#).

Qualifications and duties of the legal representative

According to the Child Protection Act the legal representative is either the parent or person designated, according to the law, to exercise the rights and to fulfil the parental obligations towards the child.⁴⁹⁶ This means that the legal representative substitutes the absent parents.

According to the Asylum Act, the interests of a child are defended by their legal representative.⁴⁹⁷ The unaccompanied child is immediately informed of the appointment of the legal representative. The legal representative performs their duties in accordance with the principle of the best interests of the child and has the necessary expertise for this purpose.⁴⁹⁸

The Child Protection Act provides that, in order to adequately support the interests of the child, DGASPC designates a person with legal or social assistance background from its staff or an authorised private body, to support the rights of the child and to participate, together with the child to the entire refugee status determination procedure.⁴⁹⁹

The legal representative has to be present at the interview with the unaccompanied child,⁵⁰⁰ and may intervene at the end of the interview.⁵⁰¹ The legal representative informs the unaccompanied child asylum seeker of the purpose and possible consequences of the personal interview and takes the necessary steps to prepare the child for it.⁵⁰² In the case of a child, the appeal is filed by their legal representative. A child who has reached the age of 16 may file the complaint in their own name.⁵⁰³

The legal representative also has to submit the request of enrolment of the unaccompanied child to preparatory courses.⁵⁰⁴

Legal representatives consider their mandate limited to assisting the child in administrative and judicial procedures related to the asylum claim, i.e. to attend interviews and court hearings. As a consequence, this mandate ends when the asylum procedure is completed. Legal representatives consider that is not their mandate to ensure the well-being of the unaccompanied child.

The CNRR⁵⁰⁵ flagged the following issues concerning unaccompanied minors in 2023: At Regional Centre Timișoara, there were situations where the asylum applications of unaccompanied minors were not analysed swiftly. In the case of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, communication between them and the legal representatives appointed by the DGASPC is not constant and tends to be limited to the

⁴⁹⁴ Ombudsman, Centres for migration 2024 reports, can be found [here](#).

⁴⁹⁵ Information provided by Ombudsman, 9 January 2024.

⁴⁹⁶ Article 4(g) Child Protection Act.

⁴⁹⁷ Article 39(1) Asylum Act.

⁴⁹⁸ *ibid.* Article 16(2^1).

⁴⁹⁹ Article 77(3) Child Protection Act.

⁵⁰⁰ Article 47(1) Asylum Act.

⁵⁰¹ Article 23(1) Asylum Decree.

⁵⁰² Article 47(2) Asylum Act.

⁵⁰³ Articles 56(2) and 66(2) Asylum Act.

⁵⁰⁴ Article 6(4) Asylum Decree.

⁵⁰⁵ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

measures and activities necessary for the asylum procedure. According to the information available to CNRR, the unaccompanied minors accommodated in the regional centres in Timișoara, Giurgiu, Șomcuta Mare and Rădăuți either have no contact with the legal representative or there is a very limited contact, and the only counselling they receive is from NGOs. The times when minors have contact with the legal representative appointed by the DGSPC are when the IGI conducts interviews in the administrative phase of the asylum procedure, or at court, when the legal representatives are required by law to be present. At the centre in Galați, a slightly more favourable situation could be observed in terms of communication between the legal representative and the unaccompanied minors, who showed a greater interest in the situation of minors, both legally and socially/culturally.

According to UNHCR,⁵⁰⁶ it results that the usual practice shows that the DGASPC is duly assuming its responsibilities for guardianship of asylum-seeking unaccompanied children. Nonetheless, there have been occasions where areas of improvement have been identified with regard to the DGASPCs' ability to promptly intervene upon the arrival of asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors to the reception centres. More specifically, there have been instances where unaccompanied children arrive at Reception Centres, triggering notifications to the DGASPCs, and where these children end up leaving the centre after a short period of time and before the DGASPC has had an opportunity to assess the children and relocate them to the dedicated centres for unaccompanied minors. Moreover, other instances show that children have left the DGASPC centres, even when a legal representative was appointed. While the reasons for departure are unknown, this shows some limitations in fully engaging the child in the process and keeping active and close communication with them. The designated legal representative appointed by DGASPC, most often the Director, of the centre of placement is expected to maintain consistent communication with the child. While DGASPC generally adheres to procedural norms, there seems to be a need for improved engagement with the children, for instance due to lack of interpreters in certain locations or for specific languages, impeding effective communication with asylum-seeking children and adolescents. Although, in 2024 there were only 50 unaccompanied minors, it has also been noted that high numbers of unaccompanied minors might be assigned to individual legal representatives and that until recently there was a lack of clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the legal representatives. Moreover, challenges persist in ensuring an adequate best interest procedure, particularly regarding children who arrive in Romania being accompanied by an adult who is not their parent nor their appointed legal guardian. Addressing this matter requires a thorough review of existing protocols and coordination mechanisms to ensure a seamless and effective process for the protection and care of unaccompanied children and adolescent asylum seekers. It is to note that progress has been made in 2023 through the issuance of the Order No 119/20.643/2023 on the conditions of appointment, role, tasks and requirements of education, training and professional experience for persons appointed as representatives for unaccompanied foreign minors who apply for or are granted a form of international protection.⁵⁰⁷ The Order outlines fundamental principles, which should be taken into consideration by the DGAPSCs, particularly with regard to the time taken to respond to situations of unaccompanied children arriving at reception centres and maintaining regular contact between the appointed legal representatives and the child regardless of where they reside.

According to Save the Children Romania in 2023⁵⁰⁸, the legal representation of minors has raised many issues in the past years. Although legal representatives are appointed shortly after the arrival of unaccompanied minors, most minors are not aware who their legal representatives are; they cannot contact them directly and they are not assisted in accessing the various social benefits and rights. The activities of legal representatives are limited to assisting the children at interviews and signing documents related to the procedure. There are also communication impairments between legal representatives and unaccompanied children caused not only by the language barriers but also by the lack of involvement of

⁵⁰⁶ Information provided by UNHCR, 23 January 2024.

⁵⁰⁷ Order No 119/20.643/2023 on the conditions of appointment, role, tasks and requirements of education, training and professional experience for persons appointed as representatives for unaccompanied foreign minors who apply for or are granted a form of international protection, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁵⁰⁸ Information provided by Save the Children in 2024.

legal representatives. Given that there are no clear provisions regarding the role and duties of legal representatives, there have been cases in which legal representatives are managing the cases differently.

According to UNHCR Romania, starting with August 2023, the lack of active involvement of legal representatives in the asylum procedure is due to the lack of clarity of the current legislation regarding the duties of the legal representative. There is no coherence between the 2 legal acts (Asylum Act and Child Protection Act) and there are poor methodologies regarding the role of the legal representative in the asylum procedure. This was confirmed by Save the Children.

Save the Children noted that previously there have been trainings and conferences on legal representation of unaccompanied minors organised by NGOs or UNHCR, but there is no coherent or mandatory training program. In 2024, CNRR published a designated information material for the legal representatives.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁹ CNRR, Information material for designated representatives, found [here](#).

B. Subsequent applications

Indicators: Subsequent Applications

1. Does the law provide for a specific procedure for subsequent applications? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Is a removal order suspended during the examination of a first subsequent application?
 - ❖ At first instance ☒ Yes ☐ No
 - ❖ At the appeal stage ☐ Yes ☒ No
3. Is a removal order suspended during the examination of a second, third, subsequent application?
 - ❖ At first instance ☐ Yes ☒ No
 - ❖ At the appeal stage ☐ Yes ☒ No

A subsequent application is considered as an application following a final termination or rejection decision on the former application, subsequent application or in case of a decision on cessation or withdrawal of the international protection granted.⁵¹⁰ New elements or circumstances have to be submitted in order for a subsequent application to be admissible.⁵¹¹

Therefore, the Asylum Act prescribes that access to a new asylum procedure shall be granted if one of the following conditions is met:⁵¹²

- ❖ The applicant relies on new elements which could not be presented for reasons beyond his or her control and which occurred during or after the completion of the previous procedure. The applicant is obliged to prove the existence of new elements invoked and impossibility of their submission until the date of application for access to a new asylum procedure. The new elements invoked cannot be the result of actions brought by the applicant in order to obtain a form of international protection from the Romanian State;
- ❖ From the date of completion of the previous asylum procedure, there have been political, social, military or legislative changes in the country of origin, likely to have serious consequences for the applicant.

For persons whose applications are considered to have been tacitly withdrawn, i.e. persons who have left Romania and moved on to another EU Member State, and the asylum procedure has been terminated, the asylum procedure may be continued if the person makes an asylum claim within 9 months of the decision to close the file, issued in case of implicit withdrawal.⁵¹³ If the time limit has expired, the asylum claim is considered a subsequent application.

If the persons have left the territory of the EU or have been removed to a third country or the country of origin, as set out in Articles 19(2) and (3) of the Dublin Regulation, and their asylum procedure has been terminated by a decision closing the file, a new claim lodged in Romania is not deemed a subsequent application.⁵¹⁴

Therefore, persons who expressly withdraw their asylum applications and have not left the territory of the EU or have not been removed to a third country or to the country of origin cannot continue their asylum procedure in case they return to Romania. As a consequence, they will have to submit new elements or circumstances.

⁵¹⁰ Article 88(1) b) Asylum Act.

⁵¹¹ *ibid.* Article 88(2)(a)-(b).

⁵¹² *ibid.*

⁵¹³ *ibid.* Article 94¹(1)(b).

⁵¹⁴ *ibid.* Article 94¹(1)(a).

The subsequent application should be submitted personally, except for cases where the applicant is detained, is in pre-trial detention or serving a sentence.⁵¹⁵

When a subsequent application is registered, IGI-DAI shall inform the IGI-Migration Directorate regarding the granting to the applicant of the permission to remain on Romanian territory.⁵¹⁶ The law foresees that if the subsequent application is personally submitted by the foreigner and the previous asylum application is finalised, the foreigner is allowed to remain on the territory of Romania for a period of 5 days from the date of the registration of the application for granting access to a new asylum procedure.⁵¹⁷ The law does not impose a time limit on submitting a subsequent application or explicit limitation on the number of asylum applications that may be lodged. However, the right to remain does not apply in the case of a second subsequent claim, thus the applicant is not granted access to territory.⁵¹⁸ The same applies where the documents from the file show that the application is made abusively in order to prevent the removal of the foreigner from the territory of Romania.⁵¹⁹

The law provides for a safeguard against *refoulement*, stating that these cases shall apply only if the enforcement of the return decision is considered to be without prejudice to the principle of *non-refoulement*.

In these cases, a decision is issued as soon as possible justifying the non-granting of the permission to remain on Romanian territory. This decision shall be communicated directly to the applicant, who is previously informed of the date on which they must present themselves at IGI-DAI or by post.⁵²⁰ This decision may be appealed within 2 days from the day it is communicated.⁵²¹ The competent court is the Regional Court territorially competent for the area in which IGI-DAI issued the decision.⁵²²

The assessment of the subsequent application is done solely on the basis of a written submission. The law does not provide for a preliminary interview. IGI-DAI delivers a decision within 5 days from the date when the application was registered, on the basis of the reasoned application, the documentation submitted by the foreigner and the elements existing in their personal file.⁵²³ The case officer may issue a decision by which: (a) grants access to a new asylum procedure; or (b) dismisses the application as inadmissible.

The decision is communicated to the foreigner immediately, in writing, by a direct communication of the IGI-DAI's representatives or by post, to the last declared residence thereof. The decision communicated shall be accompanied by written information in Romanian language and in a language that the applicant understands or is reasonably supposed to understand, of the admission or rejection solution of their application and the conditions under which the decision can be challenged.⁵²⁴ The decision may also be communicated to the lawyer or representative of the NGO who legally represents the applicant, to the extent that the applicant has expressly stated this.⁵²⁵

Rejected subsequent applications may be appealed before the territorially competent Regional Court within 10 days of communication.⁵²⁶ Judicial review of rejected subsequent applications has no automatic

⁵¹⁵ *ibid.* Article 88(1)(a) and (3).

⁵¹⁶ Article 40(1) Asylum Decree.

⁵¹⁷ Article 89(1) Asylum Act.

⁵¹⁸ *ibid.* Article 89(2)(b). *A foreigner submits a subsequent application after a previous application of this type has been rejected as inadmissible or if, after granting access to a new asylum procedure, their application has been rejected as manifestly unfounded.*

⁵¹⁹ *ibid.* Article 89(2)(a).

⁵²⁰ *ibid.* Article 89(3).

⁵²¹ *ibid.* Article 89(4).

⁵²² *ibid.* Article 89(5).

⁵²³ *ibid.* Article 91(1).

⁵²⁴ *ibid.* Article 91(3).

⁵²⁵ *ibid.* Article 91(4).

⁵²⁶ *ibid.* Article 93(1) and (2).

suspensive effect.⁵²⁷ The foreigner may ask for permission to stay on the territory of Romania. The application for permission to remain on the territory of Romania is solved as a matter of urgency by the competent court, which shall pronounce a final decision, in the council chamber, with the parties being summoned.⁵²⁸ In this case the foreigner has the right to remain on the territory of Romania until the court has ruled on this request.⁵²⁹ The permission to remain on the territory of Romania shall be granted until the moment of the court's pronouncement on the appeal.⁵³⁰

Under Article 94(1) of the Asylum Act the court assesses the appeal without hearing the foreigner, within 30 days, and delivers a reasoned decision, by which it either (a) rejects the complaint, or (b) admits the complaint, granting access to a new asylum procedure and ordering IGI-DAI to examine the application in the regular procedure. The decision of the court is irrevocable.⁵³¹

Even though third-country nationals who make a subsequent application have the right to be counselled and assisted at any stage of the procedure by an NGO representative, Romanian or foreign, the projects funded by the national AMIF program do not cover counselling and assistance for these applicants, as they are not considered as asylum seekers. CNRR representatives provide counselling and assistance on a voluntary basis. According to CNRR, access to a new asylum procedure is granted if either the applicant presents new elements relevant to their case or if significant political, social, military, or legislative changes have occurred in their country of origin. In many instances, the absence of new elements or the inability to justify why such elements were not presented during the initial procedure poses a challenge to submitting a subsequent application. Regarding legal assistance, asylum seekers who sought support from CNRR did not face any obstacles.⁵³²

In 2024, 203 subsequent applications were made⁵³³. In 2023, 188 subsequent applications were made:⁵³⁴ the main countries of origin were Syria (40 applications), Afghanistan (24), Somalia (18), Palestine (13) and Pakistan (10). In 2022, 187 subsequent applications were made.⁵³⁵

No.	Country of origin	Total number of subsequent applications in 2024 ⁵³⁶
1	Syria	59
2	Pakistan	15
3	Ethiopia	13
4	Afghanistan	13
5	Somalia	12

*Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

⁵²⁷ *ibid.* Article 93(3).

⁵²⁸ *ibid.* Article 93(4).

⁵²⁹ *ibid.* Article 93(5).

⁵³⁰ *ibid.* Article 93(6).

⁵³¹ *ibid.* Article 94(2).

⁵³² Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁵³³ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

⁵³⁴ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

⁵³⁵ *ibid.* 22 February 2023.

⁵³⁶ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

C. The safe country concepts

Indicators: Safe Country Concepts

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Does national legislation allow for the use of “safe country of origin” concept? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Is there a national list of safe countries of origin? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Is the safe country of origin concept used in practice? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Does national legislation allow for the use of “safe third country” concept? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Is the safe third country concept used in practice? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
3. Does national legislation allow for the use of “first country of asylum” concept? ☒ Yes ☐ No

1. Safe country of origin

Article 77(1) of the Asylum Act defines the concept of “safe countries of origin” as the EU Member States, as well as other States established by order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on the basis of a list proposed by IGI, taking into account a number of criteria, *inter alia*:

- ❖ The observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as provided for and guaranteed by the ECHR, as subsequently amended, hereinafter referred to as the European Convention and/or the ICCPR, and/or the Convention against Torture, in particular the rights from which no derogation is permitted, in accordance with Article 15(2) ECHR;
- ❖ The functioning of democratic principles, political pluralism and free elections, as well as the existence of functional democratic institutions ensuring the guarantee and respect of fundamental human rights;
- ❖ Effective mechanisms for reporting violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- ❖ Compliance with the principle of *non-refoulement*, in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention;
- ❖ Existence of stability factors.

When designating safe countries of origin, the government has to consider information sources from other Member States, EUAA, UNHCR, the Council of Europe and other international organisations.⁵³⁷ IGI shall periodically review the situation in third countries designated as safe countries of origin and, on the basis of the resulting information, update the list.⁵³⁸ The asylum application of a person who comes from a safe country of origin is rejected as manifestly unfounded, unless the factual situation or the evidence presented by the applicant shows the existence of a well-founded fear of persecution or a risk of serious harm. In this case, the applicant shall be given access to the regular procedure.⁵³⁹

According to IGI-DAI, Romania has no list of safe country of origin, European safe third country or safe third country.⁵⁴⁰

No applications were rejected based on the safe country of origin concept in 2022.⁵⁴¹ In 2023, there were 2 cases in which the rejection was made on the basis of safe country of origin (Croatia, France); no further details were provided by IGI-DAI.⁵⁴²

⁵³⁷ Article 77(2) Asylum Act.

⁵³⁸ *ibid.* Article 77(3).

⁵³⁹ *ibid.* Article 77(4).

⁵⁴⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 20 February 2020.

⁵⁴¹ *ibid.* 22 February 2023.

⁵⁴² *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

According to the *Committee on the Rights of the Child, concluding observations on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Romania* from 2025, Law No. 105/2022 introducing automatic birth registration for both Romanian and foreign children was noted as a positive development. The Committee also took note of the proposed amendments to Law No. 21/1991 on Citizenship, aimed at preventing statelessness—specifically by prohibiting the withdrawal of Romanian citizenship in cases where such action would result in the loss of nationality for the individual's spouse and children. The Committee recommended that the Romanian authorities ensure that all children have access to birth registration and birth certificates without delay, paying particular attention to Roma children, Ukrainian children born in Romania since February 2022, and children born to refugee mothers. Additionally, it urged the establishment of a dedicated statelessness determination procedure and the systematic collection of disaggregated data on stateless children.⁵⁴³

2. Safe third country

Article 96 of the Asylum Act states that a European safe third country is a European country which is not a Member State of the European Union and:

- ❖ Has ratified and respected the provisions of the Refugee Convention without any geographical limitation;
- ❖ Has an asylum procedure provided for by domestic legislation;
- ❖ Has ratified the ECHR and complies with its provisions, including standards on effective remedies.

The concept of European safe third country may be applied only if the applicant has attempted to enter or has irregularly entered Romania from the referring country and this country agreed to their readmission.⁵⁴⁴

Under Article 97(1) of the Asylum Act, a safe third country is considered to be a country in respect of which there are sufficient guarantees that the rights of an applicant for international protection are respected on its territory in accordance with the following principles:

- ❖ Life and freedom are not threatened for reasons of race, religion, citizenship, membership of a particular social group or political opinion;
- ❖ There is no serious risk for the purposes of this law;
- ❖ The principle of *non-refoulement* in accordance with the Refugee Convention is respected;
- ❖ The prohibition of expulsion to a State where the person may be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is respected;
- ❖ There is a possibility to request refugee status and, if this status is granted, to benefit from protection in accordance with the Refugee Convention.

Pursuant to Article 97(2), IGI-DAI rejects an asylum application as inadmissible when these criteria are applicable, the third country has agreed to readmit the applicant and there is a link between the applicant and the third country, on the basis of which it may reasonably be expected that the country is safe in their personal situation.

Although the law prescribes that a list of safe third countries shall be published in the Official Gazette,⁵⁴⁵ there is no such list available therein according with the information provided by IGI-DAI.⁵⁴⁶ NGO practitioners are also unaware of the existence of such a list. The Director of the Regional Centre of Timișoara thought that a list is published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. UNHCR stated that there is no list of safe third countries and the concept has not been applied in practice according to information available to them.

⁵⁴³ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding observations on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Romania*, CRC/C/ROU/CO/6-7, 5 June 2025, available [here](#).

⁵⁴⁴ Article 96(2) Asylum Act.

⁵⁴⁵ *ibid.* Article 97^2.

⁵⁴⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

According to the law, ratification and respect for the provisions of the Refugee Convention without any geographical limitation is one of the criteria which has to be fulfilled by the country in order to be considered a European safe third country. This criterion does not figure in the conditions for a “safe third country”.

When claims are rejected as inadmissible on the ground of European safe third country, safe third country or first country of asylum, IGI-DAI must inform the authorities in the respective country in the language of the safe third country, stating that the claim of the applicant was not examined on the merits.⁵⁴⁷

One application was dismissed on the basis of the safe third country concept in 2018.⁵⁴⁸ In 2019, no applications were dismissed on the basis of the safe third country concept.⁵⁴⁹ The same was reported in 2022.⁵⁵⁰ The situation was the same also in 2023.⁵⁵¹ No data is available for 2024.

3. First country of asylum

Article 95 of the Asylum Act provides that if the applicant has previously crossed a third country which has granted them protection, this country is considered a first country of asylum on the basis of the following criteria:

- ❖ Life and freedom are not threatened for reasons of race, religion, citizenship, membership of a particular social group or political opinion;
- ❖ There is no serious risk of harm;
- ❖ The principle of *non-refoulement* in accordance with the Refugee Convention is respected;
- ❖ The prohibition of expulsion to a State where the applicant is at risk of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is respected;
- ❖ The protection granted subsists.

The law only refers to “protection”, without specifying whether the applicant must be granted refugee status or enjoy sufficient protection as per Article 35 of the recast Asylum Procedures Directive.

The criteria listed under Article 38(1) of the recast Asylum Procedures Directive with regard to “safe third country” also apply to the concept of first country of asylum”.

In 2022, no applications were dismissed on the basis of the first country of asylum concept.⁵⁵² The situation was the same also in 2023.⁵⁵³ The situation was the same also in 2024.⁵⁵⁴

D. Information for asylum seekers and access to NGOs and UNHCR

1. Provision of information on the procedure

Indicators: Information on the Procedure

1. Is sufficient information provided to asylum seekers on the procedures, their rights and obligations in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No
 - ❖ Is tailored information provided to unaccompanied children? ☐ Yes ☒ No

⁵⁴⁷ Article 97^1(4) Asylum Act.

⁵⁴⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 5 March 2019.

⁵⁴⁹ *ibid.* 20 February 2020.

⁵⁵⁰ *ibid.* 16 February 2021.

⁵⁵¹ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

⁵⁵² Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

⁵⁵³ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

⁵⁵⁴ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

1.1 General information on rights, obligations and the procedure

The Asylum Act provides that the asylum seeker has the right to be informed, at the time of submission of the asylum application or later, within 15 days from the filing of the application, in a language which they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand, regarding the procedure, their rights and obligations during the asylum procedure, the consequences of non-compliance with these obligations and the lack of cooperation with the competent authorities, as well as the consequences of an explicit or implicit withdrawal of the asylum application.⁵⁵⁵

Competent officials are also obliged to inform asylum seekers about how they can contact non-governmental organisations and UNHCR, and how to obtain legal assistance and representation.⁵⁵⁶

In practice, respondents reported that there is no specifically tailored information provided to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. They are informed in the same way as adults, while they are also informed that they will have a legal representative. In general, unaccompanied children do not understand what this means. UNHCR also stated that there is a lack of accessible and adequate information materials for asylum-seeking children, child-friendly materials being an option.

The information has to be provided in writing by the official responsible for receiving the asylum application, according to a template established by order of the Director-General of IGI.⁵⁵⁷ Where necessary for the proper understanding of the information, this may also be communicated orally at the preliminary interview.⁵⁵⁸

Since 2022, information materials were made available in all reception centers about rights and obligations that are provided immediately to the asylum seekers, verbally and in writing, when they are accommodated in the centre, with the support of available interpreters and by distributing leaflets/informative materials into the mother tongue. Information on the rights and obligations is also displayed in the interior of each centre in several languages (IGI-DAI⁵⁵⁹ did not provide further details). According to CNRR the information is provided both verbally and by distributing leaflets available in languages such as English, French, Turkish, Ukrainian, Arab, Urdu, Pashto.⁵⁶⁰ The IGI-DAI staff make an overall presentation of the information, further details are provided by the NGO staff present in each centre.⁵⁶¹

The modalities of information in the different Regional Centres were: **In practice**, respondents reported that there is no specifically tailored information provided to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. They are informed in the same way as adults, while they are also informed that they will have a legal representative. **In general**, unaccompanied children do not understand what this means. UNHCR also stated that there is a lack of accessible and adequate information materials for asylum-seeking children. UNHCR has sought to address this challenge by developing child-friendly materials and making them available in reception centres.⁵⁶²

In 2024 according to CNRR, asylum seekers received a list of rights and obligations from IGI immediately upon applying for asylum. In addition to the information provided by IGI officers, CNRR counsellors distributed leaflets on the asylum procedure in multiple relevant languages. Informational videos about the asylum process were also shown in the Regional Centres. In practice, the main challenge in providing information to asylum seekers is still the language barrier. However, when it comes to legal assistance,

⁵⁵⁵ Article 17(1)(f) Asylum Act.

⁵⁵⁶ Article 2(2) Asylum Decree.

⁵⁵⁷ Article 2(1) Asylum Decree.

⁵⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁵⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁵⁶⁰ Consiliul Național Român pentru Refugiați (CNRR), 'Useful materials', webpage, available [here](#).

⁵⁶¹ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

⁵⁶² Information provided by UNHCR in March 2025.

CNRR ensures that counselling is always conducted with the help of an interpreter.⁵⁶³ According to a JRS representative in Galați, in 2024 information was conveyed both orally and through leaflets by staff from NGOs involved in asylum seeker support projects, such as CNRR and the ICAR Foundation. Additionally, IGI officers provided both individual and group information sessions for the benefit of asylum seekers.⁵⁶⁴

1.2 Information on the Dublin procedure

IGI-DAI has the obligation to inform the asylum seeker of the content of the common leaflet drawn up by the European Commission.⁵⁶⁵ The competent officer of IGI-DAI communicates the information contained in the common leaflet, drawn up according to Article 4(3) of the Dublin Regulation.⁵⁶⁶ If the applicant is an unaccompanied minor, the designated officer shall provide them, in a manner appropriate to their level of understanding, with the information contained in the special information leaflet drawn up by the European Commission, complemented through additional specific information for Romania.

IGI-DAI⁵⁶⁷ stated in 2023 that the asylum seekers receive information about the Dublin procedure and that there is available a brochure in 15 languages (no further details were provided).

According to CNRR, in 2024 a Common Information Brochure developed by the European Commission, in accordance with Article 4(3) of the Dublin Regulation, was provided to asylum seekers when they submit their application. This brochure, which includes additional details specific to Romania, is signed on the first page, with a copy retained in the applicant's file. Additionally, a second brochure was available with information specifically adapted for unaccompanied minors, in which case the first page of this brochure is signed by a DGASPC representative, and the content must be explained to the minor in a way that aligns with their level of understanding by the official at the authority where the application was registered, as required by Article 118. A third brochure was issued when an individual is subject to the Dublin procedure. Alongside CNRR's leaflets on the asylum process, information on the Dublin procedure was also provided in multiple relevant languages.⁵⁶⁸

In 2024 according to JRS Romania representatives in Galați, asylum seekers were repeatedly informed about Dublin Regulation provisions and the consequences of traveling to other EU member states. They were made aware that if they move to another EU country, they will be returned to Romania, where they initially filed their asylum application. This information was conveyed both by IGI authorities and by NGOs involved in asylum seeker support projects.⁵⁶⁹

2. Access to NGOs and UNHCR

Indicators: Access to NGOs and UNHCR

1. Do asylum seekers located at the border have effective access to NGOs and UNHCR if they wish so in practice? ☐ Yes ☒ With difficulty ☐ No
2. Do asylum seekers in detention centres have effective access to NGOs and UNHCR if they wish so in practice? ☐ Yes ☒ With difficulty ☐ No
3. Do asylum seekers accommodated in remote locations on the territory (excluding borders) have effective access to NGOs and UNHCR if they wish so in practice?

⁵⁶³ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁵⁶⁴ Information provided by JRS representative in Galati in February 2025.

⁵⁶⁵ Article 118 Asylum Act.

⁵⁶⁶ *ibid.* Article 118(1).

⁵⁶⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁵⁶⁸ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁵⁶⁹ Information provided in February 2025. Available [here](#) on CNRR website.

☐ Yes ☒ With difficulty ☐ No

According to the Asylum Act, asylum seekers located at the border or in detention centres have the right to be counselled and assisted by a representative from non-governmental Romanian or foreign organisations and to contact and receive assistance from an official of UNHCR at any stage of the asylum procedure.

In practice, asylum seekers located at the border have difficulties in accessing NGO services and assistance. Access depends on whether the Border Police or IGI-DAI inform the NGOs of the presence of asylum seekers at the border-crossing check points. In relation to asylum seekers detained in detention centres, access to such services is not systematically ensured as NGOs, namely CNRR, do not have regular office hours in these centres.

In practice, asylum seekers residing outside reception centres often face difficulties accessing NGOs. Their access largely depends on word-of-mouth information shared within the community, as well as the availability of contact details exchanged at the time of their asylum claim or during the integration programme. NGOs typically maintain a stronger presence within the reception centres, which makes access more limited for those living independently. While immigration authorities may refer individuals to NGOs when they apply for asylum or enter the integration programme, this referral does not systematically reach all those living in the community.

In 2024, UNHCR Romania was contacted by the asylum seekers accommodated in one of the Regional Centres through their implementing partner CNRR or directly via email, phone or walk-in interviews at its office.

B. Differential treatment of specific nationalities in the procedure

Indicators: Treatment of Specific Nationalities

1. Are applications from specific nationalities considered manifestly well-founded? ☐ Yes ☒ No
 ❖ If yes, specify which:
2. Are applications from specific nationalities considered manifestly unfounded?⁵⁷⁰ ☐ Yes ☒ No

In the case of Syrian asylum seekers, in 2023, according to IGI-DAI, 748 applications were admitted and the asylum seekers were granted a form of protection (605 in Bucharest, 60 in Galati, 12 in Giurgiu, 10 in Rădăuți, 21 in Șomcuta Mare, 40 in Timisoara) and 377 applications rejected (287 in Bucharest, 183 in Galati, 51 in Giurgiu, 8 in Rădăuți, 130 in Șomcuta Mare, 5 in Timișoara).⁵⁷¹ No updates available for 2024.

At the end of 2024, CNRR observed an administrative suspension in the processing of asylum applications submitted by Syrian nationals. Asylum requests based on economic grounds—primarily from applicants from Nepal, India, and Bangladesh—as well as those involving individuals deemed a potential risk to national security, were prioritized and rejected through the accelerated procedure.⁵⁷²

The most frequently granted form of protection in 2024 was subsidiary protection, with the primary beneficiaries being Sudanese citizens, followed by Syrians and Palestinians. Refugee status was granted in fewer cases, mainly to applicants from Palestine, Pakistan, Uganda, Cameroon, and Syria. In these cases, protection was granted both during the administrative process and through judicial decisions.⁵⁷³

⁵⁷⁰ Whether under the “safe country of origin” concept or otherwise.

⁵⁷¹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁵⁷² Information provided by CNRR in February 2024.

⁵⁷³ *ibid.*

Reception Conditions

Short overview of the reception system

Asylum seekers who do not have means of subsistence are entitled to reception conditions from the moment they have expressed their intention to apply for asylum until the completion of the asylum procedure and the expiry of their right to stay in Romania. Most asylum seekers are accommodated in Regional Centres for Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers, managed by IGI-DAI. The management of reception is decentralised to the level of counties. Asylum seekers may also request to stay in private accommodation, but at their own expenses.

In 2024, the EUAA initiated the deployment to the Romanian national reception authorities of 71 containers for asylum and reception use, other than accommodation.⁵⁷⁴

A. Access and forms of reception conditions

1. Criteria and restrictions to access reception conditions

Indicators: Criteria and Restrictions to Reception Conditions

1. Does the law allow access to material reception conditions to asylum seekers in the following stages of the asylum procedure?

❖ Regular procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced material conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> No
❖ Dublin procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced material conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> No
❖ Admissibility procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced material conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> No
❖ Border procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced material conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> No
❖ Accelerated procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced material conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> No
❖ First appeal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced material conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> No
❖ Onward appeal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced material conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> No
❖ Subsequent application	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced material conditions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

2. Is there a requirement in the law that only asylum seekers who lack resources are entitled to material reception conditions? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Asylum seekers who do not have means of subsistence are entitled to reception conditions from the moment they have expressed their intention to apply for asylum until the completion of the asylum procedure and the expiry of their right to stay in Romania.⁵⁷⁵ In 2023, legislative amendments were made to Law No. 122/2006, Article 17, paragraph (1), letter b, which provides for the right to remain in Romania until the asylum procedure is completed. Accelerated and border procedures are concluded from the date of delivery of the court's decision if an appeal has been lodged, or from the expiration of the deadline for filing the appeal.⁵⁷⁶ In the Dublin procedure the right to remain on the territory of Romania ceases on the date of the transfer.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁴ Information provided by the EUAA, 14 March 2025.

⁵⁷⁵ Article 56(6) Asylum Decree.

⁵⁷⁶ Article 17(7) Asylum Act.

⁵⁷⁷ *ibid.* Article 17(1)(a).

Subsequent applicants do not have the right to access material reception conditions.⁵⁷⁸

At the time of submission of an application for material reception conditions and whenever necessary, IGI-DAI shall analyse the provision of material reception conditions on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the material and financial means possessed by the applicant.⁵⁷⁹ If IGI-DAI finds that the applicant has the means to ensure an adequate standard of living and can contribute to the costs of material reception conditions and health care, it may suspend the granting of material reception conditions and may require reimbursement and impose future contribution to those costs.⁵⁸⁰

According to the law, applicants are entitled to reception conditions from the moment they express the intention to seek asylum. In the past, there have been reports of cases in which access to accommodation was only granted at the moment of registration of the asylum claim.

In 2022-2023, a mono-parental family was hosted in Somaschi Foundation. From February 2023, JRS helped them with the rent costs through the AMIF project, financed by IGI.⁵⁸¹ No new cases were reported in 2024.

Since 9 March 2022, when the Romanian government lifted all COVID-19 restrictions, there have been no restrictions or measures imposed in the regional centres, according to the directors of the centres.

By 16 February 2023, at the ITPF Timișoara there were four shipping containers where asylum seekers were accommodated, and two mobile toilets placed in the inner courtyard of the institution. One of these containers was presented to the author. It had eight bunk beds, without mattresses and a broken fan heater. The representatives of ITPF stated that the mattresses were taken out for cleaning. They also declared that these containers had not been used since December 2022; they are only used when there is a group of 10-20 people waiting for their interview and registration process. In the first trimester of 2022, ITPF Timișoara had to process groups of 10-12 persons. In 2024, the containers were used as offices by Frontex and EUAA in Timisoara Reception Centre and the main pavilion building is used for accommodating asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection.⁵⁸²

Asylum seekers transferred from Timișoara received the financial allowance prior to transfer only if they had stayed in the centre for a longer period. Those who were transferred within a matter of days were scheduled to receive the financial support at the destination reception centre. Those who were transferred soon after their arrival, they were only fingerprinted in Timisoara reception centre. The financial allowance is provided twice per month on the first and 15 of the month. Therefore, asylum seekers present in the centre at these dates received the financial allowance.⁵⁸³

According to JRS, in 2024 asylum seekers were usually penalized by warnings or financially for violating the regulations within the CRPCSA Galati, by reducing the amount received as material aid from the IGI (e.g. They were not paid for the days when they refused to contribute to the cleaning of the centre). If the asylum seeker's behaviour was particularly serious or a repetition of the violation of the rules was found, temporary or permanent eviction from the centre may have been applied as sanction. For unexcused absence from the centre, eviction was applied as well.⁵⁸⁴

2. Forms and levels of material reception conditions

Indicators: Forms and Levels of Material Reception Conditions

⁵⁷⁸ *ibid.* Article 88^1.

⁵⁷⁹ Article 55(8) Asylum Decree.

⁵⁸⁰ *ibid.*

⁵⁸¹ Experience of JRS Romania, April 2024.

⁵⁸² Information from JRS Romania provided in July 2025.

⁵⁸³ *ibid.*

⁵⁸⁴ Information provided in February 2025.

1. Amount of the monthly financial allowance/vouchers granted to asylum seekers as of 1 June 2024(in original currency and in €): 960 RON / € 195

According to IGI, in 2023, 6,638 asylum seekers benefitted from financial allowances.⁵⁸⁵ For 2024, in the Regional Centres for Procedures and Accommodation of Asylum Seekers, financial aid was granted to 2,463 asylum seekers (894 - Bucharest, 1014 - Timisoara, 191 - Galati, 148- Radauti, 66 -Maramures, 150-Giurgiu). Financial aid is provided through government funds.⁵⁸⁶

Reception conditions consist of accommodation in one of the reception centres; financial allowance for food and clothing; and pocket money.

According to CNRR,⁵⁸⁷ in practice, there are a series of challenges that asylum seekers face in accessing their socio-economic rights. The most important is the language barrier. Moreover, the procedures for accessing national public health programs, health insurance, applying for social benefits (unemployment or child allowance), school enrolment, are characterised by heavy bureaucratic procedures that are very difficult to navigate without any guidance or assistance. Public institutions services are also not adapted to the specific needs of asylum seekers, the public servants are not aware of the legislation in this field and therefore their access to these rights is oftentimes denied requiring direct interventions from NGOs.

Allowance for food / clothing and pocket money

Asylum seekers are entitled to receive, upon request, the following allowances, which were doubled as of 27 February 2022:⁵⁸⁸

- ❖ Food daily allowance of 20 RON / € 4.08 from 10 RON / € 2.08 per person;
- ❖ Clothing one-off allowance of 135 RON/ € 27.55 from 67 RON / €13.95 per person during summer and 200 RON/ € 40.81 from 100 RON / € 20.83 per person during winter;
- ❖ Pocket money of 12 RON/ € 2.45 from 6 RON / € 1.25 per day per person for other expenses such as local transport expenses, cultural services, press, repair and maintenance services and personal hygiene products expenses.

There were no available reports of lack of or difficulty in accessing public funds (local, national or EU funds) hampering or limiting the provision of reception conditions in 2023 and 2024.

Monthly amounts of financial allowances for different categories of applicants are as follows:⁵⁸⁹

Monthly amount of financial allowances for asylum seekers	
Category	Amount of allowances
Single adults	960 RON / €195
Pregnant women in months 1-4 Ill persons upon admission to infirmary	1,140 RON / €232
Pregnant women in months 5-9 Women giving birth who do not breastfeed	1,200 RON / €244
Women giving birth who breast feed Children aged 0-5 months	1,260 RON / €256
Children aged 6-12 months	1,380 RON / €280

⁵⁸⁵ Ministry of Interior Affairs, *PROGRAMUL NAȚIONAL 2021-2027 AZIL MIGRAȚIE ȘI INTEGRARE - GHIDUL SPECIFIC aferent apelului de proiecte*, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁵⁸⁶ Inspectorate General for Immigration (IGI), Reply on the 2024 AIDA country report on Romania, 14 August 2025..

⁵⁸⁷ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024, 2023*, available [here](#).

⁵⁸⁸ Article 55(1) Asylum Decree, modified by Decision 277 of 27 February 2022.

⁵⁸⁹ *ibid.* Article 55(2) a-g.

In general, the financial allowance is sufficient to ensure a decent living. In cases of families, all the members are entitled to receive the financial allowance.

In comparison, Romanian nationals with low-income benefit from social assistance,⁵⁹⁰ heating assistance⁵⁹¹ and a family allowance.⁵⁹² Romanian nationals – families and single persons – are entitled to a minimum guaranteed income as a form of social assistance.⁵⁹³ The monthly minimum guaranteed income is determined based on the social reference indicator (*indicator social de referinta*, ISR) set by law at 500 RON / €100. Starting March 2024, ISR was increased to 660 RON/ ~132 EUR⁵⁹⁴

Monthly amount of minimum guaranteed income		
Category	Percentage ISR	Amount
Single adults	28.3%	187 RON / € 37.5
Family of two	51%	337 RON / € 67.7
Family of three	71.4%	471 RON / € 94.6
Family of four	88.4%	584 RON/ € 117.3
Family of five	105.4%	696 RON / € 139.8

In addition, the State affords an allowance for all children, including nationals and non-nationals, up to the age of 18.⁵⁹⁵ This type of financial allowance is complementary to other forms of material support afforded by the State. The level of the state child allowance is determined by the ISR and amounts to:⁵⁹⁶ 719 RON / €159 for children up to the age of 2, or 3 in case of a disabled child; 292 RON / € 64.5 for children between the age 2 and 18;⁵⁹⁷

Even though a comparison between financial assistance granted to nationals and asylum seekers is difficult to make due to the diversity of available allowances and the applicable calculation modes, asylum seekers are not treated less favourably than nationals as far as material support is concerned. They also benefit from other financial allowances than the ones provided by the Asylum Act, such as the allowance for children and they are also entitled to receive social assistance under the conditions provided by Act292/2011 on Social Assistance, as amended.⁵⁹⁸

According to IGI-DAI, in 2024, measures to limit or withdraw material reception conditions were applied to 130 persons accommodated in the regional centres. IGI-DAI mentioned that they do not have statistics for this category.⁵⁹⁹ In 2024 no information is available regarding the number of measures applied by IGI-DAI.

Accommodation allowance where reception capacity is exceeded.

A new form of reception conditions was included by the 2015 reform. When the capacity in the reception centres for asylum seekers is exceeded, IGI-DAI may grant asylum seekers an accommodation allowance for the purpose of renting a house or contracting specialised services for the reception and

⁵⁹⁰ Act 416/2001 on Minimum Guaranteed Income, available at [here](#).

⁵⁹¹ Emergency Government Ordinance 70/2011 on social protection measures during the cold season, available [here](#).

⁵⁹² Act 277/2010 on Family Allowance, available [here](#).

⁵⁹³ Article 1(1) -(2) Act 416/2001 on Minimum Guaranteed Income.

⁵⁹⁴ Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity (Romania), ‘*Alocațiile de stat pentru copii, majorate din luna ianuarie*’ [press release], 4 January 2024, available [here](#).

⁵⁹⁵ Article 1 Act 61/1993 on the State Child Allowance.

⁵⁹⁶ *ibid.* Article 3.

⁵⁹⁷ Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity (Romania), ‘*Alocațiile de stat pentru copii, majorate din luna ianuarie*’ [press release], 4 January 2024, available [here](#).

⁵⁹⁸ Article 17(1) (n^o1) Asylum Act.

⁵⁹⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

accommodation of asylum seekers in individual or collective locations, within the limits of the available funds.⁶⁰⁰This form of reception conditions has never been applied to date.

In these situations, IGI-DAI may provide, upon request, material assistance amounting to the following monthly sums per person: rental assistance of 808 RON / €165; and maintenance assistance of 145 RON / €29.59 during the summer season and 185 RON / €37.75 during the winter season. In the case of a two-member household, the monthly amount paid to a person for rental decreases by 30%. In the case of households consisting of three or more members, the amount granted monthly to a person for rental decreases by 40%.⁶⁰¹

This material assistance shall be granted in the first month after the filing of the application, without the need for the submission of supporting documents for the rental. However, for the second month the submission of these documents is mandatory. If the requested documents are not submitted by the second month, the grant is suspended.

Reimbursement of expenses related to travel

Asylum seekers also have the right to reimbursement, upon request, of transport costs associated with their court proceedings, if the judicial process takes place in a different area than the one where they are residing, and if transport is carried out by road, rail or ferry.⁶⁰²

The reimbursement of transport expenses is made on the basis of a request filed by the asylum seeker, together with travel tickets, filed within 5 working days from the date of the court hearing at the Regional Centre where the asylum seeker is accommodated. The reimbursement is made after checks have been carried out in order to certify the presence of the asylum seeker in court.⁶⁰³

The Asylum Decree refers particularly to asylum seekers accommodated in Șomcuta Mare and Rădăuți, since the competent courts for onward appeals (see [Regular Procedure: Appeal](#)) are located in a different city than the one where the Regional Centres are located; respectively Baia-Mare and Suceava. The policy of reimbursement is applied in practice.

IGI-DAI may also involve asylum seekers in activities related to the maintenance or redevelopment of the interior and exterior spaces of Regional Centres, or support to the centre staff in information and counselling activities.⁶⁰⁴ Asylum seekers who perform this kind of activity benefit from an additional allowance for food of 10 RON / €2 per day.⁶⁰⁵

In 2022 according to the director of Timișoara centre, the majority of asylum seekers were transferred before they received financial aid, especially in the last part of 2022, when asylum seekers were transferred in a maximum of three days after their arrival. This was also confirmed by the directors from the other centres. Based on the financial assessment made in Timișoara; asylum seekers received the financial aid in the destination centre, according to the director of Timișoara. It was reported by the CNRR representative in Giurgiu, that asylum seekers receive the financial aid a week after their arrival at the centre, as the assessment of their financial situation has to be approved in Bucharest, as Giurgiu centre is not a financial controller. In Galati asylum seekers are granted the aid within 3 days. In practice, the reimbursement policy could not be applied in the case of Șomcuta Mare due to the fact that there is no public transportation to Baia Mare. Applicants have to hitch hike to go to the court.⁶⁰⁶

⁶⁰⁰ Article 17(8) Asylum Act.

⁶⁰¹ Article 55(4) Asylum Decree, modified by Decision 91 of 19 January 2022.

⁶⁰² Article 17(1)(q) Asylum Act.

⁶⁰³ Article 56(2[^]1) Asylum Decree.

⁶⁰⁴ *ibid.* Article 55(9).

⁶⁰⁵ *ibid.* Article 55(10).

⁶⁰⁶ Experience based observation by JRS Romania, April 2024.

Material and financial assistance from NGOs

In 2022 and 2023 (until October), in addition to the material reception conditions afforded by IGI-DAI, asylum seekers also benefit from material assistance provided by NGOs, mainly under AMIF; however, this was not provided in 2024, due to gap in implemented projects on social assistance for asylum-seekers.

3. Reduction or withdrawal of reception conditions

Indicators: Reduction or Withdrawal of Reception Conditions

1. Does the law provide for the possibility to reduce material reception conditions?
☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the law provide for the possibility to withdraw material reception conditions?
☒ Yes ☐ No

IGI-DAI may limit or withdraw the material reception conditions granted to asylum seekers by a reasoned decision communicated to the applicant. The Asylum Act provides that the grounds for which material reception conditions may be limited or withdrawn are to be determined by a Government decision.⁶⁰⁷ Accordingly, these are laid down in the Asylum Decree.

IGI-DAI may limit or withdraw the material reception conditions where the applicant:⁶⁰⁸

- ❖ Leaves the place of residence established for 72 hours without having previously informed the Regional Centre;
- ❖ Does not comply with the obligation to present themselves at the request of IGI-DAI in order to provide information or does not attend interviews notified to them;
- ❖ Repeatedly violates the house rules of the Regional Centres.

The law does not foresee any limitation on reception conditions due to large numbers of arrival. Where reception capacity is exhausted, IGI-DAI grants a specific allowance to asylum seekers to secure accommodation (see [Forms and Levels of Material Reception Conditions](#)).

More particularly as regards violations of house rules, Article 47 of the Regulation of Internal Order (ROI) prescribes the applicable sanctions in cases of disciplinary deviations, with the exception of applicants held in the specially designed closed spaces. The Director of the centre or their legal substitute shall apply individually, gradually and proportionally with the seriousness of the act, one of the following sanctions:

- ❖ Oral warning;
- ❖ Written warning;
- ❖ Suspension of the daily amount of 12RON for local transport expenses, cultural services, press, repair and maintenance services and expenses for personal hygiene products, for a period of 1-3 months;
- ❖ Temporary suspension from the centre for 24 hours;
- ❖ Temporary suspension from the centre for 7 days;
- ❖ Eviction from the centre.

Decisions on reducing or withdrawing material reception conditions must be reasoned and taken on an individual basis, impartially and objectively.⁶⁰⁹ The decision is signed by the Director of the Regional Centre. However, potential risks of destitution following the withdrawal of reception conditions are not assessed.

⁶⁰⁷ Article 19[^]1(1) Asylum Act.

⁶⁰⁸ Article 55[^]1 Asylum Decree.

⁶⁰⁹ *ibid.* Article 55[^]1(3).

That these measures remain in place has been confirmed for the year 2023 by IGI-DAI, who stated that they can be ordered according to the provisions of Article 47 of the Regulation of Internal Order (ROI) as indicated above.⁶¹⁰ However, IGI-DAI did not provide information as to practice in 2023 and 2024.

According to IGI-DAI, 9,462 eviction notices were taken in 2022,⁶¹¹ compared to 1099 in 2021⁶¹², 803 in 2020⁶¹³ and 639 in 2019.⁶¹⁴ IGI-DAI stated that these eviction notices were issued for asylum seekers who left the centre without a formal request for more than 72 hours. Of the total number of decisions 3,350 were issued for Ukrainians who were accommodated in the centres. There was no available data for 2024.

Bucharest	Timișoara	Galați	Rădăuți	Șomcuta Mare	Giurgiu	Total
328	2630	886	3728	814	1074	9,462

Source: IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

The decisions to withdraw reception conditions were taken either because the asylum seekers left the reception centre without prior notification or they failed to observe the ROI.⁶¹⁵

The sanction imposed was suspension of the daily amount of 12 RON for local transport expenses, cultural services, press, repair and maintenance services and expenses for personal hygiene products, for a period of 1-3 months.⁶¹⁶

The decision on reduction or withdrawal of reception conditions may be challenged, subject to the rules applicable in the Accelerated Procedure: Appeal.⁶¹⁷ In 2019, the first and only appeal was drafted, but the applicant did not lodge it. In 2022, no decision to withdraw or reduce the reception conditions was challenged, while there is no information for 2023 and 2024.

According to CNRR, unlike in 2023, no applicants in 2024 have reported the suspension of the 12 RON/day allowance or any other reduction or withdrawal of reception conditions. In the previous year, for instance, this financial support—intended for transportation, cultural services, and other expenses—was no longer granted to asylum seekers who had been rehoused after eviction (such as in cases where they left the centre without approval for three or more consecutive days).⁶¹⁸

Based on observed practices, the most common disciplinary measures are verbal and written warnings. Regional Centres regularly organize information sessions for accommodated individuals, attended by integration officers, NGO representatives, medical staff, logistics department officers and contract employees, PCA officers, psychologists, and EUAA interpreters. These sessions cover topics such as hygiene and sanitary regulations, financial aid provided by the IGI, and room re-compartmentalization.⁶¹⁹

Additionally, if an applicant has received financial aid in advance but is later found to have sufficient financial resources (exceeding the threshold of 32 RON/day), they are required to return the amount received. Notably, no applicants have reported any reduction in the hygiene products distributed to them monthly.⁶²⁰

⁶¹⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁶¹¹ *ibid.* 22 February 2023.

⁶¹² *ibid.* 10 March 2022.

⁶¹³ *ibid.* 16 February 2022.

⁶¹⁴ *ibid.* 20 February 2020.

⁶¹⁵ *ibid.* 10 March 2022.

⁶¹⁶ *ibid.*

⁶¹⁷ Article 19^1(1) Asylum Act.

⁶¹⁸ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁶¹⁹ *ibid.*

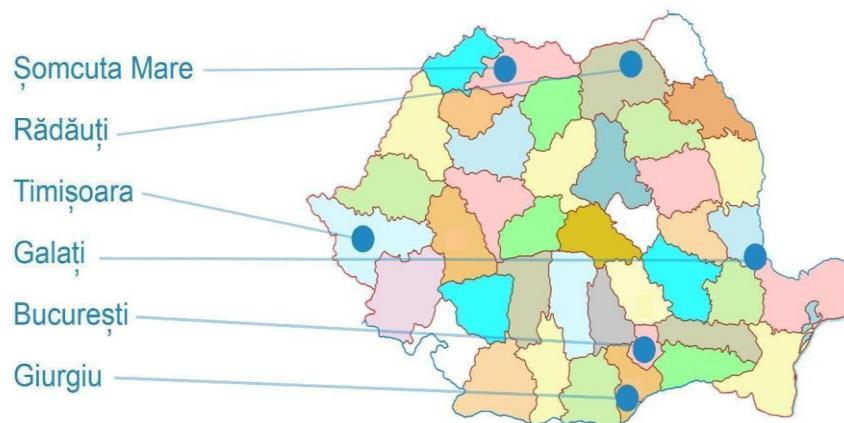
⁶²⁰ *ibid.*

4. Freedom of movement

Indicators: Freedom of Movement

1. Is there a mechanism for the dispersal of applicants across the territory of the country?
☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the law provide for restrictions on freedom of movement? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Asylum seekers are allocated to a specific reception facility through a dispersal scheme operated by IGI-DAI. The Regional Centres for Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers are located in the following areas:



Source: AIDRom, Support for asylum seekers in Romania available [here](#).

According to the Asylum Act, asylum seekers are not allowed to leave their place of residence without authorisation from IGI-DAI.⁶²¹ The request to leave the residence has to include the address, the full name of the person with whom the applicant will be staying and the period of time and reasons for their request to leave.⁶²² Authorisation is issued following an individual, objective and impartial assessment. In case IGI-DAI refuses to grant authorisation, its decision shall be motivated.⁶²³

The provision of material conditions is subject to the applicant's actual residence in the assigned centre. This is monitored by IGI-DAI through its database. If an applicant leaves the Regional Centre without permission and does not return in 72 hours, IGI-DAI may apply [Reduction or Withdrawal of Reception Conditions](#).

According to CNRR,⁶²⁴ persons in the centres have freedom of movement, but they need the approval of the management staff in case of long absence (more than 1 day). All the asylum seekers have to notify IGI regarding any residency change.

Transfers between centres

While in previous years, applicants were transferred from Timișoara to other Regional Centres due to limited capacity, starting from April 2022 around 70-80% of asylum seekers were transferred to other centres within two to three days of their arrival. As of June 2022, by order of the general inspector of IGI,

⁶²¹ Article 19(g) Asylum Act.

⁶²² Article 7 Asylum Decree.

⁶²³ Article 19(g) Asylum Act.

⁶²⁴ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024, 2023*, available [here](#).

all asylum seekers from Timișoara centre were transferred. According to the Director of the Regional Centre of Timișoara and NGO representatives, asylum seekers are not informed beforehand about the transfers. IGI-DAI officers jointly with the special police forces/gendarmes wake them up on the morning of the transfer. No problems were reported with regards to the transfer process. In 2024, according to JRS Romania, transfers between regional centres were carried out, including from Timișoara to Bucharest, Rădăuți, Giurgiu, and Șomcuta Mare. Additionally, vulnerable cases were relocated from Bucharest to Galați due to renovation works at the Bucharest centre. However, no precise figures are available regarding the total number of transfers conducted during the year.⁶²⁵

According to the director of Timișoara, food packages were not offered to asylum seekers when they were transferred to other centres in the second half of 2022. An AIDRom representative stated that there were moments when asylum seekers did not receive transfer packages, as there were more than 1,000 asylum applicants transferred in 2022 and only 385 transfer packages foreseen in the implemented project. In 2024 social assistance was affected by the gaps of AMIF funds.

According to the AIDRom representative, in 2022 asylum seekers were informed on the spot by the integration officer and AIDRom representative. An information note, written in Romanian and English, was given to the asylum seekers on the day of the transfer. In general, transfers were conducted once a week. AIDRom assisted to the transfer procedure and provided them with packages.

From June 2022 until 25 February 2023, another order of the general inspector of IGI was given to transfer asylum seekers from one regional centre to another in order to hinder contact with smugglers. The transfer procedure was described by the director of Galați centre as follows.

The asylum seeker was transferred from the centre where the asylum claim was made in a maximum three days; in the next centre the preliminary interview was conducted within another three days; in seven days from the arrival in the second centre, the asylum seeker was transferred to a third centre where the personal interview was conducted. After a maximum of seven days the person was again transferred to a fourth centre where the decision was communicated. If the decision was not issued and communicated within seven days, the applicant was subject to another transfer. This chain of transfers stopped when an administrative decision was issued as the appeal was assessed by the Regional Court with jurisdiction in the locality where the regional centre was located.

In 2022 CNRR reported that this measure was not entirely effective. From the practice encountered by the CNRR legal counsellors, due to this practice the asylum procedure tended to be more difficult, applicants were less cooperative because of the length of the asylum procedure. Moreover, the legal counsellor in Timișoara centre noticed that the human trafficking networks were still widespread, and the asylum seekers remained in contact with the smugglers, who were well aware of this chain of transfers.⁶²⁶ In 2022 the director of Galați centre also mentioned that this measure entailed a lot of human and financial resources.

While the capacity of Tudor Gociu centre is 96 places, during 2022 the capacity was reduced to 25 and even to 10 places by order of the general inspector. When this occurred, asylum seekers were transferred to Giurgiu centre. According to CNRR, the asylum seekers returned and remained in Bucharest. The asylum seekers declared that they wanted to stay in Bucharest as they were already integrated there, and it would be difficult for them to find a job and housing in Giurgiu. They lived in private accommodation or with friends from their community. They were afforded material assistance from Giurgiu centre.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁵ Information provided by JRS Romania, July 2025.

⁶²⁶ Information provided by CNRR, 7 February 2023.

⁶²⁷ *ibid.* 8 March 2023.

The ITPF Timișoara representatives reported in 2022 that to discourage Timișoara being an intermediary stop, the Border Police jointly with IGI and the Gendarmerie conducted raids twice a day at the usual meeting places of migrants.

IGI-DAI highlighted that in 2023, 3,901 asylum seekers were transferred between the regional centres, and that the main purpose of the transfers was to maintain a balance from the perspective of accommodation and processing of asylum applications between the regional centres.⁶²⁸

CNRR⁶²⁹ stated that in 2023 the following issues were identified concerning asylum seekers temporarily accommodated in the Timișoara regional centre and then transferred to other regional centres. Because in many cases transfers from Timișoara are made within 24-48 hours of arrival in this centre, asylum seekers were not offered food, hygiene material, clothing, shoes. The only support for those transferred within a short period of time was food offered from donations by NGOs and transfer packages offered by AIDROM within the project the organisation had implemented. Between June-December 2023, AIDROM implemented the project “Information, counselling and comprehensive assistance for asylum seekers in the regional centres of the General Inspectorate for Immigration”, a project financed by UNHCR. Within this project, transfer packages were provided to asylum seekers that were transferred from one centre to another. Transfer packages consisted of food, water, towels, etc.

Restrictive measures

According to IGI-DAI, in 2022, 208 decisions assigning a specific residence,⁶³⁰ reception centres, for the asylum seekers, were taken, in line with article 19(4) of the Asylum Act, compared to 26 decisions taken in 2020.⁶³¹

In 2023, according to IGI-DAI data, there were situations when restrictive measures were imposed on asylum seekers:⁶³²

- ❖ There were no such measures ordered with regard to the Galați centre;
- ❖ 9 measures mandating that the person present themselves at the centre, in the context of the Dublin procedure, and 25 measures establishing residence in the centre, were ordered at the Timișoara centre;
- ❖ 32 measures mandating that the person present themselves at the IGI-DAI Giurgiu, in the context of the Dublin procedures, and 431 orders establishing residence in the centre, were ordered at the Giurgiu centre;
- ❖ 19 orders establishing residence in the centre, were ordered at the Bucharest centre;
- ❖ Residence was established at the Șomcuta Mare centre in 367 cases.
- ❖ Residence was established at the Rădăuți centre in 367 cases.

According to IGI-DAI, in 2024, 128 decisions assigning a specific residence, reception centres, for the asylum seekers, were taken, in line with article 19(4) of the Asylum Act, a reduced number compared to previous years.⁶³³

⁶²⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁶²⁹ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024

⁶³⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 10 March 2022.

⁶³¹ *ibid.* 20 February 2020.

⁶³² *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

⁶³³ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

B. Housing

1. Types of accommodation

Indicators: Types of Accommodation

1. Number of reception centres: 6
2. Total number of places in the reception system: 1,100
3. Total number of places in private accommodation: Not available
4. Type of accommodation most frequently used in a regular procedure:
☒ Reception centre ☐ Hotel or hostel ☐ Emergency shelter ☐ Private housing ☐ Other
5. Type of accommodation most frequently used in an accelerated procedure:
☒ Reception centre ☐ Hotel or hostel ☐ Emergency shelter ☐ Private housing ☐ Other

Most asylum seekers are accommodated in Regional Centres for Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers, managed by IGI-DAI. The management of reception is decentralised to the level of counties.

IGI-DAI confirmed that no new accommodation centres for applicants seeking international protection were established in 2024. Currently, IGI oversees six Regional Centres for Asylum Seekers' Procedures and Accommodation, located in Timișoara, Șomcuta Mare (Maramureș County), Rădăuți (Suceava County), Galați, Giurgiu, and Bucharest. These centres provide housing for individuals who have applied for protection in Romania, upon request, for the duration of their right to remain in the country, provided they lack the financial means for self-sufficiency.⁶³⁴

The total accommodation capacity across these facilities is 1,100 places, with an additional expansion potential of 262 places. Furthermore, 166 places are available in specially designated closed spaces. Placement in these areas is strictly regulated and occurs only under the conditions expressly outlined in Article 19 of Law No. 122/2006 on Asylum in Romania.⁶³⁵

The capacity of the different Regional Centres operating across the country (see [Freedom of Movement](#)) is as follows:

Capacity and occupancy of the reception system: 2024		
Centre	Capacity	Asylum seekers accommodated throughout 2024
Timișoara	250	1226
Șomcuta Mare	100	126
Rădăuți	130	141
Galați	200	225
Bucharest	320	290
Giurgiu	100	122
Total	1,100	2,156

Source: IGI-DAI, January 2025.

⁶³⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

⁶³⁵ *ibid.*

Note on the table: According to the IGI 2024 report, the accommodation capacity for asylum seekers has been significantly increased, particularly in the regional centres of Galați and Rădăuți. With support from the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) and external non-reimbursable funding, a total of 540 new places were added in 2024: 240 at the Centre for Accommodation of Foreigners in Public Custody in Arad and 300 in reception centres in 71 modular housing containers which were installed in the regional centres of Maramureș, Rădăuți, and Galați to improve reception infrastructure and prevent overcrowding.⁶³⁶ The General Inspectorate for Immigration reported having implemented an AMIF-funded project aimed at expanding the IGI's capacity to accommodate asylum seekers and modernizing the existing fencing in Galați, a project that aims to allocate space in containers/modular constructions on a metal frame of an administrative type, which will lead to an increase in accommodation capacity at the CRPCSA Galați by 300 places. Furthermore, future projects with non-reimbursable external funding aim to expand the accommodation capacity at the CRPCSA Timișoara by 100 places and at the CRPCSA Rădăuți by 100 places. At the same time, in the context of the implementation of the Operational Plan for technical and operational support granted to Romania by the European Union Agency for Asylum, modular constructions (containers) have been set up as workspaces at the CRPCSA Rădăuți, CRPCSA Galați, and CRPCSA Maramureș, which will increase the number of accommodation places by another 120 (CRPCSA Galați – 28, CRPCSA Rădăuți – 42, CRPCSA Maramureș – 50) as a result of the transfer of the workflow to these spaces.⁶³⁷

According to IGI-DAI, the capacity of each centre can be increased in case of need:

- ❖ Timișoara centre: the total capacity of the centre can be increased by 10 places;
- ❖ Șomcuta Mare: the total capacity of the centre can be increased by 100 places;
- ❖ Rădăuți: the total capacity of the centre can be increased by 20 places;
- ❖ Galați: the total capacity of the centre can be increased by 10 places;
- ❖ Bucharest: the total capacity of the centre can be increased by 52 places;
- ❖ Giurgiu: the total capacity of the centre can be increased by 70 places.

For information about regular transfers of asylum seekers between centres, see [Freedom of movement](#).

There has not been a situation to date whereby asylum seekers were left without accommodation due to a shortage of places in the reception centres.

Initially, under the AMIF program, IGI also aimed to expand the accommodation capacity by 500 places across three centres: Timișoara and Rădăuți with 100 places each, and Galați with 300 places. However, the planned construction works in Timișoara and Rădăuți were suspended due to a lawsuit filed by the contractor, who contested the contractual value of the construction works. This legal dispute delayed the implementation of the project in those two locations.

As a result of the increase of asylum applications made in Romania, IGI, in accordance with the Emergency Ordinance no. 38 of 10 May 2018, took over a public building, administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in order to convert it into an accommodation centre for asylum seekers. The building is located in Crevedia, Dâmbovița County and is intended to have a capacity of 500 places. However, no update regarding the status or progress of the centre was made publicly available in 2024, and it remains unclear whether the facility has become operational.

Asylum seekers may also request to stay in private accommodation at their own cost. In this case, they have to present to IGI-DAI a lease agreement registered with the tax authorities or a commodity contract concluded in authentic form. GI-DAI stated that for 2024 they do not have statistics on the distribution of the total number of residents by gender or on the total number of applicants for international protection living in private housing at the end of the year. Additionally, IGI does not provide private housing for applicants for international protection.⁶³⁸

⁶³⁶ According to the *Assessment of the activity of the general inspectorate for immigration in the year 2024* of the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI), published in April 2025, available [here](#).

⁶³⁷ Inspectorate General for Immigration (IGI), Reply on the 2024 AIDA country report on Romania, 14 August 2025.

⁶³⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

According to CNRR,⁶³⁹ in 2023, reception conditions and capacity remained stable. However, IGI reported that in 2024, accommodation capacity was expanded through several infrastructure improvements. In October 2023, the IGI regional centre for procedures and accommodation for asylum seekers in Bucharest was reopened after almost 2 years of rehabilitation. It has a capacity of 320 places. According to JRS Romania staff in 2024, the Bucharest reception centre on Vasile Stolnicu Street was fully operational and functioned normally.⁶⁴⁰ During these works, asylum seekers were temporarily accommodated to the General Inspectorate for Immigration premises where the asylum related procedures are carried out (interviews, applications registration etc.).

According to IGI-DAI⁶⁴¹ at the end of 2024 the situation was the following:

- Bucharest Reception Centre: 79 residents (61 asylum seekers and 18 beneficiaries of international protection) were accommodated on 31 December 2024.
- Galați Reception Centre: 24 residents (9 asylum seekers and 15 beneficiaries of international protection) were accommodated on 31 December 2024.
- Rădăuți Reception Centre: 6 residents (5 asylum seekers and 1 beneficiaries of international protection) were accommodated on 31 December 2024.
- Maramureș Reception Centre: 3 residents (2 asylum seekers and 1 beneficiaries of international protection) were accommodated on 31 December 2024.
- Timișoara Reception Centre: 32 residents (19 asylum seekers and 13 beneficiaries of international protection) were accommodated on 31 December 2024.
- Giurgiu Reception Centre: 24 residents (19 asylum seekers and 5 beneficiaries of international protection) were accommodated on 31 December 2024.

During the Romanian Ombudsman visits in the reception centres in 2022, the common problems identified were: some toilets and the kitchen (area to prepare the food) were in a poor state of cleanliness and hygiene, not enough specialised medical staff (e.g. medication for people with mental was distributed for several days without medical supervision). Asylum seekers are accommodated according to gender criteria, i.e. women and men, and unaccompanied minors are accommodated separately from adults.⁶⁴² Some problems were improved throughout the years and in 2024, following visits by the Romanian Ombudsperson to the Regional Centres for Accommodation and Procedures for Asylum Seekers (CRPCSA) in Timișoara and Șomcuta Mare, overall hygiene and accommodation conditions were found to be satisfactory, with gender and age-based separation properly ensured. However, a common concern identified in 2024 was the insufficient availability of specialized medical personnel, particularly for vulnerable individuals, alongside the need to improve interpretation support in psychological and medical services.⁶⁴³

⁶³⁹ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#).

⁶⁴⁰ Information provided by JRS Romania in January 2025.

⁶⁴¹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

⁶⁴² Ombudsman, Centres for migration 2022 reports, can be found [here](#).

⁶⁴³ Ombudsman, Centres for migration 2024 reports, can be found [here](#).

2. Conditions in reception facilities

Indicators: Conditions in Reception Facilities

1. Are there instances of asylum seekers not having access to reception accommodation because of a shortage of places? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. What is the average length of stay of asylum seekers in the reception centres? Not available
3. Are unaccompanied children ever accommodated with adults in practice? ☒ Yes⁶⁴⁴ ☐ No
4. Are single women and men accommodated separately? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Conditions in Regional Centres are monitored, *inter alia*, by the Ombudsman, who visits the centres on a regular basis. In 2022 the Ombudsman conducted monitoring visits in Bucuresti, Galati, Rădăuți, Șomcuta Mare and Giurgiu.⁶⁴⁵

According to the data provided by the Ombudsman, its representatives did not carry out monitoring visits to the IGI-DAI centres in 2023, but a visit was made to the Border Police Territorial Unit Calarasi on 6 January 2023 and certain problems were noted with regard to the screening/triage room (at the time of the visit, no person was kept in custody in this place). It is a room where migrants are taken after they are caught for trying to cross the border illegally. The following problems were identified concerning this room: there was no window allowing natural lighting, no heating source in the room and in the sanitary group, the nearest heating source was a radiator in the surveillance room used by the border police located next to that room. The Ombudsperson made recommendations for the rehabilitation of the triage room, the appropriate provision of furniture and sanitary facilities, the conclusion of a protocol of cooperation with a medical unit in order to comply with the procedure for the organisation and operation of the triage room in terms of medical assistance that need to be provided to persons kept in such a place.⁶⁴⁶

In 2024 the Ombudsman conducted monitoring visits in Rădăuți, Șomcuta Mare and Giurgiu. According to the Ombudsman's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), its teams paid four unannounced monitoring visits to IGI-DAI reception centres in 2024 – Giurgiu (30 January), Șomcuta Mare (30 May), Timișoara (3 July) and Rădăuți (19 July) – in order to check whether living conditions complied with OPCAT (Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment) safeguards. In Giurgiu, inspectors welcomed cleaner dormitories and new bedding but again found heavy cockroach infestation, stressing that repeated disinfection campaigns had failed. They also deplored the lack of ramps, lifts and adapted bathrooms, urging the centre to create at least one fully accessible room and sanitary block for people with reduced mobility.⁶⁴⁷

At Șomcuta Mare, 2024 the Ombudsman praised a refurbished kitchen but noted that crockery was still stored directly on the floor and ordered the installation of closed cupboards to improve hygiene. All shower cabins in that centre lacked privacy screens, and the NPM asked for curtains as well as at least one fully adapted room and bathroom for persons with disabilities.⁶⁴⁸

During the July 2024 mission to Timișoara, monitors again found cockroaches in several dormitories and a kitchen despite eight pests-control sessions, calling for stronger chemicals and closer hygiene oversight.

⁶⁴⁴ *Only unaccompanied children above the age of 16, who are accommodated in different rooms.

⁶⁴⁵ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁴⁶ Information provided by the Ombudsman, 9 January 2024.

⁶⁴⁷ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁴⁸ *ibid.*

They also recorded dirty walls and refrigerators in some rooms, concluding that daily cleaning routines were inconsistent and needed tighter supervision.⁶⁴⁹ During the visit in Rădăuți in 2024, the conditions had improved after renovations were conducted in 2023: bathrooms afforded privacy and the communal kitchen was newly equipped, yet the Ombudsman urged IGI to fill the remaining staff vacancies to ensure smooth running of services.⁶⁵⁰

Overall, the 2024 inspections show incremental progress – fresher facilities, some renovations and more staff – but persistent pest problems, sporadic hygiene lapses and limited accessibility continue to hold reception conditions below the safeguards the NPM expects for asylum-seekers.⁶⁵¹

2.1 State of the facilities

UNHCR mentioned that in 2023, they provided support to the IGI-DAI Reception and Accommodation Centres for Asylum Seekers, including through the donation of non-food items to the Reception Centres that requested it (e.g. water, hygiene kits, towels, blankets, clothing) as well as financing integration counsellors, employed with UNHCR's partner CNRR, at the reception centres. Additionally, through UNHCR's implementing partners AIDRom and CNRR, UNHCR supported the IGI-DAI by covering a gap in services which are usually covered through AMIF funding, relating to material assistance (welcome/installation packages for asylum-seekers arriving at IGI-DAI Reception Centres), legal assistance, information provision on social assistance and their rights in Romania, social counselling, organising socio-cultural, educational and recreational activities, such as Romanian language courses, for the asylum-seekers and refugees from the IGI-DAI's Reception Centres.⁶⁵²

Regarding the reception conditions, the Romanian Ombudsman has made a series of monitoring visits to the IGI procedures and accommodation centres for asylum seekers, the most recent ones are from 2022, in Giurgiu,⁶⁵³ Galați,⁶⁵⁴ Maramureș⁶⁵⁵ and Rădăuți,⁶⁵⁶ all reports were further accompanied by answers provided by the General Inspectorate for Immigration on measures conducted following the recommendations of the Ombudsman.⁶⁵⁷ Among the main issues identified in the reports are the following: insufficient centre staff (especially in the medical assistance department), lack of constant professional training for centre staff, inadequate hygienic-sanitary conditions, accommodation spaces that require improvements/rehabilitation. No major improvements were reported since then.

In 2024, the Ombudsman resumed unannounced monitoring visits - Giurgiu (30 January), Șomcuta Mare (30 May), Timișoara (3 July) and Rădăuți (19 July) - finding some visible progress, notably the renovations of kitchens, sanitary blocks and equipment at Șomcuta Mare conducted in 2023. However, the visit confirmed that chronic weaknesses persist: cockroach infestations and long times (up to 24-hour) for asylum seekers to receive their first meal after their arrival at the centre in Giurgiu; problems with pest-ridden, unclean kitchens in Timișoara; continuing vacancies in medical and technical posts at Timișoara and Rădăuți that hamper service delivery. Based on these observations, most of the Ombudsman's 2022 recommendations remain outstanding.⁶⁵⁸

On reception conditions, UNHCR reported⁶⁵⁹ that when asked about accommodation, 93% of respondents reported that they currently reside within a Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers, with only six per cent of the respondents reporting living in private accommodation. 0.3% respondents reported living in other

⁶⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁶⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁶⁵² Information provided by UNHCR, 23 January 2024.

⁶⁵³ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁵⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁶⁵⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁵⁷ *ibid.*

⁶⁵⁸ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁵⁹ UNHCR, *Regional Protection Monitoring Report Romania*, 28 March 2024, available [here](#).

forms of accommodation. This reflects the asylum procedural stage in which the respondents were at the time of the interview. Regarding the safety of the accommodation, 71% of the respondents reported feeling very safe; 21% of moderately safe, and six per cent feeling neither safe nor unsafe. Only a small percentage of respondents, one per cent each, reported feeling moderately unsafe or very unsafe.

The Regional Centre Timișoara

The Regional Centre was located in the same premises as the Emergency Transit Centre (ETC) operated by UNHCR, where refugees evacuated from other countries stay before they are resettled to another country, until 1 December 2020.⁶⁶⁰ ETC moved to another facility as of 1st December 2020. The facility is located 20 minutes by bus from the city centre. The facility was repainted and the doors and windows were repaired in December 2017.

The entire facility is split into four buildings, of which two are designed for accommodation. Each of these two buildings contains 12 rooms with 12 beds per room. One building ("Building B") is separated into two parts through a built-in wall: six rooms are dedicated to asylum seekers and another six to ETC refugees. Until December 2020 ETC had a total capacity of 200 places, the Regional Centre has a capacity of 50 places. Each building where persons are accommodated has a kitchen. However, "Building B" dedicated to families only has 2 refrigerators. "Building B" has two bathrooms, each equipped with two squat toilets, two urinals, three sinks and three showers.

In the second half of 2021 renovation work commenced in the regional centre of Timișoara. The works consist of interior painting, replacement of tiles in hallways, kitchens, bathrooms, replacement of laminate flooring in accommodation rooms with tiles, replacement of all facilities in bathrooms and kitchens, replacement of radiators and modernisation of the central heating system.⁶⁶¹ The renovation work commenced with building C and was finalised in January 2022. Renovation of building B started in March 2022 and at the time of the author's visit only minor details were still to be finalised. Metal bars were installed on all windows. The construction work for the additional accommodation places and offices was suspended. In 2022 the highest number of asylum seekers was 250 during July and August and they were accommodated in the centre for two to three days until they were transferred. Two shipping containers were installed in the courtyard, where IGI-DAI registered beneficiaries of temporary protection.

According to IGI-DAI,⁶⁶² in 2023, the situation was as follows: the centre consists of 6 buildings, with in total 24 rooms (20 rooms with 10 beds each, 2 rooms with 12 beds each, 2 rooms with 13 beds each). On each floor there is a common bathroom and a common kitchen with a stove and a refrigerator. In 2022, all accommodation spaces were improved through a project to modernise them; no other rehabilitation works were carried out in 2023. Single women are accommodated separately from men. Unaccompanied minors under the age of 16 are taken in by the DGASPC and those over 16 can be accommodated in the centre in separate rooms. There is a mobile ramp that ensures the access/movement of people with disabilities. Families are provided with a room to themselves.

According to IGI-DAI, in 2024 the capacity of CRPCSA Timișoara has 250 places, with 15 in closed spaces and an additional 10 places available for expansion.⁶⁶³

The Regional Centre Șomcuta Mare

The Regional Centre is located close to the city centre and 25 km away from Baia Mare. The centre consists of a three-storey building. Rooms are located on the second and third floor, each floor containing 22 rooms with 2, 4, 6, 8 persons sleeping in a room. There are two bathrooms on each floor, separated

⁶⁶⁰ UNHCR, *ETC Timișoara*, 14 December 2016, available [here](#); *Operations in Romania*, 16 December 2016, available [here](#).

⁶⁶¹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 10 March 2022.

⁶⁶² *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

⁶⁶³ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

by gender. On the hallway of the first floor, there are 6 refrigerators, while the ground floor has two isolation rooms for medical purposes. The basement has a kitchen with ten stoves, a dining room and a laundry room with four washing machines but only two are functional. The basement also contains a specially designed closed space (see [Place of Detention](#)).⁶⁶⁴ The centre has a capacity of 100 places. In August 2021 it was extended to 200 places and as of March 2022 the capacity was increased with 50 more places, by transforming the gym room into an accommodation room.⁶⁶⁵

In 2021 small renovations were carried out, taps were changed and rooms and hallways were painted.

According to IGI-DAI⁶⁶⁶, in 2023 the situation in this centre was the following: the centre consists of a single building, with 44 rooms that can accommodate a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 8 people. On each floor there are 2 shared bathrooms, a shared kitchen with stove and fridge. In order to improve the accommodation conditions, rehabilitation works have been carried out in 4 bathrooms, as well as sanitation works in all accommodation spaces, hallways, kitchen, laundry. Unaccompanied minors up to the age of 16 are taken care of by the DGASPC, and those older than 16 can be accommodated in separated room in the centre. Individual accommodation spaces are allocated to families.

According to IGI-DAI, in 2024 the capacity of CRPCSA Maramureş provides 100 places, including 15 in closed spaces, with the highest expansion potential of 100 additional places.⁶⁶⁷

The Regional Centre Rădăuți

The Regional Centre is located not far from the city centre. There are rooms with eight and ten beds. There are two bathrooms, one for women and one for men, each with three toilets and showers. There is a common kitchen, which lacked refrigerators and dishes at the time of the Ombudsman's visit in 2017.⁶⁶⁸ The gym and prayer room were converted into accommodation in 2020 in order to increase reception capacity.⁶⁶⁹ Each room has a refrigerator, which serves 10 persons. Construction of new accommodation places started in October/November 2021. The construction work was also suspended, as the constructor is the same in both centres Rădăuți and Timișoara. There is still limited space for counselling for NGOs.

In 2023, the situation in the centre was as follows:⁶⁷⁰ the centre consists of 2 buildings (building A and building B), with in total 5 rooms for 12 persons, 5 rooms for 10 persons, 1 room for 8 persons, 2 rooms for 6 persons. Building A has rooms with shared bathrooms and Building B has rooms with private bathrooms. On each floor there is a shared kitchen (1 gas stove and 1 fridge in each kitchen). Unaccompanied minors over the age of 16 years old can be accommodated in the centre in separate rooms (minors under 16 years old are taken care of by the DGASPC). The positions of psychologist and doctor are vacant. Women and men are accommodated in separate rooms. There are ramps to facilitate access in the building for people with disabilities. Families are provided with individual spaces.

According to IGI-DAI, in 2024 the capacity of Reception centre in Rădăuți has 130 places, with 10 in closed spaces and a 20-place expansion possibility.⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶⁴ Ombudsman, *Report of the visit to the Regional Centre for Procedures and Reception for Asylum Seekers Șomcuta Mare*, 36/2017, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁶⁵ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁶⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁶⁶⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

⁶⁶⁸ Ombudsman, *Report of the visit to the Regional Centre for Procedures and Reception for Asylum Seekers Șomcuta Mare*, 36/2017, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁷⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁶⁷¹ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

The Regional Centre Galați

The Regional Centre is located in the city, with easy access to public transport. The centre has three buildings: two for administrative purposes and one two-storey building for accommodation. On each floor of the accommodation building, there is one bathroom for men and one for women: each comprising of three showers and seven sinks. There is only one normal toilet for women per floor; the rest are 'squat toilets'.

The rooms have a maximum capacity of four and 12 beds. Generally, if there are available places asylum seekers are accommodated depending on nationality. Families are accommodated in the same room, separately from single men. There are two kitchens on each floor with three stoves and three sinks each, as well as one refrigerator in each room. In 2022, the clubs and the gym were functional and transformed into accommodation rooms only when necessary. Specially designed closed spaces were used as accommodation rooms only in January for the Afghan refugees. The prayer room still exists. The highest number of asylum seekers accommodated in the regional centre in 2022 was 157. In February-March 2022 four shipping containers were installed for the registration of beneficiaries of temporary protection.⁶⁷²

In 2023, according to data provided by IGI-DAI⁶⁷³ the situation was the following: the centre consists of 3 buildings (only one housing asylum seekers), with a total of 34 rooms (rooms with 6 places, 8 places, 10 places or 12 places), 1 shared bathroom on each floor, 2 kitchens per floor (3 stoves and refrigerators in each kitchen). Sanitation works were carried out in 2022, replacement of radiators, roof repairs, provision of material goods (e.g. stoves, fridges, beds, mattresses, washing machines, dryers, pots, pans, cutlery, towels, blankets) funded from the AMIF program. Unaccompanied minors up to the age of 16 are taken in by the DGASPC, and those over 16 can be accommodated in the centre in separate rooms. There is a psychologist employed by IGI-DAI in the centre, and a doctor has a collaboration contract with IGI-DAI. There are access ramps for people with disabilities. Women are accommodated in separate rooms; families are accommodated in individual rooms.

According to IGI-DAI, in 2024 the CRPCSA Galați has a current capacity of 200 places, including 30 places in closed spaces, with a possible expansion of 10 additional places.⁶⁷⁴

The Regional Centre Bucharest

The Regional Centre is located 20 minutes by bus from the city centre. The building accommodating asylum seekers has four floors. It contains a total of 80 rooms, each with four beds, a toilet and a shower. On each floor there are two kitchens, each with two refrigerators, two stoves and two sinks. When assigning asylum seekers to different rooms, IGI-DAI takes into consideration their religion, nationality and gender. Families are accommodated together.

The renovation of the Vasile Stolnicu centre started in July 2021 and was finalised in March 2023.⁶⁷⁵ All the asylum seekers were moved to the Tudor Gociu centre.

The building of Tudor Gociu has four floors. Asylum seekers are accommodated on the third and fourth floors. There are 24 rooms for accommodation, one kitchen on each floor, four bathrooms and two washing rooms. All windows have metal bars. The director of the Vasile Stolnicu centre describe the rooms as a little bit too crowded. Bathrooms and toilets are separated according to gender. The JRS representative reported that privacy is lacking in the bathroom as the doors cannot be locked. There are no leisure/common rooms. There is no courtyard, so children and adults spend their time on the hallways or in their rooms.

⁶⁷² Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁷³ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁶⁷⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

⁶⁷⁵ Ministry of Internal Affairs, Directorate of non-reimbursable external funds, 'Îmbunătățirea condițiilor de cazare și asistență a solicitanților de azil – proiect RO#FAMI', last edited 15 March 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

According to data provided by IGI-DAI,⁶⁷⁶ for the year 2023 the situation was the following:

The Bucharest Centre consists of a building located at street Tudor Gogiu 24A (a closed centre, 96 places distributed in 24 rooms, each room can accommodate 4 people) and a building located at street Vasile Stolnicu 15 (an open centre, 320 places distributed in 80 rooms, each room can accommodate 4 people). The closed centre has 2 bathrooms per floor, and in the open centre each room has its own bathroom. In both centres there is a kitchen on each floor with 2 gas stoves and 2 refrigerators.

At the open regime centre located in Vasile Stolnicu Street, thermal rehabilitation and interior sanitation works were carried out, in the period March 2021-September 2023. In September 2023, the centre was opened at full capacity.

According to IGI-DAI, in 2024 the closed centre had a capacity of 96 places, with a possible expansion of 52 additional places.⁶⁷⁷

In the open regime centre unaccompanied minors over 16 years old can be accommodated, they are accommodated separately from adults, taking into account the best interests of the child (unaccompanied minors under 16 years old are taken over by the DGASPC). In this centre there are 1 doctor and 2 nurses, and the position of psychologist is vacant. This centre is divided into 2 sections (one section for single men, one section for women and families with children). Both centres have mobile access ramps in the building for people with disabilities.

The Regional Centre Giurgiu

The Regional Centre is a former barracks located in the outskirts of the city and repurposed in 2011, without any refurbishment beyond repaint. As a result, technical problems often occur. The capacity of the centre is 100 places arranged in eight rooms. At the time of the author's visit in January 2023, there were 8 accommodation rooms with different capacities from 4, 8, 15, 16, 17, 24 to 26 beds. The capacity of the centre could be increased by 70 places⁶⁷⁸. Each room is equipped with refrigerators; the number of refrigerators depends on the number of beds. There are two kitchens with four stoves and three sinks. Only one kitchen was used by the asylum seekers, the other one was locked. There are two bathrooms, one for men and one for women, with five 'squat toilets' and five showers. The women's bathroom was also locked. The gym is used as a deposit room for old refrigerators and washing machines and single use bed sheets. There is also a club where Romanian language classes were held by AIDRom with seven desks and chairs and a small collection of books in Romanian. The isolation room was not occupied in March 2025.⁶⁷⁹ The isolation room had its own bathroom and half of the room was serving as a deposit of beds. A prayer space was set up next to the kitchen. The centre has a small courtyard, but it is not accessible as it is surrounded by a fence. In the backyard old furniture, beds, sinks are deposited.

According to data provided by IGI-DAI⁶⁸⁰, for the year 2023 the situation was the following: the centre consists of one building. There is a shared bathroom and a shared kitchen on each floor. No improvements have been made to the premises (e.g. painting, replacement of furniture, etc.), however the centre is about to be renovated this year.⁶⁸¹ Minors over 16 years of age can be accommodated in separate rooms (minors under 16 years old are taken by DGASPC). There is a psychologist and a medical assistant, and the position of doctor is vacant. The centre is mainly for single men, and if single women or families are accommodated in the centre they will be accommodated separately until they will be transferred to another centre.⁶⁸² The centre has a mobile elevator for people with disabilities.

⁶⁷⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁶⁷⁷ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

⁶⁷⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

⁶⁷⁹ Visit to the Giurgiu Regional Centre for Asylum Seekers during ECRE fact-finding visit, 18 March 2025.

⁶⁸⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁶⁸¹ Visit to the Giurgiu Regional Centre for Asylum Seekers during ECRE fact-finding visit, 18 March 2025.

⁶⁸² *ibid.*

2.2 Food and hygiene

The Asylum law prescribes the necessary daily amount of nutritional value based on which the daily allowance for food is calculated depending on the individual situation.⁶⁸³ Asylum seekers may cook for themselves, using the kitchens available in every centre.

In all regional centres, asylum seekers are obliged to clean their rooms, kitchen and bathrooms on a rotation basis. The number of toilets and showers are sufficient in all facilities during regular occupancy.

In March 2024, UNHCR published its Regional Protection Monitoring Report Romania based on 1,955 interviews conducted with asylum-seekers and, to a lesser extent, with refugees and, to a lesser extent, with other individuals who reached Romania as part of mixed flows. 93% of respondents reported to be living in a reception centre for asylum seekers. On reception conditions, UNHCR reported⁶⁸⁴ that concerning the access to meals, four per cent of the respondents reported receiving one meal a day, 39% of the respondents reported having access to two meals, and 57% of the respondents reported benefiting from three meals daily. These findings raise protection concerns which relate to situations where asylum-seekers' freedom of movement is restricted upon their first arrival to the reception centre and until they may be transferred to another centre. For one reception centre, for example, it has been reported that, during the time when the protection monitoring was conducted, authorities relied on donations by NGOs to ensure the provision of food to residents in the Reception Centre. If these supplies are not available or do not arrive timely, food is not available.

Galați: The Ombudsman described the hygienic conditions in the majority of rooms as appropriate. However, there were also rooms with inadequate hygienic conditions: walls were dirty and scratched.⁶⁸⁵ Bathrooms were clean, but there were also bathrooms with worn down sanitary installations. The kitchens were also described as clean and appropriate; the stoves were new. The Ombudsman observed that out of 28 rooms only two were equipped with air conditioning and recommended its installation in all rooms. The director of the centre reported that the living conditions had improved in 2022, as they painted the entire building, the linoleum was replaced, mattresses and furniture were changed. The water pipes in bathrooms were repaired. The centre is still confronting bed bugs infestation, even though disinfection is carried out twice a month. The Ombudsman did not conduct any visit to the Galați reception centre in 2024.

Șomcuta Mare: The Ombudsman reported inadequate hygienic conditions in kitchens: mould and food scraps were observed next to the pipes, there was no furniture where asylum seekers could eat. In 2021, the JRS representative reported that the roof of the building was damaged, and it was raining inside and because of the damp, the wall and ceiling plaster was falling. They repaired the ceiling but there is still water coming in because they did not repair the roof. At the time of the Ombudsman's visit at the end of March 2022 this was still an issue, mould and infiltration were observed. Bathrooms were in a precarious state of hygiene: walls with damp, damaged sanitary items, no head showers, rusty toilets.⁶⁸⁶ The director reported that sink faucets, light switches and electrical outlets were changed during the year, and the roof had been repaired. The rooms affected by damp were not used. In 2023 the centre will be refurbished according to the director. In 2024 the Ombudsman, during an unannounced visit to the Șomcuta Mare reception centre, praised the newly refurbished kitchen with its ten spotless cooking stations but found utensils piled on the floor, showers without privacy curtains and damp patches in the mother-and-child

⁶⁸³ Article 55(1) Asylum Decree.

⁶⁸⁴ UNHCR, *Regional Protection Monitoring Report Romania*, 28 March 2024, available [here](#).

⁶⁸⁵ Ombudsman, *Report of the visit to the Regional Centre for Procedures and Reception for Asylum Seekers Galați*, 7 July 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁸⁶ Ombudsman, *Report of the visit to the Regional Centre for Procedures and Reception for Asylum Seekers Șomcuta Mare*, 29 March 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

room. The Ombudsman urged the centre to install closed cupboards, fit curtains and finish repairs, despite overall cleaner facilities after 2023 renovations, full hygiene standards were not yet met⁶⁸⁷.

In **Bucharest**: according to the Ombudsman the hygienic conditions in Tudor Gociu centre have deteriorated. The furniture, mattresses, linoleum were worn down. On the 4th floor dampness and mould was observed by the visiting team. The bathrooms were in a poor state of cleanliness and hygiene: mouldy walls, damp, doors were dirty, broken tiles, rusty toilets, showers without a hose or shower head and the lighting was not working. The kitchens were also dirty. ⁶⁸⁸ In 2024 no visit was conducted by the Ombudsman in the Bucharest reception centre.

In **Giurgiu**, the author observed during their visit, and it was also confirmed by interviewed NGO representatives, that the hygiene conditions had improved. Hallways were freshly painted, rooms were clean and painted, only in one room were there doodles on the walls. The conditions had also improved from the Ombudsman's visit on 15 April 2022, when it was noted that hallways were dirty and not painted as well as the accommodation rooms, refrigerators were dirty and smelly and bugs were also spotted. With regards to the bathrooms the situation was the same as reported by the Ombudsman, water on the floor, damp, the walls separating the showers were rusty, there was a leaking pipe and it smelt. The toilets had old tiles and the smell was unbearable. The director of the centre stated that the centre will be renovated, without knowing when works would start. In 2024 the Ombudsman's team found the Giurgiu reception centre largely clean and freshly refurbished—dormitories, bathrooms and even the fridges in each room were “sanitised and tidy”—yet a stubborn cockroach infestation still lingered despite repeated pest-control rounds. The inspectors also learned that eight newly-arrived residents had gone almost 24 hours without food, so they urged management to keep a petty-cash reserve for cold meals to ensure no newcomer is left hungry again⁶⁸⁹.

In **Rădăuți**, the Ombudsman reported that the bathrooms, even though they were renovated in 2021, were worn down and the hygienic conditions were inadequate. The kitchens were also dirty, the tiles were broken and dirty bugs were spotted on the dirty floor. The same situation was observed in the building intended for the accommodation of vulnerable asylum seekers: the floors and walls were dirty.⁶⁹⁰ It was also reported by the NGO representative that hot water and heating was not available 24h/7 in the accommodation rooms or the NGO offices. Asylum seekers complained that during cold days the heating was not on all day. Also, bed bugs remain an issue. The director of the centre reported that during 2022 rooms, kitchen, bathrooms and hallways had been refurbished. In 2024 the Ombudsman's team found the Rădăuți reception centre's main kitchen freshly refurbished—new stoves, sinks and spotless tiling—but pointed out that residents had moved all fridges and table-ware into bedrooms, leaving no proper food-storage sector; the monitors therefore told management to keep fridges and utensils in the kitchen and continue periodic deep-cleaning. By contrast, the newly renovated pavilion reserved for vulnerable persons looked unkempt—walls, floors and several rooms were dirty—and the Ombudsman urged the centre to step up cleaning, repair worn fittings and involve residents in routine hygiene tasks⁶⁹¹.

In **Timișoara**, NGO representatives reported that residents did not complain about bed bugs, fleas, bugs, the poor condition of mattresses and plumbing in the showers and toilets. After the renovation the centre is clean; asylum seekers clean their rooms. At the time of the author's visit there were only three asylum seekers accommodated in the centre in building C, of whom one asylum seeker had been living in the centre for a longer period of time. The rooms, kitchen and bathrooms were tidily kept. Asylum seekers who were to be transferred were accommodated in the same two rooms. The mattresses in these rooms were not so well kept. All the kitchen equipment and refrigerators were replaced. The bathrooms were also clean. In 2024 the Ombudsman's team found hygiene at the Timișoara reception centre uneven: one of the communal kitchens in Corp C was dirty, with greasy walls, a clogged sink and utensils left

⁶⁸⁷ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁸⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁸⁹ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁹⁰ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2022, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁹¹ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

unwashed, while cockroaches were seen there and in several dormitories despite eight pest-control rounds. Some rooms were tidy, but others had grimy walls and fridges, the bathrooms needed repairs and cleaning, and no adapted toilet existed for residents with reduced mobility, prompting calls for deeper cleaning, stronger de-insectisation and an accessible sanitary block. Although residents confirmed they receive the statutory cash allowance for food, several complained that insects persist in living and cooking areas, underscoring the Ombudsman's recommendation to restore full hygiene standards before the next inspection.⁶⁹²

2.3 Activities in the centres

In 2024, the Ombudsman visited the Regional Centres for Procedures and Accommodation of Asylum Seekers in Rădăuți, Șomcuta Mare, Timișoara, and Giurgiu. At Rădăuți, the team noted the presence of a club, a sports room, a prayer space, and a play or counselling room for children, as well as professional training activities supported by EUAA. In Șomcuta Mare, the Ombudsman observed the absence of rooms for recreational or educational activities and no NGO involvement in delivering structured support. At Timișoara, the monitoring team found a club equipped with games, TV, and sports items, but no regular socio-educational activities organised by civil society actors. At Giurgiu, no dedicated activity spaces were identified; the Ombudsman observed that children spent most of their time inside the accommodation rooms, and there were no visible efforts to engage them in age-appropriate activities. Across all centres, the institution recommended the development of structured, inclusive programs—especially for vulnerable persons and minors—to improve living conditions and integration perspectives.⁶⁹³

UNHCR mentioned that in 2023, they provided support to the IGI-DAI Reception and Accommodation Centres for Asylum Seekers, including through the donation of non-food items to the Reception Centres that requested it (e.g. water, hygiene kits, towels, blankets, clothing) as well as financing integration counsellors, employed with UNHCR's partner CNRR, at the reception centres. Additionally, through UNHCR's implementing partners AIDRom and CNRR, UNHCR supported the IGI-DAI by covering a gap in services which are usually covered through AMIF funding, relating to material assistance (welcome/installation packages for asylum-seekers arriving at IGI-DAI Reception Centres), legal assistance, information provision on social assistance and their rights in Romania, social counselling, organising socio-cultural, educational and recreational activities, such as Romanian language courses, for the asylum-seekers and refugees from the IGI-DAI's Reception Centres.⁶⁹⁴

Asylum seekers are allowed to go outside whenever they want, until 22:00. All Regional Centres except **Timișoara** have a prayer room where residents can practice their religion.⁶⁹⁵

In 2020 AIDRom stated that the Romanian language classes were held in person, respecting the protection measures and social distancing. They continued in this format due to the limited possibilities of asylum seekers to have access to a mobile phone for online courses. Where beneficiaries had access to an electronic device, the courses were held online.⁶⁹⁶

Social and community workers in the centres organise different activities for both adults and children

Save the Children Romania offers as part of a project funded from the organisation's own resources program, educational social services and material assistance addressing the specific needs of asylum-seeking children and refugees, including unaccompanied minors. The activities are running in 5 Regional Centres, with the exception of Giurgiu.

The project foresees the following activities:

⁶⁹² *ibid.*

⁶⁹³ Ombudsman, Visiting reports 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁶⁹⁴ Information provided by UNHCR, 23 January 2024

⁶⁹⁵ Although the Ombudsman states that there is a confession room in Timișoara where Romanian classes are held, this is a hallway leading to the NGO offices rather than an actual room.

⁶⁹⁶ Information provided by AIDRom, 4 March 2021.

- ❖ Daily educational-recreational program for children in accommodation centres. In Timișoara these are not organised as there are no children
- ❖ Facilitating access to education and cultural accommodation
- ❖ Services to ensure their basic needs
- ❖ Facilitating access to social and medical services, when necessary
- ❖ Social counselling for children and adults
- ❖ Material assistance.

During the years, when there is funding, material assistance consists of hygienic products, food, clothes, shoes. All asylum seekers received food, irrespective of their age or vulnerability, according to the Save the Children representative. Donations were also made by private persons and companies.

In 2023, AIDRom implemented several activities in the centres:⁶⁹⁷ between June and December 2023, AIDRom, implemented the project "Information, counselling and complex assistance for asylum seekers from the regional centres of the General Inspectorate for Immigration, Output 3", financed by UNHCR. The aim of the project was to ensure the promotion of a manifold assistance system from a social point of view with the provision of specialised services to increase the standard of living of asylum seekers in Romania, by approaching the issue with a new strategy of relationship between the host community and asylum seekers. The project took place in all 6 regional centres (Bucharest, Giurgiu, Galati, Rădăuți, Maramureș- Șomcuta Mare, Timisoara). The activities carried out within the project were:

- ❖ **Information and social counselling.** The social counselling consisted in directly informing the beneficiaries about the existence of the project, the facilities and services offered, access to basic social services and any other individual or group social needs of the beneficiaries, identified by the social worker. In total, 670 asylum seekers benefited from this activity.
- ❖ **Assistance for cultural-educational integration:** educational, recreational, orientation and accommodation activities in Romanian society, such as visits to museums, the theatre, the Zoological/Botanical Garden, outings in parks, etc. In total, 648 asylum seekers benefited from these activities.
- ❖ **Romanian language courses for both minors and adults,** in the centres. In total, there were 572 entries for the Romanian language courses.
- ❖ **Material aid.** In total, 345 asylum seekers benefited from installation packages. The installation packages consisted in: household items, housekeeping (detergent, bed linen, etc.), clothes, personal hygiene items (shampoo, deodorant, toothbrush and toothpaste, etc.), food. Moreover, 790 asylum seekers benefited from transfer packages. The transfer packages consisted of the provision of food, water, napkins, etc. for asylum seekers who were transferred between regional accommodation centres or transferred from the place of submission of the asylum application to the regional accommodation centres.
- ❖ **Material assistance** for the translation of civil status documents and/or diplomas as well as the legalization/authentication of these documents. In total, 30 asylum seekers benefited from translation services.

⁶⁹⁷ *ibid.* 15 January 2024.

C. Employment and education

1. Access to the labour market

Indicators: Access to the Labour Market

1. Does the law allow for access to the labour market for asylum seekers? ☒ Yes ☐ No
❖ If yes, when do asylum seekers have access to the labour market? After 3 months
2. Does the law allow access to employment only following a labour market test? ☐ Yes ☒ No
3. Does the law only allow asylum seekers to work in specific sectors? ☐ Yes ☒ No
❖ If yes, specify which sectors:
4. Does the law limit asylum seekers' employment to a maximum working time? ☐ Yes ☒ No
❖ If yes, specify the number of days per year
5. Are there restrictions to accessing employment in practice? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Asylum seekers have access to the labour market following 3 months from the lodging of the application, if no decision has been taken by IGI-DAI due to no fault of the applicant, or during the appeal stage.⁶⁹⁸ This means that if a decision was made in the administrative phase of the procedure, the asylum seeker is allowed access to labour market even sooner than 3 months. Persons who, at the time of filing an application for asylum, have a right of residence on the territory of Romania and are working legally, may continue to work.⁶⁹⁹

Access to the labour market is granted under the same conditions set out in law for Romanian citizens.⁷⁰⁰ Accordingly, there is no labour market test, sectoral limitation or other restriction laid down in the law.

The Asylum Law prescribes that asylum seekers may benefit, upon request, from mediation services, professional information and counselling services provided to persons seeking employment by the County Employment Agencies (AJOFM).⁷⁰¹

In order to be registered as a job seeker by the AJOFM and to benefit from the aforementioned services, asylum seekers must present the documents requested by law, except for the civil status documents issued by the country of origin, together with their temporary identity document issued by IGI-DAI and a certificate which confirms their right to work. The same conditions apply for asylum seekers' participation in a vocational training program or the evaluation of professional competences acquired through non-formal means.

Diplomas or certificates of education or graduation, as well as certificates of professional competence, qualification or other relevant documents, are accepted only if they are recognised on the territory of Romania according to the applicable legal provisions.

According to the law, asylum seekers who have access to the labour market have the right to benefit from measures promoting employment, as well as protection within the unemployment insurance system, under the conditions provided by the law for the Romanian citizens.⁷⁰² Moreover, the provisions of the

⁶⁹⁸ Article 17(1)(o) Asylum Act.

⁶⁹⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰⁰ *ibid.*

⁷⁰¹ Article 6[^]1(1) -(5) Asylum Decree.

⁷⁰² Article 17(1) (o[^]1) Asylum Act.

Asylum Law on access to employment for asylum seekers also refer to the possibility to participate in vocational training programs.⁷⁰³

According to CNRR, in 2023 and 2024, asylum seekers in Romania were granted the right to work after three months from the date of submitting their asylum application, provided no decision had been issued in the administrative phase.⁷⁰⁴ This right could also be obtained earlier if the applicant entered the judicial phase of the asylum procedure. However, CNRR noted inconsistencies in the interpretation of this legal provision at the regional level, with variations observed in different reception centres, such as in Giurgiu.⁷⁰⁵

In previous years, the number of asylum seekers securing formal employment remained relatively low. Data from IGI-DAI indicate the following:⁷⁰⁶

- 2019: 26 asylum seekers were formally employed.
- 2021: 18 asylum seekers held employment contracts.
- 2020: 970 asylum seekers had the right to work, but only 276 were reported to be employed.
- 2023: The National Employment Agency did not maintain records on the number of asylum seekers working under formal employment contracts.
- 2024: 64 asylum seekers with the right to work were employed under contract.

Despite having the right to work, asylum seekers continue to face significant barriers to employment. According to CNRR, the most frequently reported challenges include:⁷⁰⁷

- **Language barrier** – primary obstacle is the lack of proficiency in Romanian. Those who speak English have an easier time finding employment.
- **Lack of recognition of qualifications** – many asylum seekers face difficulties due to missing or unrecognized diplomas, certificates, and work experience. This forces them to accept unskilled labour positions.
- **Administrative and legal barriers** – the temporary nature of their identity documents and the uncertainty regarding the duration of the asylum procedure deter employers from hiring asylum seekers.
- **Limited access to employment services** – although asylum seekers are theoretically eligible to receive assistance from the National Employment Agency, they rarely use these services due to language barriers and insufficient guidance.
- **Risk of exploitation**: Given these challenges, many asylum seekers are vulnerable to informal or illegal work arrangements, exposing them to labour exploitation.

From documented cases, asylum seekers who do find work are often employed in construction, car service and car wash facilities, fast food and delivery services.⁷⁰⁸

According to CNRR, in the past years, representatives from the National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons (ANITP) have visited the Regional Centre for Asylum Seekers in Galați to provide asylum seekers with key information on labour legislation and protection against exploitation. In 2024, ANITP expanded its outreach by distributing informational leaflets in Romanian, English, Arabic, and Nepali on various employment-related topics.⁷⁰⁹

⁷⁰³ Article 6^1(4) Asylum Decree.

⁷⁰⁴ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#). Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁷⁰⁵ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁷⁰⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 20 February 2020, 16 February, 2021, 10 March 2022, National Employment Agency, 10 January 2024.

⁷⁰⁷ Information provided in February 2025 and confirmed also by JRS Romania representatives in Galati. CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#).

⁷⁰⁸ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#).

⁷⁰⁹ Information provided in February 2025.

CNRR stated that there are currently no known projects specifically focused on the labour market integration of asylum seekers or their vocational training and qualification.⁷¹⁰

2. Access to education

Indicators: Access to Education

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Does the law provide for access to education for asylum-seeking children? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Are children able to access education in practice? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

The Asylum Act prescribes for the right of minor asylum seekers to have access to before pre-school (0-3 years), pre-school (3-6 years) and compulsory education (6-18 years) under the same conditions as minor Romanian citizens, as long as no measure is taken to remove them or their parents from Romania.⁷¹¹ Access to education is therefore free and unconditional.⁷¹²

Compulsory general education consists of 10 grades and includes primary and lower secondary education. Compulsory education ends at the age of 18.⁷¹³

While asylum-seeking children theoretically have access to education on the same terms as Romanian children, practical barriers hinder their integration and learning experience. According to CNRR, these challenges include lack of funding, delayed school enrolment, and lack of trained teachers.⁷¹⁴

In 2022, the adoption of new methodologies for diploma recognition, school enrolment, and Romanian language classes for refugees represented a step forward in improving access to education for asylum seekers. However, CNRR reports that the implementation of these measures has been inconsistent due to varied interpretations at the local level and insufficient communication from the Ministry of Education to the schools.⁷¹⁵

Despite efforts to integrate minor asylum seekers into the education system, several challenges persist:⁷¹⁶

- Language barrier – a major obstacle that affects both participation and understanding in class.
- Educational gaps – some minors arrive with significant educational gaps. For example, there are cases of illiterate 16-year-olds or minors who have only completed 2-3 grades. Due to their age, they cannot be placed in primary school but also lack the necessary knowledge for high school.
- Limited school and kindergarten places – public schools and kindergartens have limited availability, making it difficult to secure spots for asylum-seeking children.
- Legal requirements – the law stipulates that minor asylum seekers must enrol in a preparatory language course within three months of submitting their asylum application. However, practical implementation can be challenging due to institutional constraints and the availability of resources.

Save the Children has played an active role in assisting minor asylum seekers, providing school supplies, clothing, after-school activities for children accommodated in Regional Centres.⁷¹⁷

For adult asylum seekers seeking to enrol in qualification courses, the most common obstacles include:⁷¹⁸

⁷¹⁰

ibid.

⁷¹¹

Article 17(1)(p) Asylum Act.

⁷¹²

Article 6(1) Asylum Decree.

⁷¹³

Article 16(1) and (2) Public Education Act.

⁷¹⁴

CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024, 2023*, available [here](#).

⁷¹⁵

CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024, 2023*, available [here](#).

⁷¹⁶

Information provided by CNRR and JRS Romania (Galati) In February 2025.

⁷¹⁷

Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁷¹⁸

Information provided by CNRR and JRS Romania (Galati) In February 2025.

- Language barriers – limited knowledge of Romanian restricts access to training programs.
- Educational prerequisites – many courses require a minimum education level (e.g., at least eight grades for some courses and a high school diploma for others).
- Lack of free vocational training: According to statements from asylum seekers, there are currently no free vocational training programs available to them.

In addition to challenges related to education, asylum seekers face significant barriers in accessing other socio-economic rights. CNRR highlights that procedures for accessing public health programs, health insurance, and social benefits (such as unemployment or child allowances) are characterized by complex bureaucratic procedures, making them difficult to navigate without assistance. Furthermore, public institutions are often not adapted to the specific needs of asylum seekers, and public servants may lack knowledge of relevant legislation, which can result in denial of rights and necessitate intervention by NGOs to ensure access to these entitlements.⁷¹⁹

Preparatory classes

Following the 2015 reform, the Asylum Act foresees a free intensive preparatory course for asylum-seeking children in view of easing their access to education before the enrolment at the national education system.⁷²⁰ The training course is organised by the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research, in collaboration with IGI-DAI. Children should be enrolled at the preparatory course within 3 months from the date their asylum application was made. At the same time, the child may be enrolled as an observer in the relevant year of study.

At the end of the preparatory course, an Evaluation Commission, whose composition and functioning are established by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research assesses the level of knowledge of the Romanian language and establishes the registration of asylum seekers in the corresponding year of study.

In 2023, NGOs such as AIDRom⁷²¹ and Save the Children⁷²² have provided, within the regional centres, various education opportunities: Romanian language courses, support in access to the education system, but also access to extra-curricular activities. Also, the NGOs provided support to IGI-DAI in the procedure of enrolling minors asylum seekers in the preparatory course, and enrolling in the national education system. Save the Children highlighted that the Romanian authorities do not offer educational programs specially designed to meet the needs of this category of children. NGOs facilitate as much as possible the relationship with the schools/teaching staff/parents, offer additional support to the minor for school accommodation and language learning, subject recovery, etc. Within the project "Information, counselling and complex assistance for asylum seekers from the regional centres of the General Inspectorate for Immigration - OUTPUT 3, financed by UNHCR, there was also the activity of granting at least 48 educational packages for minors enrolled in preschool and school education. Unfortunately, the number of minors enrolled in the school for the 1-year intensive Romanian language course was very small. AIDRom managed to award only 7 packages (5 in the regional centre from Bucharest and 2 in the regional centre from Maramureş- Şomcuta Mare).

In 2024, Save the Children continued to provide support in the regional reception centres in Bucharest, Galaţi, Suceava, Maramureş, and Timișoara, focusing on accommodation and education assistance. By the end of 2024, the organisation had assisted 94 residents in these centres (Timișoara – 10; Bucharest – 16; Maramureş – 32; Suceava – 36), including asylum seekers, beneficiaries of protection, and persons whose asylum applications had been rejected. Additionally, Save the Children supported 153 asylum seekers living in private accommodation across the four counties. Regarding education, the NGO assisted

⁷¹⁹ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#).

⁷²⁰ Article 18(1)-(4) Asylum Act.

⁷²¹ Information provided by AIDRom, 15 January 2024.

⁷²² Information provided by Save the Children, 15 January 2024.

7 asylum-seeking children in accessing education: 4 children in Bucharest (2 girls, 2 boys, all enrolled in primary education) and 3 in Suceava (2 girls in lower secondary education and 1 boy in high school). No asylum-seeking children were assisted in accessing education in Maramureş or Timișoara during 2024.⁷²³

In 2024, minor asylum seekers were enrolled in schools and high schools near the Regional Centres, facilitating their integration into the education system. Initially, they attend classes as audience, meaning they participate in lessons without receiving grades. This process, supported by NGOs such as the Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR), Save the Children, and the ICAR Foundation, along with IGI staff, helps minors familiarize themselves with the Romanian language and the subjects taught in school. An identified problem is the limited places in public kindergartens and schools. The law stipulates that minor asylum seekers must enrol in the preparatory course within 3 months of the date of submission of the asylum application. Save the Children organization was systematically involved, they provided supplies, clothes, proposed after-school activities with the children accommodated in the Center.⁷²⁴

At the end of the academic year, these children undergo an assessment to evaluate their knowledge. Based on the results, their appropriate education level is determined, and they are placed in a corresponding class for the following school year.⁷²⁵

D. Health care

Indicators: Health Care

1. Is access to emergency healthcare for asylum seekers guaranteed in national legislation?

☒ Yes
☐ No

2. Do asylum seekers have adequate access to health care in practice?

☒ Yes
☐ Limited
☐ No

3. Is specialised treatment for victims of torture or traumatised asylum seekers available in practice?

☒ Yes
☐ Limited
☐ No

4. If material conditions are reduced or withdrawn, are asylum seekers still given access to health care?

☒ Yes
☐ Limited
☐ No

Access to health care for asylum seekers covers the right to receive free primary care and appropriate treatment, emergency hospital care and free health care and treatment in cases of acute or chronic illnesses considered imminently life threatening, through the national emergency health care system and qualified first aid. These services shall be provided, as the case may be, through the medical service of the Regional Centres and/or other health care facilities accredited and authorised by law.⁷²⁶

In addition, asylum seekers have the right to be included in national public health programs aimed at preventing, monitoring and controlling contagious diseases in epidemiological risk situations.⁷²⁷

Asylum seekers are assigned a personal identification number which figures on their temporary identity documents in order for them to enjoy all the rights provided by the law.⁷²⁸ After receiving the personal identification number, asylum seekers may register in the public health insurance system and, if they pay

723

ibid. March 2025.

724

Information provided by CNRR and JRS Romania (Galati) In February 2025.

725

ibid.

726

Article 17(1)(m) Asylum Act.

727

ibid. Article 17(1) (m^1).

728

ibid. Article 17(1^1).

healthcare contributions and register at a general practitioner's office, they have the status of an insured person with the same rights and benefits as nationals.

Asylum seekers benefit from free medical care through the medical network of the MoI - IGI and the costs are covered by the same structure and, for these services, do not have the obligation to pay the contribution for the public health insurance. In specific cases, medical insurance could be covered through projects financed through AMIF. However, medical services are mainly related to health checks upon accommodation in a Regional Centre and emergencies. Certain medical services are not included by the National Medical Insurance System (e.g. rehabilitation services, certain medicines and medical materials).

In 2022, not all the regional centres had a medical doctor employed.

In 2023, according to IGI-DAI⁷²⁹, the situation in each centre was as follows:

- ❖ Bucharest: 1 doctor and 3 nurses were employed; the position of psychologist is vacant.
- ❖ Giurgiu: 1 psychologist and 1 medical assistant were employed; the position of doctor is vacant.
- ❖ Rădăuți: the positions of psychologist and doctor are vacant.
- ❖ Șomcuta Mare: there are a psychologist and a doctor employed. Timisoara: there are a psychologist and a doctor employed. Galati: there is a psychologist employed, and an external doctor has a collaboration contract with IGI-DAI.

Regarding vulnerable persons (e.g. pregnant women, persons with disabilities, victims of human trafficking, etc.), IGI-DAI specifies that, in accordance with internal procedures, medical assistance is given with priority, periodic monitoring is carried out, information is provided concerning the administration of the medicines, people are accompanied to the hospital. Also, through projects implemented with funding from European funds, vulnerable people benefit from complementary medical and psychological assistance (e.g. from NGOs). No other details were provided, including from other actors than IGI-DAI.

According to CNRR, in 2024, asylum seekers in Romania had access to healthcare services provided by the medical staff of the Regional Centres. In general, applicants did not face significant obstacles in accessing medical assistance. Medical services within the Centres were provided by family doctors who collaborated with the Reception Centres, and when necessary, asylum seekers were referred for specialized medical checks, such as in psychiatry, funded through IGI resources. This ensured that their healthcare needs were not limited to the medical office within the Centre.⁷³⁰

Additionally, with the start of the AMIF project in December 2024, asylum seekers began benefiting from Integrated Health Services for Asylum Seekers. This project aimed to provide more comprehensive health services to asylum seekers throughout their stay.⁷³¹

For medical emergencies, asylum seekers were referred to local hospitals and could be hospitalized if required. In such cases, language barriers were a significant challenge, especially when seeking emergency care at hospitals. However, interpreters were called to assist asylum seekers and ensure they received the necessary medical attention.⁷³²

In some instances, gender differences between asylum seekers and medical staff or interpreters were reported as obstacles. However, efforts were made to minimize these issues, ensuring that asylum seekers had access to medical assistance, regardless of gender.⁷³³

The language barrier was a major obstacle in accessing healthcare services, particularly in interactions with medical professionals outside of the Regional Centres. Many asylum seekers faced difficulties when

⁷²⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁷³⁰ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁷³¹ *ibid.*

⁷³² Information provided by CNRR and JRS Romania representatives in Galati in February 2025.

⁷³³ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

trying to communicate with healthcare providers, which could impact the quality and timeliness of the medical care they received.⁷³⁴

Moreover, bureaucratic obstacles posed challenges in navigating public health services. According to the CNRR, procedures for accessing national public health programs, health insurance, and social benefits (such as unemployment or child allowances) were often complex and difficult to navigate without assistance. Additionally, public institutions' services were not always adapted to the specific needs of asylum seekers. Many public servants lacked awareness of the relevant legislation, which sometimes led to the denial of rights, requiring direct intervention from NGOs to ensure asylum seekers could access the care and services they were entitled to.⁷³⁵

Save the Children played an essential role in assisting asylum seekers by covering the costs of medications during the transitional period in the AMIF projects for vulnerable individuals, ensuring they were not left without necessary treatments.⁷³⁶

In Galati, asylum seekers could also access health insurance under the same conditions as Romanian citizens. Minors were insured free of charge, while adults could obtain insurance if they had a job or were included in national health programs. However, finding a family doctor who would accept asylum seekers was often difficult due to the language barrier and the uncertain nature of their status in Romania (e.g., uncertainty about whether they would remain in the country or keep their job).⁷³⁷

Specialised treatment

The Asylum Act provides for the right of asylum seekers with special needs to receive adequate health care.⁷³⁸ In practice, the ICAR Foundation is the only organisation with the necessary experience in providing psychological assistance to torture survivors and traumatised asylum seekers in all the reception centres.

In 2024, according to CNRR, each applicant's file contained an observation sheet indicating the information declared by the applicant regarding age, gender, family situation (single-parent family, could risk gender violence, elderly person alone, etc.), pregnancy, physical or mental health problems/already diagnosed diseases, disabilities, substance abuse, whether the applicant was a victim of torture (there are indications/statements of the applicant in this regard) or human trafficking (there are indications/statements in this regard) as well as other concerns (if the applicant has difficulty concentrating, is emotional, agitated, cries, etc.). This information is collected at the different stages of the procedure (at the time of submitting the asylum application, during accommodation in the Centre, during the preliminary questionnaire, during the interview or during the court phase). The caseworker assesses whether it is necessary to inform the integration officer about the case in order to take special assistance measures. If a vulnerability arises later in the asylum procedure, the Reception Centre takes all measures to ensure adequate conditions for asylum seekers in need (of course, taking into account the reception conditions in each Centre). Medical staff in each centre conduct regular check-ups of people identified as having a special need.⁷³⁹

In 2022 in Rădăuți an asylum seeker who was HIV positive was treated through the state scheme. This project was not implemented between October 2023 until December 2024.⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁴ CNRR, *Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2024*, 2023, available [here](#). Information provided by CNRR also in February 2025.

⁷³⁵ *ibid.*

⁷³⁶ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025. Also ICAR Foundation in Galati provided medical services, according to JRS Romania representatives in Galati.

⁷³⁷ Information provided by JRS Romania (Galati) in February 2025.

⁷³⁸ Article 17(1)(n) Asylum Act.

⁷³⁹ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁷⁴⁰ Press release ICAR Foundation, available [here](#).

In Timișoara, as of 2022 ICAR personnel conduct the medical screening. IGI-DAI is notified if there are asylum seekers suffering from mental health issues and they are referred to specialised hospitals, if necessary. The ICAR Foundation doctor is present in the centre once a week. According to the JRS representative, AIDRom representatives carry out a more detailed screening.

E. Special reception needs of vulnerable groups

Indicators: Special Reception Needs

1. Is there an assessment of special reception needs of vulnerable persons in practice?

☒ Yes

☐ No

An applicant with special reception needs is a vulnerable person according to Article 5⁴¹ of the Asylum Act, who needs special guarantees to enjoy their rights and fulfil their obligations under the law.⁷⁴¹ Article 5⁴¹(2) lists the following categories of vulnerable persons: minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of human trafficking, persons suffering from serious illnesses, people with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, or persons in other special circumstances.

The law does not prescribe actual mechanisms or methods for the identification of vulnerable persons. The Asylum law only states that specialised personnel of IGI-DAI cooperate with UNHCR and relevant NGOs to identify asylum seekers who may fall within in the category of vulnerable persons referred for the identification of vulnerable cases, IGI has a SOP applied by all reception centres and staff interacting with asylum seekers from the moment of their arrival and during the whole asylum procedure. In order to assess the vulnerability of asylum seekers, specialists within IGI-DAI, where appropriate together with experts from other institutions and authorities competent in the field, to make an assessment of the special needs of foreigners. Depending on the specific need of each asylum seeker identified as vulnerable person, IGI-DAI notifies and cooperates with authorities and specialised agencies in order to provide necessary assistance. IGI-DAI may collaborate with NGOs to assist asylum seekers identified as vulnerable.⁷⁴²

Psychosocial specialists of the ICAR Foundation who carry out activities in the Regional Centres first seek to identify asylum seekers, especially those belonging to vulnerable groups (families in difficulty, elderly people, people with chronic illness, unaccompanied children, victims of physical and mental violence) and their needs. Subsequent tests are conducted to assess the general health status of newly arrived asylum seekers, while general practitioners provide weekly medical consultations (see [Health Care](#)).⁷⁴³

According to the Asylum Act, asylum seekers with special needs have the right to benefit from adapted accommodation and assistance conditions in the Regional Centres.⁷⁴⁴ During a visit in the regional centre of Timișoara in 2021, the Ombudsman noticed that an asylum seeker who had walking difficulties due to an accident, struggled to use the toilet and recommended that the management build a toilet for persons with special needs.⁷⁴⁵ IGI-DAI stated that all regional centres are ramps for persons with disabilities.⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴¹ Article 2(1)(b⁴²) Asylum Act.

⁷⁴² Article 5(1)-(4) Asylum Decree.

⁷⁴³ AIDRom, *Adapted and accessible health services for asylum seekers in Romania*, available [here](#).

⁷⁴⁴ Article 17(1)(l) Asylum Act.

⁷⁴⁵ Ombudsman, Report, 2021, p.7, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁷⁴⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

The house rules of the Regional Centres stipulate that, in order to deal with situations of sexual or gender-based violence, the Director of the Centre shall:⁷⁴⁷

- ❖ Inform the persons accommodated in the centre about sexual or gender-based violence and the consequences of such acts;
- ❖ In case of such situations occurring during the period of accommodation in the centre, notify the competent public authorities and institutions and, depending on the seriousness of the deed, gradually apply one of the sanctions provided in Article 47 ROI (see [Reduction or Withdrawal of Reception Conditions](#));
- ❖ Cooperate with national and international NGOs, as well as with public authorities and institutions competent in this field to assist victims while they are accommodated in the Regional Centre.

To the best of the knowledge of the expert, there were no available reports in 2023 or 2024 of cases of sexual or gender-based violence in the reception centres. IGI-DAI states that that if such cases would exist, the centre would immediately notify the police and the competent judicial authorities to investigate.⁷⁴⁸

In 2024, IGI-DAI stated that the Regional Centres managed by IGI have spaces suitable for accommodating vulnerable persons.

In 2024 according to CNRR, each applicant's file, contains an observation sheet documenting key personal details—such as age, gender, family status (e.g., single parenthood, risk of gender-based violence, old age), pregnancy, health conditions, disabilities, substance use, or past experiences of torture or trafficking. Emotional or behavioural concerns like agitation or frequent crying are also recorded. This information is gathered throughout the asylum process: at application, during accommodation, the preliminary questionnaire, interview, or court proceedings. Medical staff at each centre conduct regular check-ups for individuals identified as having special needs to ensure their health and well-being are properly managed.⁷⁴⁹

1. Reception of unaccompanied children

1.1 Unaccompanied children below the age of 16

Unaccompanied children below the age of 16 are accommodated in a centre managed by DGASPC or an authorised private body.⁷⁵⁰ If they have relatives residing in a Regional Centre, DGASPC decides where they will be accommodated, taking into consideration their best interests. In case of unaccompanied children who have siblings under or above the age of 16, when taking a decision regarding their accommodation, IGI-DAI shall consult their legal representative, observe the principle of family unity and take into account the age and maturity of the older sibling.⁷⁵¹ The opinion of the unaccompanied child regarding the place where they will be accommodated is considered and given due importance, taking into account their age and degree of maturity.⁷⁵²

As regards the conditions in DGASPC facilities, Save the Children stated that the facilities are decent but there are no interpreters; thus, interaction with these children is limited until they learn Romanian. In most cases the staff is not trained to work with foreign children, the services provided are not adapted to their needs.

IGI-DAI mentioned that in 2024, unaccompanied minors were generally accommodated in centres managed by the General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection. IGI-DAI mentioned that,

⁷⁴⁷ Article 60 ROI.

⁷⁴⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁷⁴⁹ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁷⁵⁰ Article 58(3) Asylum Decree, in conjunction with Article 78(1) Child Protection Act.

⁷⁵¹ Article 58(3^1) Asylum Decree.

⁷⁵² *ibid.* Article 58(4).

when accommodated in the Regional Centres managed by IGI, the accommodation of unaccompanied minors is arranged by gender, in rooms separate from adults. As of 31 December 2024, two unaccompanied minors were accommodated in the Regional Centres managed by IGI.⁷⁵³

In 2024, Child Protection Bucharest (DGASMB) stated that there were no reception centres, accommodation places, or unaccompanied minors housed in reception centres at the end of the year.⁷⁵⁴

Additionally, they reported four specialized reception centres in Bucharest:⁷⁵⁵

- For victims of domestic violence (2 centres):
 - Emergency Reception Centre for Victims of Severe Domestic Violence “Theodor Pallady”
 - Emergency Reception Centre for Female Victims of Domestic Violence
- For homeless adults (2 centres) in Bucharest:
 - Integrated Social Services Complex for Adults – St. Ioan
 - Filaret Community Assistance Centre.

1.2 Unaccompanied children aged 16 or more

Unaccompanied children, who have reached the age of 16 and do not have the necessary material resources to ensure their subsistence, are accommodated in the Regional Centres. IGI-DAI⁷⁵⁶ states that unaccompanied minors can be accommodated in separated rooms in the centres and that the principle of the best interest of the child is taken into account.

In 2021, IGI-DAI reported a total number of 2,630 of unaccompanied children accommodated in the regional centres.⁷⁵⁷ In 2022, the number of unaccompanied minors decreased significantly to 386 and at the end of the year 26 unaccompanied minors were accommodated in the regional centres.⁷⁵⁸ In 2024, IGI-DAI mentioned that unaccompanied minors over the age of 16 were allowed to remain in the Regional Centres managed by IGI. At the national level, IGI administers **six reception centres**.⁷⁵⁹

Children may remain in the reception centre if they are accompanied by an adult or if they are unaccompanied and over the age of 16. In cases where unaccompanied children are under the age of 16, the Child Protection Authority is promptly contacted. However, the duration of their stay is typically short, either due to family reunification processes or, in some cases, irregular onward movement, after which the children may no longer be traceable.⁷⁶⁰

1.3 Reception of families

Efforts are made to ensure that nuclear families can stay together during the asylum procedure. Families are accommodated in separate rooms. In 2023, according with IGI-DAI, families are accommodated separately in all centres.⁷⁶¹

Beyond the Regional Centres managed by IGI-DAI, AIDRom used to run two Accommodation Centres: one Accommodation Centre in Timișoara, which has operated without interruption since August 2012 with

⁷⁵³ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

⁷⁵⁴ Information provided by DGASMB, 17 January 2025 available [here](#).

⁷⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁵⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁷⁵⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 10 March 2022.

⁷⁵⁸ *ibid.* 22 February 2023.

⁷⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 23 January 2025.

⁷⁶⁰ Information provided by IGI during ECRE fact-finding visit at the Timișoara Reception Centre, 20 March 2025.

⁷⁶¹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

a capacity of 15 places; and one Accommodation Centre in Bucharest, which has operated since 2015 with 18 places.

These centres accommodate vulnerable persons, especially single parents with children (mothers with children). The AIDRom centres are located within these cities, funded partially by AMIF and partially by external donors. Asylum seekers housed in these centres have access to social assistance, cultural activities and cultural orientation.

In 2024, Save the Children focuses on supporting children with families, unaccompanied minors, and single women present in the Timisoara reception centre. Typically, families with children do not remain in the reception centre for long periods of time. AIDRom provides social assistance, including services such as family reunification and the distribution of school supplies, also extending their support to beneficiaries of international protection.⁷⁶²

In 2024, according to CNRR from the practice encountered, the most common are verbal and written explanations and warnings regarding internal regulation. In the Regional Centers, information sessions are organized for those accommodated, sessions attended not only by integration officers and NGO representatives but also by medical assistants, officers and contract employees from the Logistics department, PCA officers, the psychologist, EUAA interpreters, in which topics such as: hygiene and sanitary rules, financial aid received from the GII, room re-compartmentation, etc. are addressed.⁷⁶³

F. Information for asylum seekers and access to reception centres

1. Provision of information on reception

Asylum seekers are informed of their rights and obligations pursuant to Article 17(1)(f) of the Asylum Act. IGI-DAI shall provide written information to asylum seekers in a language they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand, within a maximum of 15 days from the submission of the asylum application.⁷⁶⁴ The information shall be provided by the official responsible for receiving the asylum application, according to a template established by order of the General Director of IGI.⁷⁶⁵ Where necessary to ensure an adequate understanding of the information by the applicant, it may also be presented orally during the preliminary interview.⁷⁶⁶ Competent officers are also required to inform asylum seekers on how to contact NGOs and UNHCR and how to obtain legal assistance and representation.⁷⁶⁷ The General Director of IGI appoints the official responsible for ensuring the conditions to carry out the above activities.⁷⁶⁸

The house rules of the reception centres prescribe that, when accommodated in reception centres, asylum seekers also receive information on the rights, obligations, prohibitions and disciplinary sanctions applicable during their stay in the centre. In this regard information is handed to asylum seekers in the form of an information sheet in a language that they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand and in which they can clearly communicate. Where appropriate, for an adequate understanding of the applicant, information may also be provided orally using the services of an interpreter apt to ensure appropriate communication.⁷⁶⁹ The applicant has to sign an acknowledgment of receipt of the information leaflets.

⁷⁶² Information provided by IGI during ECRE fact-finding visit at the Timisoara Reception Centre, 20 March 2025.

⁷⁶³ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁷⁶⁴ Article 17(1)(f) Asylum Act; Article 2(1) Asylum Decree.

⁷⁶⁵ Article 2(1) Asylum Decree.

⁷⁶⁶ *ibid.* Article 2(1[^]1).

⁷⁶⁷ *ibid.* Article 2(2).

⁷⁶⁸ *ibid.* Article 2(3).

⁷⁶⁹ Article 5(1) and (2) ROI.

In practice, asylum seekers are complementary informed by NGOs in the Regional Centres about reception conditions, house rules and their rights and obligations.

According to the ROI, information on the rights, obligations, prohibitions and disciplinary sanctions applicable during the stay in the Regional Centre shall be displayed in each accommodation room in an international language.⁷⁷⁰ However, according to national civil society actors, this is not always respected in practice. In particular, further improvements would be necessary regarding the provision of information on the centre's rules.

In 2025 according to CNRR, the information provided to asylum seekers regarding reception conditions is generally deemed sufficient. In the Reception Centres, asylum seekers receive information from both centre staff and NGO representatives about internal regulations, the asylum procedure, and the accommodation conditions. This includes practical details such as the washing machine schedule (which is also displayed in foreign languages), hygiene standards required in the kitchens, the person responsible for distributing monthly hygiene products, the availability of a prayer room (for Muslims), a small gym, and the schedule for periodic disinfestation, disinfection, and pest control, among other things. Medical information is also shared, including the location of the medical office, operating hours, and the identities of the nurses.⁷⁷¹

In 2025 according to a representative from JRS in Galati, asylum seekers are informed about their accommodation options in the Centre and the rules they must follow, with information provided by both IGI staff and NGOs working in this area.⁷⁷²

2. Access to reception centres by third parties

Indicators: Access to Reception Centres

1. Do family members, legal advisers, UNHCR and/or NGOs have access to reception centres?

☒ Yes

☐ With limitations

☐ No

Pursuant to Article 17(1)(r) of the Asylum Act, asylum seekers have the right to be visited by family members, representatives of national and international NGOs and bodies with duties in the field of asylum or human rights, authorised and accredited under the law.

The house rules prescribe that visitors shall have access to the centre premises, including closed spaces, only through the access control post, based on identity documents such as identity card, passport, diplomatic identity card or residence permit. Visitors' access to the centre premises, including closed spaces, shall be allowed only after they have been authorised by the service staff at the access control post and after registering the entry in the Visitor Record Register. Authorities cannot retain the documents at the access control post.

NGOs implementing projects funded by the AMIF national program have access to reception centres for the duration of their projects, based on contracts/protocols with IGI-DAI.

G. Differential treatment of specific nationalities in reception

There is no difference in treatment based on nationality with respect to reception was reported. All Regional Centres accommodate different nationalities.

⁷⁷⁰ Article 5(3) ROI.

⁷⁷¹ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁷⁷² Information provided in February 2025.

Detention of Asylum Seekers

A. General

Indicators: General Information on Detention

1. Total number of asylum seekers detained in 2024:	Not available
2. Number of asylum seekers in detention at the end of 2024:	Not available
3. Number of detention centres:	7 ⁷⁷³
4. Total capacity of detention centres:	440 ⁷⁷⁴

Special Accommodation Closed Areas

Before the recast Reception Conditions Directive, Romania only detained third country nationals subject to removal. An asylum detention regime was established following the transposition of the Directive, taking the form of a specially designed closed place i.e. locked rooms in each Regional Centre, except Giurgiu. Detention in a specially designed closed space is ordered in writing, for a period of 30 days, by an order motivated in fact and in law by the designated prosecutor within the Prosecutor's Office attached to the Court of Appeal territorially competent for the area where the Regional Centre is located, upon a motivated request by IGI.⁷⁷⁵

Based on the information provided by IGI-DAI, a distinction must be made taking in consideration the following aspects:

- The Regional Centres for Procedures and Accommodation of Asylum Seekers have an open regime; however, they may have certain places (e.g. rooms) where an asylum seeker could be held due to specific situations (e.g., national security reason). The following information was provided by IGI-DAI for the year 2023 in terms of closed spaces and is still valid for 2024:⁷⁷⁶ there are such spaces in the centres in Bucharest, Rădăuți, Maramureș, Timișoara, Galați. There appears to be no such rooms in the centre in Giurgiu. IGI-DAI stated that in 2023 no asylum seekers were held in these closed rooms/places within accommodation centres, which normally have an open regime. In 2024, IGI-DAI did not provide any response regarding whether asylum seekers were held in the closed spaces within reception centres, which normally operate under an open regime.
- The Public Custody Centres in Otopeni and Arad have a closed regime.

According to the information provided by IGI-DAI, the regional centres have a total capacity of 166 places in specially arranged closed spaces (see [Places of detention](#)), with the specification that the placement of persons in closed spaces is done only for the situations and within the limits expressly provided by law (e.g. national security reasons). In 2023 there were no cases of asylum seekers being held in closed regime in the regional centres.⁷⁷⁷

Public custody centres

The 2015 reform also amended the provisions of the Aliens Ordinance regarding the situation of foreigners who lodge an asylum application from detention. Whereas prior to 2015 the Aliens Ordinance required the release of foreigners from detention as soon as a first application for international protection was lodged, the Aliens Ordinance now prescribes that an asylum seeker is only released when they are granted access to the regular procedure in Romania.

⁷⁷³ 5 specially arranged closed spaces in 2023, and 2 public custody centers.

⁷⁷⁴ 166 in specially arranged closed spaces and 274 in public custody centers.

⁷⁷⁵ Article 19⁷(1) Asylum Act.

⁷⁷⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024

⁷⁷⁷ *ibid.*

The law defines the measure of taking a person into “public custody” as a temporary restriction of the freedom of movement on the territory of Romania, ordered against foreigners in order to accomplish all the necessary steps for removal or transfer under the Dublin Regulation under escort.⁷⁷⁸ In practice, however, it constitutes a measure of deprivation of liberty.

There are 2 detention centres, known as Centres for Accommodation of Foreigners Taken into Public Custody (*Centrul de Cazare a Străinilor luați în Custodie Publică*), located in **Otopeni**, near Bucharest, and **Arad**, near Timișoara. The centres are managed by IGI and are specially designed for the temporary accommodation of foreigners taken into public custody.⁷⁷⁹

Detention (“public custody”) is ordered in writing by an order, justified in law and in fact by the designated prosecutor within the Prosecutor’s Office attached to the Court of Appeal of Bucharest, upon a motivated request by IGI.⁷⁸⁰

In most cases, asylum seekers are not detained. The main categories of asylum seekers detained are those who have applied for asylum from detention and whose application has been assessed in the accelerated procedure.

During 2022, 110 asylum applications were made from public custody centres, 92 in Arad and 18 in Otopeni.⁷⁸¹ In 2022 a total of 936 foreigners were detained in the public custody centres, compared to 1,327 in 2021, 1,241 in 2020 and 377 in 2019, of whom 589 persons were detained in Otopeni and 446 in Arad.

In 2023, a total of 1,316 foreign nationals were detained in the public custody centres (Arad and Otopeni), according with the information provided by IGI-DAI⁷⁸² and the Public Custody Centre of Arad.⁷⁸³ 993 third-country nationals were detained in the Arad centre. Out of them, there were 37 women and 1 person with disabilities.

In 2024, a total of 1,043 foreign nationals were detained in the public custody centres (Arad and Otopeni⁷⁸⁴), according to the information provided by IGI-DAI and the Public Custody Centre of Arad. In 2024 regarding the Accommodation Centre for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody in Arad, the available data covers only the first 11 months of 2024.⁷⁸⁵

Arad: Arad Centre has a capacity of 160 places for foreigners held in public custody. In 2023, according to the information provided by the Public Custody Centre of Arad, 41 foreigners detained in the Arad centre submitted asylum applications during their detention there. Their countries of origin were: Guinea, Sudan, Pakistan, India, Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Russia Federation, Tunisia, Senegal and Sri Lanka. During a visit conducted by the AIDA expert to the Public Custody Centre of Arad on 16 March 2023, there were 32 foreigners, all men, in detention out of whom two were asylum seekers from Pakistan and Guinea. According to the representative of Arad, a total number of 92 asylum applications were made in Arad, out of which 33 were granted access to the regular procedure. In addition, 26 subsequent applications were made, out of which only five were granted access to the regular procedure. The majority of applicants were Turkish nationals. However, the Director of Timișoara Centre reported that 84 asylum applications

⁷⁷⁸ Article 101(1) Aliens Ordinance.

⁷⁷⁹ *ibid.* Article 103(3).

⁷⁸⁰ Article 19¹⁴(1) Asylum Act; Article 101(2) Aliens Ordinance.

⁷⁸¹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

⁷⁸² *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

⁷⁸³ Information provided by the Public Custody Centre of Arad, 10 January 2024.

⁷⁸⁴ Bucharest FM, “IGI: Over 440 Foreign Nationals Taken into Public Custody at Otopeni Center in 2024,” March 6, 2025, available [here](#).

⁷⁸⁵ General Inspectorate for Immigration, “Achievements and Results Obtained by the Police Officers of the Accommodation Center for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody Arad in the First 11 Months of This Year,” December 18, 2024, available [here](#).

were made in 2022 in Arad, out of which only 16 were assessed in the regular procedure. According to the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI), in 2024, *approximately 600 foreign nationals were placed in the Arad Accommodation Center for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody by immigration police, pending the completion of escort removal procedures. Between 1 January and 30 November 2024, a total of 584 foreigners were taken into public custody and accommodated in the Arad centre. Among the individuals for whom the public custody measure was ordered, 118 were from Bangladesh, 115 from Nepal, 100 from Sri Lanka, and 73 from Pakistan, while the rest came from other countries such as Ethiopia, India, Egypt, Vietnam, Morocco, Syria, etc.*⁷⁸⁶

Otopeni: The Otopeni Centre has a capacity of 114 places for foreigners held in public custody. According to the director of the Otopeni Public Custody Centre, 589 persons were detained in Otopeni in 2022. The majority of detainees were from India (106) and Pakistan (83). 18 first time asylum applications were made in 2022.⁷⁸⁷ No statistics on the number of migrants who lodged a subsequent application were provided, nor the number of asylum seekers who were granted access to the regular procedure. For the year 2023, IGI-DAI did not provide statistics about the foreigners who submitted asylum applications. In 2024, the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) placed 443 foreign nationals in public custody at the Otopeni Accommodation Center,⁷⁸⁸ but did not provide statistics on those who submitted asylum applications. In 2024, immigration police officers brought 443 foreigners into the Otopeni Public Custody Accommodation Centre, pending the completion of their removal procedures under escort. Most of them came from Nepal – 102, Syria – 50, Pakistan – 44, Bangladesh – 28, Sri Lanka – 32 and Ethiopia – 25, but also from other countries such as Turkey, Congo, Guinea, Cameroon, Algeria or Burkina Faso.⁷⁸⁹

The law prescribes a deadline of 3 days for IGI-DAI to assess the asylum application of an applicant who is in detention and to issue a motivated decision.⁷⁹⁰ Therefore, in these cases the procedure is rapidly conducted. Asylum seekers cannot prepare for the personal interview, as they have no time to contact an attorney or a legal counsellor in order to be counselled or assisted at the interview.

According to the JRS representative, many of the asylum seekers in Arad detention centre were relying on information received from the other detainees, saying that the legal counsellor from Timișoara is not providing legal counselling anymore to asylum seekers in Arad. This was also confirmed by the detainees interviewed by the author. Conversely, the director stated that legal counselling is provided by the legal counsellor from Timișoara, however, he never saw her in the detention centre in 2021, but he stated that he saw her at an interview conducted through videoconference.

⁷⁸⁶ General Inspectorate for Immigration, *"Achievements and Results Obtained by the Police Officers of the Accommodation Center for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody Arad in the First 11 Months of This Year,"* December 18, 2024, available [here](#).

⁷⁸⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

⁷⁸⁸ Bucharest FM, IGI: Over 440 Foreign Nationals Taken into Public Custody at Otopeni Center in 2024, 6 March 2025, available [here](#).

⁷⁸⁹ IGI: "Over 440 Foreign Nationals Taken into Public Custody at Otopeni Center in 2024. Over 190 Escort-Led Removal Missions Carried Out," General Inspectorate for Immigration, accessed 24 March 2025, available [here](#).

⁷⁹⁰ Article 19^15(1) Asylum Act.

B. Legal framework of detention

1. Grounds for detention

Indicators: Grounds for Detention

1. In practice, are most asylum seekers detained
 - ❖ on the territory: ☒ Yes ☐ No
 - ❖ at the border: ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. Are asylum seekers detained during a regular procedure in practice?
☐ Frequently ☐ Rarely ☒ Never
3. Are asylum seekers detained during a Dublin procedure in practice?
☐ Frequently ☒ Rarely ☐ Never

1.1 Detention of asylum seekers in specially designed closed spaces

Under Article 19⁵(1) of the Asylum Act, when [Alternatives to Detention](#) cannot be applied, IGI may place asylum seekers in specially designed closed places to carry out the necessary procedural steps and to limit abuse to the procedure, for the following reasons:

- (a) To verify the applicant's identity;
- (b) To establish the elements on which the application is based, which could not be obtained in the absence of this measure, in particular where there is a risk of absconding by the applicant;
- (c) At the request of one of the institutions with responsibilities in the field of national security, from which it follows that the applicant presents a danger for national security.

The law provides that the "risk of absconding" within the meaning of Article 19⁵(1)(b) of the Asylum Act is to be understood as the factual situation which justifies the assumption that the applicant absconds from performing the activity of determining the elements of the asylum application made with the occasion of the personal interview.⁷⁹¹ The Asylum Act sets out the criteria for determining the existence of a "risk of absconding".⁷⁹²

- (a) The applicant crossed or was caught trying to illegally cross the state border of Romania after filing the asylum application;
- (b) The applicant was caught trying to illegally cross the state border of Romania, and the asylum application was filed after the person was apprehended;
- (c) There are reasons to believe that the applicant intends to leave Romania after filing the application.

The measure of placement in specially designed closed spaces cannot be ordered in relation to asylum seekers subject to the Dublin procedure or to a measure of removal or expulsion from Romanian territory.⁷⁹³

In 2024 according to CNRR, in practice, most asylum seekers were not detained, both on the territory or at the border. Asylum seekers were detained during an admissibility, Dublin or accelerated procedure, only in cases where the authorities identify well-founded reasons for a risk of absconding. During 2024, CNRR did not report issues of concern regarding the grounds for detention, or any violations of Article

⁷⁹¹ *ibid.* Article 19⁶(3) and (2).

⁷⁹² *ibid.* Article 19⁶(4).

⁷⁹³ *ibid.* Article 19²(3).

8(3)(b) of the recast Reception Conditions Directive) and the Dublin procedure (Article 28 of the Dublin III Regulation).⁷⁹⁴

1.2 Detention of asylum seekers in public custody centres

Under Article 19¹³ of the Asylum Act an asylum seeker may be placed or maintained in detention (“public custody”) in the cases foreseen by the Aliens Ordinance,⁷⁹⁵ as well as in the following cases:

- (a) In order to carry out the transfer to the responsible Member State under the Dublin Regulation, where there is a significant risk of absconding;⁷⁹⁶
- (b) Where the applicant was detained with a view to removal or expulsion from Romania and filed an application in order to delay or prevent enforcement of the removal or expulsion measure, having had the possibility to lodge an application before.

The Asylum Act sets out a different set of criteria for the determination of a “significant risk of absconding” in the Dublin procedure, referring to cases where the applicant:⁷⁹⁷

1. Has irregularly crossed the border and their fingerprints match with a Eurodac ‘hit’;
2. Has irregularly crossed the external border of the EU Member States or Schengen countries, or was caught trying to irregularly cross the Romanian border and applied for asylum after being apprehended;
3. Has irregularly crossed or attempted to cross the Romanian border after applying for asylum in Romania;
4. Has applied for asylum in Romania after having been transferred to the responsible Member State;
5. Has not complied with alternatives to detention;⁷⁹⁸
6. Opposes the transfer to the responsible Member State.

In practice, in most cases asylum seekers are detained on the territory. Most stakeholders reported that detention in public custody is generally not ordered. These asylum seekers are usually detained if they cross or attempt to cross into Hungary. According to the Director of the Regional Centre Stolnicu, applicants subject to the Dublin procedure were never placed in detention. However, in 2023, IGI-DAI mentioned that detention was ordered in the case of 3 Syrian nationals subject to a Dublin procedure, but no further details were provided.⁷⁹⁹

Whereas prior to 2015 the Aliens Ordinance required the release of the foreigner from detention as soon as a first application for international protection was lodged, the law now prescribes that an asylum seeker is only released when they are granted access to the regular procedure. Therefore, if they are assessed in an [Accelerated Procedure](#), they will stay in detention until the asylum procedure is concluded. If the application is rejected and the asylum seeker lodges an appeal, they shall remain in detention while the appeal is examined. When the applicant makes a subsequent application, detention ceases on the date they are granted access to the new procedure.⁸⁰⁰ If the application is rejected and the asylum seeker lodges an appeal, they shall remain in detention while the appeal is examined.

In 2024 according to CNRR, most asylum seekers did not spend the whole status determination procedure in detention. In practice, those under accelerated procedures were most likely to be detained until a final answer regarding the asylum procedure.⁸⁰¹

⁷⁹⁴ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁷⁹⁵ Article 101(2) Aliens Ordinance. The measure of public custody is ordered against a foreigner who cannot be removed under escort within 24 hours and who: (a) risks absconding from removal; (b) avoids or hampers the preparation of the return or removal under escort process; or (c) is subject to expulsion.

⁷⁹⁶ Article 19¹³ Asylum Act, in conjunction with Article 19¹⁴(1) Asylum Act.

⁷⁹⁷ *ibid.* Article 19¹⁴(2).

⁷⁹⁸ *ibid.* Article 19¹⁴(2)(e) citing Article 19²(1)(a)-(b).

⁷⁹⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁸⁰⁰ Article 101(8) Aliens Ordinance.

⁸⁰¹ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

2. Alternatives to detention

Indicators: Alternatives to Detention

1. Which alternatives to detention have been laid down in the law? ☒ Reporting duties
☐ Surrendering documents
☐ Financial guarantee
☒ Residence restrictions
☐ Other
2. Are alternatives to detention used in practice? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Specifically designed closed spaces

The Asylum Act provides for the possibility to impose alternatives to asylum detention, defined as “restrictive measures”, in order to fulfil the necessary formalities, to limit abuse of the asylum procedure, and in case the asylum seeker poses a threat to national security, on the basis of an individual assessment.⁸⁰² These consist of:⁸⁰³

- ❖ Reporting duties;
- ❖ Designated place of stay in one of the Regional Centres.

Detention in specially designed closed spaces may be ordered if reporting duties and designated place of stay measures cannot effectively be applied to carry out the necessary procedural formalities and to limit abuse of the asylum procedure.⁸⁰⁴ However, none were ordered in 2023 according to IGI-DAI.⁸⁰⁵ In 2024, IGI-DAI did not provide any information regarding whether asylum seekers were held in the closed spaces within accommodation centres, which normally operate under an open regime.⁸⁰⁶

No restrictive measures may be imposed against an asylum applicant for the sole reason that they have lodged an application for international protection in Romania.⁸⁰⁷

IGI-DAI reported 208 asylum seekers subject to a restrictive measure in 2022, they were designated place of stay in one of the Regional Centres.⁸⁰⁸ In 2023, IGI-DAI reported 882 cases in which restrictive measures were taken (the establishment of residence in one of the regional centres).⁸⁰⁹ In 2024, IGI-DAI mentioned that 1,155 measures were imposed regarding asylum seekers, noting that multiple restrictive measures can be applied to the same person. These included 128 restrictive measures establishing residence in a regional centre and 1,027 measures requiring individuals to report to the IGI office.⁸¹⁰

Detention (“public custody”) centres

The placement of an asylum seeker in detention centres (“public custody”) may be ordered if the prior assessment regarding the possibility to impose alternatives to detention demonstrates that these measures are not possible and sufficient to meet the procedure and the purpose sought,⁸¹¹ namely removal from Romania or transfer under the Dublin Regulation.

⁸⁰² Article 19²(1) Asylum Act.

⁸⁰³ *ibid.*

⁸⁰⁴ *ibid.* Article 19⁵(1).

⁸⁰⁵ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁸⁰⁶ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

⁸⁰⁷ Article 19²(2) Asylum Act.

⁸⁰⁸ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 10 March 2022.

⁸⁰⁹ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

⁸¹⁰ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

⁸¹¹ Article 19¹³(2) Asylum Act.

3. Detention of vulnerable applicants

Indicators: Detention of Vulnerable Applicants

1. Are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children detained in practice?

☐ Frequently

☒ Rarely

☐ Never

❖ If frequently or rarely, are they only detained in border/transit zones? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Special Accommodation Closed Areas

Asylum detention, i.e. placement in specifically designed closed spaces, cannot be ordered against unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, except for cases where the unaccompanied child cannot prove their age and, due to serious doubts thereon, IGI-DAI requests an age assessment.⁸¹²

Detention (“public custody”) centres

The law defines the measure of taking a person into “public custody” as a temporary restriction of the freedom of movement on the territory of Romania, ordered against foreigners in order to accomplish all the necessary steps for removal or transfer under the Dublin Regulation under escort.⁸¹³ In practice, however, it constitutes a measure of deprivation of liberty.

There are 2 detention centres, known as Centres for Accommodation of Foreigners Taken into Public Custody (*Centrul de Cazare a Străinilor luați în Custodie Publică*), located in **Otopeni**, near Bucharest, and **Arad**, near Timișoara. The centres are managed by IGI and are specially designed for the temporary accommodation of foreigners taken into public custody.⁸¹⁴

Detention (“public custody”) is ordered in writing by an order, justified in law and in fact by the designated prosecutor within the Prosecutor's Office attached to the Court of Appeal of Bucharest, upon a motivated request by IGI.⁸¹⁵

In most cases, asylum seekers are not detained. The main categories of asylum seekers detained are those who have applied for asylum from detention and whose application has been assessed in the accelerated procedure.

The Public Custody Centres Regulation explicitly provides that children cannot be detained in these centres, unless they are accompanied by at least one of the parents or their legal representative, who are taken into public custody.⁸¹⁶

According to the amended Aliens Act, in case the foreigner declares that they are a minor and cannot prove their age, if there are serious doubts about his minority, they will be considered an adult.⁸¹⁷ In this situation, IGI requests an age assessment, with their prior consent.⁸¹⁸ As a consequence the child will be treated as an adult and placed in detention pending the age assessment, until their age is confirmed.

In 2023, IGI-DAI reported that there were no children detailed in Arad or Otopeni.⁸¹⁹ The Public Custody Centre in Arad indicated that in 2023, out of the total of 993 foreigners detained, there were 37 women and 1 person with disabilities.⁸²⁰ Further details were not provided.

⁸¹² Article 19^5 Asylum Act, in conjunction with Article 42(2) Asylum Act.

⁸¹³ Article 101(1) Aliens Ordinance.

⁸¹⁴ *ibid.* Article 103(3).

⁸¹⁵ Article 19^14(1) Asylum Act; Article 101(2) Aliens Ordinance.

⁸¹⁶ Article 29 Public Custody Centres Regulation.

⁸¹⁷ Article 131^1(1) Aliens Act, as amended by Act 247/2018 of 6 November 2018.

⁸¹⁸ *ibid.* Article 131^1(2) Aliens Act.

⁸¹⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁸²⁰ Information provided by the Public Custody Centre Arad, 10 January 2024.

In 2024, approximately 1,043 foreign nationals were detained in the public custody centres (Arad and Otopeni), according to the information provided by IGI-DAI and the Public Custody Centre of Arad. In 2024, regarding the Accommodation Centre for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody in Arad, the available data covers only the first 11 months of 2024. During this period, approximately 600 foreign nationals were placed in the Arad centre. Among them, 118 were from Bangladesh, 115 from Nepal, 100 from Sri Lanka, and 73 from Pakistan, while the rest came from countries such as Ethiopia, India, Egypt, Vietnam, Morocco, and Syria. As of 18 December 2024, 43 foreign nationals were accommodated in the Arad centre, representing an occupancy rate of 27%.⁸²¹ In 2024, the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) took 443 foreign nationals into public custody at the Otopeni Accommodation Centre for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody (detention centre). The majority of these individuals came from Nepal (102), Syria (50), Pakistan (44), Bangladesh (28), Sri Lanka (32), and Ethiopia (25), with others originating from countries such as Turkey, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Cameroon, Algeria, and Burkina Faso.⁸²²

According to the observations by the Ombudsman following a visit to the centre on 27 June 2024, at the Otopeni Detention Center: *"There were no minors or families in custody (no such cases have been recorded since 2017).*⁸²³

In 2022, CNRR reported no accompanied children, families, or other vulnerable persons detained in Arad or Otopeni.⁸²⁴ However, the Director of Otopeni stated that a pregnant woman and a single mother with her infant were detained and later returned to Serbia. Arad held no vulnerable persons but detained eight single women throughout the year. IGI-DAI reported no vulnerable detainees and stated that,⁸²⁵ while Romanian law does not prohibit the detention of vulnerable asylum seekers, individuals with special needs, such as victims of torture or trafficking, have not been placed in public custody.⁸²⁶ One migrant with psychological issues in Otopeni was released after two days, while in Arad, no one was released for medical reasons, though 10 detainees had chronic illnesses.

In 2024, according to CNRR, no vulnerable asylum seekers, including unaccompanied or separated children, were detained.⁸²⁷

4. Duration of detention

Indicators: Duration of Detention

1. What is the maximum detention period set in the law (incl. extensions):

❖ Asylum detention2 months

❖ Pre-removal detention18 months

2. In practice, how long on average are persons detained? 1-11 months (ee below for more details)

Special Accommodation Closed Areas

According to Article 19^7(1) of the Asylum Act, detention in specially designed closed spaces is ordered for a period of 30 days. IGI may request the territorially competent Court of Appeal to prolong detention

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General Inspectorate for Immigration, *"Achievements and Results Obtained by the Police Officers of the Accommodation Center for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody Arad in the First 11 Months of This Year," December 18, 2024*, available [here](#).

822

Bucharest FM, "IGI: Over 440 Foreign Nationals Taken into Public Custody at Otopeni Center in 2024," 6 March 2025, available [here](#).

823

Information provided by Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

824

Information provided by CNRR, 15 February 2022.

825

Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

826

ibid. 14 February 2018.

827

Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

for an additional 30-day period.⁸²⁸ Accordingly, the total period of detention in those spaces may never exceed 60 days.⁸²⁹

IGI-DAI has to carry out the examination of the applicant's identity and establishment of the elements of the asylum claim expeditiously in order to maintain the measure of detention as short as possible. Delays due to the administrative procedures that cannot be imputed to the applicant cannot justify a continuation of detention, except for situations where it is necessary to continue to apply the measure for reasons of national security, without exceeding the 60-day limit.⁸³⁰

Detention ("public custody") centres

Detention in public custody centres is also ordered for an initial period of 30 days⁸³¹ and it may not exceed 6 months.⁸³² However, this period may be extended exceptionally for an additional period no longer than 12 months, in cases where IGI-DAI is unable to transfer the asylum seeker to the responsible Member State due to delays in obtaining the necessary documentation for the transfer to the respective Member State.⁸³³ Therefore, detention in public custody can last up to 18 months.

Specifically, as regards detention in the Dublin procedure, the Asylum Act recalls that detention ceases if the time limit of six weeks set out in Article 28(3) of the Dublin Regulation is reached.⁸³⁴

When asylum seekers lodge an application in detention centres and are assessed under the accelerated procedure, they spend the whole asylum procedure in detention.

According to the observations following the Ombudsman's visit to the centre carried out on 27 June 2024, at the Otopeni Detention Center: *"The duration of accommodation for these individuals ranged between one month and 11 months. The maximum period for which foreigners could be detained was 18 months, after which automatic toleration intervened, meaning that the person could reside and work in Romania until the causes that prevented their removal from the country were resolved."*⁸³⁵

A Tunisian national detained in Otopeni declared during the author's visit that he had been detained for one year in Arad. According to the directors of Otopeni the average duration of detention in 2022 was 3-5 months.

According to IGI-DAI, in 2019, the average duration of detention was 1-5 months.⁸³⁶ In 2020, IGI-DAI reported an average duration of detention of 264 days.⁸³⁷ In 2022 and 2023⁸³⁸ IGI-DAI said they had no statistics regarding the average duration of the procedure.⁸³⁹ According to the report on the Ombudsman's visit carried out on 27 June 2024, at the Otopeni Detention Center, the duration of accommodation for detainees ranged between one month and 11 months.⁸⁴⁰

⁸²⁸ Article 19⁷(3) Asylum Act.

⁸²⁹ *ibid.* Article 19⁷(5).

⁸³⁰ *ibid.* Article 19⁷(6).

⁸³¹ *ibid.* Article 19¹⁴(1).

⁸³² *ibid.* Article 19¹⁴(6).

⁸³³ *ibid.* Article 19¹⁴(7).

⁸³⁴ *ibid.* Article 19¹⁴(10).

⁸³⁵ Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

⁸³⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 20 February 2020.

⁸³⁷ *ibid.* 16 February 2021.

⁸³⁸ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

⁸³⁹ *ibid.* 22 February 2023.

⁸⁴⁰ Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

Detention in border and transit zones

Detention upon apprehension cannot exceed 24 hours under the Romanian Constitution and the Criminal Procedure Code.⁸⁴¹ According to the ITPF Timișoara persons apprehended were not held for more than 24 hours in Border Police custody. No updated information or reports were available for 2024.

C. Detention conditions

1. Place of detention

Indicators: Place of Detention

1. Does the law allow for asylum seekers to be detained in prisons for the purpose of the asylum procedure (i.e. not as a result of criminal charges)? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. If so, are asylum seekers ever detained in practice in prisons for the purpose of the asylum procedure? ☐ Yes ☒ No

According to the law, asylum seekers may be detained in specially designed closed spaces within the Regional Centres, as well as in public custody centres. Asylum seekers are only detained in prisons if they are convicted of a criminal act or if they are sentenced to imprisonment.

In practice, not most asylum seekers are detained on the territory or at the border. Asylum seekers are detained during an admissibility, Dublin or accelerated procedure, only in cases where the authorities identify well-founded reasons for a risk of absconding. During 2024 CNRR stated they did not report issues of concern regarding the grounds for detention, or any violations of Article 8(3)(b) of the recast Reception Conditions Directive) and the Dublin procedure (Article 28 of the Dublin III Regulation).⁸⁴²

1.2 Specifically designed closed spaces in Regional Centres

All Regional Centres except Giurgiu contain specially designed closed spaces. According to the information provided by IGI-DAI,⁸⁴³ in Bucharest, in the building situated in Tudor Gociu Street there are 96 places in closed regime. As for the other centres the situation is the same as in previous years: Rădăuți has 10 places in closed spaces, Galați has 20, Timișoara has 15 and Șomcuta Mare has 15 places located in a closed space in the basement of the building.

Capacity of specially designed closed spaces: 2024	
Centre	Capacity
Timișoara	15
Șomcuta Mare	15
Rădăuți	10
Galați	20
Bucharest	96
Giurgiu	0
Total	156

Source: IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

⁸⁴¹ Article 23 Romanian Constitution; Article 209 Criminal Procedure Code.

⁸⁴² Information provided by CNRR, February 2025.

⁸⁴³ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

In 2023, no asylum seekers were kept in these places. In 2024, no information is available regarding asylum seekers kept in these places.

1.3 Detention (“public custody”) centres

There are two Accommodation Centres for Aliens Taken into Public Custody (*Centrul de Cazare a Străinilor Luați În Custodie Publică*) in Romania with the following capacity:

Capacity of detention centres: 2024		
Detention centre	Capacity	Possibility of extension the capacity
Otopeni	114	Up to 132
Arad	160	Up to 400 ⁸⁴⁴
Total	274	532

Source: IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

In 2022, in the Arad centre the highest number of foreigners detained was 156. In Otopeni the highest number of persons was 54.

Asylum seekers placed in public custody centres shall be detained, as far as possible, separately from other categories of third-country nationals.⁸⁴⁵ In practice, this is not the case according to the directors of the Arad and Otopeni centres.

Persons who are convicted of crimes are also to be accommodated in separate rooms from other categories of foreigner nationals. Foreigner nationals considered ‘undesirable’⁸⁴⁶ are accommodated separately from the others, according to the Directors of Otopeni and Arad. Those who are convicted of crimes are only accommodated separately in Otopeni.

1.4 Transit zones

Romania has an airport transit zone in Otopeni Airport in Bucharest, with a capacity of 22 places. Eight people were detained in Otopeni Airport in 2022.⁸⁴⁷ In 2023, according to the Border Police 18 persons were detained in the airport transit zone; no one requested asylum.⁸⁴⁸ 11 people left the airport in less than 24 hours, and 7 had to stay longer than 24 hours (for flight delay reasons). In 2023 there were 16 airport transit zones, with a total capacity of 108 places.⁸⁴⁹ There was no available information or data provided for 2024. The only information given was that there are 18 places in Otopeni Airport.⁸⁵⁰

⁸⁴⁴ General Inspectorate for Immigration, “Achievements and Results Obtained by the Police Officers of the Accommodation Center for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody Arad in the First 11 Months of This Year”, 18 December 2024, available [here](#).

⁸⁴⁵ Article 19^16(1) Asylum Act.

⁸⁴⁶ Article 86(1) Aliens Act defines undesirable foreigner as a foreigner who has carried out, carries out or there are solid indications that he/she intends to carry out activities likely to endanger national security or public order.

⁸⁴⁷ Information provided by Border Police, 6 April 2023.

⁸⁴⁸ *ibid.* 16 January 2024.

⁸⁴⁹ Information provided by the Border Police, 3 March 2021.

⁸⁵⁰ Information provided by IGI DAI, 23 January 2025.

2. Conditions in detention facilities

Indicators: Conditions in Detention Facilities

1. Do detainees have access to health care in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- ❖ If yes, is it limited to emergency health care? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Given that detention of asylum seekers in the specifically designed closed spaces of Regional Centres is not used in practice, the following section focuses on conditions in detention (“public custody”) centres.

Public custody centres are managed by the IGI Migration Directorate. According to the Aliens Ordinance, the centres are established, organised, sanitary authorised and equipped to provide adequate accommodation, food, medical care and personal hygiene.⁸⁵¹

As of 2022, the situation was the following: The representative of **Arad** centre emphasised the lack of administrative staff, police officers and of nurses as an issue. At the time of the author’s visit there were three nurses hired, of whom one was on medical leave for more than 90 days. During 2022 there were two medical nurses and as of 14 May 2022 there were three. The nurses had been working 12 hours per day until June 2022 and as of June 24 hours with 72 hours rest. The working schedule was also adapted to the actual needs. The centre has a medical doctor contracted through a service provider contract. The doctor is present in the centre 3 hours per day on weekdays. Some of the interviewed detainees declared that some of the police officers have no English language skills. The author noticed during the interviews that most of the foreign nationals detained in Arad had a basic grasp of the English language. Communication with some of them was very hard; it was hard for the foreigner nationals to understand basic questions. The representatives of both centres stated that they received a translation device, which allows them to discuss issues with the migrants. The device is similar to Google translate. The representative of Arad centre said it is used for written communication, while the director of Otopeni stated that it is used for oral communication.

The director of **Otopeni** stated that they manage to communicate with foreign nationals in English or by using this new device. Nevertheless, they need interpreters to communicate with detainees.

One of the foreigners detained in **Arad** interviewed by the author reported that, while he was on hunger strike, the police officers tried to beat him in order to convince him to eat. He stated that he was beaten three times. He was pushed and kicked. Another foreign national interviewed by the author stated that the police officers are violent towards some of the detainees. A foreign national interviewed by the author in Otopeni also declared that a police officer in Arad hit him in the back without a reason. The director of Arad stated that there were many issues linked to this: the majority of detainees in Arad are from Algeria and Morocco, they stay for longer periods in Arad, than in Bucharest and in Bucharest the food is of better quality. He also mentioned that he had discussed the allegations with the police officers who managed the shifts and they said that it had not happened on their shifts.

Foreigners interviewed by the author in Otopeni, who were also detained in Arad stated that the police officers in **Otopeni** treated them better than the officers in Arad.

When transferred from the facility to court for hearings, detained foreigners are handcuffed and escorted. According to the director of Arad, the foreigners are not always handcuffed, only if there is a risk of absconding or the number of foreigners is higher than the number of police officers accompanying them.

According to the directors of **Otopeni**, foreigners are handcuffed and escorted to the court. The handcuffs are taken off once they enter the court. According to the foreigners interviewed by the author during the

⁸⁵¹ Article 103(3) Aliens Ordinance.

visit in Otopeni the handcuffs are taken off when they enter the courtroom, where the court hearing is held. Women are not handcuffed when they are taken to court hearings, according to the representative of Otopeni.

Regarding detainees' right to information on their rights and obligations in detention, in **Arad** all detainees receive written information about their rights and obligations in English or French upon arrival. Both centres have leaflets also in Arabic, Pashto, Kurdish and Chinese. The author noticed posters in different languages that were displayed in the dining space and the hallways.

In **Otopeni** information on ROI and rights and obligations is provided by IGI. The detainees receive A4 leaflets with their rights and obligations in English.

According to the director of **Otopeni**, detainees are informed about their rights and obligations and the reasons for their detention upon arrival in the centre in writing in English and Romanian. Posters with the rights and obligations and ROI are displayed in the hallways of the centre in several languages. During the visit in Otopeni the author saw the posters with ROI and rights and obligations in different languages displayed on the hallways. Some of the foreigners interviewed by the author during the visit in Otopeni mentioned that they received the decision in Romanian and short information in English.

In June 2024, the Ombudsman carried out a visit to the Otopeni Detention Center, observing the following: *"The staffing structure included 70+1 positions, out of these, there was one position in the psychological department, five positions in the medical department (one doctor and four medical assistants), and one position in the technical-administrative department (a person responsible for the heating system and pipes, plumber, waiter, caretaker, and storekeeper). The security personnel were organized into four shifts: one shift with 12 employees, two shifts with 11 employees each, and one shift with 10 employees. At the time of the visit, the following positions were vacant: one psychologist, one officer, one caretaker, one boilerman, and one plumber. According to the information provided, these positions were to be opened for recruitment. Additionally, an increase in the security staff structure was deemed necessary, as the existing personnel was insufficient to carry out the centre's specific activities (...) Although activities were carried out in accordance with the Regulation of Accommodation Centres for Foreigners Taken into Custody, approved by Order of the Minister of Internal Affairs No. 121/2014, there were situations where, due to the number of operational missions, the security personnel was occasionally understaffed at certain times of the day. Allowing all foreigners to leave their rooms simultaneously posed both a security risk for the staff and a risk of illegal departure from the centre. It is necessary to fill all vacant positions and revise the organizational chart by increasing staffing levels to address these shortcomings and eliminate operational dysfunctions. (...) At the time of the visit, the position of psychologist was not filled, as it had been put out to competition. In the past, there was a full-time psychologist, but he retired on 2 May 2023."*⁸⁵²

2.1 Overall conditions

Otopeni centre operates in Otopeni, Ilfov County, near the largest airport in Romania, Henri Coanda Airport, which facilitates the operative return of foreigners to their countries of origin. The centre was established in 1999 and renovated in 2004-2005 with PHARE funds of €1,500,000, including Romania's own contribution.⁸⁵³ Otopeni centre has two buildings. The centre has a capacity of 114, with the possibility of extension to 132 places. The majority of the rooms have 4 beds each, but there are also rooms with 6 and 8 beds and one room with 12 beds.

Arad is located in Horia, a village in Arad County. It had a capacity of 160 places. There were two buildings: one (building B) hosting the administrative offices and 52 places of accommodation and another building (building C) designated for accommodation with 108 places, administration purposes and other

⁸⁵² Information provided by Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre , 27 June 2024, available [here](#).
⁸⁵³ Ombudsman, *Report of the visit to the Accommodation Centre for Aliens Taken in Public Custody Otopeni*, 70/2016, available in Romanian [here](#).

activities, inaugurated in 2015.⁸⁵⁴ Each room is designed to accommodate 4 people and has 4.5 to 6m² per person.⁸⁵⁵ In May 2021, the authorities started the construction of another facility, with a capacity of 240 places of accommodation, a sports field and leisure spaces. The construction of the facility was funded by AMIF. The construction works were finalized in 2024, and according to the statement of the General Inspectorate for Immigration from December 2024, the accommodation capacity increased by 240 places, which is expected to become operational in the immediate future. With this increase, the total capacity will reach 400 places.⁸⁵⁶

In 2022, in **Otopeni** the highest number of detainees was 54, as building A was closed and foreigners were only accommodated in building B, which has a capacity of 54 places. At the time of the author's visit there were 37 foreigners detained, including a woman from Cuba.

During the visit carried out to Otopeni on 21 March 2023, the detention conditions in the building which was not under renovation were good. The hallways and other shared spaces were clean. In the renovated building, the walls were already dirty and the old tiles had been kept. The dining room which is in the other building was also clean. The outside space had not been improved, the representatives of the centre said refurbishments are foreseen in 2025.

According to the report of the **Ombudsman visit** to the Otopeni Detention Center Of 27 June 2024: "*The centre was organized into two sections (A and B), with rooms in both sections equipped with four beds, except for one room with 12 beds in Section A and rooms with six or eight beds in Section B. Each room had its own sanitary facilities, and every detainee was provided with an individual bed and bedding. Section A, divided into multiple levels, included office spaces (for both staff and NGO personnel), accommodation rooms, two isolation rooms, a visitors' room, a recreation activity room, a medical office, and a treatment room. The accommodation rooms were furnished with beds, a metal wardrobe, a table, and a television, with sanitary facilities nearby. The rooms were fitted with security systems, with doors locked from the outside, and windows secured with bars. Surveillance systems were installed in the hallways to ensure safety conditions for both detainees and centre staff. For social and sports activities, a terrace was available on the floor where the accommodation rooms were located, as well as a sports field. In Section B, the upper level was designated for public custody, while the lower level was used as transit asylum facilities. At the time of the visit, foreign nationals were only accommodated in Section B. Several detainees complained about the poor quality of the mattresses, stating that many had exposed metal springs. Upon inspection, some mattresses with protruding springs were identified. The centre's management explained that these mattresses had been purchased a few months prior through a project with minimal funding, with an expected lifespan of five years. However, due to the prolonged use (over eight hours daily) and their low quality, their condition had deteriorated faster than expected. The visiting team found that better organization of cleaning and maintenance was necessary, particularly regarding sanitary facilities, which required repainting. Additionally, anti-slip mats were needed in the bathrooms to prevent accidents. Detainees expressed their desire for more frequent contact with their families, as phone communication time was limited at the time of the visit. According to the Regulation for Accommodation Centres for Foreigners Taken into Custody, approved by OMAI No. 121/2014, detainees were provided a €5 phone card per month. Foreign nationals could also use their personal mobile phones upon request, under direct visual supervision, while ensuring privacy. Furthermore, the centre had provided two mobile phones for detainees to use at their own expense, but at the time of the visit, one of the phones was non-functional. (...) According to the special events register, by the time of the visit in 2024, one disciplinary isolation sanction had been applied, while in 2023, there had been four such sanctions. These measures were taken in cases where detainees violated the provisions of Article 40 (b) and (f) of the Internal Regulations governing regional asylum seeker accommodation centres, as*

⁸⁵⁴ Ombudsman, *Report of the visit to the Accommodation Centre for Aliens Taken in Public Custody Arad*, 30/2016, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 10.

⁸⁵⁶ General Inspectorate for Immigration, "*Achievements and Results Obtained by the Police Officers of the Accommodation Center for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody Arad in the First 11 Months of This Year*," December 18, 2024, available [here](#).

established by Ministerial Order No. 121/2014. The regulations explicitly prohibit detainees from engaging in acts of violence against staff, mission personnel, visitors, other detainees, or any other individuals within the centre (Article 40(b)). Additionally, detainees are forbidden from using obscene language, gestures, or actions in public (Article 40(f)). Isolation sanctions were also applied in cases where detainees failed to comply with their obligations under Article 39 (d) and (h), which require them to treat centre personnel and external individuals, such as judicial representatives, diplomats, healthcare professionals, and NGO staff, with respect (Article 39(d)) and to properly maintain and care for the material goods provided by the centre throughout their stay (Article 39(h)). In some situations, authorities enforced Article 47(1)(a) of the same regulations, which allows temporary restraint of detainees by centre staff or personnel from other units within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This measure was taken to prevent real and immediate dangers, such as self-harm or property destruction. The centre had two disciplinary isolation rooms, with isolation measures typically lasting 24 hours. However, in one case, the measure was extended for an additional 24 hours. Upon reviewing the special events register, it was noted that not all records included the exact time and date when the isolation measure was imposed, though the time and date of release were consistently recorded. To minimize conflicts, detainees were assigned to rooms based on nationality, gender, religion, and spoken languages.⁸⁵⁷

Each detainee has their own bed and there is generally sufficient space, except at times when the number of detainees was high and they had to place mattresses on the floor. Detainees are required to clean their own rooms and the common spaces in both centres. They receive cleaning products from IGI and CNRR, according to the directors of the centres.

Detainees are accommodated in separate rooms on the basis of gender, religion or nationality. Family members are accommodated in the same room, separately from other people, ensuring an appropriate level of privacy.

CNRR provides material assistance through the project "Counselling and Material Assistance in Public Custody Centres", funded by the AMIF national program. The main objective of the project is to provide information and counselling to migrants about return operations and rules that must be respected during these operations; the rights, obligations and rules of the Public Custody Centres Arad and Otopeni; and to provide services and specific assistance (including material assistance) complementary to that granted by the Romanian government during their detention in the Public Custody Centres and during their return under escort to the country of origin or other country of destination.⁸⁵⁸

The Public Custody Centres Regulation prescribes that food is provided three times a day, in the form of a hot or cold meal, depending on the situation of the detainees during accommodation or transport. For sick people, pregnant women and other categories of persons, food provision follows the number of meals and the diet prescribed by the doctor at the centre. At the request of detainees, their religious diet is respected.⁸⁵⁹

Overall, the living conditions in the **Arad** Reception Centre have improved considerably since December 2024, when a new building was finalised.⁸⁶⁰ All administrative offices and accommodation facilities were relocated to this modern, well-equipped, and clean facility, enhancing both the quality of services provided and the standard of living for the residents. The centre has been organised to reduce tensions among detainees, with accommodation rooms typically hosting only two to three persons, despite having a larger

⁸⁵⁷ Information provided by Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

⁸⁵⁸ Information provided by CNRR, 9 December 2019.

⁸⁵⁹ Article 30(1) -(4) Public Custody Centres Regulation.

⁸⁶⁰ General Inspectorate for Immigration, "Achievements and Results Obtained by the Police Officers of the Accommodation Center for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody Arad in the First 11 Months of This Year", 18 December 2024, available [here](#).

capacity, in order to avoid conflicts. Separate rooms are allocated for men and women. Rooms are equipped with air conditioners.⁸⁶¹

According to JRS Romania, the Arad Detention centre includes a new medical office, an improved dining area and kitchen—both reported as being clean and well-organised—and isolation rooms, which are identical in conditions to the regular rooms but used for individual accommodation when necessary.⁸⁶²

According to JRS Romania the meals in Arad Detention centre are provided by the Romanian Gendarmerie, which also supplies food for prisons and other detention facilities. Detainees noted that while the food is adequate, with daily servings of fruit and vegetables, they would prefer meals more suited to their traditional preferences (spicy food, curry, or ingredients specific to Muslim diets). However, this is not possible due to the uniform catering system applied across the Gendarmerie network. Some detainees even mentioned that the food portions were too large at times.⁸⁶³

In the **Arad** Detention centre, detainees benefit from additional support provided by NGOs and religious communities. Donations of clothes, hygiene products, and other materials have been regularly offered by organisations such as CNRR, JRS Romania, and various faith-based groups, with the management being open to such initiatives.⁸⁶⁴

According to JRS Romania, communication with the outside world from the centre is facilitated through two phones available in the centre, and detainees receive a monthly phone card of €5. They are also allowed to use their own phones weekly, usually under supervision. Moreover, visits from relatives and friends are permitted during designated visiting hours.⁸⁶⁵

In **Arad** Detention centre NGOs maintain regular access to the centre: CNRR provides legal counselling and information sessions, while JRS Romania, in cooperation with IOM Romania, implements the RVAR voluntary return program. Detainees are also informed about the possibility of voluntary return facilitated by Frontex, which offers financial support packages of €600 upon departure and €1,400 in reintegration assistance in the country of origin, in addition to covering travel and document-related costs. Frontex returns, however, are not available to certain nationalities, such as Sudanese, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Afghan, and Ugandan nationals, for whom the RVAR program may remain an option. Both programs are complementary and coordinated in the centre.⁸⁶⁶

As for 2024, CNRR stated that food was delivered daily to the Public Custody Centres in order to be served to the persons taken into public custody. Food was provided in the Centre pursuant to instructions approved by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (and published in the Official Monitor of Romania), which establish a number of calories to be assured daily for each person taken into public custody. The norms in cause take into account the particular situation of each person (adults, pregnant or breastfeeding women, minors accompanying adults in public custody, religious restrictions, dietary restrictions as advised by a doctor etc.). The migrants received three meals a day, as well as additional food periodically distributed by CNRR. Foods that might go against religious dietary restrictions (such as pork) were not served.⁸⁶⁷ During important religious holidays (e.g. Ramadan), at the request of the migrants, food was provided at a time that allowed them to respect their traditions. During Ramadan, CNRR distributed food every evening to every migrant, in addition to the food provided by the authorities, regardless of religion. In detention centres normally if the migrants have financial resources, they can request weekly that various products (alimentary and non-alimentary) be purchased for them.⁸⁶⁸

⁸⁶¹ Information provided by JRS Romania Timisoara and Arad, March 2025.

⁸⁶² *ibid.*

⁸⁶³ *ibid.*

⁸⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁸⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁸⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁸⁶⁷ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁸⁶⁸ *ibid.*

According to the report on the Ombudsman's visit of 27 June 2024 to the Otopeni Detention Center: "Food for foreign nationals taken into public custody and accommodated in the centre was provided by the Gendarmerie's catering service, ensuring a double record-keeping system and the preservation of food samples. The medical service was involved in activities related to dietary regimes and conducted water potability tests from the centre's own supply every two months throughout the year. The Romanian National Council for Refugees, which implemented the project "Counselling and Material Assistance Provided in Public Custody Centres", occasionally ensured the provision of fresh fruits and vegetables to foreigners in the centre".⁸⁶⁹

2.2 Activities

The Public Custody Centres Regulation provides that every foreigner is entitled to an hour of recreational outdoor activities per day, depending on the weather conditions and the possibilities of supervision. Recreational outdoor activities usually take place between 13:30 and 17:00. The director of the centre or their legal substitute may increase the duration of outdoor recreational activities.⁸⁷⁰

The Aliens Ordinance provides for the right to access to education for children detained in public custody centres accompanied by at least one parent or by their legal representative; children have free access to the compulsory education system.⁸⁷¹ Nevertheless, according to the directors of both **Arad** and **Otopeni**, none of the children detained in public custody centres were enrolled or attended school.

No information was made available regarding 2023.

According to the report on the Ombudsman's visit of 27 June 2024 to the Otopeni Detention Center: *"Detainees did not have access to activities that could help them pass the time in the centre. The facility's management specified that there was no activity schedule for the accommodated individuals, as it was deemed unnecessary. During discussions with detainees, they expressed that they had no activities to occupy their time, highlighting the need for an activity schedule for those in custody (...) there was a need to organize cultural-educational and/or recreational programs, as such programs did not exist at the time of the MNP team's visit. These activities should involve or allow the participation of foreign nationals in designated indoor and outdoor spaces within the centre. The development and implementation of such programs could be achieved by identifying and using resources through EU-funded projects and/or engaging external collaborators and specialists. This was necessary to maintain the detainees' well-being and prevent anxiety and depression, considering the high costs associated with managing these conditions, which could persist for years, with relapses, long-term complications, and potential hospitalization, further increasing expenses. Additionally, such programs would help foster a secure and trusting social environment. (...) Legal and material assistance for detainees was provided through projects implemented by non-governmental organizations that had formal collaborations with IGI and the centre. These projects were funded either by the organizations themselves or through European Union programs. Among these organizations, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR), and JRS – Jesuit Refugee Service Romania played a key role in supporting detainees. CNRR managed two major projects: one funded by the European Union under the National Program – Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), which provided counselling and material assistance to migrants in public custody, and another project dedicated to legal assistance for foreigners. As a partner NGO, JRS was actively involved in cases of tolerated stay, offering accommodation to foreigners who could not be removed from the country. Meanwhile, IOM provided assistance in voluntary return cases, ensuring that those who wished to return to their home countries could do so under safe and organized conditions."*⁸⁷² Based on these findings, the Ombudsman recommended the following: The management of the Accommodation Centre for Foreigners Taken into

⁸⁶⁹ Information provided by Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

⁸⁷⁰ Article 26(1) -(2) Public Custody Centres Regulation.

⁸⁷¹ Article 104(6) Aliens Ordinance.

⁸⁷² Information provided by Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

Public Custody Otopeni is advised to take the necessary legal measures to: *“Develop and implement an educational-recreational program, prepare a calendar of activities and display it in a visible manner so that it can be easily accessed by foreigners, as well as carry out cultural, educational and recreational activities necessary for the leisure time of the persons in custody. Fill vacant positions and hire the necessary personnel, so that the persons in custody have the opportunity to spend free time outside, in the open air, engaging in sports and recreational activities; Take the necessary steps to carry out cleaning and maintenance works in the living spaces, especially in sanitary groups, which require repainting and maintenance; equip the sanitary groups with anti-slip mats to prevent slipping; replace the degraded mattresses; Ensure that the centre provides the necessary clothing items for the persons in custody; Ensure the functionality of the mobile phones made available to foreigners for making calls; Provide advanced training courses for the staff in order to be able to handle crisis situations and de-escalate conflicts, including the qualification of trainers in the field”*.⁸⁷³

In January 2025, the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) responded to the Ombudsman's report from its visit on 27 June 2024 at the Otopeni Detention Centre, affirming the implementation of measures to create an educational-recreational program in the centre. The IGI acknowledged that staff shortages and the lack of interest from detainees had hindered the implementation of these programs. However, efforts were made, including the organisation of competitions and leisure activities with the support of the CNRR (Romanian National Council for Refugees).⁸⁷⁴

According to JRS Romania, the new building of the **Arad** Detention Centre is equipped with a fully functional gym, and detainees also have access to two outdoor recreational areas where they can play football and basketball. In 2024, the centre continued to respect detainees' religious rights; during Ramadan, a dedicated prayer room was made available to allow detainees to observe their religious practices. Additionally, all detainees have access to televisions in their rooms, with channels available in multiple languages, including from their countries of origin.⁸⁷⁵

According to CNRR, in 2024 the Management of Otopeni Public Custody Centre provided recreational facilities, including a sports field and an indoor gym. According to the Centre's internal regulations, individuals in public custody were entitled to one hour of outdoor recreational activities per day. This period may have been extended with the director's approval if weather conditions and supervision capacities permitted. Minors accompanying adults in public custody were granted extended outdoor recreation time. However, unaccompanied minors were not placed in public custody in 2024. Cases involving minors accompanying adults were rare, as alternatives to public custody were usually applied. For minors, the Centre has a dedicated children's room equipped with age-appropriate toys. When needed, CNRR organizes recreational and educational activities for them.⁸⁷⁶

According to CNRR, in 2024 the Otopeni Public Custody Centre also featured a library with books in various foreign languages, including English, French, and Arabic. While individuals in public custody do not have access to computers, they can use their personal mobile phones twice a week. However, each room is equipped with a television and cable connection, providing access to satellite programs in multiple languages. Additionally, CNRR had supplied board games and playing cards, organizing periodic tournaments and championships as part of its projects. These activities offered detainees an opportunity for engagement and social interaction, fostering a sense of normalcy within the facility.⁸⁷⁷

⁸⁷³ Information provided by Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

⁸⁷⁴ Information provided by the IGI in January 2025 as response to the visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

⁸⁷⁵ Information provided by JRS Romania Timisoara and Arad, March 2025.

⁸⁷⁶ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁸⁷⁷ *ibid.*

2.3 Health care and special needs in detention

Foreigners detained in public custody centres have the right to legal, medical and social assistance and the right to have their own opinion, religious, philosophical and cultural matters respected.⁸⁷⁸

The Asylum Act provides that vulnerable asylum seekers detained in specially designed closed spaces within the Regional Centres are regularly monitored and benefit from adequate support, according to their individual situation, including their health situation.⁸⁷⁹ The Aliens Ordinance also provides for appropriate medical care and treatment for vulnerable persons in detention centres.⁸⁸⁰

In 2024 according to UNHCR Romania, public custody centres lack an established identification mechanism of vulnerable persons, which is instead present in reception centres, including specially arranged closed areas. According to the director of the Otopeni centre, there is no identification mechanism for vulnerable persons.

According to the law, the psychologist of the centre makes the psychological evaluation of persons detained in the centre, drafts psychological observation sheets and provides specialist assistance throughout their stay.

For foreigners with psychological or psychiatric problems, the psychologist of the centre informs the Director of the centre immediately or their legal substitute and, where appropriate, makes proposals for specialist consultations to hospital departments.⁸⁸¹

The psychological assistance is provided without an interpreter. It was mentioned that many of them speak English or Romanian and if they do not speak these languages she solicits the assistance of another detainee, who may interpret for them but only if the foreigner agrees to it.

The authorities try to ensure assistance for this category of persons, but if the needs in question cannot be satisfied, the person is released. In rare cases, groups such as families with children have been released from detention.

According to the observations provided in the report on the Ombudsman visit, of 27 June 2024 to the Otopeni Detention Center: *"Since the beginning of the year until the date of the visit by the NPM team, the main activities of the medical service include: conducting 105 tests for respiratory conditions (flu, COVID); 1,051 consultations through the center's medical office; 141 medical records prepared upon the admission of beneficiaries into the centre; 18 escort missions to clinics outside the centre, including for paternity testing; and 85 prophylactic activities for the food block. Migrants were examined by medical staff upon admission to the centre, where they declared in writing, under their own responsibility, any known medical conditions. However, an informed consent form for necessary treatments also needed to be attached to the consultation file. A notable best practice was observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, as Romania became the first country in Europe to implement a vaccination policy for detainees in the centre, as highlighted in discussions with medical staff. The centre had specific digitalized procedures, including protocols for admission, food refusal (no cases recorded from the beginning of the year until the visit), self-harm (four cases in 2023 and three in 2024), drug users, transfer/transport cases, pregnant detainees (one case in December 2023), and first aid administration. The medical office and two treatment rooms were adequately equipped according to minimum standards, thanks to EU-funded projects aimed at ensuring rapid identification and isolation of infectious diseases. Two designated isolation rooms were available, one in each section of the centre. Rapid test kits for detecting pathogens such as hepatitis B and C, HIV, influenza, and COVID-19 had been purchased. For cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the centre*

⁸⁷⁸ Article 104(2) Aliens Ordinance.

⁸⁷⁹ Article 19¹¹(3) Asylum Act.

⁸⁸⁰ Article 104(7) Aliens Ordinance.

⁸⁸¹ Article 38 Public Custody Centers Regulation.

was equipped with a defibrillator, two large emergency kits, and a small first-aid kit, all placed in visible locations. Additionally, a vacuum immobilization system was available for orthopaedic cases. The medical assistance areas were sterilized using UV lamps. From a staffing perspective, the medical team was adequately structured to meet the monitoring needs of detainees. This included one doctor working seven hours per day and four medical assistants, who also participated in 24/72-hour on-call rotations. An annual training plan was in place for the medical service, covering first aid and epidemic control measures, including isolation and quarantine protocols. Medical information was initially confidential, but in cases requiring dietary adjustments (e.g., for diabetic detainees), staff were informed to ensure appropriate meals. Specialized care for women was included in the medical protocols, ensuring access to specialized treatment and appropriate dietary plans while respecting previous medical diagnoses upon confirmation. The standard medication included nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), gastric protectors, and antispasmodics. Active medication was administered by medical assistants, based on prescriptions or recommendations. No supply chain shortages were recorded, as the medical stock was managed by a designated medical assistant. All consultations and treatments were recorded daily in medical files and consultation registers, which were securely stored. The medication for chronic patients was properly ensured and distributed as needed, with continuous monitoring of expiration dates. Maintaining a stock of only essential emergency medicines was a priority, as certain substances had biochemical instability and required careful management, with an average shelf life of three months, impacting costs. Efforts were ongoing to provide dental care services, including permanent fillings, given that some detainees could remain in custody for up to 18 months. No deaths were recorded. Detainees aged 65 and older were identified in the centre, with medical staff trained to address their specific needs. Additionally, three individuals with mental health conditions were under monitoring at the time of the visit. (...) Following the assessment of the psychological assistance provided to detainees—through the review of case files, interviews with staff and detainees—it was found that, as of the date of the visit, there were no identified psychological services available to beneficiaries. Specifically, there were no records of psychological evaluations, no register of psychological consultations, and no weekly or annual activity schedule for beneficiaries. Although the institution had applicable procedures for training staff to handle crisis situations and defuse conflicts—especially in the absence of a permanent clinical psychologist at the centre—there was a need for more in-depth training courses and for qualified trainers in the field. At the time of the visit, the psychologist position was vacant, although it had been opened for recruitment. In the past, a full-time psychologist was employed at the centre but retired on May 2, 2023. According to information provided by the centre’s management, when needed, a psychologist from the General Inspectorate for Immigration would visit the centre.⁸⁸² The Ombudsman presented the following recommendations based on the visit’s findings: “The management of the Accommodation Centre for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody Otopeni is advised to take the necessary legal measures to: Attach to the medical consultation file the informed consent form regarding access to necessary treatments for ensuring the conditions for maintaining vital functions and, implicitly, the maintenance of an adequate state of health in the given situations; Ensure the constant verification of expiration dates and keep in the emergency medical cabinet only specific medications, as a priority and responsibility of the medical personnel; Continue efforts to ensure dental assistance so that foreign nationals benefit from dental interventions, including the application of permanent fillings, considering the maximum length of stay of up to 18 months in the Otopeni Accommodation Centre; Provide psychological services for individual and group intervention, specific to migrants; fill the vacant position of psychologist.”⁸⁸³

In January 2025, the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) also acknowledged in its response to the Ombudsman’s report from 27 June 2024 that the post of psychologist at the Otopeni Detention Centre had remained vacant since May 2023. The IGI stated that the centre relied on interventions from the psychologist of the IGI headquarters as needed and expressed its commitment to fill the vacancy and to expand staff capacity to ensure access to psychological support for detainees.⁸⁸⁴

⁸⁸² Information provided by Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

⁸⁸³ *ibid.*

⁸⁸⁴ Information provided by the IGI in January 2025 as response to the visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

According to JRS Romania, in 2024, the situation regarding medical and psychological support in the Arad detention centre remained largely unchanged, with a doctor and a nurse regularly available to provide medical assistance. However, a significant improvement was that the presence of a psychologist on a daily basis was guaranteed. All newly arrived persons are now subject to an initial psychological evaluation upon entry, and additional psychological counselling is offered upon request—either initiated by the beneficiaries themselves or recommended by the centre’s director or medical staff. Additionally, all new arrivals continue to undergo a medical assessment upon admission, to rule out any contagious conditions that might pose a risk to other residents. The quality of medical and psychological facilities has also improved following the relocation to a new building; in particular, medical cabinets and the psychological counselling room are currently better equipped and more suitable for consultations.⁸⁸⁵

CNRR stated that medical and psychological assistance were provided at the Centre by specialized staff in 2024. Upon arrival, individuals were placed in medical isolation for five days, during which they underwent medical evaluations. This was a standard procedure for new arrivals to prevent the spread of illnesses. If specialized or multidisciplinary medical care was required (such as for acute illnesses, infectious diseases, conditions needing immediate or ongoing medical attention, decompensated psychiatric conditions, general medical emergencies, etc.), the person was transferred to a hospital. Migrants who required psychological support or counselling could request these services, and they were informed of this option when they entered the accommodation centre for individuals under public custody.⁸⁸⁶

3. Access to detention facilities

Indicators: Access to Detention Facilities

1. Is access to detention centres allowed to

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| ❖ Lawyers: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ NGOs: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ UNHCR: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ❖ Family members: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> No |

The Aliens Ordinance provides that national, international and non-governmental organisations and other bodies competent in the area of migration, authorised and accredited under the law, shall be provided with the possibility to visit detention centres on the basis of the Protocols concluded with IGI or prior authorisation. In exceptional and duly motivated situations, it is possible to visit the centres within 48 hours.⁸⁸⁷

Article 13 of the Public Custody Centres Regulation details visiting hours in detention centres for the following groups:⁸⁸⁸

- (a) Representatives of diplomatic missions or foreign consular offices representing the detainees’ interests: 09:00 – 20:00 every day;
- (b) Representatives of national, international or non-governmental organisations competent in the area of migration, authorised and accredited under the law: 09:00 – 20:00 every day;
- (c) Family members or other persons who need to state the reasons for visiting: 10:00 – 12:00 and 14:00 – 17:00 for a maximum of 30 minutes, three times a week, usually on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday;
- (d) Legal representatives: 09:00 – 20:00 every day.

⁸⁸⁵ Information provided by JRS Romania Timisoara and Arad, March 2025.

⁸⁸⁶ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁸⁸⁷ Article 103(4) Aliens Ordinance.

⁸⁸⁸ Article 13(1) -(3) Public Custody Centers Regulation.

Lawyers have to hold a power of attorney from the foreigner held in detention. In some cases, lawyers have not been allowed access to detention centres on the ground that they had not had their lawyer's card validated by the Bar Association.

Visits are authorised by the Head of the Centre or their legal representative. In the absence of cooperation Protocols, visits by NGO representatives are authorised by the Director of the IGI Migration Directorate.

Media and politicians have access to detention centres if their request is approved.

The Public Custody Centres Regulation prescribes the conditions under which detainees may use the phone in order to contact people outside the centre.⁸⁸⁹ Detainees may use the public telephone at their own expense from 09:00 to 22:00 every day. Every person is entitled to a card of 5 euro per month. The representatives of Otopeni reported that in some cases they allocated 2 cards. All interviewed persons stated that this is not sufficient, because international calls are very expensive.

In 2022 in **Arad** there was one functional phone in building B. The phone was available for a day for foreigners accommodated on one floor and the next day for the ones accommodated on the other floor, according to the detainees interviewed. Phone wires were installed in each common room in building C and a phone was connected for two hours in each common room. Each foreigner has around 20 minutes' access to the phone. The Ombudsman also confirmed that the number of phones (four) is not enough, even more so when the centre is at full capacity.⁸⁹⁰

In 2022 **Otopeni**, according to the people interviewed, there was a phone available in each building. According to the representatives of Otopeni centre there are 2 phones. Detainees may use their personal mobile phone upon request, provided that it is not equipped with a camera. They are forbidden from using their personal mobile phone as long as they are under escort. In 2024, the situation remained similar, and besides the two available phones, people in detention can use their personal phones too, under supervision, twice a week.

According to the report on the Ombudsman visit of the Otopeni Detention Center carried out on 27 June 2024: *"There were two disciplinary isolation rooms. The disciplinary isolation measure was applied for a duration of 24 hours, and in one case it was extended by an additional 24 hours. Upon reviewing the register for recording special events, it was noted that in some cases the date and time of the beginning of the isolation measure were not recorded—only the date and time of release from isolation were mentioned."*⁸⁹¹ Based on this finding, the Ombudsman recommended the following: The management of the Accommodation Center for Foreigners Taken into Public Custody Otopeni is advised to take the necessary legal measures to: *"Record the date and time of initiation of the isolation measure in the register for the documentation of special events. Take the necessary steps to carry out cleaning and maintenance works in the living spaces, especially in sanitary groups, which require repainting and maintenance; equip the sanitary groups with anti-slip mats to prevent slipping; replace the degraded mattresses."*⁸⁹²

In January 2025, in its response to the Ombudsman's report from the 27 June 2024 visit at the Otopeni Detention Centre, the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) confirmed plans to address hygienic and maintenance shortcomings, including the provision of proper bedding, clothing, and access to outdoor activities. These commitments come in response to repeated concerns about overcrowding, poor hygiene, and inadequate facilities highlighted by the Ombudsman.⁸⁹³

⁸⁸⁹ Article 12(1) -(4) Public Custody Centres Regulation.

⁸⁹⁰ Ombudsman, Visit Report, 6 October 2022, p.5, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁸⁹¹ Information provided by Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

⁸⁹² *ibid.*

⁸⁹³ Information provided by the IGI in January 2025 as response to the visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

CNRR mentioned that lawyers were allowed to visit their clients in public custody throughout 2024. NGO representatives were allowed to access the Public Custody Centres on the basis of a collaboration protocol, either to implement projects or for punctual activities. Access to the Centres is nominal and can be granted by the General Inspectorate for Immigration in the following cases:

- For the duration of a year
- At the date of signature of the collaboration protocol
- At the date of signature of the contracts for non-reimbursable funding, for the entire implementation period of the projects
- Occasionally, in specific circumstances ⁸⁹⁴

CNRR stated that legal counselling was also consistently provided regarding return procedures, available legal remedies against return decisions under escort, and measures involving public custody. When necessary, specialized counsellors offered guidance on the asylum procedure within the centres. As a national NGO with public utility foundation status, in 2024 CNRR had regular and unrestricted access to these centres upon an initial general request for access, ensuring daily legal and material assistance throughout the implementation of AMIF-funded projects. Its counsellors offered free legal support on migration law matters, including return decisions and public custody. Additionally, in specific cases, CARR's asylum law specialists were granted access to public custody centres to assist migrants applying for asylum. A structured communication mechanism between CNRR and IGI ensured timely information-sharing, allowing for a swift response from asylum specialists.

According to CNRR, in 2024 UNHCR had access to the centres upon request, either independently or in response to an individual potentially in need of international protection. If an alternative to public custody was granted, the migrant received tolerated stay status in Romania, which provided him with the legal right to work for the duration of their stay, along with all other rights stipulated by Romanian law for this category of migrants.⁸⁹⁵

D. Procedural safeguards

1. Judicial review of the detention order

Indicators: Judicial Review of Detention

1. Is there an automatic judicial review of the lawfulness of detention? ☐ Yes ☒ No
- ❖ If yes, at what interval is the detention order reviewed?

The Aliens Ordinance provides that foreigners detained in public custody centres have the right to be informed immediately after their arrival in these places, in their language or in a language they understand, of the main reasons for their detention and of the rights and obligations they have during their stay in these centres. These are communicated in writing by the persons designated to manage these centres.⁸⁹⁶

In practice, however, foreigners receive the detention order, in all cases written in Romanian. According to the director of Arad they receive a form with their rights and obligations, where it is also mentioned that they have the right to appeal against the detention order in English. Communication is done only in writing when they arrive in detention and there is no interpreter provided at this stage. According to a lawyer, detainees are not receiving their return decision. The lawyer has to request the decision from the IGI Migration Directorate.

⁸⁹⁴ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁸⁹⁵ *ibid.*

⁸⁹⁶ Article 104(3) Aliens Ordinance.

In **Otopeni**, detainees are informed in writing, in Romanian and English about the reasons for detention, according to the representatives of the centre. They also said that if detainees have questions, whoever is on duty explains more to them upon arrival.

In 2023, CNRR⁸⁹⁷ stated they distributed leaflets in English, French, Albanian, Hindu, Urdu and Vietnamese language to foreigners in public custody. The informative material about the public custody procedure was distributed both in the Otopeni and Arad centres. CNRR representatives made monthly monitoring visits at these centres. Foreign nationals in public custody were informed of the reasons why this measure has been taken against them, the legal remedies available to them and their rights. The information was provided by means of leaflets, posters and also through the legal counsellor of CNRR who comes to the centre daily during the week (6h/day). If necessary, the legal information was provided to foreigners with the support of available interpreters. No situations reported from which to result that foreigners were not able to lodge complaints to court against the measure of public custody. The Public Custody Centre in Arad indicated that informative material is available also in Arad, Turkish and Chinese. In 2024, both asylum seekers and foreign nationals in public custody were informed of the reasons why this measure had been taken against them, the legal remedies available to them and their rights. The information was provided by means of leaflets, posters and also through the legal counsellors of CNRR who come to the Otopeni public custody centre daily during the week.⁸⁹⁸ If necessary, the legal information was provided to foreigners with the support of available interpreters. No situations reported from which to result that asylum seekers or foreigners were not able to lodge complaints to court against the measure of public custody.⁸⁹⁹

Under Romanian law, only a Prosecutor is competent to order detention. The maximum duration of the initial detention order is 30 days both for public custody and for specially designed closed spaces in Regional Centres.

Foreigners subject to detention can appeal before the territorially competent Court of Appeal within 5 days.⁹⁰⁰ The appeal formulated against detention is subject to lighter formalities, as it is exempt from the judicial stamp duty.⁹⁰¹ If the applicant is detained during the Dublin procedure, it does not have a suspensive effect on the detention order or on the determination of the responsible Member State.⁹⁰² The Court of Appeal has to examine the appeal within 3 days from the date of receipt, and its decision is final. In comparison with previous years when only a few appeals were lodged against detention orders, in 2022, the Court of Appeal of Timișoara had registered 23 appeals against detention orders of the Prosecutor's Office attached to the Court of Appeal of Bucharest. However, 22 appeals were rejected and 1 annulled as judicial taxes were not submitted.⁹⁰³

In regard to the small number of complaints, CNRR stated that it could be because most foreigners requested their assistance in order to return to Serbia based on the readmission agreement.⁹⁰⁴

In 2023, the Court of Appeal of Bucharest registered 10 appeals against detention orders; the court delivered 4 decisions to admit the appeals and 6 decisions to reject them. The hearings were held in person in 9 cases and in 1 case online.⁹⁰⁵ The Court of Appeal of Timisoara did not provide information for 2023.

In 2024, CNRR reported that they provided legal assistance in submitting 309 appeals against administrative decisions issued by the General Inspectorate for Immigration, as well as 100 second

⁸⁹⁷ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

⁸⁹⁸ *ibid.* February 2025.

⁸⁹⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰⁰ Articles 19[^]7(7) and 19[^]14(8) Asylum Act.

⁹⁰¹ *ibid.* Article 19[^]16(3).

⁹⁰² *ibid.* Article 19[^]14(8).

⁹⁰³ Information provided by the Court of Appeal Timișoara, 07 and 17 February 2022.

⁹⁰⁴ Information provided by CNRR, 15 February 2022.

⁹⁰⁵ Information provided by the Court of Appeal of Bucharest, 10 January 2024.

appeals (appeals against the first court decision). There is no systematic follow-up available for all cases; however, it is known that the majority of these appeals were rejected.⁹⁰⁶ No additional information on these cases was provided by the General Inspectorate for Immigration.

Concerning the reason for ordering the detention, it was noted by a lawyer that IGI invokes the risk of absconding without even assessing the individual circumstances of each case. The simple fact that the person did not leave Romanian territory voluntarily means there is a risk of absconding. A rejected asylum-seeking unaccompanied minor, who lived for almost one year at DGASPC centre in Bucharest, went to school and even had a job, was placed in detention the day after his 18th birthday, due to the risk of absconding. The same reason was invoked also in the case of a woman accommodated at JRS Bucharest with medical problems. According to the lawyer who filed the appeals, the detention orders were challenged and the decision of the court was positive.

The prolongation of detention is ordered by the territorially competent Court of Appeal, upon a motivated request by IGI, filed at least 5 days before the expiry of the time limit of initial detention. The court must rule before the expiry of the period of prior detention, and its decision is final.⁹⁰⁷

In general, the IGI Migration Directorate requests the extension of detention for an additional period of 5 months to enforce return decisions under escort and the court may grant an extension of detention for this period.

Questions are raised with regard to the effectiveness of judicial review against detention measures, particularly in light of recent case law from the Court of Appeal of Bucharest. In a case concerning a family from Cuba including a child enrolled at kindergarten and a grandmother suffering from thalassemia and hypertension, whose asylum application had been rejected, detained on the basis of a risk of absconding from the voluntary return procedure, the Court briefly concluded on the legality of detention. It dismissed the appellants' argument on alternatives to detention, stating that these only apply to asylum seekers. The Court also failed to consider the best interests of the child.⁹⁰⁸

In the assessment of the IGI Migration Directorate's request for a two-month extension of detention, however, the Court of Appeal noted that even though detention was not ordered against the minor child, since the centre could not provide adequate conditions for raising and educating a child, it would be contrary to the best interests of the child to maintain the family in detention.⁹⁰⁹

In addition to judicial review upon request and judicial review in case of an extension of the duration of detention, the Aliens Ordinance requires IGI to examine the opportunity to maintain the measure of public custody at intervals of up to 3 months. In the case of families with children, the analysis must be carried out at intervals of up to one month.⁹¹⁰ However, there is no information about this procedure in practice.

An important case that underscores the intersection between detention measures, extradition proceedings, and the right to seek asylum is the case of the extradition of one Ukrainian to Russia was ruled in 2022. Romanian national authorities detained Chechen asylum seeker Amina Gerikhanova in March 2022 on grounds that she posed an alleged threat to national security. She had fled her home in Ukraine in the aftermath of Russia's invasion in February 2022. The Romanian border guards separated her from her young son and detained her pending extradition based on a Russian Interpol red notice.⁹¹¹ On 18 April 2022, the court of Appeal of Suceava authorised her extradition to Russia,⁹¹² whereas the

⁹⁰⁶ Information provided by CNRR in March 2025.

⁹⁰⁷ Article 19¹⁴(4) Asylum Act.

⁹⁰⁸ Court of Appeal of Bucharest, Decision 2472/2018, 29 May 2018.

⁹⁰⁹ Court of Appeal of Bucharest, Decision 2767/2018, 13 June 2018.

⁹¹⁰ Article 101(13) Aliens Ordinance.

⁹¹¹ Amnesty International, Europe: Halt returns of people from the North Caucasus to Russia where they are at risk of torture and abuse, 17 January 2024, available [here](#).

⁹¹² Amnesty International, Romania: Ukrainian refugee faces extradition to Russia: Amina Gerikhanova, 29 April 2022, [link](#).

judicial authorities of the Russian Federation have presented in writing, in documents submitted to the Ministry of Justice, a series of guarantees⁹¹³, while her appeal was finally rejected on 4 May by the High Court of Cassation and Justice in Romania. The last Court noted that likewise, the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict cannot constitute a reason for refusing extradition, the admission of the extradition request being based on the documents in the file and not on the circumstantial situations that do not directly involve the violation of the fundamental rights of the requested person, as there is no evidentiary element in the file that would lead to this conclusion. In addition, the arrest warrant and the INTERPOL alert were issued a long time ago, respectively since 2018, and the search for the extraditable person carried out by this prosecutor's office until 15.12.2017, when she was placed on the international wanted list. The same High Court also concluded that simply submitting an asylum application is not enough to be considered exempt from extradition⁹¹⁴.

On 9 May, Amina Gerikhanova was granted interim measures by the European Court of Human Rights under the Rule 39 procedure. The Court informed the Romanian Government that it should not extradite Amina Gerikhanova her pending its assessment of her situation⁹¹⁵.

Her extradition to Russia was only stopped following a massive public outcry and the imposition of interim measures by the European Court of Human Rights. Romania eventually granted her asylum⁹¹⁶.

It should be mentioned that in a similar case of extradition ruled by the High Court of Cassation and Justice (against another ruling of the Court of Appeal of Suceava of 10 May 2022⁹¹⁷) the same month of 2022, judges stated that on 15 March 2022, the Russian Federation initiated the procedure for withdrawal from the Council of Europe. In this context, it is noteworthy that the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights, the judicial body of the Council of Europe that provides protection in the event of violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the Convention, is being denied, which calls for increased caution in assessing the consequences that extradition to the Russian Federation could have. Also, the existence of data supporting the uncertainty of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the requesting state is highlighted by the European Parliament Resolution of 07.04.2022 on the intensification of repression in Russia (2022/2622 (RSP), which was based, among other things, on the statement of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights of 24 March 2022 expressing his appreciation for the courageous work of journalists and human rights defenders, including those from the Russian Federation and Belarus, the statement of the Representative for Freedom of the Media of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe of 03.03.2022 on the serious violation of the right to freedom of expression and freedom of the media in Russia in the context of the country's military attack against Ukraine; the statement of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the latest developments in Russia and Ukraine.⁹¹⁸

2. Legal assistance for review of detention

Indicators: Legal Assistance for Review of Detention

1. Does the law provide for access to free legal assistance for the review of detention?
☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Do asylum seekers have effective access to free legal assistance in practice?
☒ Yes ☐ No

During detention in public custody centres, asylum seekers have all the rights set out in the Asylum Act, except for those concerning the right to access employment, right to accommodation in the Regional

⁹¹³ High Court of Cassation and Justice, Penal Section, Decision no. 282 of 04 May 2022, available only in Romanian [here](#).

⁹¹⁴ *ibid.*

⁹¹⁵ Amnesty International News, 2022, available [here](#).

⁹¹⁶ Amnesty International, Europe: Halt returns of people from the North Caucasus to Russia where they are at risk of torture and abuse, 17 January 2024, available [here](#).

⁹¹⁷ Penal decision no. 47 of 10 May 2022, Court of Appeal of Suceava

⁹¹⁸ High Court of Cassation and Justice, Penal Section, Decision no. 339 of 25 May 2022, available [here](#)

Centres and reimbursement for travel costs.⁹¹⁹ Consequently, detained asylum seekers have the same rights to legal assistance as those in liberty.

Legal assistance for asylum seekers in detention is provided by CNRR through the project “Specialised legal assistance for asylum seekers in Romania”, funded by the AMIF national program. According to CNRR, if the detained asylum seekers express their wish to be counselled before the interview, a CNRR legal advisor will provide the necessary assistance. In this case, the interested asylum seeker refers to the management of the centre and the latter informs CNRR and the legal counsellor will go to the detention centre.⁹²⁰ CNRR also confirmed that legal counselling is provided upon request at every stage of the procedure.⁹²¹ The implementation of this project continued also in 2024.⁹²² As part of this project CNRR ensured legal counselling in all 6 regional centres for asylum seekers (1 counsellor/centre). In the public custody centres in Otopeni and Arad the counselling of asylum seekers was provided by 2 other counsellors of CNRR.

In **Arad**, legal counselling is provided by the CNRR legal counsellor from Timișoara according to CNRR. However, CNRR reported there were no asylum claims made by foreigners detained in Arad or Bucharest in 2022.⁹²³ No information was presented for 2023. According to data reported by CNRR for the year 2024, counselling was provided to four individuals in detention who had applied for asylum: three in the Otopeni Detention Centre and one in the Arad Detention Centre.⁹²⁴ It is possible that the actual number of cases was higher; however, no additional data was made available by the IGI. In practice asylum seekers were relying on the information received from other detainees. This was also confirmed by the interviewed detainees who reported that they were not counselled by any NGO on asylum applications or subsequent applications, and that they were relying on the information provided by other detainees or police officers.

CNRR reported that, IGI informs CNRR Bucharest by email when an asylum application is made.⁹²⁵ The representative of Arad centre said they inform the CNRR representative working in the centre if an asylum claim is made, because while the detainee is an asylum seeker, he/she cannot benefit from the services provided under the project implemented. The director of Timișoara centre said they inform the legal counsellor in Timișoara if an asylum claim was made from the detention centre, but not every time. Nevertheless, it seems that the communication between IGI and CNRR was flawed in 2021 and as well as in 2022 because, CNRR reported that there were no asylum requests made in detention centres in 2022,⁹²⁶ even though the representative of Arad centre reported 92 asylum applications.

It is more difficult or even impossible for asylum seekers to contact the legal counsellors or attorneys in due time in order to prepare and/or assist them for the personal interview. They are made aware of their rights and obligations as asylum seekers only at the interview conducted by the IGI-DAI case officer. There is no legal counsellor providing legal counselling to asylum seekers in detention who work in the centre on a daily basis. Lawyers cannot contact their clients by phone, as the detainees are not allowed to have personal phones in detention and may only use their phone upon request if it has no camera. Lawyers may only access them if they visit them or if the clients have free minutes left to talk on the phone. Meetings are held in private rooms.

⁹¹⁹ Article 19^16(2) Asylum Act.

⁹²⁰ Information provided by CNRR, 15 February 2022.

⁹²¹ *ibid.*

⁹²² *ibid.* in February 2025.

⁹²³ *ibid.* 7 February 2023.

⁹²⁴ *ibid.* March 2025.

⁹²⁵ *ibid.* 7 February 2023.

⁹²⁶ *ibid.* 15 February 2022.

Therefore, no appeals were drafted by CNRR in 2021 and 2022.⁹²⁷ According to the director of Timișoara centre, all appeals were lodged by the applicants. He also noted that detained asylum seekers are not counselled by anyone before the interview and none of the appeals were admitted by the court.

In 2023 and 2024 legal aid was provided by CNRR under European Union funds. According to CNRR, from the practice encountered in 2024, asylum seekers did not face obstacles in accessing legal assistance in detention. They had effective access to legal assistance, such as legal assistance for asylum seekers in detention being provided by CNRR through the project “Specialised legal assistance for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection in Romania”, funded by the AMIF national program. If the detained asylum seekers expressed their wish to receive legal counselling before the interview or at any stage of the asylum procedure (e.g., lodging a complaint against the IGI decision), a CNRR legal advisor would provide the necessary assistance. In such cases, the asylum seeker would inform the centre’s management, who would then notify CNRR, and the legal counsellor would go to the detention centre. If the situation required it, the CNRR legal counsellor could call an interpreter to assist with the legal counselling session.⁹²⁸

According to the observations from the Ombudsman report on the visit conducted on 27 June 2024, to the Otopeni Detention Center: *“Legal and material assistance activities were carried out through projects implemented by non-governmental organizations with which IGI/the Centre had collaboration agreements, based on projects funded either from their own resources or from European Union funds. These organizations included: the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR), and JRS – the Jesuit Refugee Service Romania.”*⁹²⁹

E. Differential treatment of specific nationalities in detention

No differential treatment of specific nationalities has been publicly reported regarding detention. In 2024 CNRR mentioned they did not identify any cases of discriminatory or preferential treatment.⁹³⁰

⁹²⁷ Ibid.

⁹²⁸ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

⁹²⁹ Information provided by Ombudsman visit report in Otopeni Detention Centre, 27 June 2024, available [here](#).

⁹³⁰ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

Content of International Protection

Under Government Ordinance No. 44/2004 ("Integration Ordinance"), beneficiaries of international protection are included in an integration program upon request and according to a protocol concluded individually by IGI-DAI.⁹³¹ The application for participation in the integration program has to be submitted to IGI-DAI within 3 months of the grant of protection, compared to 30 days provided by the previous form of the Integration Ordinance.⁹³²

After the registration of the application, the integration officer of IGI-DAI interviews the beneficiary. At the interview representatives of NGOs, local public authorities or other institutions with competences in the integration area may participate. An individual needs assessment sheet is drafted to determine the type of assistance or activities needed for the social integration of the applicant.⁹³³ Based on this evaluation form, an individual plan is established, which includes deadlines, necessary activities to achieve the objectives, responsible persons, responsible institutions and / or organisations, as well as the decision of the IGI-DAI regarding the local community in which the integration activities of the program will be carried out.⁹³⁴

Participation in the integration program is relevant to the enjoyment of certain rights such as [Housing](#) and Social Welfare.

Activities which may be included in the plan mainly include, separately or cumulatively, the following:⁹³⁵

- ❖ Counselling and support activities to ensure access to the rights listed in the Integration Ordinance;
- ❖ Cultural accommodation sessions;
- ❖ Romanian language courses ([see Access to Education](#)).
- ❖ Educational and recreational activities;
- ❖ Non-reimbursable financial aid, granted under the conditions of Asylum Act;
- ❖ Financial allowance in an amount equal to that granted to asylum seekers until receiving the non-refundable aid, but not more than 3 months;
- ❖ Accommodation in one of the regional centres, depending on the number of available accommodation places;
- ❖ Other types of activities or benefits established according to the individual needs of the foreigner and granted by NGOs carrying out activities in the field of integration of foreigners or by local public administration authorities.

The implementation period of the integration program is 12 months from the date of signing the protocol or from the date provided in the protocol. It may grant an extension of maximum 6 months based on a motivated request of the beneficiary and assessment of the situation.⁹³⁶

In addition to the integration program offered by the state authorities, there are several projects concerning the integration of beneficiaries of international protection and third-country nationals funded through the national AMIF scheme.

Since 2016 the implementation of these projects covers 6 regions throughout the country.⁹³⁷ Each region has at least one Regional Centre for asylum seekers.

⁹³¹ Article 15 Integration Ordinance.

⁹³² *ibid.* Article 16.

⁹³³ *ibid.* Article 17.

⁹³⁴ *ibid.* Article 18(1).

⁹³⁵ *ibid.* Article 18(2).

⁹³⁶ *ibid.* Article 20.

⁹³⁷ Romania is Home, *Integration programs*, available in Romanian [here](#).

In Region 1, after more than 2 years of no integration project implemented,⁹³⁸ IOM Romania, in partnership with AIDRom and the Schottener Social Services Foundation, implemented the project “InterAct + Active participation and integrated services for migrants from Romania” between 25 December 2020 – 24 December 2022. IOM Romania indicated that the project continued in 2023.⁹³⁹ In 2024, Region 1 experienced a minimum six-month gap in funding, during which no integration project was active—leaving beneficiaries of protection and third-country nationals without structured support. Since May 2024, the InterACT project,⁹⁴⁰ implemented by IOM Romania and funded under the 2021–2027 National Program for Asylum, Migration, and Integration, has resumed services through a one-stop-shop model supporting social, economic, and cultural inclusion. Region 1 includes Bucharest and the following counties: Ilfov, Prahova, Buzău, Dâmbovița, Argeș, Vâlcea, Gorj, Brașov și Covasna.⁹⁴¹ Services offered included: Information and advice on the rights and obligations of legally resident migrants (both beneficiaries of some form of protection and third-country nationals); Romanian language courses; cultural orientation sessions; socio-cultural activities; medical support through the settlement of services / treatments / medicines / payment of health insurance for migrants in vulnerable situations; psychological counselling; material assistance to migrants in vulnerable situations; school supplies and reimbursement for food costs for children; facilitating access to the labour market, including organising meetings with potential employers; financial education sessions; financial incentives to beneficiaries of a form of international protection that constantly participates in the activities organised by the project team.⁹⁴²

In Region 2 JRS implemented the project “My place to Integration”. Supporting the process of effective integration of beneficiaries of international protection (BPI) and foreigners (RTT - third country nationals) legally residing in Romania in the following counties of Galați, Constanța, Vrancea, Bacău, Vaslui, Brăila, Tulcea. The project includes activities such as information, counselling, material, legal, medical, psychological assistance, employment counselling, as well as social, cultural, recreational, educational activities, Romanian language courses and cultural orientation, in 2 regional integration centres: Galați and Constanta. The project is introducing means of distance counselling / assistance for certain categories of beneficiaries (online courses, etc.) and facilitating access to the labour market through an online tool. The project also aims to involve cultural mediators, interpreters and volunteers at the local level as well as the development of local support networks at the level of institutions and organisations that come into contact with foreigners or within their communities.⁹⁴³ The project also covers the costs of meals in kindergarten and school, school supplies, rental fees in regional centres; offers social vouchers of 50 RON/10EUR two per person. The project ended in October 2023. From the end of 2023 until June 2024, there was a gap in integration assistance in Region 2. Since June 2024, JRS Romania has been implementing the project *My Place to Integration in Romania*, providing legal, social, educational, medical, and material support through Regional Integration Centres in Galați and Constanța, a Regional Contact Point in the Galati Reception Centre, and a newly established Virtual Integration Centre.

Also in Region 2 following a six-month gap in integration services from the end of 2023 until mid-2024, JRS Romania launched in June 2024 the project “*A New Home in Romania – Strengthening the Social Integration Mechanism*” (project code: AM22G_01),⁹⁴⁴ funded under the National Asylum, Migration and Integration Program. With a total budget of 3,700,000 lei (of which 3,330,000 lei represents European non-reimbursable funding), the project runs from June 2024 to January 2026, addressing the serious housing needs of Beneficiaries of International Protection (BPI). The project ensures adequate accommodation for at least 500 BPIs, offering direct rental assistance and mediating relations with landlords. Activities include continuous needs assessments, collaboration with local authorities and real

⁹³⁸ Since 2 August 2019, no integration project has been implemented in Region 1.

⁹³⁹ Information provided by IOM Romania, 4 January 2024.

⁹⁴⁰ InterACT – Active participation and integrated support for migrants in Romania (Region 1), available in Romanian [here](#).

⁹⁴¹ Romania e Acasa, Integration Programs, available in Romanian [here](#). According to IOM Romania, 773 beneficiaries of international protection benefitted from its services in 2021.

⁹⁴² Information provided by IOM Romania, 19 February 2022.

⁹⁴³ JRS Romania, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁹⁴⁴ A New Home in Romania – Strengthening the Social Integration Mechanism, available in Romanian [here](#), accessed 26 March 2025.

estate agencies, and financial subsidies to support vulnerable groups, such as single-parent families, persons without income, Muslim women, and large families. Geographically, the project covers areas with Regional Integration Centres—Bucharest, Galați, Baia Mare, Timișoara, Rădăuți, Șomcuta Mare, and Giurgiu—with a significant focus on Bucharest, where 78% of the housing support is concentrated due to the high number of resettlements and the beneficiaries' preference for the capital. JRS Romania has been implementing this housing program since 2016 in Romania.

In Region 3 ICAR Foundation implemented in 2022 the project “Integration of foreigners with legal residence in Romania—INTEG-RO”, in partnership with AIDRom which includes Rădăuți and Suceava, Botoșani, Neamț and Iași counties.⁹⁴⁵ The program provides information and social / legal counselling, vocational and professional guidance, psychological support to overcome difficulties and motivate participation in the integration program (in the case of beneficiaries of international protection). The services included both individual counselling sessions (social and psychological), information, assistance in contacting various public or private institutions and local community, as well as group activities (e.g.: Romanian language courses, cultural accommodation sessions, group counselling, development of life skills, socio-recreational activities).⁹⁴⁶ This project ended in October 2023. After a one-year interruption in the provision of integration assistance in Region 3—which includes the counties of Suceava, Botoșani, Neamț, and Iași—support for migrants resumed in early 2025 through the launch of a new project named “*Integration of legally resident foreigners in Romanian society: a common construction*”.⁹⁴⁷ The project is implemented by the ICAR Foundation, in partnership with AIDRom, under the national Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) 2021–2027 program, coordinated by the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI). Running for 24 months, the project operates in two Regional Integration Centres located in Iași and Rădăuți, and aims to provide a wide array of free services tailored to the needs of beneficiaries of international protection and legally residing third-country nationals. Among the services offered are legal and social counselling, Romanian language courses, cultural orientation, psychological support, medical assistance, and help accessing housing, including rent subsidies for the initial months after leaving accommodation centres. The project also supports children's access to education by covering school materials and after school or kindergarten fees, and assists migrants with family reunification procedures, legal document translations, and citizenship applications. To promote community engagement, beneficiaries are encouraged to take part in intercultural and recreational activities, with small financial incentives (150 RON) offered for active participation. By re-establishing these essential services after a prolonged gap, the project contributes to rebuilding the integration framework in Region 3 and reinforces collaboration between local authorities, NGOs, and migrant communities, following a comprehensive one-stop-shop approach.

In Region 4 LADO Cluj, in partnership with Asociația Profesională Neguvernamentală de Asistență Socială Baia Mare (ASSOC) and IOM ROMANIA implemented in 2022 the project “SIM - CIS - Integrated services for migrants - intercultural and solidary communities. The project covers Maramureș, Satu Mare, Sălaj, Cluj, Bistrița Năsăud, Mureș, Harghita, Sibiu și Alba counties. The project aimed to support the integration into Romanian society of beneficiaries of international protection and third country nationals by creating a coalition of institutional and organisational actors operating as local support networks to increase the quality of integrated services for migrants. They offered the following services: Romanian language and cultural orientation courses; guidance on how to obtain Romanian citizenship; material assistance (food, clothing, hygiene products, etc.); translation of documents (especially identity documents); legal / psychological / medical assistance; socio-cultural and recreational activities; Support for insertion in the labour market. For minors they offer material assistance (school supplements, teaching materials); cover the costs for food / nursery / kindergarten / boarding / after-school.⁹⁴⁸ The implementation of this project ended in 2022.⁹⁴⁹ Following a service gap of over 6 months during which no integration

⁹⁴⁵ AIDRom, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁹⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁹⁴⁷ Romania – Integration Measures 2024, European Website on Integration, available [here](#).

⁹⁴⁸ LADO, available in Romanian [here](#): 134 beneficiaries on international protection were assisted by LADO and ASSOC in 2021.

⁹⁴⁹ Information provided by IOM Romania, 4 January 2024.

programs were available in Region 4—which includes the counties of Maramureș, Satu Mare, Sălaj, Cluj, Bistrița-Năsăud, Mureș, Harghita, Sibiu, and Alba—the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Romania, in partnership with ASSOC Baia Mare, relaunched migrant support initiatives through the PRISM 4 – Promoting Inclusion Services⁹⁵⁰ in Region 4 project. Running between 31 July 2024 and 30 July 2026, the project is funded through the AMIF. PRISM 4 is based on a one-stop-shop model, designed to centralize integration services for Beneficiaries of International Protection (BIPs) and Third-Country Nationals (TCNs). The project provides a broad spectrum of tailored support, including legal and social counselling, Romanian language instruction, cultural orientation sessions, psychological assistance, labour market inclusion support, and help in accessing healthcare. Beyond direct assistance, the project promotes active cooperation between migrants and local actors—encouraging engagement from local authorities, civil society, and private stakeholders—to reinforce community-level integration. PRISM 4 thus responds strategically to previous gaps, rebuilding the integration framework in Region 4 with the goal of enabling migrants to transition from vulnerable newcomers to active participants in Romanian society.

In Region 5, the Western part of Romania, AIDRom in partnership with Filantropia Oradea, implemented in 2022 the project "AIM 5 – Actions to integrate migrants in Region 5" between September 2020-September 2022. The aim of the project was to support the socio-economic and cultural integration of beneficiaries of international protection and third-country nationals in Romanian society in Region 5, through an integrated “one stop shop” approach - by providing all the necessary information and services in one place and by strengthening the collaboration and active involvement of local authorities and community in supporting migrants during the integration process.⁹⁵¹ Region 5 includes Timișoara, and Arad, Bihor, Hunedoara, Mehedinți și Caraș Severin counties.⁹⁵² Services provided through this project included: information on rights and obligations and activities or services provided under the project; individual social counselling and assistance services; individual legal advice, advice on accessing the labour market; Romanian language courses and cultural accommodation, social, cultural and recreational activities; health insurance for a maximum period of 6 months, reimbursement of medical services, equivalent value of medicines and / or medical objects / materials; financial incentives for beneficiaries who consistently participate in project activities; supplies and other materials needed in the educational process; reimbursement of meal expenses charged to nurseries, kindergartens and afterschool as well as costs incurred in participating in extracurricular activities undertaken by educational institutions; emergency Financial Packages; reimbursement of public transport costs; document translations and legislations.⁹⁵³ A similar project was implemented by AID-Rom until October 2023. After a break of at least six months, AIDRom and its partners have resumed their activities supporting migrant integration in western Romania. Through the project *INTEGRIS*:⁹⁵⁴ *Integration Initiatives for Migrants in Romania – implemented in Region 5*, a new stage of coordinated action has begun in the counties of Timiș, Arad, Bihor, Hunedoara, Mehedinți, and Caraș-Severin. Implemented between November 2024 and November 2026, the project is designed to support beneficiaries of international protection, third-country nationals, and those under temporary protection. The approach is integrated and human-centred, offering key services—social and legal counselling, Romanian language courses, material aid, cultural orientation, and child-specific support—in a single location. The two Regional Integration Centers, in Timișoara and Oradea, will continue to serve as essential hubs for these services. At the same time, the project fosters community engagement through awareness campaigns, volunteer mobilization, and collaboration with local authorities.

In Region 6, from December 2020-December 2022 the Global Help Association, in partnership with IOM Romania and AIDRom, implemented the project ‘Regional network for the integration of migrants in Romania – MyRO’. The project ended in 2022.⁹⁵⁵ Region 6 included Giurgiu, Călărași, Ialomița,

⁹⁵⁰ PRISM 4 – Promoting Inclusion Services in Region 4, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁹⁵¹ Information provided by AIDRom, 14 January 2022. AIDRom assisted 179 beneficiaries of international protection in 2021.

⁹⁵² AIDRom, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁹⁵³ Information provided by AIDRom, 14 January 2022.

⁹⁵⁴ INTEGRIS: Migrant integration initiatives in Romania carried out in Region 5, available [here](#).

⁹⁵⁵ Information provided by IOM Romania, 4 January 2024.

Teleorman, Olt și Dolj.⁹⁵⁶ As of December 2022, no project was being implemented in Region 6, as no NGO applied for the call for proposals launched by IGI-DAI. As of 29 November 2024, integration activities in Region 6 resumed, with the launch of a new project⁹⁵⁷ implemented by AIDRom. This initiative, funded under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), is set to run for 24 months, until 28 November 2026. The project aims to strengthen the socio-economic inclusion of migrants by providing integrated and personalized support, including language and civic education courses, medical and legal assistance, and professional development to facilitate access to the labour market. Activities are conducted through Regional Integration Centres located in the cities of Craiova and Giurgiu.

The integration prospects for beneficiaries of international protection in Romania are assessed in the context of appeals against returns of beneficiaries from other European countries. Different courts in Germany and the Netherlands have dismissed such appeals on the ground that conditions for international protection holders in Romania do not present deficiencies triggering Article 3 ECHR,⁹⁵⁸ including the case of a person with PTSD.⁹⁵⁹

According to the IGI 2024 report, Romania achieved a 97.5% absorption rate under the AMIF 2014–2020 program, implementing 184 projects. A Norwegian-funded program also closed with an 89% absorption rate. Romania was the first EU country to submit a National Implementation Plan for the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.⁹⁶⁰

Most of the projects related to integration were implemented until October 2023, and the new financial AMIF scheme allowed for implementation of projects starting with June 2024, only, with a noticeable breaking of seven months.

Following a period marked by significant service gaps, Romania gradually re-established its migrant integration infrastructure across all six regions through projects financed under the **AMIF 2021–2027 national program**, coordinated by the **General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI)**. Below is a brief overview of each region's current project and implementing organizations:

- **Region 1:** After more than two years without structured support, the InterACT project, implemented by IOM Romania in partnership with AIDRom and Schottener Foundation, resumed in May 2024 and will run until May 2026.
- **Region 2:** The My Place to Integration in Romania project, led by JRS Romania, was relaunched in June 2024, covering a period of two years.
- **Region 3:** The ICAR Foundation, together with AIDRom, started in early 2025 the project “A Common Construction”, running for 24 months.
- **Region 4:** The PRISM 4 project, implemented by IOM Romania and ASSOC Baia Mare, began in July 2024 and continues until July 2026.
- **Region 5:** The INTEGRIS project, coordinated by AIDRom and Filantropia Oradea, started in November 2024 and will be active until November 2026.
- **Region 6:** After nearly two years of inactivity, AIDRom resumed integration services in November 2024 through a new 24-month project based in Craiova and Giurgiu

⁹⁵⁶ GlobalHelp Association, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁹⁵⁷ AIDRom – Press Release on the Launch of Integration Project in Region 6, available [here](#), accessed 26 March 2025.

⁹⁵⁸ (Germany) Administrative Court of Aachen, 6 L 202/18. A, 7 May 2018; Administrative Court of Düsseldorf, Decision 22 L 5230/17. A, 5 June 2018; Administrative Court of Hannover, Decision 12 B 3173/18, 3 July 2018; (Netherlands) Regional Court of the Hague, Decision NL.18.7700, 17 May 2018; Regional Court of Gravenhage, Decision NL18.21071, 5 December 2018.

⁹⁵⁹ (Germany) Administrative Court of Aachen, Decision 6 L 606/18. A, 6 July 2018.

⁹⁶⁰ According to the *Assessment of the activity of the general inspectorate for immigration in the year 2024* of the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI), published in April 2025, summarising its operations during 2024. Official source [here](#).

A. Status and residence

1. Residence permit

Indicators: Residence Permit

1. What is the duration of residence permits granted to beneficiaries of protection?

❖ Refugee status	3 years
❖ Subsidiary protection	2 years

The duration of residence permits granted for refugee status is 3 years and for subsidiary protection 2 years.⁹⁶¹

The conditions for issuing a residence permit – in the form of a card – are prescribed by the Asylum Decree.⁹⁶² In order to obtain a residence permit, issued free of charge, the beneficiary of international protection has the obligation to submit a document to IGI-DAI which proves their legal residence. This can be a: title of ownership; lease agreement registered with the fiscal administration; commodity contract concluded in authentic form; or any other documents concluded under the conditions of validity provided by Romanian legislation in force regarding the housing title, which prove the acquisition of some housing rights.⁹⁶³

Responsibility for issuing the residence permits lies with IGI-DAI. In practice there are no difficulties in the issuance of the residence permit. However, the AIDRom representative in Timișoara stated that beneficiaries encounter difficulties in obtaining a rental contract fulfilling the conditions required by the authorities. Currently, the landlords do not want to declare to the authorities that they rented out their apartments. The situation was the same for beneficiaries of international protection living in Region 2, but not in the Galați reception centre, in 2023.⁹⁶⁴ In 2024, according to JRS Romania some beneficiaries of protection still experienced challenges in securing housing. One persistent obstacle is the reluctance of Romanian landlords to rent to foreigners, often refusing to declare rental agreements to the authorities. In addition, the requirement for a financial guarantee or deposit poses a significant challenge, as none of the NGOs are in a position to cover these costs. Some beneficiaries also struggle to find stable employment, making it difficult to sustain rent payments once NGO support ends. In certain cases, even paying for utilities becomes a burden, as these are not always included in the assistance provided by NGOs.⁹⁶⁵

The beneficiary of international protection has to fill in a standard form,⁹⁶⁶ which is usually filled in together with the officer in charge. The time of issuance of the residence permit card is issued differs from one Regional Centre to another: as of 2022, one week or even sooner in Bucharest, three weeks in Timișoara, according to the director of the regional centre of Timișoara, three weeks in Rădăuți, three weeks in Galați (also in 2023),⁹⁶⁷ two to three weeks in Giurgiu. As for Șomcuta Mare, the director was not aware of the average duration. The situation in Timișoara in 2024 remained similar to the previous year's, with some minor improvements. Difficulties and delays may arise when the beneficiaries do not understand the procedure and do not bring all the required documents.⁹⁶⁸

As regards the renewal of residence permit, beneficiaries of international protection do not encounter any problems. Before the expiry of the residence permit, they fill in a request for renewal and a new card is issued in the same time frame as mentioned above.

⁹⁶¹ Article 20(6) Asylum Act.

⁹⁶² Article 51 Asylum Decree.

⁹⁶³ *ibid.* Article 50(3).

⁹⁶⁴ Practice based observation of JRS Romania, April 2024.

⁹⁶⁵ *ibid.* February 2025.

⁹⁶⁶ The form is available [here](#).

⁹⁶⁷ Practice observed by JRS Romania, April 2024.

⁹⁶⁸ Information provided by IOM, 19 February 2022.

IGI-DAI issued 1,374 residence permits to refugees and 1,798 to subsidiary protection beneficiaries in 2023.⁹⁶⁹ These were residence permits issued for the first time; beneficiaries had not held another residence permit in the previous 6 months. In 2024, IGI-DAI issued 2,416 residence permits to refugees and 2,417 to subsidiary protection beneficiaries.⁹⁷⁰

2. Civil registration

The procedure of civil registration is set out in Act 119/1996.⁹⁷¹

2.1 Marriage and childbirth registration

With regard to marriage registration, the law provides the obligation for the future spouses to present identity documents, birth certificates, and medical certificates.⁹⁷² Beneficiaries of international protection have to present several documents, such as:

- ❖ Identity document, which in their case may be the travel document issued after granting a form of protection;⁹⁷³
- ❖ Birth certificate;
- ❖ Certificate/ evidence issued by diplomatic missions or consular offices;
- ❖ Declaration, authenticated by the notary, which proves that they fulfil the necessary conditions for getting married;
- ❖ Proof of divorce/ death certificate of the spouse as the case may be;
- ❖ Prenuptial medical certificate;
- ❖ Marriage convention.

In addition, foreign citizens who do not speak Romanian have to submit the marriage declaration in the presence of and through an authorised translator, which they have to pay for.

ASSOC/LADO reported that beneficiaries do not encounter any issues in case of civil registration.⁹⁷⁴

In 2024, several challenges were reported, particularly in Bucharest, in relation to population records services (Evidența Populației). Notably:

- In cases of childbirth registration, the lack of authorized translators for certain languages, combined with the costs of translation and notarization, remains a significant barrier.
- Many beneficiaries lack original documents, having lost or been unable to carry them due to forced displacement, war, or prolonged travel. Others arrive with documents written in their national language that require legalized translation—a service that NGOs do not always cover financially.
- There are also practical difficulties related to the quality of translations. Inaccurate or unprofessional translations have led to misunderstandings or even rejection of documents by the authorities, affecting registration outcomes.

These administrative and financial burdens continue to hinder the full exercise of civil rights for some beneficiaries of international protection, particularly when attempting to register marriages or the births of their children.⁹⁷⁵

⁹⁶⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

⁹⁷⁰ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

⁹⁷¹ Act 119/1996 on civil registration acts, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁹⁷² Article 25(3) Act 119/1996.

⁹⁷³ Local Council of Timișoara, *Marriage Registration*, available in Romanian [here](#).

⁹⁷⁴ Information provided by LADO/ASSOC, 20 February 2023.

⁹⁷⁵ Information provided by JRS Romania, January 2025.

2.2 Bank accounts

As mentioned in the past years, BIP in Romania face significant difficulties in opening bank accounts, particularly those from Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan.⁹⁷⁶ Many banks refuse to provide services to these nationals due to security concerns, despite the Romanian National Bank stating that banks have the discretion to open accounts. In several cities, including Galați, Giurgiu, and Rădăuți, banks commonly reject applicants unless they have an employment contract, making it challenging for unemployed beneficiaries to access financial services.⁹⁷⁷ Even small banks that previously allowed account openings have become more restrictive, preventing some beneficiaries from renewing their residence permits. In Bucharest, additional requirements such as proof of stable income, a passport, and Romanian language proficiency create further obstacles, and there have been cases where accounts were suspended without explanation. While some beneficiaries with employment contracts do not face these barriers, the overall banking restrictions severely limit financial inclusion for many refugees in Romania.

In 2024, according to JRS Romania, the situation regarding access to bank accounts for beneficiaries of international protection remained challenging, particularly for individuals from Syria. Changes in the Syrian conflict and shifts in European policy have led to increased scrutiny of Syrian nationals. While Revolut was previously a convenient alternative, its transition into a regulated national bank now requires stricter documentation. Syrian applicants are often asked to provide a valid Syrian passport—a requirement many cannot meet due to expired documents or the impossibility of obtaining new ones. Even those holding Romanian travel documents for refugees or subsidiary protection are frequently rejected by the app. Traditional banks like Banca Transilvania, ING, and Revolut have adopted increasingly restrictive internal policies, making account access difficult for many foreigners. In contrast, banks such as Linker and UniCredit have shown greater flexibility and empathy toward migrants. Moreover, foreign nationals—including recognized refugees—also report difficulties when attempting to open business accounts, despite the account being linked to a legal entity rather than personal use.⁹⁷⁸

3. Long-term residence

Indicators: Long-Term Residence

Number of long-term residence permits issued to beneficiaries in 2024: 320⁹⁷⁹

During the state of emergency, in place from March 2020 to March 2022, applications for long term residence permits were suspended. The long-term residence permits were valid during the state of emergency.⁹⁸⁰

Long-term residence or permanent residence status is regulated by Government Emergency Ordinance No. 194/2002 (“Aliens Ordinance”). The conditions for obtaining long-term or permanent residence status are prescribed by Article 71 of the Aliens Ordinance and do not differ for refugees and people granted subsidiary protection.

- (a) **Lawful residence:** Permanent residence status may be granted to refugees or beneficiaries of subsidiary protection who have lawfully resided on the territory of Romania continuously during the last 5 years preceding the filing of the application.⁹⁸¹ Continuity implies that a person has not been absent from Romania for more than 6 consecutive months and shall not exceed 10 months of absence in total.⁹⁸²

⁹⁷⁶ Practice observed by JRS Romania, April 2024. Information provided by IOM Romania, 19 February 2022. Information provided by AIDRom, 14 January 2022.

⁹⁷⁷ Practice observed by JRS Romania, April 2024.

⁹⁷⁸ Information provided by JRS Romania, February 2025.

⁹⁷⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2021.

⁹⁸⁰ *ibid.* 16 February 2021.

⁹⁸¹ Article 71(1)(a) Aliens Ordinance.

⁹⁸² *ibid.* Article 71(1)(a)(i).

The 5 years residence term may be reduced to 4 years for beneficiaries of international protection in Romania who actively participate in the economic, social and cultural life of the Romanian society, including following the integration programs provided by the Integration Ordinance,⁹⁸³ or are married to a person holding Romanian citizenship for at least 5 years.⁹⁸⁴

According to the law, this period of residence starts from the moment when the asylum application was lodged.⁹⁸⁵

- (b) **Knowledge of Romanian language:** In addition, the applicant has to know the Romanian language at least at a satisfactory level. Usually this requirement is verified by the officer examining the request for a long-term residence card, by having a discussion in Romanian with the applicant.⁹⁸⁶
- (c) **Public order / national security:** The applicant must not pose a threat to public order or national security.⁹⁸⁷
- (d) **Health insurance.**⁹⁸⁸
- (e) **Accommodation:** The applicant has to prove the legal possession of a living space.⁹⁸⁹
- (f) **Means of subsistence:** The applicant has to prove they have at least the level of the gross average income in Romania.⁹⁹⁰

Article 72 of the Aliens Ordinance sets out the documents that the applicant has to submit personally, when requesting the permanent residence status:

- ❖ Travel document⁹⁹¹ for which there is an exemption for beneficiaries of international protection;⁹⁹²
- ❖ Proof of the legal possession of the living space, in accordance with the law;⁹⁹³
- ❖ Proof of the means of subsistence at the gross average earning in Romania;⁹⁹⁴
- ❖ Proof of health insurance;⁹⁹⁵
- ❖ Criminal record, issued by the Romanian authorities.⁹⁹⁶

According to IOM Romania difficulties occur when the beneficiaries cannot prove their means of subsistence, for example, if they have no employment contract and do not have social health insurance.⁹⁹⁷

Applications for permanent residence status are examined by a special committee of IGI.⁹⁹⁸ The decision has to be taken no later than 6 months from the day the application was registered. For objective reasons, the Head of IGI may extend this deadline by another 3 months, duly notifying the applicant.⁹⁹⁹

⁹⁸³ *ibid.* Article 71(1)(a)(v).

⁹⁸⁴ *ibid.* Article 71(1)(a)(vi).

⁹⁸⁵ *ibid.* Article 71(1)(a)(vii).

⁹⁸⁶ *ibid.* Article 71(1)(a)(vii).

⁹⁸⁷ *ibid.* Article 71(1)(f).

⁹⁸⁸ *ibid.* Article 71(1)(c).

⁹⁸⁹ *ibid.* Article 71(1)(d).

⁹⁹⁰ *ibid.* Article 71(1)(b).

⁹⁹¹ *ibid.* Article 72(1)(a).

⁹⁹² Article 146 Asylum Act.

⁹⁹³ Article 72(1)(b) Aliens Ordinance.

⁹⁹⁴ *ibid.* Article 72(1)(c).

⁹⁹⁵ *ibid.* Article 72(1)(d).

⁹⁹⁶ *ibid.* Article 72(1)(e).

⁹⁹⁷ Information provided by IOM Romania, 4 January 2024.

⁹⁹⁸ Article 73(1) -(2) Aliens Ordinance.

⁹⁹⁹ *ibid.* Article 73(3).

The applicant is notified within 15 days of the request being granted. Within 30 days from the receipt of the communication, the person who has been granted the right of permanent residence in Romania has to present themselves to the regional office of the IGI, where the application was registered, for the issuance of the permanent residence permit.¹⁰⁰⁰

Statistics for 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 were not made available. In 2023, IGI-DAI indicated that it does not have statistics available regarding the number of requests for long-term residence permits lodged.¹⁰⁰¹ In 2024, IGI-DAI issued 320 long-term residence permits in accordance with Directive 2003/109/EC, including 155 valid permits for refugees and 165 valid permits for subsidiary protection **beneficiaries** as of 31 December 2024.¹⁰⁰²

As of 2024, there have been no legislative or procedural changes to the criteria for obtaining long-term residence. The conditions set out in Article 71 of GEO 194/2002 continue to apply in full. The Romanian language requirement is still assessed informally through an interview with the IGI officer. All beneficiaries of international protection are eligible under the same terms as before, with no distinction between refugee status and subsidiary protection.¹⁰⁰³

4. Naturalisation

Indicators: Naturalisation

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. What is the minimum residence period for obtaining citizenship? | |
| ❖ Refugee status | 3 years ¹⁰⁰⁴ |
| ❖ Subsidiary protection | 8 years |
| 2. Number of citizenship grants to beneficiaries in 2024: | Not available |

The main criteria for naturalisation are laid down in Article 8(1) of the Act on Romanian Citizenship.¹⁰⁰⁵ According to the recent amendments, the standard 8-year residence requirement may be reduced under specific conditions to 5 or 3 years for refugees. Categories benefiting from this reduction include:

- Spouses of Romanian nationals (after 5 years of marriage);
- Refugees who demonstrate particular efforts towards integration (minimum 3 years of residence);
- Citizens of EU/EEA/Swiss Confederation;
- Persons born in Romania to parents legally residing at the time of birth.

Only recognised refugees benefit from the shortened 3-year residence requirement. Persons with subsidiary protection must still meet the full 8-year condition. A legal amendment to equalise these conditions was discussed but was not yet adopted as of May 2025¹⁰⁰⁶.

The minimum period of residence prior to the naturalisation application is shorter for a number of categories of applicants treated preferentially.¹⁰⁰⁷ Recognised refugees are one of the categories required to have resided in Romania continuously for a period of at least 3 years prior to the submission of the application. Therefore, the aforementioned provision clarifies the distinction between refugee status and subsidiary protection, which means that preferential treatment is afforded only to those bearing refugee

¹⁰⁰⁰ *ibid.* Article 73(4) -(5).

¹⁰⁰¹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

¹⁰⁰² *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

¹⁰⁰³ Information provided by JRS Romania, January 2025.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Law No. 14/2025 amending and supplementing the Romanian Citizenship Law No. 21/1991, as well as amending and supplementing other legal acts, available [here](#), accessed on March 27, 2025.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Act 21/1991 of 1 March 1991, available in Romanian [here](#).

¹⁰⁰⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰⁷ Article 8(2) Act on Romanian Citizenship.

status, while persons with subsidiary protection need to fulfil the condition of living 8 years prior to submitting the application.

Another change would concern reacquisition of Romanian citizenship, requiring them to prove their knowledge of the Romanian language through a certificate, which could be relevant for beneficiaries of international protection coming from Ukraine where there are ethnic Romanian communities.¹⁰⁰⁸

Two new articles, Article 8¹ and 8², now allow stateless persons or foreign nationals to apply for citizenship regardless of residence duration, provided they have significantly contributed to the protection and promotion of Romanian culture, civilization, and spirituality, or promoted Romania's image through exceptional achievements, particularly in sports. Eligibility under Article 8¹ must be confirmed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which assesses the cultural contribution based on activities such as teaching, research, publishing in Romanian, or supporting Romanian diaspora communities.¹⁰⁰⁹

The competent authority remains the National Authority for Citizenship (Autoritatea Națională pentru Cetățenie – ANC).¹⁰¹⁰

Law No. 14/2025 also introduces the obligation for applicants seeking reacquisition of Romanian citizenship to present a Romanian language certificate, a provision which could impact beneficiaries of international protection, especially those from Ukraine.

CNRR mentioned that several issues with regard to the citizenship acquisition process are still the same, as reported in 2021, and became more severe in 2022, such as the lack of a separate procedure for beneficiaries of international protection. Given the high volume of applications, there are long delays in scheduling the interview and there are situations in which officials of the NAC request civil status documents, which would involve contacting the authorities of the country of origin by beneficiaries. The request for documents from the authorities of the country of origin may be considered as voluntarily re-availing themselves of the protection of the country of nationality, a ground for cessation of refugee status or subsidiary protection.¹⁰¹¹ Furthermore, it was acknowledged that there is a lack of an adequate procedure for vulnerable persons. All applicants (regardless of their status) must go through an interview to test their knowledge of the Romanian language, Romanian History, Romanian Geography, Romanian Culture and Constitution. Although the beneficiaries did not express their dissatisfaction with the difficulty of the test, there are people who for objective reasons (illness, the elderly, those with a disability, etc.) cannot pass the interview, although they meet all the substantive conditions. For example, a person with severe Down syndrome cannot pass the interview, and there is no exception or special procedure for such cases.¹⁰¹² In 2023 CNRR added that there is no separate procedure for beneficiaries of international protection who would like to obtain Romanian citizenship, requests are processed under the legal provision for foreigners with legal residence.¹⁰¹³

In 2023, CNRR¹⁰¹⁴ highlighted again that under Article 8 of [Law 21/1991](#), beneficiaries of international protection have the right to apply for Romanian citizenship. The same article offers more favourable conditions to persons with refugee status, with the possibility of shortening the eligibility period from 8 years of residence to 4 years. However, in the case of persons with subsidiary protection, this shortened period does not apply. Moreover, there is a lack of clear procedure stipulated in the legislation regarding

¹⁰⁰⁸ Ministry of Justice, 'Update 26.04.2024 – Proiect de Lege pentru modificarea și completarea Leii cetățeniei române nr. 21/1991, precum și pentru modificarea și completarea altor acte normative', 26 April 2024, available in Romanian [here](#).

¹⁰⁰⁹ *Law No. 14/2025 amending and supplementing the Romanian Citizenship Law No. 21/1991, as well as amending and supplementing other legal acts*, available [here](#), accessed on March 27, 2025.

¹⁰¹⁰ For further details, see European Statelessness Network, *Ending Childhood Statelessness: A case study on Romania*, 2015, available [here](#).

¹⁰¹¹ Information provided by CNRR, 15 February 2022.

¹⁰¹² *ibid.*

¹⁰¹³ *ibid.* 7 February 2023.

¹⁰¹⁴ *ibid.* 16 January 2024.

access to Romanian citizenship for certain vulnerable categories, such as disabled or elderly people, as well as stateless persons. Vulnerable persons have to take the interview for which they must acquire a thorough knowledge of history, geography, culture and knowledge of the Romanian Constitution. For example, a person suffering from dementia or Down's syndrome is unable to take the interview due to their condition, yet the interview is foreseen by law as a compulsory step in the procedure to obtain Romanian citizenship. In 2023, CNRR organized a citizenship course for beneficiaries of international protection, divided into 4 modules related to the topics addressed in the specific interview (history of Romania, geography of Romania, culture of Romania and the Constitution of Romania); the course was attended by 40 people.

In 2024, JRS Romania mentioned that the timeframe for obtaining Romanian citizenship remains lengthy, even after beneficiaries of international protection complete all the procedural steps. Many applicants report waiting periods of two to three years for a decision, with no notable improvement in processing times. Challenges also persist regarding the translation and legalisation of documents from the country of origin. Some beneficiaries lack the financial means to obtain certified translations, and in other cases, the poor quality of translations can negatively impact the application process. Furthermore, the procedure remains complex and difficult to navigate, particularly for those unfamiliar with legal terminology or institutional requirements. As a result, many applicants continue to rely on NGOs for guidance and support throughout the process—from preparing documentation to understanding legal specifications and following up with authorities.¹⁰¹⁵

In 2025 IGI-DAI stated they do not keep statistics on citizenship granted to beneficiaries of international protection.¹⁰¹⁶

5. Cessation and review of protection status

Indicators: Cessation

1. Is a personal interview of the beneficiary in most cases conducted in practice in the cessation procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the law provide for an appeal against the first instance decision in the cessation procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Do beneficiaries have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No

Article 98(1) of the Asylum Act prescribes the grounds for cessation of refugee status as cases where the beneficiary:

- (a) Has voluntarily re-availed themselves of the protection of the country of nationality;
- (b) Having lost their nationality, has voluntarily re-acquired it;
- (c) Has acquired a new nationality and enjoys the protection of the country of their new nationality;
- (d) Has voluntarily re-established themselves in the country which they left or outside which they remained owing for the reasons on the basis of which they were granted refugee status;
- (e) Can no longer, because the circumstances in connection with which they have been recognised as a refugee have ceased to exist, continue to refuse to avail themselves of the protection of the country of nationality or habitual residence and cannot invoke, in order to justify such refusal, imperious reasons of concern to previous persecutions; or
- (f) Expressly renounces refugee status granted by Romania in writing.

¹⁰¹⁵ Information provided by JRS Romania, February 2025.

¹⁰¹⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

Article 99(1) of the Asylum Act provides the following grounds for cessation of subsidiary protection:

- (a) When the circumstances which led to its grant have ceased to exist or have changed to such an extent that this form of protection is no longer necessary; or
- (b) When the beneficiary expressly renounces in writing, to the subsidiary protection granted by the Romanian State.

These provisions on changed circumstances do not apply to a person who has been granted refugee status or subsidiary protection and who can rely on compelling reasons resulting from previous persecution, in order to refuse the protection of the country of origin or habitual residence.¹⁰¹⁷

Article 102 of the Asylum Act describes the cessation and withdrawal procedure. It shall be triggered *ex officio* by IGI-DAI or at the proposal of one of the institutions responsible for national security or public order, when new elements or data indicate the existence of reasons to reconsider the situation of the persons enjoying international protection within the meaning of the Asylum Act. Where the procedure for the cessation or cancellation of international protection is initiated at the proposal of one of the institutions responsible for national security or public order, IGI-DAI shall inform the respective institution of the decision of the procedure.

Article 103 of the Asylum Act requires the case officer in charge to inform the beneficiary of international protection in writing of:

- (a) The initiation of the cessation or, as the case may be, withdrawal of the international protection granted by the Romanian state, as well as the reasons for initiating the procedure;
- (b) rights and obligations during this procedure;
- (c) the possibility to present, in a personal interview or written statement, the reasons why international protection should be maintained.

In addition, the same article sets out the rights and obligations of the person subject to cessation or withdrawal procedure. During the cessation or withdrawal of the international protection granted by the Romanian state, the beneficiary has the right to:

- (a) be assisted by a lawyer;
- (b) have an interpreter free of charge;
- (c) contact and receive assistance by a UNHCR official;
- (d) receive counselling and assistance by an NGO representative;
- (e) receive, upon request, legal and procedural information, including information on the procedure in the administrative phase, under the legislation on legal aid in civil matters, taking into account their personal situation;
- (f) be provided, on request, with information to clarify the reasons for a cessation or withdrawal of international protection decision at the administrative phase and to explain how such a decision may be challenged, under the legal provision on legal aid in civil matters. The beneficiary has the obligation to:
- (g) provide the competent authorities with full and complete information about their personal situation; submit all the documents at their disposal and relevant to their personal situation;
- (h) follow the stage of the procedure and inform IGI-DAI within 5 days regarding any change of residence;
- (i) respond to the requests of IGI-DAI.

The beneficiary of international protection has the possibility to present, in a personal interview or written statement, the reasons why their international protection should be maintained.¹⁰¹⁸ The interview is not conducted in case the beneficiary of international protection has acquired Romanian citizenship.¹⁰¹⁹ If the

¹⁰¹⁷ Articles 98(2) -(3) and 99(2) Asylum Act.

¹⁰¹⁸ *ibid.* Article 103(1)(c).

¹⁰¹⁹ *ibid.* Article 103(3) citing Article 98(1)(c).

beneficiary is not present at the interview, the case officer will assess the case on the basis of the documents in the personal file.¹⁰²⁰

The re-evaluation of the case may be carried out in the Regular Procedure or Accelerated Procedure. The case officer decides on the re-examination of the case in the accelerated procedure, pursuant to the conditions set out in Article 75 for applying it.¹⁰²¹

Upon request, IGI-DAI grants UNHCR access to information on the procedure for reconsideration of the situation of beneficiaries of international protection and on the decisions issued, if the beneficiary has consented to this. In fulfilling its supervisory role under Article 35 of the Refugee Convention, UNHCR has the right to present its views to IGI-DAI on the procedure for reconsidering the situation of beneficiaries of international protection at any stage of this procedure.¹⁰²²

After analysing the existing elements from the case file and, as the case may be, the reasons invoked during the interview, the case officer issues a reasoned decision, which maintains, ceases or withdraws international protection.¹⁰²³ The cessation or withdrawal of the form of protection shall not have effect on the person's family members.¹⁰²⁴

Depending on the reasons, which gave rise to the decision to cease or withdraw the form of protection, the case officer may mention, as the case may be, the obligation to leave the Romanian territory.¹⁰²⁵ If the decision states also the obligation to leave the Romanian territory, IGI shall issue and enforce the return decision.¹⁰²⁶

If the case officer decides to cease or to withdraw international protection, the beneficiary may appeal the decision, following the rules of the Regular Procedure or Accelerated Procedure.

The law does not prescribe a systematic review of the protection status and cessation did not occur systematically in 2018-2024.

In 2022 IGI-DAI provided the information that they had issued 70 cessation decisions (17 cessation of refugee status and 53 of subsidiary protection). One of the beneficiaries renounced the form of protection granted. The main countries of origin were Ukraine, Syria and Iran.¹⁰²⁷ In 2022 the number doubled from 2021 when 34 cessation decisions were issued (main countries Syria, Iraq, Egypt)¹⁰²⁸ down from 55 cessation decisions in 2020 (main countries Syria, Iraq and Ukraine),¹⁰²⁹ 57 in 2019 (31 cessation of refugee status and 26 of subsidiary protection), up from 3 decisions issued in 2018.¹⁰³⁰ The number increased again slightly in 2023, to 84 decisions, concerning nationals from Syria, Ukraine and Iran. In 2024, IGI-DAI indicated a total of 53 cessation decisions (27 cessations of refugee status and 26 cessations of subsidiary protection). The people against whom these decisions were taken came from Afghanistan (11), Syria (21), Ukraine (4), Iraq (9).¹⁰³¹

In several cases, international protection was maintained. In three cases where legal counselling was offered by JRS Romania, following the re-assessment procedure, it was decided that international protection should continue, including:

¹⁰²⁰ *ibid.* Article 103(4).

¹⁰²¹ *ibid.* Article 103(5).

¹⁰²² *ibid.* Article 103(6).

¹⁰²³ *ibid.* Article 104(1).

¹⁰²⁴ *ibid.* Article 104(2).

¹⁰²⁵ *ibid.* Article 104(3).

¹⁰²⁶ *ibid.* Article 104(4).

¹⁰²⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

¹⁰²⁸ *ibid.* 10 March 2022.

¹⁰²⁹ *ibid.* 16 March 2021.

¹⁰³⁰ *ibid.* 5 March 2019, 20 February 2020.

¹⁰³¹ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

- ❖ The case of a Syrian BIP, who presented the necessary documents to submit the application for permanent residence and presented a valid national passport issued by the Syrian authorities after the date on which he received international protection.
- ❖ The case of two Iraqi adults, father and son, who, when they came to change their residence permit (the old one being expired), they presented national passports with entry/exit visas from the state of origin.

6. Withdrawal of protection status

Indicators: Withdrawal

1. Is a personal interview of the beneficiary in most cases conducted in practice in the withdrawal procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the law provide for an appeal against the withdrawal decision? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Do beneficiaries have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No

Refugee status is revoked where:

- (a) the person who has been granted refugee status has made false statements, failed to provide certain data or used false documents that were decisive for granting refugee status, and there are no other grounds for maintaining the status of refugee; or
- (b) after granting the refugee status it was discovered that the person should have been excluded from being a refugee.¹⁰³²

Subsidiary protection is revoked under the same grounds as the refugee status,¹⁰³³ the only difference being the grounds of exclusion. The withdrawal procedure is the same as the Cessation procedure. In 2022, IGI-DAI issued 6 decisions of withdrawal of protection status (Syria, Afghanistan).¹⁰³⁴ In 2023, IGI-DAI issued 2 withdrawals of protection status (1 person coming from Syria, 1 person coming from Afghanistan).¹⁰³⁵ In 2024, IGI-DAI issued 9 withdrawals of protection status, including 3 decisions revoking refugee status (2 for Iraqi nationals and 1 for a person from the Palestinian Authority in Palestine) and 6 decisions revoking subsidiary protection (1 for a stateless person, 3 for a person coming from the Palestinian Authority in Palestine, and 2 for Syrian nationals).¹⁰³⁶

¹⁰³² Article 100 Asylum Act.

¹⁰³³ *ibid.* Article 101.

¹⁰³⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

¹⁰³⁵ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

¹⁰³⁶ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

B. Family reunification

1. Criteria and conditions

Indicators: Family Reunification

1. Is there a waiting period before a beneficiary can apply for family reunification? ☐ Yes ☒ No
❖ If yes, what is the waiting period?
2. Does the law set a maximum time limit for submitting a family reunification application? ☐ Yes ☒ No
❖ If yes, what is the time limit?
3. Does the law set a minimum income requirement? ☐ Yes ☒ No

There is no difference between refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries in relation to the criteria and conditions for family reunification.

1.1 Eligible family members

Article 2(j) of the Asylum Act defines family members of the beneficiary of refugee status or subsidiary protection, to the extent that the family is in the country of origin at the date of the asylum application made by the sponsor, as:

- ❖ Spouse;
- ❖ Minor unmarried children of the beneficiary or the spouse, with the condition that they are unmarried, regardless of whether they are born in the marriage or out of wedlock or adopted in accordance with the national law of the country of origin.

The law does not set out any waiting period before a beneficiary of international protection may apply for family reunification. The law does not prescribe any deadline for applying for family reunification. The beneficiary of international protection in Romania may apply for asylum for their family members as long as they are not on the territory of Romania.¹⁰³⁷ Beneficiaries of international protection are also not required to prove the existence of income, accommodation or health insurance for family reunification.

They only need to prove the family relationship with the family member or the fact that the marriage was concluded before entering the territory of Romania.¹⁰³⁸ In practice, if the beneficiary of international protection does not have the financial means to pay for the translation of necessary documents to prove family ties, NGOs might help them in covering the costs of translation. In this case, the beneficiary has to wait until they receive their residence permit, as the terms of the project funded by the national AMIF program clearly state that costs of such translations may be covered only if the person holds a residence permit.

1.2 Family reunification procedure

Family reunification applications are processed by every Regional Centre.

According to the law, once the application has been submitted, the beneficiary shall also present original documents (birth certificate, marriage certificate, identity card) to prove family ties with the family members or, in the absence of these documents, any other documents proving the status of family member.¹⁰³⁹

¹⁰³⁷ Article 71(1) Asylum Act.

¹⁰³⁸ *ibid.* Article 71(3).

¹⁰³⁹ Article 30(1) Asylum Decree.

To obtain additional data and information on family ties and to clarify other relevant aspects of the asylum application lodged for family members, IGI-DAI must conduct an interview with the beneficiary of international protection.¹⁰⁴⁰ In 2023, interviews took place with Somali nationals.¹⁰⁴¹ In 2024, the authorised or trusted interpreters were used for the interviews.¹⁰⁴²

If the beneficiary of international protection does not present to IGI-DAI sufficient documents showing their family relationship with the family member in whose name the application is made, where originals are in the possession of the family member who is in a third country, IGI-DAI must communicate to the Directorate-General for Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the list of the necessary documents.¹⁰⁴³

The General Directorate for Consular Affairs requests the diplomatic mission or the consular office of Romania from the country where the family member of the beneficiary of international protection is, to establish the existence of the documents requested by IGI-DAI. The family member must present these documents, in original, to the diplomatic mission or consular office of Romania.¹⁰⁴⁴ The documents shall be sent in copy, with the mention “according to the original”, through the General Directorate for Consular Affairs, to IGI-DAI by the diplomatic mission or consular office of Romania from the country where the family member is present.¹⁰⁴⁵

1.3 Cases of family reunification in 2024 per regional centre

Statistics for 2024 were provided by IGI-DAI, however not desagregated on each reception centre. The total number of family reunification applications made in 2024 were 295, from which 96 were admitted by IGI-DAI.¹⁰⁴⁶

1.4 Specific procedure for unaccompanied children

The Asylum Act provides for a family reunification procedure for unaccompanied children, with specific requirements. The family reunification for unaccompanied minors, beneficiaries of international protection, shall be done with respect to their best interests.¹⁰⁴⁷ The procedure may be triggered *ex officio* by IGI-DAI. In this case the consent of the legal representative and/or the unaccompanied child is also required.¹⁰⁴⁸ In all cases, the unaccompanied child’s views will be taken into account and given due weight.¹⁰⁴⁹

If the unaccompanied child’s family has been traced, the case officer analyses the possibility and the conditions for carrying out family reunification and issues a reasoned decision in this respect.¹⁰⁵⁰ The decision provided may be challenged under the same conditions as a decision delivered by IGI-DAI in the Regular Procedure.¹⁰⁵¹

¹⁰⁴⁰ *ibid.* Article 30(2).

¹⁰⁴¹ Practice observed by JRS Romania, April 2024.

¹⁰⁴² *ibid.* February 2025.

¹⁰⁴³ Article 30(3) Asylum Decree.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Article 30(4) Asylum Decree.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *ibid.* Article 30(5).

¹⁰⁴⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, January 2025

¹⁰⁴⁷ Article 72(1) Asylum Act.

¹⁰⁴⁸ *ibid.* Article 72(2).

¹⁰⁴⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁰ *ibid.* Article 72(3).

¹⁰⁵¹ *ibid.* Article 72(4).

IGI-DAI shall take, as soon as possible, the necessary measures to trace the unaccompanied child's family, while protecting their best interests.¹⁰⁵² The unaccompanied child's opinion on the tracing of their family is taken into account and given the due importance, in relation to their age and maturity.¹⁰⁵³

The data and information collected for the purpose of family tracing are processed in accordance with the principle of confidentiality, especially when the life or physical integrity of a child or their close family who have remained in the country of origin is endangered.¹⁰⁵⁴

In Galați, it was reported in 2022 that applications made by an unaccompanied minor are assessed slowly. There was a case of a child who applied for family reunification in July 2022 and as of February 2023 she still had not received a decision. According to the director the procedure is initiated by the legal representative jointly with the NGO representative.

In 2023, in the case of 2 unaccompanied minors, family reunification requests were approved and their mothers arrived in Romania. There was also a case where the request for family reunification was approved and this positive decision was communicated to the legal representative, but the unaccompanied child BIP was unaware until he requested legal support from JRS Romania. Moreover, in cases of unaccompanied minors, NGOs assist children and their parents for the visa appointments, not the legal representatives. For instance, in the two successful cases mentioned above, the mothers were illiterate and thus could not do the procedure on their own. Support for obtaining visa appointments was offered in many more cases.¹⁰⁵⁵

It was noted that IOM Romania and LADO/ ASSOC are of the opinion that an unaccompanied minor who attains the age of majority during the asylum procedure does not retain their right to family reunification,¹⁰⁵⁶ contrary to the judgment of the CJEU in *Case C-550/16 A and S v Staatssecretaris van Veiligheid en Justitie* of 2018.

With regard to 2023, the CNRR¹⁰⁵⁷ flagged a series of issues concerning unaccompanied minors. In 2024, according to JRS Romania, the situation concerning the asylum procedure for unaccompanied minors remained largely unchanged. So although the number of asylum applications, including those submitted by unaccompanied minors, was lower compared to previous years, the procedural challenges persisted. The examination of asylum claims from unaccompanied minors continued to be marked by delays and inconsistencies, with some cases being prioritised while others faced prolonged processing times or insufficient procedural safeguards. These difficulties were often linked to the functioning of the General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPC), whose representatives—appointed as legal guardians—frequently lacked specialised training and were responsible for an excessive number of cases, sometimes managing over 100 to 200 minors at the same time. This situation negatively affected the quality of representation and the effective protection of unaccompanied minors' rights during the asylum process.¹⁰⁵⁸ At Regional Centre Timisoara there were situations where the asylum applications of unaccompanied minors were not analysed swiftly. In the case of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, communication between them and the legal representatives appointed by the DGASPC is not constant and tends to be limited to the measures and activities necessary for the asylum procedure. According to the information available to CNRR, the unaccompanied minors accommodated in the regional centres in Timisoara, Giurgiu, Șomcuta Mare and Rădăuți either have no contact with the legal representative or there is a very limited contact, and the only counselling they receive is from NGOs. The times when minors have contact with the legal representative appointed by the DGSPC are when the IGI conducts interviews

¹⁰⁵² *ibid.* Article 73(1).

¹⁰⁵³ *ibid.* Article 73(2).

¹⁰⁵⁴ *ibid.* Article 73(3).

¹⁰⁵⁵ Practice based observation by JRS Romania, April 2024.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Information provided by IOM Romania, 19 February 2022 and Information provided by LADO/ASSOC, 3 February 2022.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Information provided by JRS Romania, February 2025.

in the administrative phase of the asylum procedure, or at court, when the legal representatives are required by law to be present. At the centre in Galati, a slightly more favourable situation could be observed in terms of communication between the legal representative and the unaccompanied minors, who showed a greater interest in the situation of minors, both legally and socially/culturally.¹⁰⁵⁹

In 2024, Save the Children assisted a total of 17 children in submitting family reunification applications with a beneficiary of international protection: 8 in Timișoara, 7 in Maramureș, and 2 in Bucharest.¹⁰⁶⁰

This has an important impact on the family reunification procedure. In the case of unaccompanied minors, Art. 72 from the Law 122/2006 on the asylum procedure in Romania states that IGI has the competence to start the procedure for the family reunification of unaccompanied minors. The Order No 119/20643/2023 on the conditions of appointment, role, tasks and requirements of education, training and professional experience for persons appointed as representatives for unaccompanied foreign minors applying for or granted a form of international protection¹⁰⁶¹ indicates that the legal representative needs to initiate steps for the immediate identification of the minor's family and verifying the possibility of reunification with them. However, in practice, the CNRR is not aware of any ex officio proceedings made by the legal representatives, finding that there is limited proactive behaviour of the legal representatives accompanied by ignorance of the law in some cases. Thus, legal representatives call on the services of NGOs that are active in the field of asylum and refugee assistance.

1.5 Time limits and duration

The law prescribes that the family reunification procedure must be completed as soon as possible, not exceeding 9 months from the date the application was made. If further checks are required, the 9-month period may be extended by up to 6 months.¹⁰⁶²

IGI-DAI stated they have no statistics regarding the average duration of the procedure.¹⁰⁶³ According to JRS Romania, a family reunification case involving a family from Cameroon extended over 12 months. Although the authorities officially approved the reunification request in September 2024, the children—six minors, only represented by their 16-year-old sister—were able to arrive in Romania and reunite with their mother and younger brother only in late January 2025. The absence of the father further complicated the procedure, particularly in identifying an airline company willing to accept the minors travelling alone. Such delays can arise from various factors, depending on the specific circumstances of each case. However, in practice, it is common for family reunification procedures to last more than nine months before the family is effectively reunited.¹⁰⁶⁴

In 2022, IGI-DAI reported a total of 395 applications for family reunification (102 Syria, 223 Somalia, 25 Afghanistan, 10 Pakistan, 9 Palestine, 8 Iraq, 5 stateless, 4 Yemen, 3 Ukraine, 2 Sudan, 2 Bangladesh, 2 Iran), of which 166 were admitted and 3 dismissed and the rest (226) were still pending at the end of 2022.¹⁰⁶⁵ In 2023, IGI-DAI reported a total of 245 applications for family reunification, of which 192 admitted and 53 rejected (countries of origin were not indicated).¹⁰⁶⁶ In 2024, the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI-DAI) registered a total of 295 family reunification applications submitted by beneficiaries of international protection. Of these, 96 applications were approved, while 199 were rejected.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Information provided by Save the Children, March 2025.

¹⁰⁶¹ Art 21 (3) Order No 119/20643/2023 on the conditions of appointment, role, tasks and requirements of education, training and professional experience for persons appointed as representatives for unaccompanied foreign minors applying for or granted a form of international protection, available in Romanian [here](#).

¹⁰⁶² Article 31(4) Asylum Decree.

¹⁰⁶³ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Information provided by JRS Romania, February 2025.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

¹⁰⁶⁶ *ibid.* 18 January 2024.

Although the nationality of applicants was recorded in the SIMS database, detailed information regarding the countries of origin was not made publicly available.¹⁰⁶⁷

2. Status and rights of family members

If the case officer considers that the family relationship or, as the case may be, the conclusion of the marriage before entering Romania, has been proved by the beneficiary international protection, they will request the diplomatic missions or consular offices of Romania to grant the short stay visa for the family members holding valid travel documents.¹⁰⁶⁸

For the family members who do not hold valid travel documents or are unable to obtain them and they are outside the country of origin, at the request of the case officer, the diplomatic missions or consular offices of Romania shall issue *laissez passer* and shall grant a short stay visa in order to enter the country. The validity of the travel document shall be no more than 30 days and ceases on the date of entry of the holder into the territory of Romania.¹⁰⁶⁹

After their entry into Romania, if they consent to the asylum application, family members will have their application assessed according to the provisions of the Asylum Act.¹⁰⁷⁰ In practice, the family members are registered as asylum seekers, they are fingerprinted and photographed, granted temporary identity documents and follow the steps of the asylum procedure. They are scheduled for an interview and receive a decision. In all reported cases, family members were granted the same form of protection as the sponsor. IOM Romania also stated that family members are granted the same form of protection as the beneficiary that applied for family reunification.¹⁰⁷¹

If the conditions for family reunification set out in Article 30 of the Asylum Decree are not fulfilled, the case officer shall issue a decision to reject the asylum application of the family members. The rejection of the application cannot be solely based on the lack of documentation certifying family ties or marriage.¹⁰⁷² The decision shall be communicated to the sponsor beneficiary of protection who submitted the asylum application for the family members.¹⁰⁷³

C. Movement and mobility

1. Freedom of movement

Beneficiaries of international protection enjoy freedom of movement within Romania, in the sense that they may choose their place of residence freely and move freely, under the same conditions as other legally residing foreigners.¹⁰⁷⁴ Beneficiaries are not allocated to specific geographic regions or facilities.

2. Travel documents

The travel document is issued, upon request, to the beneficiaries of international protection (both persons with refugee status and subsidiary protection) in Romania for a period of 2 years, without the possibility of prolonging its validity. Upon expiry, a new travel document with the same validity period is issued.¹⁰⁷⁵ Refugees receive a dark blue trilingual travel document (Romanian, English, French) as specified in the

¹⁰⁶⁷ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Article 71(3) Asylum Act.

¹⁰⁶⁹ *ibid.* Article 71(3^1).

¹⁰⁷⁰ Article 71(4) Asylum Act.

¹⁰⁷¹ Information provided by IOM Romania, 18 November 2019.

¹⁰⁷² Article 31(2) Asylum Decree.

¹⁰⁷³ *ibid.* Article 31(3).

¹⁰⁷⁴ Article 20(1)(b) Asylum Act.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *ibid.* Article 20(8).

1951 Refugee Convention, while beneficiaries of subsidiary protection receive a different travel document, also trilingual but of grey colour, which mentions “subsidiary protection”.¹⁰⁷⁶

For beneficiaries of international protection who are abroad and do not possess valid travel documents, the diplomatic missions or consular offices of Romania, with the approval of IGI, will provide them with travel documents valid only for the return to Romania. The validity of the travel title is at most 30 days and ceases upon the holder’s entry on Romanian territory.¹⁰⁷⁷

The travel document is valid for travel to all countries, except the country of origin of the beneficiary.

Refugees may travel freely in the EU, without a visa, while beneficiaries of subsidiary protection must apply for a visa. At the base of this trend lies the European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees signed at Strasbourg on 20 April 1959,¹⁰⁷⁸ and the Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001. Before 2014, beneficiaries with subsidiary protection were assimilated to refugees and they were also exempt from the visa requirement.

In order to apply for a travel document, beneficiaries of international protection are obliged to certify their residence by submitting one of the following documents: lease agreement registered with the fiscal authority; commodity contract concluded in authentic form; or any other documents concluded under the conditions of validity provided by Romanian legislation in force regarding the housing title, which prove the acquisition of some housing rights. In addition, beneficiaries should also submit an ID photo when applying for a travel document. The travel document is issued for a fee of 258 RON/€60, which represents a tax imposed by the National Printing House.

The application (standard form) for the travel document is made at IGI-DAI, after the temporary residence permit is issued. The authority issues the travel document within 30 days.

In 2022, IGI-DAI issued 2,204 travel documents.

In 2023, IGI-DAI issued 2981 travel documents:¹⁰⁷⁹

- ❖ IGI-DAI Galati: 255 travel documents (123 refugees, 132 beneficiaries of subsidiary protection).
- ❖ IGI-DAI Bucharest: 2,312 travel documents (1,274 refugees, 1,038 beneficiaries of subsidiary protection).
- ❖ IGI-DAI Rădăuți: 80 travel documents (10 refugees, 70 beneficiaries of subsidiary protection).
- ❖ IGI-DAI Giurgiu: 61 travel documents (37 refugees, 24 beneficiaries of subsidiary protection).
- ❖ IGI-DAI Maramureș- Șomcuta Mare: 100 travel documents (39 refugees, 61 beneficiaries of subsidiary protection)
- ❖ IGI-DAI Timișoara: 173 documents (51 refugees, 122 beneficiaries of subsidiary protection).

In 2024, IGI-DAI reported that all asylum seekers and individuals granted international protection were provided with identity documents and, where applicable, travel documents.¹⁰⁸⁰

¹⁰⁷⁶ Annexes 5 and 6 Government Decision 557/2006.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Article 20(9) Asylum Act.

¹⁰⁷⁸ European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees signed at Strasbourg on 20 April 1959, signed by Romania on 5 November 1999 and ratified through Act 75/2001.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

¹⁰⁸⁰ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

D. Housing

Indicators: Housing

1. For how long are beneficiaries entitled to stay in reception centres? 12 months¹⁰⁸¹
2. Number of beneficiaries staying in reception centres as of 1 January 2024: 357¹⁰⁸²

1. Stay in reception centres

Beneficiaries of international protection who participate in integration programs and have no financial means are allowed to stay in the Regional Centres, subject to availability of places.¹⁰⁸³ They may stay in the centres for 12 months with the possibility of extension for another 6 months in case of well-founded reasons, with the approval of IGI-DAI, without exceeding the implementation period of the integration program.¹⁰⁸⁴ Vulnerable categories can be accommodated until it is established the condition of vulnerability ended.

In 2022, there was a total number of 397 beneficiaries of protection accommodated in the six centres. At the beginning of 2023, there was a slight increase as there were 431 beneficiaries of international protection residing in the Regional Centres.¹⁰⁸⁵

A total of 53 beneficiaries of international protection were residing in the Regional Centres at the end of 2024:¹⁰⁸⁶

Centre	Total in 2024 ¹⁰⁸⁷
Timișoara	13
Șomcuta Mare	1
Rădăuți	1
Galați	15
Bucharest	18
Giurgiu	5
Total	53

Source: IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

Beneficiaries accommodated in Regional Centres have to pay rent, including maintenance costs, after 3 months.¹⁰⁸⁸ This was also confirmed by the directors of Timișoara, Giurgiu and Vasile Stolicu in the past years. The daily rental fee is different in every regional centre. Vulnerable beneficiaries may be accommodated free of charge in the Regional Centres.¹⁰⁸⁹ Although the rent costs are lower compared to the situation outside the Regional Reception Centre, they are high compared to the IPB (grant aid) income. Vulnerable IPB beneficiaries live in Regional Reception Centre without paying rent.¹⁰⁹⁰

¹⁰⁸¹ With the exception of vulnerable beneficiaries.

¹⁰⁸² Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

¹⁰⁸³ Article 21(1) Integration Ordinance.

¹⁰⁸⁴ *ibid.* Article 21(2).

¹⁰⁸⁵ IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024

¹⁰⁸⁶ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

¹⁰⁸⁷ *ibid.* 23 January 2025.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Article 21(5) Integration Ordinance. The rental fee is established at local level for the living facilities which are in the state's or territorial / administrative unit's property.

¹⁰⁸⁹ *ibid.* Article 34(2) and (3). IGI-DAI may provide accommodation in its centres to vulnerable persons that do not require specialised assistance and who cannot benefit from a home from the institutions ability within the space and funds available. For well-founded reasons, the IGI-DAI may extend the integration program for these persons.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Practice based observation by JRS Romania, April 2024.

Beneficiaries of international protection who participate in integration programs and have no financial means have the right to stay in Regional Centres or in other facilities managed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs for a general period of 12 months, which may be extended for 6 months, while for vulnerable categories this period may be further extended indefinitely.¹⁰⁹¹

In practice, beneficiaries of international protection în Timișoara, București, Șomcuta Mare, Rădăuți, Galați and Giurgiu, are allowed to stay for free, according to the amended Integration Ordinance, for up to 3 months, in comparison to 2 months as prescribed by the previous version of the Ordinance. Beneficiaries of international protection have to pay a rental fee after that period.

The rental fee to be paid by the adult beneficiaries differs from one centre to another, as follows:¹⁰⁹²

Centre	Rent summer	Rent winter
Timișoara	220 RON / €44	310 RON / €63
Giurgiu	248 RON / €50	387 RON / €79
Șomcuta Mare	280 RON / €57	431 RON / €87
Galați	330 RON / €67	480 RON / €98
Bucharest	250 RON / € 50	267 RON / €54
Rădăuți	238 RON / €49	295 RON / €60

After this period, the rental fees may be covered by NGOs through the implemented projects, if there are AMIF funded projects. JRS and AIDRom mentioned that this is paid until the beneficiary receives the non-refundable financial aid when leaving the Regional Centres and moving to a private home is achievable. This type of support was also available in 2023; however, for some civil society actors, particularly JRS Romania, the assistance was interrupted following the end of AMIF funding in October 2023. As a result, beneficiaries of international protection no longer received this form of support due to the lack of financial resources. According to JRS Romania the situation improved in June 2024, when new AMIF-funded integration projects were launched. Under the "A New Home in Romania" program, implemented by JRS Romania, beneficiaries who enrolled in the project received assistance in leaving the reception centres, securing private accommodation, signing rental contracts, and having their rent covered for a period of 10 months. However, the program had certain limitations, as it did not cover rental guarantees or utility costs, which remained the responsibility of the beneficiaries themselves.¹⁰⁹³ LADO/ASSOC stated that the period for which they may cover the cost of rent depends on several factors, namely: how long the beneficiary chooses to stay in the centre, how much money he/she has left according to the budget allocated by the project, as it is possible that he/she previously benefited from some medical services or the translation of some personal documents given that the money for these expenses is provided from the same budget.¹⁰⁹⁴

It should be noted that taking the amount of non-refundable aid, after paying rent, it is practically impossible to reach the level of resources necessary to maintain a minimum standard of living.¹⁰⁹⁵

Additionally, JRS Romania implemented the project "A New Home in Romania", funded under the AMIF national program, to support beneficiaries of international protection living outside reception centres by covering their rental costs. This assistance was temporarily suspended between October 2023 and June 2024 due to a gap in AMIF funding.¹⁰⁹⁶

¹⁰⁹¹ Article 21(2) Integration Ordinance.

¹⁰⁹² Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

¹⁰⁹³ Practice observed by JRS Romania, February 2025

¹⁰⁹⁴ Information provided by LADO/ASSOC, 20 February 2023

¹⁰⁹⁵ Practice based observation by JRS Romania, April 2024.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Practice observed by JRS Romania, February 2025

2. Social housing

According to the law, beneficiaries of international protection have the right to access the social housing scheme under the same conditions as Romanian citizens.¹⁰⁹⁷

After the integration program is completed or when a job opportunity has been identified, IGI-DAI guides the assisted person to the community where there are vacancies and informs them on how to get a social home under the conditions set in the law.¹⁰⁹⁸

Local public administration authorities have the obligation to ensure, within the limits of available resources, social housing for persons who have acquired a form of protection in Romania and who are to move to the respective community under the same conditions as the Romanian citizens, even if they have not established their domicile or residence in that area.¹⁰⁹⁹

If the local public administration authorities cannot provide a social home, the beneficiary may rent housing within the respective local community.¹¹⁰⁰ IGI-DAI subsidizes up to 50% of the rent, subject to availability of funding, for a maximum period of one year.¹¹⁰¹ In 2022 and 2023,¹¹⁰² no beneficiary accessed this aid. According to JRS Romania in 2024, no beneficiary accessed this aid.¹¹⁰³

E. Employment and education

1. Access to the labour market

Beneficiaries of international protection have the right to be employed by natural or legal persons, to carry out voluntary activities, to exercise free professions and to carry out legal acts, to carry out acts and deeds of commerce, including independent economic activities, under the same conditions as Romanian citizens.¹¹⁰⁴ There are no differences between refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries in relation to access to employment.

Beneficiaries participating in the integration program are registered as individuals looking for a job at the National Agency for Employment, within 30 days of signing the protocol.¹¹⁰⁵

In order to carry out measures to stimulate employment, the National Agency for Employment, through its agencies, has the obligation to draw up an individual plan for each person included in the integration program and register them as a person looking for a job, according to the legal provisions. For this purpose, IGI-DAI provides information on the education and professional profile of the beneficiaries. The National Agency for Employment may also collaborate with NGOs in order to inform, counsel or provide other services to beneficiaries of international protection.

Unemployed beneficiaries of international protection included in the integration program may also benefit from relocation, mobility or activation allowance, if they are registered as unemployed.¹¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁹⁷ Article 20(1)(q) Asylum Act.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Article 28 Integration Ordinance.

¹⁰⁹⁹ *ibid.* Article 29(1).

¹¹⁰⁰ *ibid.* Article 29(2).

¹¹⁰¹ *ibid.* Article 29(3).

¹¹⁰² Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

¹¹⁰³ Practice based observation by JRS Romania, February 2025.

¹¹⁰⁴ Article 20(1)(c) Asylum Act.

¹¹⁰⁵ Article 24 Integration Ordinance.

¹¹⁰⁶ *ibid.* Article 25.

In 2024, IGI-DAI indicated to lack statistical data on the total number of refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries employed at the end of the year, as well as on the unemployment rate among these groups. These matters fall under the competence of the National Employment Agency (ANOFM). Additionally, IGI-DAI clarified that refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries do not require work permits, as they have the same employment rights as Romanian citizens. Furthermore, IGI-DAI emphasized that foreign nationals with the right to reside in Romania are assigned a Personal Numeric Code (CNP) starting with the digits 7 or 8. As such, when requesting employment-related data from the National Employment Agency (ANOFM), it is necessary to explicitly specify that the request pertains to individuals holding international protection, excluding those under temporary protection.¹¹⁰⁷

In 2024, the National Employment Agency (ANOFM) stated that it implements the measures outlined in Law no. 76/2002 regarding the unemployment insurance system and the stimulation of workforce employment, including for vulnerable categories. These measures apply to all individuals registered with employment agencies, including foreign nationals who have obtained international protection (refugee status or subsidiary protection) and asylum seekers who have been in the administrative procedure for at least three months without receiving a decision, provided the delay is not their fault, or who are in the judicial phase of the asylum procedure without a final and irrevocable decision.

ANOFM clarified that refugees, subsidiary protection beneficiaries, and asylum seekers do not require a work permit, as they have the same employment rights as Romanian citizens.

At the same time, ANOFM stated the institution does not collect statistical data on the total number of persons with international protection who were employed at the end of 2024. However, data on individuals employed with individual labour contracts as of 31 December 2024, can be obtained from the Labour Inspection Authority, which manages the Romanian Employee Registry.

According to the IGI 2024 report, all work visa applications in 2024 were submitted exclusively online. Work permits were electronically issued and delivered via email, while the Foreigners Registration Portal (PIS) was modernised to improve user experience.¹¹⁰⁸

Regarding the unemployment rate among refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries, ANOFM stated that, according to Law no. 76/2002, it calculates the number of unemployed individuals and the registered unemployment rate at the national, county, and Bucharest municipality levels but does not provide specific unemployment data for refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries.

Below is the table presenting the number of persons registered and those who exited ANOFM records (either through employment or other reasons) in 2024, for individuals originating from non-EEA countries.

Type of Persons	Registered Persons (2024)	Women (2024)	Exits by Employment (2024)	Women (Exits by Employment)	Exits by Other Reasons (2024)	Women (Exits by Other Reasons)
Beneficiaries of International Protection	52	26	11	1	39	19
Refugees	9,436	6,069	464	248	8,180	5,318
TOTAL	9,488	6,095	465	249	8,219	5,337

¹¹⁰⁷ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 23 January 2025.

¹¹⁰⁸ According to the *Assessment of the activity of the general inspectorate for immigration in the year 2024* of the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI), published in April 2025, summarizing its operations during 2024. Official source [here](#).

1.1 Obstacles to access in practice

Although beneficiaries of international protection have the same rights as Romanian citizens when it comes to access to the labour market, there are some fields where there is limited or no access. For example, doctors with refugee status or subsidiary protection do not have the right to practice medicine in Romania¹¹⁰⁹ unless they are married to a Romanian citizen, they are family members of an EU citizen, or they have a [Long-Term Residence](#) permit granted by Romania or an EU Member State.¹¹¹⁰

Legally there are no limitations imposed on beneficiaries of international protection regarding access to labour market. In practice, knowledge of Romanian language (and in some cases English) may hinder beneficiaries' access to labour market. In addition, many of the beneficiaries do not have diplomas that certify their studies, which makes it impossible for them to apply for certain positions.

According to CNRR in 2023,¹¹¹¹ beneficiaries of international protection in Romania are mainly employed in the HORECA (it is the acronym for the hospitality industry: Hotels, Restaurants, Catering), and construction. According to JRS Romania, the situation in 2024 remains largely unchanged. In addition to employment in the HORECA sector, beneficiaries of international protection are also employed in construction and in various community businesses, often hired by compatriots or alongside other nationals from their country of origin within Romanian companies. In some cases, particularly in rural areas or for jobs requiring relocation, employers also provide accommodation and meals, and in certain situations, extend this support to the workers' family members.¹¹¹² They are generally paid the minimum wage, which does not allow a decent living, especially in the case of families with several children. This is also JRS Romania's observation at least for those living in Region 2.¹¹¹³ Beneficiaries of international protection have the possibility to follow the "Second Chance"¹¹¹⁴ educational program in order to complete their studies and to follow vocational training courses. In practice, these are not accessed as they lack the financial resources to support themselves during the program, preferring to take unskilled jobs. It is even more complicated for single mothers with several children. For educated people, accessing the labour market is easier, however they also face certain difficulties because they are unaware of the legal provisions and of their rights, and are victims of pressure from employers to work overtime or to accept delayed pay, for example.

In 2024, according to CNRR, beneficiaries of international protection in Romania continue to face significant challenges in accessing the labour market, particularly in their first years of integration. Key obstacles include lack of formal qualifications or recognition of prior professional experience, language barriers, insufficient institutional support for employment, discrimination, and employer uncertainty about hiring refugees. While BIPs are entitled to work without a special permit, many employers are unaware of this, often assuming the process is complex and highly bureaucratic. Additionally, xenophobic narratives in Romania further hinder their acceptance in the workforce.¹¹¹⁵

In 2024, CNRR mentioned that during the first year after obtaining their status, refugees can attend Romanian language courses and receive a monthly financial aid of approximately €150. However, this amount is insufficient to cover basic needs, leading many to seek employment.¹¹¹⁶ According to JRS

¹¹⁰⁹ The issue was debated during a meeting on 26 October 2017 with representatives of the Romanian Government, the College of Doctors, IGI, NGOs, UNHCR and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM Romania). The conclusions of the meeting were that the Government will analyse the proposals and will try to find solutions. See EMINET, 'Obținerea dreptului de practică de către medicii străini, în contextul deficitului de personal din sistemul de sănătate românesc', 26 October 2017, available in Romanian [here](#).

¹¹¹⁰ Article 376(1) Act 95/2006 on Health Reform.

¹¹¹¹ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

¹¹¹² Practice based observation by JRS Romania, February 2025

¹¹¹³ *ibid.* April 2024.

¹¹¹⁴ Ministry of Education, *Programul „A doua șansă”*, available in Romanian [here](#).

¹¹¹⁵ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

¹¹¹⁶ *ibid.*

Romania, a major issue is that once a refugee starts working—regardless of whether the job is temporary—they permanently lose their right to financial assistance. This policy discourages early formal employment, pushing some refugees toward illegal work despite understanding its legal risks.¹¹¹⁷ Moreover, CNRR added that language courses are held only in person during standard working hours, making it nearly impossible for employed refugees to attend, further limiting their language learning and professional opportunities.¹¹¹⁸

According to CNRR, the language barrier remains the most significant obstacle for beneficiaries of international protection in accessing the labour market. Regardless of the skill level required for a job, a minimum conversational level of Romanian is almost always necessary for workplace integration and communication with colleagues. Additionally, language barriers hinder access to formal and dignified employment by limiting refugees' ability to search for job opportunities, understand hiring requirements, navigate employment procedures, network, and have their professional qualifications recognized.¹¹¹⁹ JRS Romania added that at present, there are several reasons that lead employers to refuse hiring beneficiaries of protection; among these are language barriers, a misunderstood patriotism that makes the employers at national level to hire only Romanians, distrust of foreigners from a culture different from theirs, the desire to avoid complicated employment procedures (although BPI does not require a work permit and when we mediate relations with a potential employer, we communicate this to them). According to JRS Romania there are other employers who offer BIPs a chance to work but take advantage of their limited employment opportunities elsewhere and their limited knowledge of labour law to exploit them.¹¹²⁰

According to CNRR in 2024 for those who have recently arrived in Romania and do not speak Romanian—or at least English—this process can be overwhelming and frustrating. As a result, many beneficiaries of international protection resorted to informal jobs as a last resort to sustain their livelihood. However, informal employment often came with significant disadvantages, including a lack of labour rights, wages below the national minimum, excessively long working hours with little to no time off, and unpaid overtime. This situation can trap refugees in a cycle of precarious work, making it even more challenging to transition into the formal labour market.¹¹²¹

In 2024, the lack of information amongst employers was one other challenge that refugees have to overcome in order to be hired. This was due to the fact that usually employers refrain from employing foreigners due to the fact that there is a high amount of bureaucracy involved. However, refugees enjoyed the right to work without having to obtain a special work permit from the Immigration office as the regular non-EU foreigners and most of the time employers do not know about the ease of the process. In order to overcome this, CNRR and other NGOs at times reached out to employers to explain what international protection involves and how they can hire refugees. Moreover, CNRR teams composed of counsellors and an interpreter accompanied refugees at job fairs to facilitate communication with potential employers and assist in the recruitment process.¹¹²²

Moreover, according to CNRR in 2024, the socio-political context in Romania has been increasingly marked by xenophobic discourses, perpetuating stereotypes and discrimination against refugees. This may have created a harsh and tense environment for beneficiaries of international protection, making it difficult for them to integrate and find a job.¹¹²³ While the state provided a platform for job search, it is only available in Romanian, thus making it harder for refugees to access. The Agency for Employment does not have interpreters to offer professional counselling or to assist by making a personalised plan for the person to integrate in the labour market, and most refugees do not use its services, as they are not at all

¹¹¹⁷ Information provided by JRS Galati in February 2025.

¹¹¹⁸ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

¹¹¹⁹ *ibid.*

¹¹²⁰ Information provided by JRS Romania Galati in February 2025.

¹¹²¹ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

¹¹²² *ibid.*

¹¹²³ *ibid.*

adapted to their needs.¹¹²⁴ Some of the practices that proved to be efficient in supporting refugees to access the labour market are initiatives led by NGOs. CNRR collaborated with other such NGOs that offer free training courses available in languages other than Romanian or job matching assistance for vulnerable categories of people. Through such collaborations, refugees were able to get equipped with sets of skills that enable them to access better jobs, they got counselling on creating or improving their CVs, while NGOs advocated for refugees' rights amongst potential employers. In addition, CNRR collaborated with some private companies and facilitated refugees' applications and interview appointments.¹¹²⁵

In 2024 according to CNRR, one of the other hurdles related to professional qualifications is the lack of training acquired by the jobs or programs. This means that refugees can only access unskilled, low income job opportunities, where sometimes their work rights are not respected making it more difficult for them to integrate long term in Romania. There are Romanian institutions such as the National Agency for Employment (ANOFM) that offer courses and training, but unfortunately these require a high level of Romanian, and a certain level of education formally recognized at the national level, which makes it difficult for someone who has recently moved to Romania to attend them and to work on their professional development.¹¹²⁶

According to JRS Romania, in 2024, the lack of qualifications is another common problem, which is why many BIPs can only occupy jobs for the unqualified and these are not well paid. Theoretically, they have the right to participate in training courses for the unemployed, organized by the County Agency for Employment (AJOFM). In practice, the courses are held in Romanian and BIPs who have recently arrived in Romania do not know Romanian and learn it with difficulty (although they are enrolled in the preparatory course for learning the Romanian language organized by County School Inspectorate (ISJ) and JRS Romania also provides Romanian language courses to its beneficiaries). A minimum level of education is requested to enrol in AJOFM courses, depending on the difficulty of the course, a requirement that many IDPs do not meet.¹¹²⁷

According to the JRS Romania representative in Galați, access to the labour market for beneficiaries of international protection in 2024 remained challenging, primarily due to language barriers. Employers often refused to hire individuals who did not speak Romanian, with cases observed in restaurants and bakeries where the lack of Romanian language proficiency was cited as a reason for rejection. As part of the integration program, beneficiaries are registered in the AJOFM database within the first months of obtaining protection status, and the agency offers qualification courses—though these are conducted in Romanian. However, many beneficiaries lacked the necessary language proficiency to participate in these courses. Despite this, JRS actively assists beneficiaries in job searching, both through monthly job listings provided by AJOFM in Galați and Brăila counties and through the efforts of JRS integration counsellors and social workers.¹¹²⁸

Within the My Place project, in 2024 JRS Romania conducted monthly meetings with beneficiaries to provide guidance on accessing the Romanian labour market. These sessions covered key topics such as employment contracts, employee rights and obligations, CV writing, interview preparation, labour legislation, and the importance of safeguarding personal documents. Beneficiaries are also informed about institutions such as AJOFM and the National Centre for Recognition and Equivalence of Diplomas (CNRED). Under the project, JRS assisted a Cameroonian beneficiary in obtaining diploma recognition through CNRED, a process that typically takes about 30 days and is free for individuals with international protection. However, the certificate issued for employment and vocational training purposes does not allow for academic continuation. For professions that are regulated by sector such as medicine, veterinary

¹¹²⁴ *ibid.*

¹¹²⁵ *ibid.*

¹¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹¹²⁷ Information provided by JRS Galati in February 2025.

¹¹²⁸ Information provided by JRS Galati in February 2025.

sciences, and architecture, diplomas from EU, EEA, and Swiss institutions are recognized by the relevant authorities in Romania, as stipulated by Law no. 200/2004.¹¹²⁹

1.2 Recognition / equivalence of professional qualifications

Beneficiaries of international protection in Romania are entitled to equal treatment as Romanian citizens concerning the recognition and equivalence of studies, diplomas, and professional qualifications. This right is established by the **Asylum Act (Law no. 122/2006)** and ensures access to regulated professions under the same conditions as Romanian nationals, in accordance with the legislation in force.¹¹³⁰

For beneficiaries who wish to work in positions that require specific educational credentials, diplomas and qualifications obtained abroad must be recognized and validated. This process is carried out by the National Centre for Recognition and Equivalence of Diplomas (CNRED), an institution under the authority of the Ministry of Education.

Procedure for Recognition and Equivalence of Diplomas:¹¹³¹

To apply for the recognition of studies and qualifications, beneficiaries must submit the following documents:

1. **Standardized application form** available on the CNRED website or at its offices.
2. **Diploma or certificate of studies** for equivalence or recognition:
 - a. If issued in Romanian, English, French, Spanish, or Italian, a copy of the diploma is sufficient.
 - b. If issued in another language, a certified translation into Romanian is required, along with a copy of the original document.
3. **Academic transcript or an official document listing the completed courses**, especially if the specialization or field of study is not clearly indicated on the diploma:
 - a. Accepted in Romanian, English, French, Spanish, or Italian.
 - b. If issued in other languages, a certified translation into Romanian is required.
4. **Other relevant supporting documents**, if applicable.
5. **Copy of personal identification documents**, such as a passport or identity card.
6. **Proof of protection in Romania** (for beneficiaries of international or temporary protection).
7. **Proof of name change**, if the name on the diploma differs from the current identity document. If the document is not in Romanian, English, French, Spanish, or Italian, a certified translation into Romanian is required.
8. **Processing fee** of 100 RON / €20, unless the applicant benefits from a form of international or temporary protection.

¹¹²⁹ *ibid.*

¹¹³⁰ Article 20(1)(r) Asylum Act.

¹¹³¹ CNRED, Recognition of studies for admission to post-secondary or university level, completed by citizens of other EU, EEA member states, the Swiss Confederation, family members, subsidiary protection and refugees, holders of a long-term residence permit, available [here](#).

The application is typically processed within 30 days from the date of registration, provided that all required documents are correctly submitted and complete.

More information and specific requirements can be found on [CNRED website](#), also available in English.

In 2024, according to CNRR, in the process of diploma and study recognition of higher education, refugees often face challenges due to a lack of official proof from their home institutions. Contacting these institutions is not an option, as it poses serious risks to their safety and refugee status. While copies of documents are accepted, higher education recognition remains impossible without proof from the issuing authority. Therefore, without any studies recognized, refugees have mainly access to low skilled labour. Additionally, there are no regulations for the recognition of an undocumented qualification acquired at work or as a result of a qualification or vocational courses in the country of origin or any other country.¹¹³²

2. Access to education

Beneficiaries of international protection have the right to have access to all forms of education, under the same conditions as Romanian citizens.¹¹³³ In order to have access to education, child beneficiaries of international protection need to have the minimum age provided by law for all children: 3 to 6 for pre-school education and 6 for primary education.

According to CNRR in 2024 although beneficiaries of international protection have the same rights to access the education system as Romanian citizens—such as free access to education and eligibility for social and merit scholarships—there are significant barriers to accessing education.¹¹³⁴

According to CNRR, in 2024 several challenges hindered the access to education for beneficiaries of international protection (BIPs) at the pre-university level:

1. **Enrolment challenges:** The County School Inspectorate is responsible for assigning students to schools. However, in some cases, delayed responses force families to search for schools independently, often far from their homes. As a result, children may be enrolled late or not at all.
2. **Unclear application of legal provisions:** There is a lack of consistency in how institutions apply the legal framework for refugee students. In Romania, BIP students initially enrol as auditors, attending classes without receiving grades while simultaneously taking Romanian language courses for both language acquisition and adaptation. This dual approach often leads to confusion regarding their official student status, whether they are required to attend both courses, and how their placement is determined if they transfer while still being an audient.
3. **Lack of student progress tracking:** Key institutions do not systematically track the academic progress of BIP students, including their transition from auditor status to full enrolment, the number of students completing Romanian language courses, or graduation rates. There is no standardized data collection on the number of BIP students enrolled in schools or annual courses. While CNRR has obtained this data upon request, practices vary across counties, and no uniform reporting system is in place.
4. **Language barrier & teaching methods:** The language barrier significantly impacts learning for students enrolled as auditors. Additionally, the lack of adapted teaching methods for non-native speakers often leaves them struggling to keep up, affecting their ability to absorb essential information.
5. **Absence of state funding for audients:** The state does not allocate a specific budget for audient students. As a result, they often lack access to essential educational resources such as textbooks, desks, student meals, or scholarships.
6. **No special exam accommodations:** Despite Romanian being a second language for refugee students, no adjustment is made for national exams in the 8th and 12th grades, which are critical

¹¹³² Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

¹¹³³ Article 20(1)(h) Asylum Act.

¹¹³⁴ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

for continuing education. Their exam papers are graded using the same standards as those of native Romanian students, regardless of how long they have been in the education system. The only criterion for enrolling in these exams is that the student was not registered in school the previous academic year.¹¹³⁵

According to CNRR at national level, Romanian language classes for children under 18 should be divided into three age categories. In some counties, these age segments are not respected, and children aged 7 take classes with children aged 13 or more, or both adults and children participate together, hindering the teaching process which is very different according to the child's age. In terms of teaching methodology, there is no national standard for teaching Romanian as a second language, instead, each teacher develops their curriculum, leading to inconsistent practices across educational institutions. Moreover, there is not standardised testing of the language acquisition in order to issue a certificate at the end of the course. Moreover, teachers who teach Romanian as a second language have not received specialized training, even though the law provides for such training. To address the lack of teacher training, CNRR launched a series of workshops on the socio-cultural norms of refugees' countries of origin. These sessions aim to help educators better communicate with students and adapt to their learning needs.¹¹³⁶

Another significant obstacle is the lack of a standardized practice regarding the assessment methodology for transitioning from audient status to full student status for children who lack or have incomplete diplomas or certificates proving their level of education from their country of origin. The law provides several assessment methods from which parents should be able to choose the most suitable one for their child. However, in practice, the educational institution decides on the method without presenting parents with available options.¹¹³⁷

The legislation includes provisions to facilitate access to education for students with special educational needs (SEN), including support for national exams, as well as curricula for students with disabilities. Refugee children have access to them in the same conditions as a Romanian citizen. However, the level of access could not be assessed by us, as our aid was not requested in any such case.¹¹³⁸

There are educational programs for BIPs who are no longer in school or who have exceeded the average age for their respective grade level by four years, known as the "Second Chance" program that do accelerate educational programs. However, in 2024, CNRR did not assist any person attending any such program.¹¹³⁹

There is access to vocational education and qualification courses, and they can be accessed under the same conditions as Romanian citizens. However, one of the main requirements is completing a minimum level of education - usually eight, ten or twelve grades. Without meeting this requirement, beneficiaries of international protection cannot access vocational or qualification courses, making this the main obstacle to participation, along language acquisition.¹¹⁴⁰

From a financial perspective, there is support for continuing education similar to that offered to Romanian students (e.g., child allowance, social scholarships, and merit scholarships). However, there is no specific financial assistance for adults, beneficiaries of international protection, who wish to continue their studies. For example, there is no assistance provided to single parents, and being the sole caregivers for their children often prevents refugees from continuing their education.¹¹⁴¹

¹¹³⁵ *ibid.*

¹¹³⁶ *ibid.*

¹¹³⁷ *ibid.*

¹¹³⁸ *ibid.*

¹¹³⁹ *ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹⁴¹ *ibid.*

Also according to CNRR, when accessing higher education, the biggest limitation faced by BIPs is the lack of awareness among educational institutions regarding the rights of persons benefiting from international protection (e.g., the possibility for BIP to enrol in university under the same conditions as Romanian citizens, the possibility of transferring from spots allocated for foreign students to those for Romanian citizens, and the exemption from the requirement to provide documents from their country of origin).¹¹⁴²

For refugees seeking recognition of higher education qualifications in fields such as dentistry or general medicine, where additional examinations are required, they must independently contact universities in the country offering these courses and attend sessions for students retaking exams or during exam sessions. The procedure is unclear, and each university applies different criteria and fees for attending these exams. Furthermore, some universities are unaware of this possibility, leaving refugees even more confused and uncertain about the process.¹¹⁴³

There are social scholarships in higher education, but for BIPs to access them, they must enrol under Romanian student status. After this, they can obtain merit or social scholarships.¹¹⁴⁴

According to JRS representatives in Galati, over the past six months of 2024, only one minor benefiting from international protection has been classified as having special educational needs (SEN). The process involved collecting the necessary documentation for evaluation at the County Centre for Resources and Educational Assistance (CJRAE), in collaboration with the IGI-CRPCSA Integration department. Following psychiatric and psychological assessments, the minor was officially classified as having SEN. She is enrolled in a mainstream state school, receives regular consultations from a paediatric psychiatry specialist, and benefits from the support of a teacher one day per week. Additionally, as a student with special educational needs, she receives financial support from the educational institution.¹¹⁴⁵

2.1 Enrolment at schools

The legal provisions regarding Romanian language courses for children were detailed by the new amendment of the Integration Ordinance. Therefore, it is stated that, in order to integrate minor beneficiaries of international protection into the Romanian education system, they would benefit from a preparatory course for learning the Romanian language, emphasising that the course is intensive and free of charge during a school year. It was also added that the enrolment is open throughout the calendar year, and the attendance of the course may continue during the following school year.¹¹⁴⁶

During the first year, children are enrolled at schools as ‘viewers and listeners’; they do not receive grades and are not registered in the class book.¹¹⁴⁷ At the end of the preparatory course, the level of knowledge of Romanian language is assessed and an evaluation commission determines enrolment at school.¹¹⁴⁸

For the year 2023, IGI-DAI¹¹⁴⁹ has indicated that it does not have statistics on the number of children benefiting from international protection who are registered in the Romanian educational system.

The County School Inspectorates in Bucharest, Giurgiu, Galați, Suceava, Timiș, and Maramureș were contacted in 2024 to provide information on the enrolment of foreign nationals, including asylum seekers

¹¹⁴² *ibid.*

¹¹⁴³ *ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁵ Information provided by JRS Romania in February 2025.

¹¹⁴⁶ Article 10(1) Integration Ordinance.

¹¹⁴⁷ *ibid.* Article 10(2). During the preparatory course children beneficiaries of international protection participate free of charge in pedagogical activities within the school units, without their presence being registered in official documents.

¹¹⁴⁸ Article 10(3) Integration Ordinance.

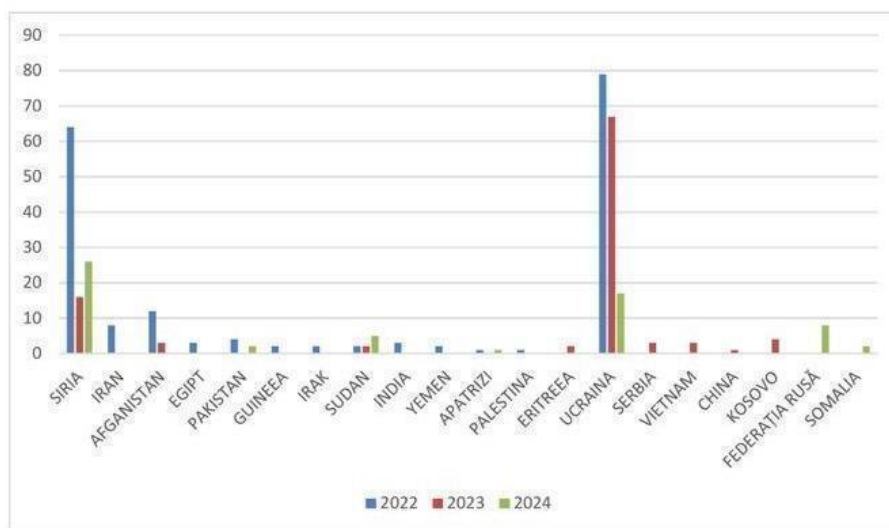
¹¹⁴⁹ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024.

and beneficiaries of international protection, in the Romanian education system. Only three Inspectorates responded: Bucharest, Timiș, and Suceava.¹¹⁵⁰

In Bucharest, the School Inspectorate reported only the number of enrolled pupils and students from Ukraine holding temporary protection for the 2024 school year.¹¹⁵¹

In Timiș County, the School Inspectorate reported that in 2023, there were 84 foreign students with legal residence in Romania enrolled in educational institutions, including 34 beneficiaries of international protection. In 2024, the number slightly decreased to 75 foreign students, of whom 35 were beneficiaries of international protection who had completed their integration program. The students' countries of origin in 2024 included: Syria (26), Palestine (11), Russia (8), Pakistan (2), Somalia (2), Uganda (1), Sudan (5), Ukraine (17), and one stateless person.¹¹⁵²

**ANALIZA COMPARATIVĂ A PROVENIENȚEI CETĂȚENILOR ÎNSCRIȘI LA CURSUL DE
INIȚIERE ÎN LIMBA ROMÂNĂ, 2022, 2023 ȘI 2024**



Source: Information provided by School Inspectorate in Timis in January 2025.

In Suceava County, the School Inspectorate indicated that in 2024, a total of 6 asylum-seeking children were enrolled in the education system: one male child in preschool, one male child in primary school, three children (one male and two females) in lower secondary education, and one male child in high school. Additionally, 8 beneficiaries of international protection were enrolled: one male child in pre-school, one female child in primary school, one female student in high school, and five adult learners (two males and three females).¹¹⁵³

As regards children with special needs, the conditions for accessing education are the same as for Romanian children. The child should first be issued a degree of disability by the Complex Assessment Service of the Child with Disabilities within the Directorate-General for Social Assistance and Child

¹¹⁵⁰ Information provided by JRS Romania in February 2025.

¹¹⁵¹ Information provided by School Inspectorate in Bucharest in January 2025.

¹¹⁵² Information provided by School Inspectorate in Timis in January 2025.

¹¹⁵³ Information provided by the School Inspectorate in Suceava in January 2025.

Protection (DGASPC). This is a particularly complicated and bureaucratic process, which has to be repeated every year.¹¹⁵⁴

Based on the evaluation, the Complex Assessment Service of the Child with Disabilities also decides if the child should be enrolled in a school for children with special needs or in a state school, and at what grade.

Beneficiaries of international protection who have reached the age of 18 continue to face significant challenges in accessing vocational training or formal education. According to an AIDRom representative, these obstacles persist regardless of age and are primarily linked to language barriers. In many cases, if beneficiaries lack school diplomas, they are required to undergo exams covering all subjects from first to twelfth grade. Alternatively, if they cannot prove the number of years of study completed in their country of origin, they must repeat those school years in Romania, following the national curriculum. Very few young beneficiaries choose this path, despite the support and understanding shown by teachers. Some beneficiaries initially attended private or community schools (such as Arabic schools) and later attempted to transfer to public schools. According to IOM Romania, additional barriers include illiteracy, low levels of formal education, or the inability to meet specific entry requirements (such as completing primary education). The Professional Association of Social Assistance (ASSOC) also highlighted, alongside the language barrier, a lack of motivation in certain cases. These challenges were still reported in 2024, as confirmed by JRS Romania, which noted that language barriers, missing educational documents, and limited schooling backgrounds continue to hinder access to education and vocational training for many beneficiaries.¹¹⁵⁵

In 2024, JRS representatives in Galati have not identified major barriers to accessing education for beneficiaries of international protection, as minors are enrolled in schools soon after applying for protection. Within the My Place project in Galati, minors initially attend school as audients to familiarize themselves with the Romanian language before undergoing an assessment to determine their appropriate grade level. However, challenges exist, such as delays due to document translation requirements, as seen in a 2024 case in Vrancea County, when the family was asked to translate documents from their country of origin and the minors had access to school a few weeks late, although the request had been made in advance. Access was granted after the family had also translated the documents. Both the General Inspectorate for Immigration and JRS were involved in expediting the process.¹¹⁵⁶

Language remains a significant barrier, with many beneficiaries struggling with reading and writing. Additionally, some lack diplomas certifying prior education, limiting their ability to continue studies. While the law grants beneficiaries of international protection the same educational rights as Romanian citizens, tuition fees for higher education remain unaffordable for many, with no known financial aid programs available. Within its funding limits, the My Place – JRS project which started in 2024 provides partial subsidies for food, after-school programs, and extracurricular activities for a limited number of children.¹¹⁵⁷ Special education support is also available in some cases. JRS assisted a minor with special educational needs (SEN) in enrolling in mainstream education, securing financial aid, and arranging support from a specialized teacher. Additionally, a young Ukrainian beneficiary with a severe disability was enrolled in a special vocational school in Galați, receiving a disability allowance and supplementary financial support.¹¹⁵⁸

In 2024, Save the Children continued to assist beneficiaries of international protection in accessing education. A total of 52 refugee children and 31 beneficiaries of subsidiary protection were supported in

¹¹⁵⁴ For the highly onerous administrative requirements to be met for this process according to Common Order No 1985/1305/5805/2016, see DGASPC, *Necessary documents for the complex assessment of the child's disability*, available in Romanian [here](#).

¹¹⁵⁵ Information provided by JRS Galati in February 2025.

¹¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*

¹¹⁵⁷ *ibid.*

¹¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*

their school enrolment: 52 refugees (Timișoara – 6, Bucharest – 46) and 31 beneficiaries of subsidiary protection (Timișoara – 4, Maramureș – 4, Bucharest – 20, Suceava – 3). The children were enrolled at various educational levels, including kindergarten (7 children – 4 girls and 3 boys in Timișoara), primary education (7 children in Maramureș and 1 in Suceava), lower secondary education (1 girl in Suceava), upper secondary education (1 boy in Suceava), and tertiary education (3 students in Timișoara: 1 girl and 2 boys). In Bucharest, Save the Children assisted 21 boys and 38 girls to access education.¹¹⁵⁹

2.2 Integration courses

The new amendments of the Integration Ordinance stipulate that IGI-DAI, in collaboration with the authorities of the local public administration, organises sessions of cultural accommodation and counselling activities, aiming to familiarise the adult beneficiaries of international protection with the traditions, customs, legislation and specifics of the Romanian society.¹¹⁶⁰ The previous provision stipulated that IGI organises these activities and may collaborate with public authorities and NGOs. IGI and the local public administration authorities may collaborate with other public institutions and non-governmental organisations in order to organise these activities.¹¹⁶¹

Under Government Ordinance No. 44/2004, an **integration program** refers to a set of measures and activities designed to facilitate the social integration of foreigners who have been granted a form of protection in Romania. These programs are implemented upon request and involve collaboration among public institutions, local communities, and non-governmental organizations, all coordinated by the National Office for Refugees of the Ministry of Administration and Interior.¹¹⁶² The integration programs for foreign nationals who were granted a form of protection in Romania shall be established and implemented based on the beneficiaries' needs, without any discrimination, by respecting their cultural background.¹¹⁶³ People who were granted a form of protection in Romania shall be included in integration programs based on their individual requests within 30 days from granting a form of protection at the headquarters of the National Office for Refugees.¹¹⁶⁴

According to IGI-DAI in 2023 a number of 739 adults newly was registered in the integration program in and a number of 761 adults had registered in 2022 continued the program in 2023.¹¹⁶⁵ Additionally 16 unaccompanied minors followed the integration program in 2023. The main countries of origin were Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Iraq.¹¹⁶⁶ No data was available for 2024.

In 2023, CNRR¹¹⁶⁷ mentioned that community empowerment activities were organised in Bucharest and in other cities of Romania, having diverse thematic such as: information about the labour contract and employees' rights (tips & tricks for the Somali community, about 15 participants attended the event), women's reproductive health, an event organised by CNRR in partnership with ANAIS organisation (about 10 participants), Somali cultural evening during with which the Somali community had the opportunity to share its culture and values and to learn more about Romanian culture (50 participants). CNRR also organised two legal education workshops for children aged 11-14 and 15-18, attended by 34 children from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. Through interactive exercises, the children were explained the provisions of the law on domestic violence, the risks of consuming prohibited substances and how people under 18 can be held accountable if they commit illegal acts. Also, in partnership with the organisation Active Random, a series of creative workshops were organised for children beneficiaries of international protection (photography, digital art, musical instruments). These events took place over 3 months and

¹¹⁵⁹ Information provided by Save the Children in March 2025.

¹¹⁶⁰ Article 13(1) Integration Ordinance.

¹¹⁶¹ *ibid.* Article 13(2).

¹¹⁶² *ibid.* Article 2(c) Integration Ordinance.

¹¹⁶³ *ibid.* Article 3.

¹¹⁶⁴ *ibid.* Articles 15-16.

¹¹⁶⁵ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 18 January 2024. See also information available [here](#).

¹¹⁶⁶ *ibid.*

¹¹⁶⁷ Information provided by CNRR, 16 January 2024.

ended with an exhibition of photos taken by the children. During 2023, 6 children BIPs attended English language courses through a partnership concluded between CNRR and the British Council.

In addition to the integration program offered by the state authorities, several integration projects resumed or were launched in 2024 after a significant gap in funding. These projects, implemented under the AMIF 2021–2027 scheme, expanded the range of activities available to beneficiaries of international protection and third-country nationals. Compared to previous years, the new projects introduced additional services such as housing support schemes (rent subsidies and mediation with landlords), the establishment of virtual integration centres to provide remote assistance, and targeted financial support for school-related expenses and meals for children. Furthermore, some projects incorporated financial incentives for beneficiaries actively participating in integration activities and expanded the use of community engagement initiatives at local level. These activities complemented the previously reported initiatives by CNRR in 2023 and addressed persistent gaps identified in earlier programming periods.¹¹⁶⁸

Adult beneficiaries of international protection benefit from intensive and free Romanian language courses, organised by the specialised structures of the Ministry of National Education, in collaboration with IGI. Enrolment is made throughout the calendar year, and the attendance of the course may continue throughout the following school year.¹¹⁶⁹ IGI-DAI, in collaboration with NGOs provides the necessary spaces for organising the courses.¹¹⁷⁰ The Ministry of Education appoints a qualified person to teach the Romanian language course for adults and minors and it also ensures adequate training for these teachers.¹¹⁷¹ The Ministry of Education establishes the organisation, duration and schedule of these courses.¹¹⁷² At the end of the preparatory course, a commission issues a certificate that demonstrates the level of knowledge of the Romanian language.¹¹⁷³

For unaccompanied minors who are beneficiaries of international protection, IGI-DAI collaborates with DGASPC and NGO representatives. They establish the integration plan for the children and implement the activities included in the plan.¹¹⁷⁴

In 2024, JRS Romania implemented the *My Place* project in Region 2. As part of this initiative, in addition to Romanian language courses, various cultural, recreational, and educational activities were organized. JRS Romania collaborated with the Agency Against Human Trafficking, the National Anti-Drug Agency, as well as non-governmental organizations, public and private educational institutions, and universities. These partners played a key role in facilitating joint activities and supporting initiatives aimed at fostering the effective integration of beneficiaries into Romanian society.¹¹⁷⁵

F. Social welfare

Beneficiaries of international protection who for objective reasons lack the necessary means of subsistence have the right to receive, upon request and within the limits of the state's financial resources, a monthly non-reimbursable aid ("aid") for a maximum period of 12 months.¹¹⁷⁶ The amount of aid is related to the reference social indicator under the terms and conditions established by Government Decision.¹¹⁷⁷ More exactly the amount of the financial aid is 1,08 ISR¹¹⁷⁸ and equals 714 RON/ ~ €143, marking a significant increase compared to 2023.

¹¹⁶⁸ Information provided by JRS Romania, January 2025.

¹¹⁶⁹ Article 14(1) Integration Ordinance.

¹¹⁷⁰ *ibid.* Article 14(2).

¹¹⁷¹ *ibid.* Article 14(3).

¹¹⁷² *ibid.* Article 14(4).

¹¹⁷³ *ibid.* Article 14(5).

¹¹⁷⁴ *ibid.* Article 35(3).

¹¹⁷⁵ Practice based observation by JRS Romania, March 2025.

¹¹⁷⁶ Article 20(1)(m) Asylum Act.

¹¹⁷⁷ *ibid.*

¹¹⁷⁸ *ibid.* Article 20 (5¹).

In 2023, some beneficiaries of international protection reported to JRS Romania that they felt discriminated against in comparison to persons benefiting from temporary protection, as the material assistance provided by the state to the latter was significantly higher. In 2024, this perception slightly diminished, as international funding for Ukrainian refugees decreased and JRS Romania's assistance approach remained consistent for all categories. It is important to underline that these differences stemmed from the disparity in available funding and project opportunities, and not from JRS Romania's internal policy or practices.¹¹⁷⁹ It was also reported in 2023 and in 2024¹¹⁸⁰ that IGI gives much more consistent material support to asylum seekers than the Romanian state allocates through National Agency for Payments and Social Inspection (AJPIS) within the framework of non-reimbursable aid.¹¹⁸¹

The Integration Ordinance states that to ensure effective access to social rights, the competent authorities take into account the specific situation of the beneficiaries of international protection.¹¹⁸² New provisions were added by the amendments, stipulating that at IGI's request, local support teams may be set up to integrate beneficiaries of international protection and other foreigners who have a right of residence in Romania, as well as citizens of the Member States of the European Union, the European Economic Area and citizens of the Swiss Confederation. The local support teams are composed of IGI-DAI, local public administration authorities, public institutions and NGO representatives.¹¹⁸³ No further rules have been published, prescribing how these support teams are established, how they operate and what their responsibilities are.¹¹⁸⁴

In 2023 and in 2024 the timeline for the submission of the application for inclusion in the integration program was prolonged from 30 days to 3 months from the date the international protection was granted, by the amended Integration Ordinance.¹¹⁸⁵ Another legal provision introduced by the amendment prescribes that NGO representatives may participate at the interview conducted by the integration officer of IGI-DAI with the beneficiary of international protection. The scope of the interview is to establish the type of assistance or activities necessary for the social integration of the applicant.¹¹⁸⁶

The duration of integration programs for beneficiaries of international protection is 12 months, which may be extended with 6 months.¹¹⁸⁷

1. Conditions for aid

The non-refundable financial aid is granted for an initial period of 6 months, with the possibility of extending it to 12 months. In order to receive non-refundable aid, beneficiaries of international protection must be enrolled in the integration program.¹¹⁸⁸ However, some groups, referred to as "special cases", are exempt from the obligation to be enrolled in the program. The special cases are:¹¹⁸⁹

- a. Unaccompanied children;
- b. Persons with disabilities;
- c. Persons who have reached retirement age and do not benefit from retirement;
- d. Pregnant women;
- e. Single-parent families with juvenile children;
- f. Victims of human trafficking;
- g. Victims of torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological or sexual violence.

¹¹⁷⁹ Practice based observation by JRS Romania, January 2025.

¹¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹⁸¹ *ibid.* April 2024.

¹¹⁸² Article 14¹(1) Integration Ordinance.

¹¹⁸³ Article 14¹(2) Integration Ordinance.

¹¹⁸⁴ *ibid.* Article 14¹(3).

¹¹⁸⁵ *ibid.* Article 16.

¹¹⁸⁶ *ibid.* Article 17(1) (2).

¹¹⁸⁷ *ibid.* Article 20.

¹¹⁸⁸ Article 60(1) Asylum Decree.

¹¹⁸⁹ Article 33(2) Integration Ordinance.

In 2022, 795 beneficiaries of international protection were enrolled in the integration program and a total of 1803 were in the program, of whom 1008 continued the program from 2021.¹¹⁹⁰ There were 28 unaccompanied minors enrolled in the integration program during 2022.¹¹⁹¹ No information is available for 2024.

In 2022, 74 beneficiaries were enrolled in the integration program in Timișoara and 22 were excluded, according to the director and 34 continued the program from the year before. In Giurgiu, 28 beneficiaries were enrolled and 34 excluded, while 41 continued their integration program from 2021. Only 15 beneficiaries finalised the one-year integration program in 2022. In Galați 66 beneficiaries were included in the integration program, one continued the program from 2020 and 98 were excluded. In Șomcuta Mare 160 beneficiaries were enrolled, of whom one unaccompanied minor. In Bucharest 495 beneficiaries were enrolled, and 990 persons were following the integration program (including the ones enrolled last year) and 249 were excluded. In Rădăuți 107 were enrolled and 83 continued the integration program from 2021.

The provision of aid is subject to the actual residence of the beneficiary, which is mentioned on the Residence Permit. The beneficiary of international protection is included in the integration program coordinated by the IGI-DAI office territorially competent for the area where they reside.¹¹⁹²

In case a beneficiary would like to change their place of residence, they have to communicate this intention to IGI-DAI where they started the integration program and has the obligation, within 15 days from the date of moving to the new address, to present themselves to the IGI-DAI office territorially competent for the area in which they now reside or, as the case may be, to the relevant territorial entity of the Aliens Authority, to register themselves and to make the necessary changes to the identity document.¹¹⁹³

IGI-DAI reported that 1,564 beneficiaries of international protection benefited from non-refundable financial aid in 2022.¹¹⁹⁴ No information is available for 2024.

IGI-DAI indicated that 1,500 beneficiaries of international protection were enrolled in the integration program in 2023.¹¹⁹⁵ Out of those 1,500 persons, 739 were beneficiaries of international protection newly enrolled in the integration program in 2023, and 761 continued in 2023 the integration program they started in 2022. 16 were unaccompanied children. BIPs enrolled in the integration program in 2023 mainly came from Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Iraq. Further information was not provided by IGI-DAI (e.g. regarding non-refundable financial aid in 2023). No information is available for 2024.

2. Application procedure for aid

The authority responsible for granting non-refundable aid is the County Agency for Payments and Social Inspection (*Agenția Județeană pentru Plăți și Inspecție Socială*, AJPIS). The funds necessary for granting aid are provided from the budget of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection through the Agency for Payments and Social Inspection of the County.¹¹⁹⁶

The application for non-refundable aid is drafted individually by each beneficiary of international protection who fulfils the conditions set out in the law or by their legal representative or guardian, according to a template established by IGI.¹¹⁹⁷ This requirement raises issues in practice for unaccompanied children in

¹¹⁹⁰ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

¹¹⁹¹ *ibid.*

¹¹⁹² Article 60(1) Asylum Decree.

¹¹⁹³ *ibid.* Article 52(2).

¹¹⁹⁴ Information provided by IGI-DAI, 22 February 2023.

¹¹⁹⁵ *ibid.* 18 January 2024. See also information available [here](#).

¹¹⁹⁶ Article 20(5) Asylum Act.

¹¹⁹⁷ Article 60(2) Asylum Decree.

Bucharest. An unaccompanied child beneficiary of international protection may not access non-refundable financial aid due to the fact that he was not appointed a legal representative by DGASPC, since the legal representative only assists unaccompanied asylum-seeking children during the asylum procedure and not after they are granted a form of protection.

In 2021 OIM stated children have access to financial aid represented by the monthly allowance for children by the state only when they are 18. Until then, the money is collected in an account on behalf of the beneficiary. Upon leaving the centre, the child will live in a DGASPC centre, and the director of the centre becomes the legal representative of the child.¹¹⁹⁸

In practice, the application is made within 3 months of the date of granting international protection, with an NGO's assistance. IGI-DAI forwards the file of the beneficiary to the AJPIS for review. The application must be accompanied by the decision granting international protection, the temporary residence permit, as well as a certificate attesting the registration in the integration program issued by the territorially competent IGI-DAI office.¹¹⁹⁹

In order to establish the right to aid, the AJPIS makes a social investigation within 10 days from the receipt of the application to confirm that the applicant lacks the necessary means of subsistence.¹²⁰⁰ The Executive Director of the AJPIS approves granting the financial aid, starting with the following month in which the application was registered with the territorial agency, on the basis of the documents submitted by IGI-DAI.¹²⁰¹ Until the first month of payment of the aid, beneficiaries who have no means of subsistence shall receive from IGI-DAI material aid equal to the amount granted to asylum seekers, within the limits of available funds, but for no more than three months.¹²⁰²

IGI-DAI reviews the situation of each beneficiary of aid, twice a year, depending on the active participation of the person in the activities stipulated in the individual integration plan and submits to the competent AJPIS proposals for extending the period of granting, suspending or terminating the payment of aid.¹²⁰³

According to JRS Romania no problems were reported in to obtain financial aid were reported in Șomcuta Mare, Galați, Rădăuți, Bucharest, and the situation remain unchanged in 2024.¹²⁰⁴

According to JRS Romania's representatives in Galați, in 2024 the main obstacle beneficiaries faced in accessing social assistance was the length of time it takes to actually receive the aid. One relevant example is the financial support linked to children's access to state education. Although the entitlement is calculated from the date the application is submitted—provided all required documents are in order—the actual transfer of funds can take approximately 2 to 2.5 months. This delay affects the child's family or legal representative, who must manage expenses related to school attendance (such as supplies, clothing, or transportation) without having immediate access to the financial aid meant to support these needs. While the entitlement is not lost, the lag in implementation undermines its effectiveness, especially for vulnerable families who cannot bridge the gap from their own resources.¹²⁰⁵

According to CNRR, in 2024 beneficiaries of international protection often had limited awareness of their socio-economic rights and the relevant institutions responsible for implementing them. While they received some information through the integration program provided by the General Inspectorate for Immigration or NGOs, they were generally unaware of additional incentives and financial aid available outside this program, as well as the procedures required to access them. In some instances, insufficient

¹¹⁹⁸ Information provided by IOM Romania, 19 February 2022.

¹¹⁹⁹ Article 60(2) -(3) Asylum Decree.

¹²⁰⁰ *ibid.* Article 60(5).

¹²⁰¹ *ibid.* Article 60(4).

¹²⁰² Article 22(3) Integration Ordinance.

¹²⁰³ Article 60(6) Asylum Decree.

¹²⁰⁴ Information provided by JRS Romania in February 2025.

¹²⁰⁵ *ibid.*

knowledge among social assistance staff leads to misunderstandings and delays in granting support, creating additional barriers for refugees seeking essential services. Strengthening institutional awareness and capacity in this regard would contribute to a more efficient and equitable process.¹²⁰⁶ Despite these challenges, those who manage to apply for socio-economic rights are often successful in obtaining them. However, the absence of interpreters within institutions necessitates reliance on NGO support to provide adequate counselling and assistance to refugees.¹²⁰⁷ Furthermore, a recurring practical issue is the limited availability of funds for certain types of financial aid, which are accessible to both refugees and Romanian citizens. Due to high demand, these funds are often depleted rapidly, restricting access to necessary support.¹²⁰⁸

Beneficiaries of international protection who participate in the integration program, who do not meet the conditions for receiving non-refundable financial aid and who have no means of subsistence, are supported in order to fulfil the legal conditions for obtaining the minimum inclusion income.¹²⁰⁹

Beneficiaries of international protection also have the right to benefit from social insurance, social assistance measures and social health insurance, under the conditions provided by the law for Romanian citizens.¹²¹⁰

G. Health care

Beneficiaries of international protection have the right to benefit from health insurance under the conditions provided by the law for the Romanian citizens.¹²¹¹ Persons suffering from mental health problems, including torture survivors and traumatised persons also have access to treatment in the same conditions as Romanian nationals.

Challenges in practice include lack of awareness of how the National Health Insurance House (*Casa Națională de Asigurări de Sănătate*, CNAS) works and what it entails. Therefore, NGOs play a key role in assisting beneficiaries of international protection to overcome all the practical obstacles, which would be insurmountable without this type of support.

Although Romanian law grants refugees the same access to healthcare as Romanian citizens, in practice, they often face significant barriers that prevent them from effectively accessing medical services.

Challenges faced by beneficiaries of international protection in the healthcare system¹²¹²

1. Limited understanding & financial barriers:
 - Many beneficiaries struggle to understand how the health insurance system works;
 - Lack of financial resources to pay for social health insurance;
 - Even if insured, certain treatments and investigations are not covered and must be paid for by beneficiaries.
2. Bureaucratic & administrative challenges:
 - Complex and lengthy procedure to obtain health insurance, register with CNAS, find a family doctor, and get specialist appointments;
 - More complicated for unemployed refugees who must pay for their own insurance.
3. Limited access to healthcare providers:
 - High waiting times for certain medical investigations;

¹²⁰⁶ Information provided by CNRR in February 2025.

¹²⁰⁷ *ibid.*

¹²⁰⁸ *ibid.*

¹²⁰⁹ Article 22(1) Integration Ordinance.

¹²¹⁰ Article 20(1)(g) Asylum Act.

¹²¹¹ *ibid.*

¹²¹² Information provided by IOM in February 2022 and by CNRR in February 2025.

- In big cities, family doctors often lack available slots or refuse refugee patients due to language barriers.
4. Language & cultural barriers:
 - Most healthcare staff do not speak foreign languages, and hospitals/clinics do not provide interpreters;
 - Difficulty navigating the healthcare system due to language barriers;
 - CNRR provides support with interpretation services, medical accompaniment, assistance with forms, and communication with doctors.
 5. Mental health challenges:
 - Mental health is often overlooked for both refugees and host communities;
 - There is a need for psycho-social support (PSS), psychological first aid (PFA), and trauma management, but Romanian healthcare and NGOs are not well-prepared.

In 2023, information from CNRR¹²¹³ and IOM Romania¹²¹⁴ highlighted significant challenges faced by beneficiaries of international protection (BIPs) in accessing healthcare. CNRR reported that many BIPs lack awareness of their healthcare rights, with those unemployed experiencing major difficulties in accessing medical services. Language barriers further complicate their situation, as hospitals rarely provide interpreters, forcing beneficiaries to rely on acquaintances for translation. Additionally, some family doctors have refused to register BIPs. IOM Romania supports BIPs by covering medical expenses and insurance costs through project funding, but these funds are often insufficient, particularly for those with chronic conditions. Language barriers also hinder communication with doctors, necessitating interpreters and accompaniment, though cooperation from medical professionals is not always guaranteed. JRS Romania confirmed similar issues in Region 2, emphasizing that the high cost of state medical insurance (RON 1,800/year) makes it unaffordable for many, especially when combined with high living expenses. Under an AMIF-funded project, BIPs in Region 2 received health insurance coverage for six months, but funding ended in October 2023. Medication costs remain high, and those who have completed the integration program face even greater difficulties. Beyond financial constraints, JRS noted that BIPs suffer from the broader inefficiencies of Romania's healthcare system, with specialist referrals taking up to six months. Private healthcare remains inaccessible due to high costs, further exacerbating their vulnerability.¹²¹⁵

According to JRS Romania's representatives in Galați, in 2024 most beneficiaries of international protection do not have health insurance, however according to the Law,¹²¹⁶ certain groups are exempt from paying social health insurance contributions, including minors, young people up to 26 years old who are students or from the child protection system, dependents without their own income, persons with disabilities, patients under national health programs, and pregnant or lactating women, etc. Those who are unemployed and do not qualify for these exemptions can access emergency medical assistance at hospital Emergency Reception Units, while some medical costs, medications, psychological assistance, and health insurance may be subsidized through the integration programs run by NGOS, depending on funding. For insured beneficiaries, such as minors or those receiving minimum inclusion income, JRS has facilitated their registration with family doctors, assisting with language barriers by preparing written descriptions of symptoms. In cases requiring emergency unit visits, JRS has provided telephone mediation, and cultural mediators (Arabic and Ukrainian) are available to support communication. Non-urgent but acute medical issues occurring outside regular consultation hours are referred to Permanence Centers, which provide free primary healthcare in Galați between 3:00 PM and 8:00 AM on weekdays and operate 24 hours on weekends and public holidays. These centres offer medical assistance for acute conditions, referrals to specialists, emergency treatment administration, and the issuance of medical letters.¹²¹⁷

¹²¹³ Information provided by CNRR, 15 January 2024.

¹²¹⁴ Information provided by IOM, 4 January 2024.

¹²¹⁵ Practice observed by JRS Romania, April 2024.

¹²¹⁶ Article 224 Law 95/2006.

¹²¹⁷ Information provided by JRS Romania, January 2025.

Despite the legal provisions ensuring equal access to healthcare for beneficiaries of international protection, practical challenges such as bureaucratic hurdles, language barriers, and limited awareness of the healthcare system continue to hinder their ability to receive proper medical care. The role of NGOs in bridging these gaps is crucial, as they provide essential support in navigating the system, accessing medical services, and overcoming cultural and linguistic barriers.

Moving forward, a more coordinated approach involving authorities, healthcare institutions, and civil society is necessary to ensure that refugees and other vulnerable groups can fully exercise their right to healthcare. Strengthening integration programs, improving access to interpreters, and enhancing mental health support are key steps toward a more inclusive and efficient healthcare system. By addressing these challenges, Romania can foster a healthcare environment that is not only legally inclusive but also practically accessible to all.

ANNEX I – Transposition of the CEAS in national legislation

Directives and other CEAS measures transposed into national legislation

Directive	Deadline for transposition	Date of transposition	Official title of corresponding act	Web Link
Directive 2011/95/EU Recast Qualification Directive	21 December 2013	27 January 2014	Ordonanța nr. 1/2014 pentru modificarea și completarea Legei nr. 122/2006 privind azilul în România și a Ordonanței Guvernului nr. 44/2004 privind integrarea socială a străinilor care au dobândit o formă de protecție sau un drept de ședere în România, precum și a cetățenilor statelor membre ale Uniunii Europene și Spațiului Economic European	https://bit.ly/3wlJrax (RO)
Directive 2013/32/EU Recast Asylum Procedures Directive	20 July 2015	24 December 2015	Legea nr. 331/2015 pentru modificarea și completarea unor acte normative în domeniul străinilor	https://bit.ly/3wpLIXU (RO)
Directive 2013/33/EU Recast Reception Conditions Directive	20 July 2015	24 December 2015	Legea nr. 331/2015 pentru modificarea și completarea unor acte normative în domeniul străinilor	https://bit.ly/3wpLIXU (RO)
Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 Dublin III Regulation	Directly applicable 20 July 2013	24 December 2015	Legea nr. 331/2015 pentru modificarea și completarea unor acte normative în domeniul străinilor	https://bit.ly/3wpLIXU (RO)

The following section contains an overview of incompatibilities in transposition of the CEAS in national legislation:

Directive	Provision	Domestic law provision	Non-transposition or incorrect transposition
Directive 2011/95/EU Recast Qualification Directive	art. 17 (1) (d)	28 (1) (d) Asylum Law	Article 17 (1) (d) from the Directive 2011/95/EU stipulates that a third-country national or a stateless person is excluded from being eligible for subsidiary protection where there are serious reasons for considering that they constitute a danger to the community or to the security of the Member State in which they are present. The national legislation, namely Law No. 122/2006 on asylum in Romania, with subsequent amendments and additions, stipulates in Article 28(1)(d) that "subsidiary protection shall not be granted to foreign nationals and stateless persons when there are serious grounds for believing that they constitute a danger to public order and national security of Romania", thus establishing a cumulative condition, and it is not sufficient that a foreign national or stateless person is only a danger to public order or national security. In view of this state of affairs, the operational situation revealed the need to amend the above-mentioned legal provision in order to establish the conditions for exclusion in an alternative, rather than cumulative, manner, depending on the degree of danger.
Directive 2013/33/EU Recast Reception Conditions Directive	Art 20(5)	Art 55^1 Asylum Decree	According to article 20(5) decisions for reduction or withdrawal of material reception conditions shall be based on the particular situation of the person concerned, especially with regard to persons covered by Article 21, taking into account the principle of proportionality. Member States shall ensure a dignified standard of living for all applicants. These provisions were not transposed in the Asylum Act and Decree.
Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 Dublin III Regulation	18(2)	94^1 Asylum Act	For persons whose applications are considered to have been tacitly withdrawn, i.e. persons who have left Romania and moved on to another EU Member State, and the asylum procedure has been discontinued, the asylum procedure may be continued if the person makes an asylum claim within 9 months of the decision to close the file, issued in case of implicit withdrawal. If the time limit has expired, the asylum claim is considered a Subsequent Application. Therefore, persons who withdraw their asylum applications and have not left the territory of the EU for at least 3 months or have not been returned to a third country or to the country of origin cannot continue their asylum procedure in case they return to Romania. As a consequence, they will have to lodge a subsequent application.

			<p>This is not in line with the second paragraph of the article 18(2), which clearly states that when the Member State responsible had discontinued the examination of an application following its withdrawal by the applicant before a decision on the substance has been taken at first instance, that Member State shall ensure that the applicant is entitled to request that the examination of their application be completed or to lodge a new application for international protection, which shall not be treated as a subsequent application. Moreover, the Dublin III Regulation does not foresee a time limit for the possibility to continue the asylum procedure.</p> <p>The Romanian Asylum Act does not prescribe the possibility to continue the asylum procedure if the previous application of the returned person has been rejected at first instance. In this case the person returned has to submit a subsequent application. According to Article 18(2), Member States responsible shall ensure that the person whose application was rejected only at first instance has or has had the opportunity to seek an effective remedy.</p>
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