

Report on the needs and difficulties encountered by Ukrainian refugees in Bucharest

Subjective perceptions and evaluations

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With help from:



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Introduction

February 24, 2022 marks the beginning of the war in Ukraine, an event with numerous consequences, both geopolitical and economic, as well as social.

The destruction of infrastructure in conflict zones means the interruption/ impedance of access to basic services, such as primary health care, poor access to food, drinking water and others necessary to meet basic needs; significant parts of the population are brought into poverty; mental health and individual well-being are severely affected (Data Friendly Space, January 2023; June 2023). Another direct and immediate effect of the war is refugees – people who tried to leave the conflict path to safe areas, countries other than Ukraine.

According to data provided by UNHCR, 137,130 refugees from Ukraine are currently registered in Romania (https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine_data_updated_for_Romania_on_07/02/2023). The data suggest that for the majority of those who came from Ukraine, Romania was more of a transit country, with 2,723,490 entries into Romania from Ukraine being registered. Also, the large number of departures from Romania to Ukraine, 2,234,885, indicates that returning, most likely temporarily, to Ukraine is a practice for many refugees. The number of those temporarily installed in Romania is not large, compared to the situation in other countries such as Poland (999,690 refugees from Ukraine on 26.06.2023) or the Czech Republic (350,455 refugees from Ukraine on 02.07.2023). However, if we take into account Romania's limited prior experience as a destination country for refugees (Voicu et al, 2018), this number becomes considerable and indicates the existence of a new type of reality that must be managed, characterized by increased social needs.

Romania's response to the refugee crisis was immediate and large-scale, mobilizing both ordinary people/private individuals, NGOs and public institutions. The first response was an emergency one, to cover basic needs, such as food or shelter, both for those who remained in Romania and for those who continued their journey to other destinations. However, given the continued critical situation and the influx of refugees, a structured program focused on integration and designed for a longer time horizon was needed. The existence, since June/July 2022, of the National Plan of measures to be implemented to facilitate the integration of refugees from Ukraine, constitutes the general frame of reference for the institutional response (both public and private) to the existing needs.

In this context, the objective of the present approach is to identify the situation of Ukrainian refugees living in Bucharest, more precisely their perceptions regarding their own situation. Starting from the mapping, in general terms, of the current state as it is experienced, perceived and reproduced by the refugees, of interest are especially the needs that they have now or that they think they will have in the near future. The premise is that an adequate response from the host society, including NGOs, can only be provided when these needs and how they are defined and prioritized are known.

Background

At the level of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, the Strategic Coordination Group for Humanitarian Assistance was established, for the efficient management of Romania's response to the refugee crisis, especially by facilitating communication between the relevant actors.

In the documents issued/published by this task force, a difference is made between the initial response, that of emergency assistance, and the protection response, intended to respond especially to the needs of those who choose to stay in Romania in the longer term (Coordinating Group Strategic - Humanitarian Assistance, April 2022). By emergency ordinance no. 100/29.06.2022, the Government approved, following consultations with specific working groups, a National Plan of measures for the protection and inclusion of displaced persons from Ukraine, a plan that includes seven dimensions/domains: transversal, employment, housing, education, health, children and youth, vulnerable people. For each field, action directions are mentioned to facilitate the integration of displaced persons from Ukraine and their access to the necessary services (<https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliuDocument/256915>).

Undertaken key measures and initiatives include:

1. Creation of coordination groups: A coordination group at the national level, including representatives of NGOs, was created to facilitate effective coordination of actions between government institutions, civil society and international organizations. Territorial working cells have also been formed to collaborate and allocate the necessary resources to refugees.

2. Legislation in support of initiatives: The government adopted emergency ordinances and legislative acts to ensure the rights of refugees and to facilitate cooperation between NGOs and state institutions. These measures aim to provide

support in areas such as education, health, work, child protection and defining the humanitarian assistance services.

3. Online platforms and resources: Various online platforms and tools have been created to facilitate resource gathering, aid coordination and communication between stakeholders. Among them are the „Ukraine - Together we help more” platform, the Dopomoha.ro platform, where information of interest to Ukrainians arriving in Romania is centralized, the national emergency preparedness platform fiipregatit.ro or the KidsUkraine application for real-time information about Ukrainian children.

4. Collaboration with NGOs and local authorities: Prefectural institutions and local authorities were actively involved in managing actions and providing support to refugees. Meetings, partnerships and collaborative agreements have been established with NGOs, community organizations and institutions to address the immediate needs of refugees and ensure their integration into local communities.

5. Funding and grants: Funding programs and grants have been launched by the Department for Romanians Everywhere, Bucharest City Hall and other institutions to support Romanian communities in Ukraine, NGOs involved in refugee protection and organizations providing shelter and support refugee mothers and children.

The report from the end of 2022 of the Strategic Coordination Group reviews what was implemented in Romania, the difficulties encountered, as well as general data on the number of beneficiaries. Two interconnected dimensions appear to be important, both addressed by what has been implemented by the end of the first year: the availability of services to potential beneficiaries and the training of service providers (through training) to provide appropriate responses to those in need. The report sheds light on aspects such as access to information from reliable, official sources, the need to find ways to overcome the language barrier, as well as the existence of vulnerable groups (such as children, the elderly people), who need increased attention and immediate access to protection services. (Chancellery of the Prime Minister, 2023)

Also, Overview of national measures regarding employment and social security of displaced persons coming from Ukraine. Country Fiche – Romania August 2022, appreciates the measures taken by the Romanian state regarding the situation of the measures taken by Romania regarding the facilitation of access to the labor market and the granting of social assistance to refugees from Ukraine. Romania grants temporary protection to people displaced from Ukraine in the event of a massive influx recognized by the Council of the European Union. Temporary protection is granted by operation of law, without the need for a formal application and lasts for one year, with the possibility of extension, and includes support measures, humanitarian assistance and other forms of protection, such as asylum status and subsidiary protection, under national law. Romanian legislation does not explicitly address measures to prevent the registration of displaced persons in several Member States or EEA-EFTA countries. The Romanian Immigration Office is required

to provide relevant information when applying for a transfer, but there are no specific provisions to prevent multiple registrations.

Beneficiaries of temporary protection have the same rights as Romanian citizens, except for the right to vote and to be elected to public offices. They have the right to be employed under the same conditions, to benefit from social insurance, social assistance measures and social health insurance, as well as equal treatment with regard to the recognition of diplomas, certificates of competence and professional qualifications.

The conditions applicable to persons who benefit from temporary (or adequate) protection from Ukraine for access to the labor market in Romania are as follows:

- Work permits or work authorizations are not required for beneficiaries of temporary protection. They have the right to be employed and to carry out independent activities under the law. The new GEO 20/2022 provides measures to facilitate the integration of people displaced from Ukraine on the labor market in Romania. Ukrainian citizens can work in Romania on the basis of a self-responsibility declaration, which mentions the relevant professional training, experience and lack of criminal record.
- Ukrainian citizens can be employed for a fixed period of up to nine months in a calendar year without needing a work permit. After nine months, they can continue to work by obtaining a work permit and a full-time individual employment contract.
- Asylum seekers from Ukraine can be employed in Romania after three months from the date of the official submission of the asylum application. They can remain employed throughout the asylum procedure.
- Once recognized as refugees or beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, Ukrainian citizens have the same employment rights as Romanian citizens.
- Ukrainian citizens who do not have documents proving their professional qualifications or work experience can work in Romania based on a declaration on their own responsibility attesting to their qualifications and experience, except for regulated professions.

Recognition of qualifications and diplomas obtained in Ukraine is possible if the Romanian state accepts them as authentic. The National Center for the Recognition and Equivalence of Diplomas offers assistance for the recognition of professional qualifications.

Support for jobseekers, such as careers advice, skills assessment and finding job vacancies, is available through career guidance counselors and the National Employment Agency. Vocational training programs are available for adults to enhance and diversify their professional skills for better integration into the labor

market. No exceptions to the general legislation in force in Romania regarding remuneration and other (self-)employment conditions were identified.

Before GEO 20/2022, there were no special social security benefits for Ukrainian citizens or other beneficiaries of temporary protection in Romania. However, Ukrainian citizens had access to emergency medical care. GEO 20/2022 amended the provisions on assistance and medical care, providing for exceptions for people coming from the conflict zone in Ukraine. These persons can benefit from the basic package of services within the social health insurance system, similar to the insured persons in Romania, without paying the social health insurance contribution and the co-payment.

According to GEO 20/2022, people with disabilities from the conflict zone in Ukraine who enter Romania can request social services provided in residential centers for adults with disabilities. They can also be accommodated for free in temporary accommodation and humanitarian aid camps, where they receive food, clothing and personal hygiene materials.

Beneficiaries of temporary protection have the right to be informed about the provisions related to temporary protection, to be employed, to receive the necessary support if they do not have material means, to receive adequate medical assistance if they have needs special and to have access to the state education system if they are under 18 years old.

Ukrainian citizens looking for a job in Romania without documents attesting to their professional qualifications or work experience can apply for support and registration at government employment agencies. Placement in suitable vacancies and issuance of assignment order are ensured after receiving professional information and counseling services.

Various websites and platforms have been created to provide information and assistance to displaced persons from Ukraine entering Romania. These resources include government websites, the Refugiati.ro platform and a platform launched by the Romanian government to rationalize the aid provided by individuals, NGOs and companies. These platforms provide valuable information in multiple languages and cover a wide range of needs such as shelter, food, transportation, healthcare, childcare, job offers and translation services.

Existing studies

Several studies and reports have shed light on various aspects of the refugee crisis and the integration of Ukrainian refugees.

Researchers have found that the attitudes encountered in the host society and the daily interactions with the locals play a significant role in the integration process (Voicu et al., 2018). The importance of providing a flexible response that goes beyond basic survival needs and considers individualized needs has also been emphasized (UNDP, 2022). While the involvement of ordinary citizens in refugee relief is crucial, a structural response involving a coherent legislative framework is needed for long-term support options (Ociepa-Kicińska and Gorzalczyńska-Koczkodaj, 2022).

Access to health services has been identified as a key concern for Ukrainian refugees in both conflict and neutral zones (Bielka et al., 2022). The language barrier is a challenge in various sectors of daily life, including access to education and the labor market, as highlighted by refugees from Ukraine in Romania (IOM, 2022a). Language barriers, limited access to local information and reliance on informal networks for information exchange are among the difficulties faced by Ukrainian refugees in Romania (Negru, 2022). The main recommendations concerned centralizing and tailoring information, using influential community members to disseminate information, and addressing the diverse information needs of different age groups (ibid.).

NGOs play a crucial role in complementing the response of public institutions and providing support to refugees who may not have access to government assistance due to administrative requirements (Mayblin and James, 2019). Collaboration between local and international NGOs is beneficial in terms of service delivery and local NGO development (Adem et al., 2018).

The open attitude of ordinary people and the involvement of public institutions and NGOs are of increased importance given the ongoing humanitarian crisis and internal problems facing host countries (World Vision, 2022). Ukrainian refugees face various health risks and challenges, including limited access to health care, housing, employment, and education (Kumar et al., 2002; Kaufman, Bhui, & Katona, 2022; Murphy et al., 2022). Mental health disorders, comorbidities, and infectious diseases are prevalent among Ukrainian refugees, requiring collaboration among organizations to provide emergency health care and essential goods (Kaufman, Bhui, & Katona, 2022; Murphy et al., 2022).

Impactul socio-economic al refugiaților ucraineni în Uniunea Europeană a fost explorat, subliniind importanța unor politici de migrație și a unor inițiative de

integrare eficiente (Dumitrescu și Constantin, 2022). Situația refugiaților ucraineni în Polonia a fost examinată, remarcându-se provocările cu care se confruntă în căutarea protecției internaționale și măsurile luate de guvernul polonez pentru a facilita integrarea (The Situation of Ukrainian Refugees in Poland, 2016).

Additionally, a lack of monitoring and information on refugee children's access to education has been highlighted, leading to limited support and high dropout rates (Refugee Integration and the Use of Indicators, 2013). Access to the labor market, vocational training, housing and family reunification have been identified as areas that present legal and procedural difficulties for beneficiaries of international protection (Refugee Integration and the Use of Indicators, 2013).

In conclusion, these studies provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities related to the integration of Ukrainian refugees. They emphasize the importance of societal attitudes, flexible responses, access to healthcare and education, language barriers, the role of NGOs and the need for effective collaboration between different stakeholders. The findings highlight the importance of tailored support, comprehensive response measures and the involvement of both public institutions and ordinary citizens to ensure the successful integration of Ukrainian refugees.

Methodology

The present research is part of the Together for Ukraine project carried out by the Social Incubator Association. This project was developed based on the urgent need to help Ukrainian refugees who arrive in Romania amid the border conflict.

It mobilized many people who actively contributed to the aid and support given to the refugees. Prior to the official initiation of this project, The Social Incubator team engaged in ad hoc efforts, serving as intermediaries between refugees and our collaborators who were eager to participate in relief efforts. We undertook border visits, where we were instrumental in setting up initial accommodation for refugees in Bucharest, Sector 1, and provided essential supplies such as food and phone cards.

The main directions of actions include the following:

- Providing immediate support to refugees by providing essential goods such as food, hygiene products, professional counseling and mediation for access to the labor market in Romania, as well as logistical assistance for the education

of young people and children and facilitating access to medical services and medicines.

- Ensuring the supply and renovation of centers to provide a minimum of comfort to refugees who are forced to live in these facilities for long periods of time.
- Undertaking activities aimed at socio-professional integration, including organizing job fairs, providing career counseling and coordinating recreational activities to promote a sense of community and well-being.

The purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the needs of Ukrainian refugees in Romania and the tools that helped their integration in Romania. For this purpose, we used a mixed methodology, which includes both quantitative and qualitative tools. The research was carried out between March and June 2023 and had two components:

- 1. Online survey** – questionnaire available for filling in as a Google form, containing items related to housing, health, employment, education, social services, future plans (Appendix 1). The questionnaire/link to the questionnaire was disseminated using both the personal networks of the researchers and the networks of The Social Incubator Association. The events with Ukrainian refugees as beneficiaries in which the Association was involved were especially important, being opportunities to get in touch with potential respondents and, possibly, to assist them in accessing the link. A total of 240 responses were recorded.
- 2. Interviews with Ukrainian refugees living in Bucharest** - in order to explore in more detail how refugees define their own situation and the needs they encounter, we joined the quantitative research with 22 interviews. The interview guide (Appendix 2) shares the logic of the questionnaire in the themes pursued. Of the 22 interviews, 3 were conducted by a Russian/Ukrainian speaker, 4 in Romanian (with refugees who also knew Romanian/Moldovan), and 15 by female researchers, with the mediation of a translator. Both options had both advantages and problematic points: although it is preferable for the interviews to be conducted by experienced researchers, the language barrier and, implicitly, the presence of the translator had a negative impact on the interview situation/dynamics. Also, given the recent, ongoing nature of the trauma, as well as the uncertainties associated with developments in Ukraine, discussions were often rather fragmented, dominated by expressions of gratitude from respondents and a visible perceived hierarchy, with a distribution of power favorable to female researchers. This gratitude is also a consequence of the selection method, based on the proximity between a service provider (in this case, The Social Incubator Association) and its beneficiaries (respondents).

This research experience was different from others based on interaction with refugees, in that, this time, the respondents were much closer, both temporally and geographically, to the place of trauma, compared to refugees whose journey to their

destinations it is longer and probably more complex, but which contributes to the distance from the point of departure of those seeking protection.

Considering that the sizes and characteristics of the population of Ukrainian refugees in Bucharest are variable, having a dynamic given by the evolution of the war, representativeness was not a stake of the quantitative research. We used the sample in its raw, unweighted form. The impossibility of thinking of a representative sample and, therefore, of generalizing those found in the entire population, does not affect the exploratory, descriptive nature of this approach, the data obtained and presented here contributing to the accumulated knowledge about the refugees from Ukraine settled (temporarily) in Bucharest.

Data analysis

General information about respondents

From previous research, we know about the group of refugees in Ukraine that it consists mainly of women, with the majority having a high level of education (tertiary education/university studies). Most left Ukraine in groups, with most groups including at least one child (UNHCR, 2022; IOM, 2022b; EWL and CEES-UW, 2022).

Our data confirms these details. Most respondents in the sample arrived in Romania in 2022 (over 85% of them), traveled in groups of 3-5 people, accompanied by their own child/children. The percentage of women in the sample is over 98%, the age category most often encountered being 20-39. Regarding the level of education, approximately 65% of the respondents have higher education, the cases of those with a very low stock of education (completed/uncompleted primary school) or very high (completed/uncompleted doctorate) being rather exceptions.

Table 1. Travel conditions to Romania (N=240)

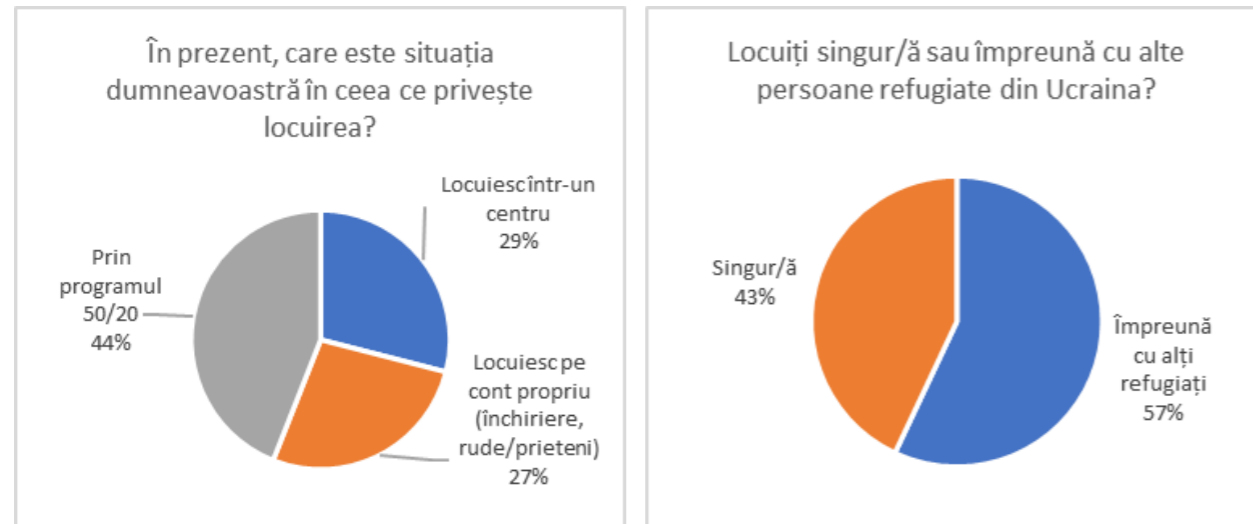
Did you come alone or in a group?			Were you accompanied by a child?		
In groups of 3-5 people	146	61%	Yes, the children of those I traveled with	17	7%
In groups larger than 5 people	18	8%	Yes, my child/children	169	70%
Alone	76	32%	No	54	23%

Housing

Quantitative:

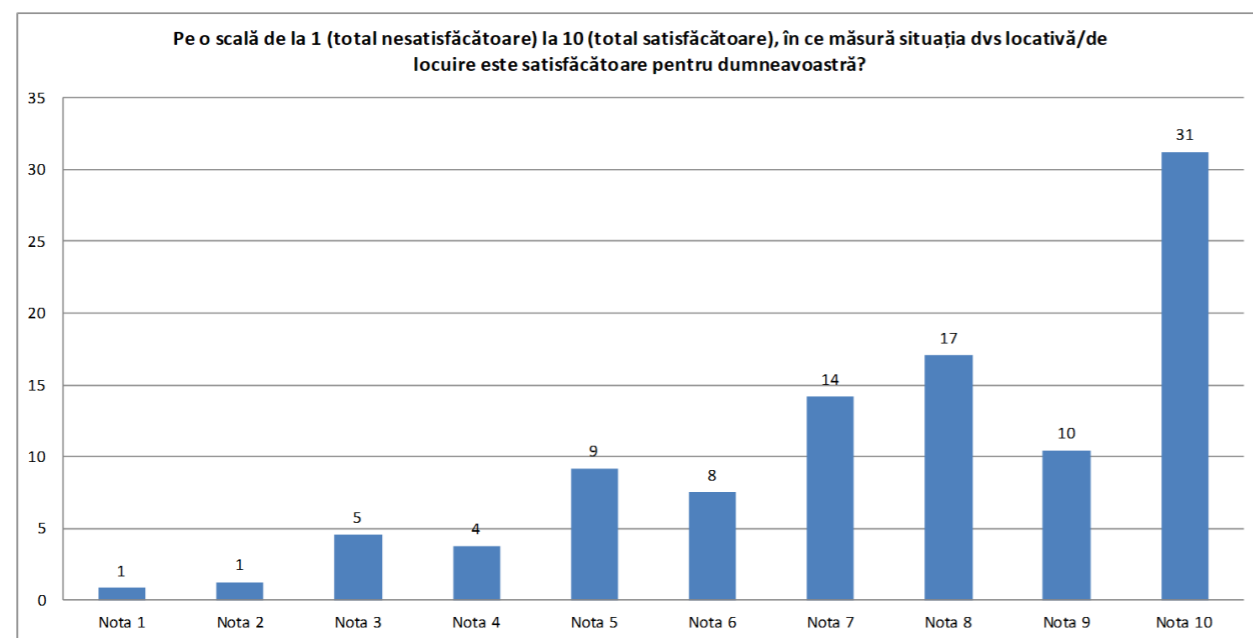
In the present sample, the percentage of those living alone is relatively close to the percentage of those living with other refugees: 57% compared to 43%. The 50/20 program was indicated by 44% of the respondents as the current option by which they secured their accommodation, while 29% live in centers for refugees and 27% live on their own (with relatives/friends, or with rent outside the 50/20 program).

Fig. 1+2. Respondents' housing situation (%)



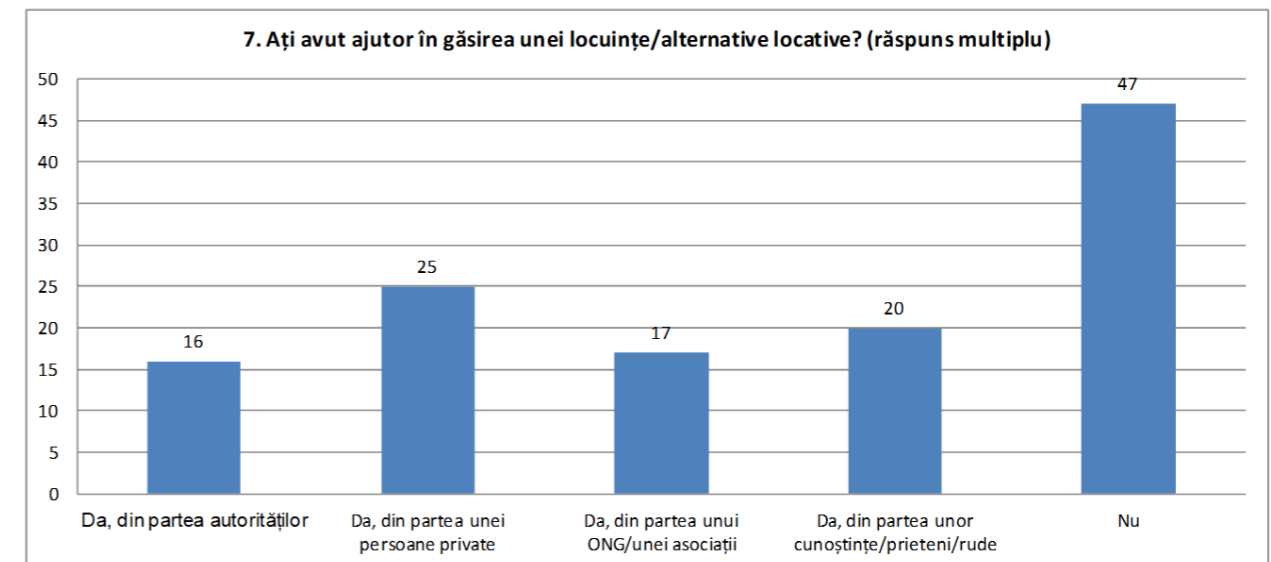
Approximately one third of the respondents (31%) declare themselves totally satisfied with their current home, the total of those who are rather satisfied (who gave marks from 6 to 10) reaching the 80% threshold.

Fig. 3. Degree of satisfaction with the current home (%)



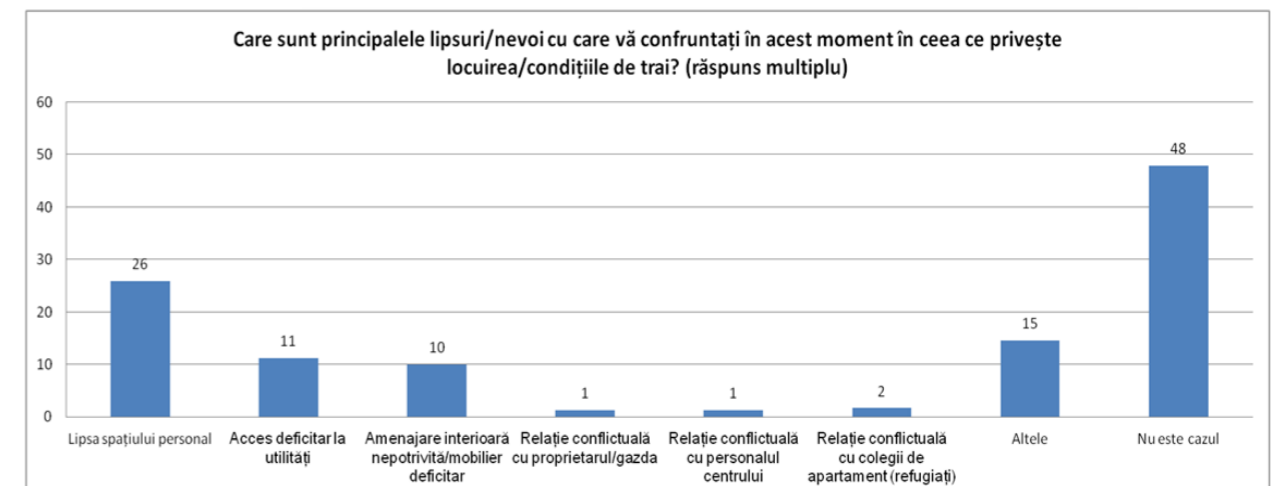
In order to obtain the current housing, almost half of the respondents (47%) say that they managed on their own, while the remaining 53% received help from at least one of the following entities: authorities (16%), NGOs or associations (17%), private persons unknown in advance (25%), relatives or friends (20%). What the data seems to suggest is that while a good number of refugees can fend for themselves within the existing infrastructure of opportunities, others likely need help from multiple actors.

Fig. 4. Assistance received to find housing (%)



Lack of privacy/personal space appears to be the most prominent issue with housing, cited by 26% of respondents. Among the problematic points mentioned are poor access to utilities (11%) and aspects related to interior design and furniture (10%). Conflictual relations (with the owner, with other refugees, with the staff of the center) amount to 4% of the sample, while for almost half (48%) housing does not pose any problems.

Fig. 5 Shortages/problems with housing/housing (%)



According to the problems mentioned by the respondents, when asked what would help them to improve their living conditions, they indicated adequate furniture, especially for the kitchen, internet connection, various appliances (microwave oven, water heater, air conditioner conditional), small repairs. But a recurring occurrence among the recorded responses refers to stability, including through the extension of the 50/20 program, and financial security or the cost of housing (rent, often considered too high).

Qualitative

Regarding housing, the interviews showed that most of the participants declared themselves satisfied with their current living conditions. Discussions were held with two groups of refugees regarding living conditions: those living in state-provided dormitory-like housing and those renting apartments with partial financial assistance from the state. However, it should be noted that refugees' preferences varied when it came to dormitory accommodation.

- ” The woman I stayed with helped me find this option because she knew about it and helped us get here. It was my initiative, because it was uncomfortable for me to sit with these people, for reasons of not causing them discomfort and not standing on their heads. The strong point of living at the house was the large, equipped kitchen, but for the center a big plus is living next to people with whom you share the same problem, the same mentality, the same language. When I lived with that family there was the language problem and the complicity of talking to each other, I always sat with Google translate next to me. Especially since they always left for work and I was alone. It was also uncomfortable for me to stay with them. Another minus was the long distance from Bucharest. The only downside to the center is that you stay with the kids 24/7 in a room. Otherwise nothing bothers me. (O refugee 34 years old).

One of the interviewees shared that the initial experience in another hostel was not favourable, highlighting issues such as disruptive behaviour, including drinking and fighting, which often required police intervention. Instead, the interviewee declared himself satisfied with his current living situation.

- ” First of all, I lived in another center. It was nasty, there were scandals from those who lived there, with those people. The police always came. And someone advised him to talk to the head of this center and he talked and came here. (S, refugee, 33 years old)

It is important to note that the interviewees did not mention any significant problems or concerns regarding housing and the general sentiment leaned towards satisfaction with the living conditions, expressing gratitude to the management of the hostels for providing support beyond the living conditions.

Health

Quantitative:

69% of respondents are rather satisfied with their state of health, giving grades in the range of 5-8, on a scale from 1 to 10. At the same time, 16% of respondents are dissatisfied (the percentage of those who gave grades from 1 to 4), and 16% of them are totally satisfied, giving marks of 9 or 10. And in terms of satisfaction with access to health services, the range 5-8 includes the majority of answers (66%), but marks of 9 and 10 are somewhat rarer (9% of respondents), while 26% of respondents are definitely dissatisfied (grades from 1 to 4).

Fig. 6 Degree of satisfaction with health condition.

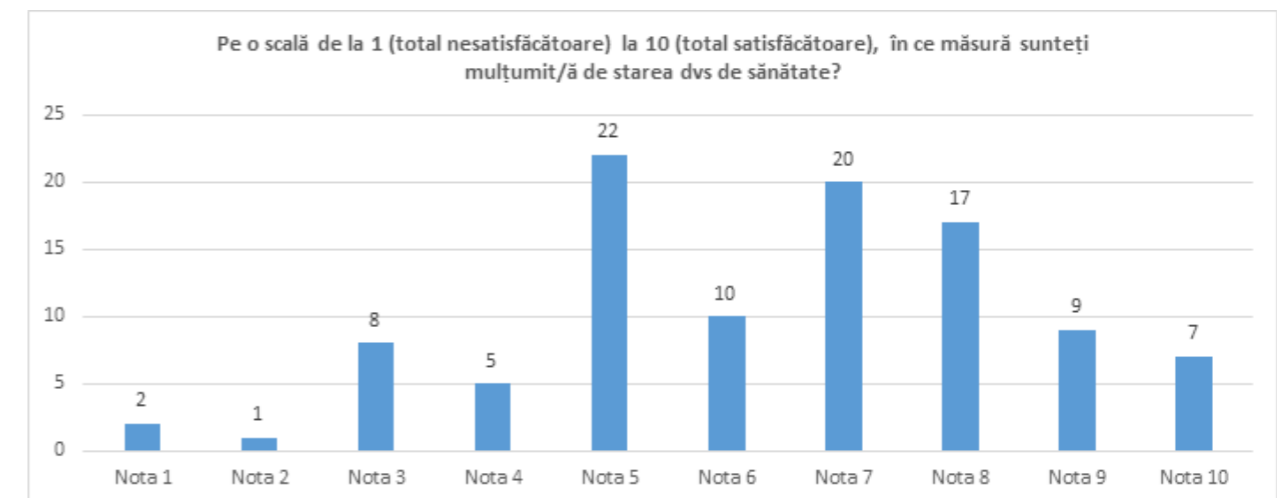
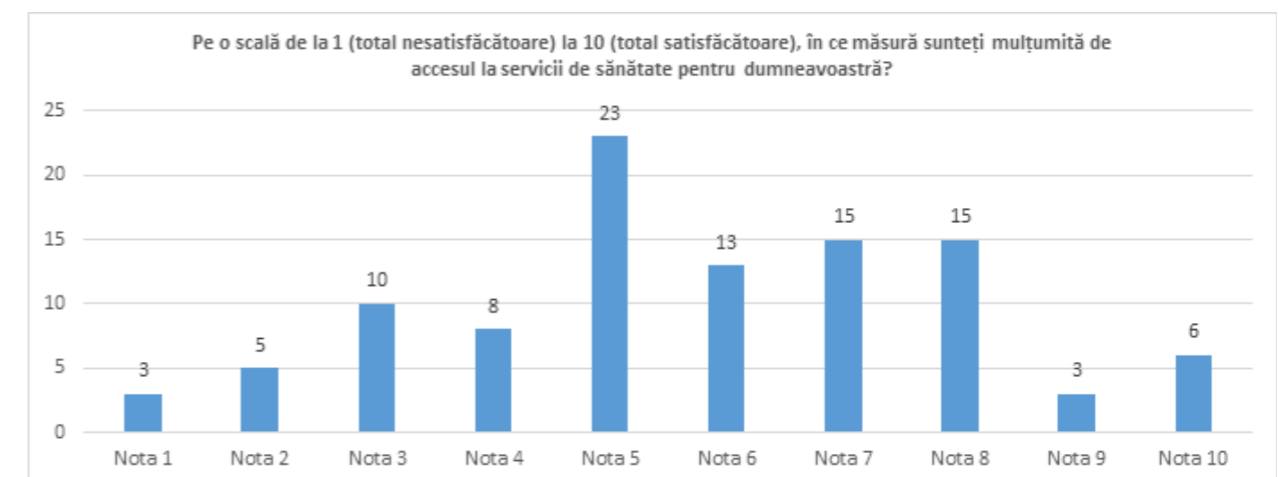


Fig. 7 Degree of satisfaction with access to health services.



Of the respondents, 66% say they have health problems. At the same time, 67% used medical services, 27% in emergency mode and 41% by appointment

Fig. 8 Health problems (%)

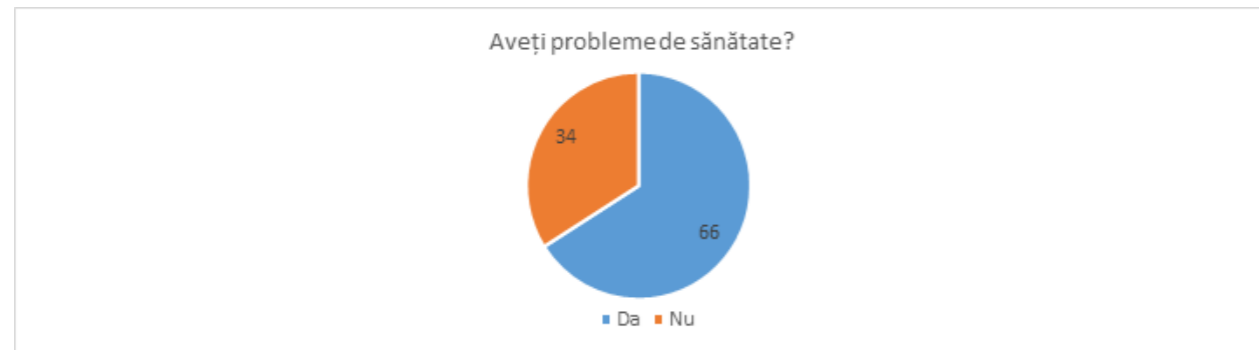
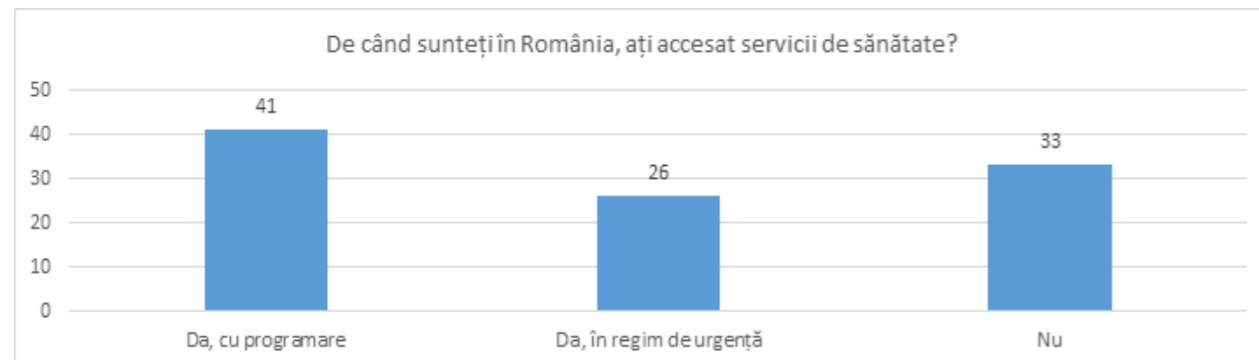


Fig. 9 Access to health services (%)



Furthermore, among those who did not access health services (totalling, as we stated, 33% of the sample), half say that it was not necessary (55%). For the other half, access to health services was usually prevented by the costs of the services, payable by the beneficiaries (41%). A small part of those who needed medical services but could not access them (4%) attributed this to the perceived reluctance of the medical staff.

Fig. 10 Causes for not accesing medical services

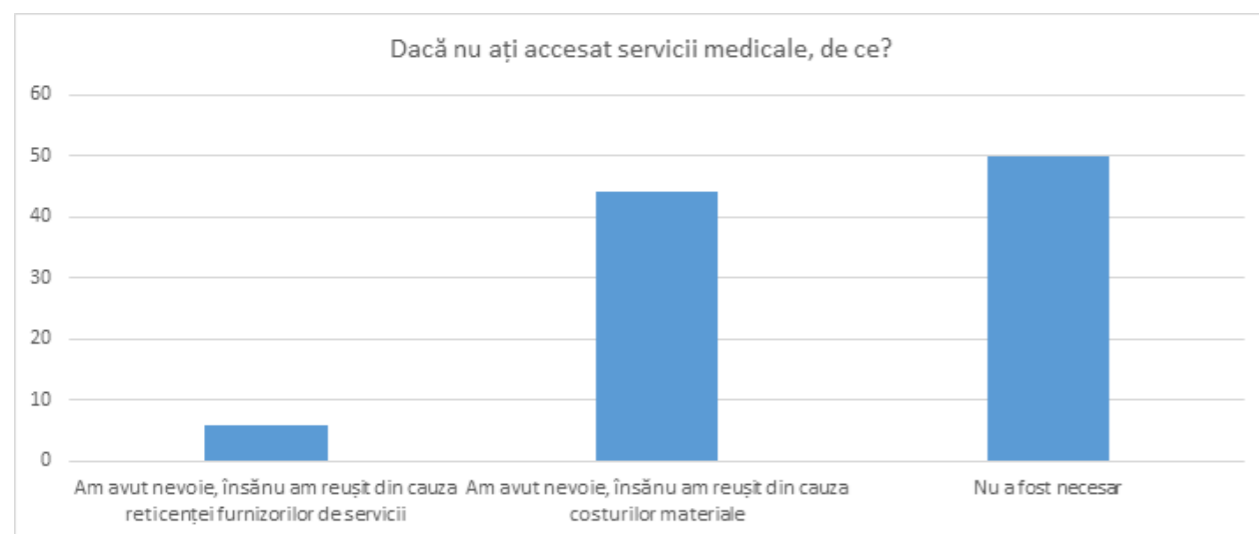
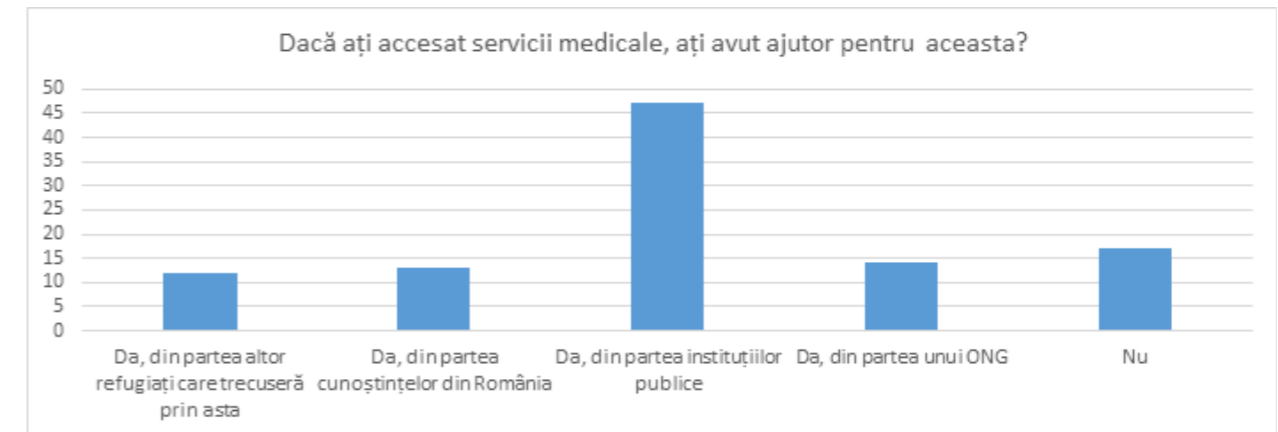
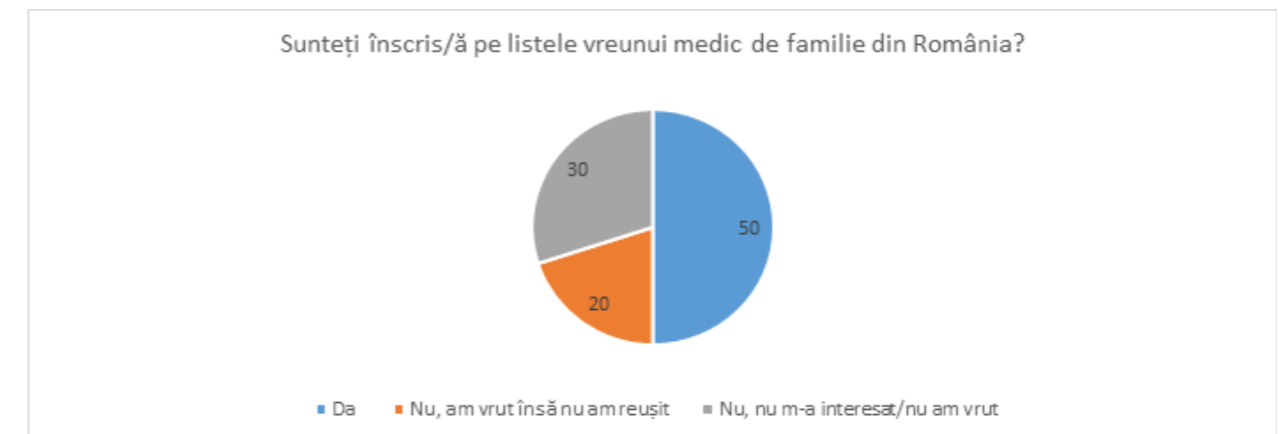


Fig. 11. Details about access to services



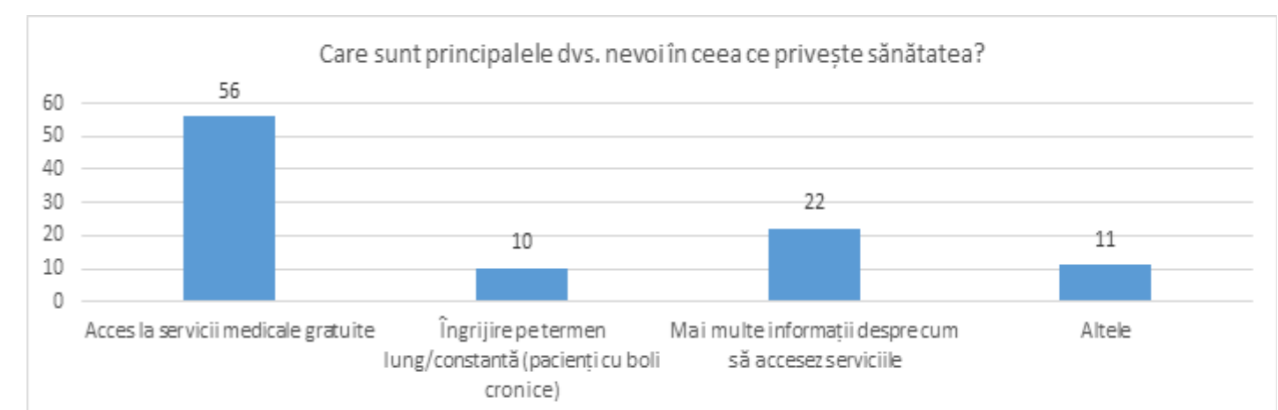
A significant component of access to medical services is registration on the lists of a family doctor. Half of those who completed the questionnaire have a family physician. For the rest, this did not happen either because they did not want/were not interested or estimated that they did not need it (30%), or because they did not succeed even though they tried (20%).

Fig. 12 Access to a family physician (%)



More than half of respondents (56%) indicated access to free medical services as their main health need. Next in frequency is the availability of more information about accessing medical services (22%), with long-term care being important to 10% of respondents.

Fig. 13 Perceived health needs (%)



Qualitative

Refugees expressed difficulty in navigating the Romanian healthcare system, which requires registering with a family physician and obtaining referrals to access specialist care. The process of obtaining referrals was described as long and cyclical, involving multiple steps and visits. This is a challenge, especially when urgent healthcare needs arise, as the process is slow and requires starting over.

The supportive role of care center administrators

Care home administrators, such as Mr. R. and Mrs. D., were mentioned as providing support in navigating the healthcare system. They helped refugees register for family medicine, connected them with volunteers, NGOs and medical services and showed ongoing care and concern for their well-being

- ” I also needed health services. I also needed neurological medicine, gastroenterology, pediatrician. With great effort I reached the specialists. For us, the system of reaching a doctor is very inconvenient. It is very different from ours. Here you need to check in with a family doctor, then get a referral from the family doctor, without it you have no chance of seeing a specialist, the same process the second time, and it is always a cyclical process and you always have to go from point A to point B to get that direction. Fortunately I managed to get a family doctor. Not necessarily a lack, but one problem with medical services is that if you need something urgently, the process is very difficult. For example, if you need an ultrasound urgently, it takes a long time to get it because you need to straighten it and do it all over again. We are always helped by the administrator of the hostel, Mr. R.. If we need medical assistance, we go to him and he helps us register. He is looking for new volunteers, NGOs, medical services. He always asks us how we feel. For the future I cannot say, because I do not know what problems I will face. (Oh, refugee, 33 years old)

Medication challenges

Some refugees have faced challenges in accessing necessary medicines in Romania. This has led them to resort to ordering medicine from Ukraine or relying on people traveling to Ukraine to bring the necessary treatments. Language barriers and reluctance of the part of pharmacies to supply certain drugs complicated their access to appropriate treatments.

- ” He does not want to go to a psychiatrist in Romania. She has a friend in Ukraine who is a psychiatrist. He has been going to her for 15 years. He is afraid that he will be given another diagnosis. (S, 49-year-old refugee)

Cultural and linguistic preferences

Refugees expressed a preference to seek healthcare from professionals who understand their language and culture. They expressed concern about the possibility of receiving different diagnoses or treatments in Romania and, in some cases, preferred to continue consulting doctors in Ukraine with whom they had established long-term relationships.

Positive experiences and gratitude

Several refugees expressed their gratitude to the Romanian doctors, to the volunteers, as well as to the kindness and support they received during their healthcare experiences. They highlighted cases of successful medical interventions, quick responses and free or low-cost healthcare. These positive experiences contributed to their overall positive perception of the Romanian healthcare system.

- ” I was very sick, I passed. C. and M. helped me reach the Moldovan doctor who operated on me. The best doctor in Bucharest, it took 9 hours. Two months of recovery and now it's fine. If I didn't get to this doctor, I wouldn't be alive. He helped me (...) . I couldn't go to the store, I was falling down. At home no doctor could tell what was wrong with me. (C, refugee, 73 years old)

Unmet healthcare needs

Despite some positive experiences, there were cases where refugees faced challenges in finding appropriate healthcare solutions. The limited availability of specialized devices such as an insulin pump highlighted unmet needs and the desire for improved access to advanced medical technologies.

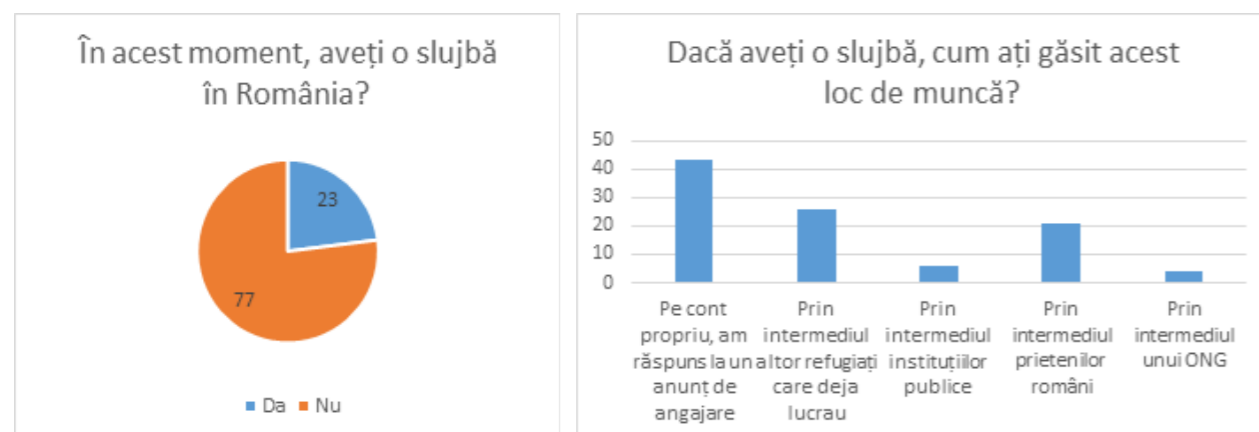
Overall, the review highlights the importance of addressing barriers to accessing health care services, taking into account cultural and language preferences, and improving coordination and efficiency within the health care system. By addressing these challenges, policymakers, health care providers, and support organizations can improve overall health care experiences and outcomes for Ukrainian refugees in Romania.

Employment/integration on the labor market

Quantitative

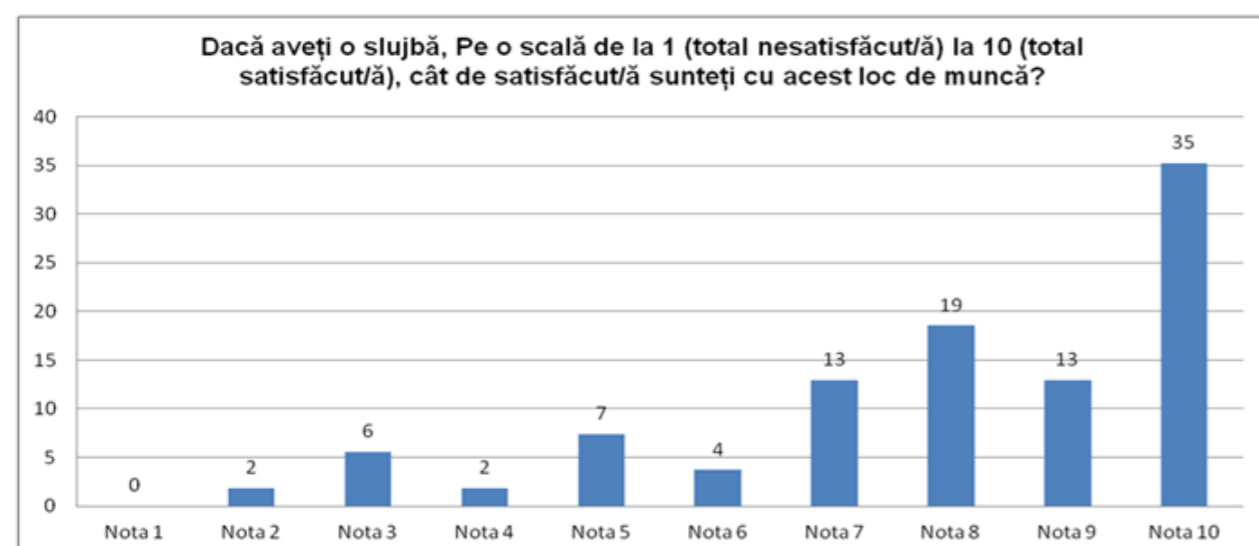
Integration on the labor market seems to be a deficient aspect for Ukrainian refugees in Bucharest. Only 23% of respondents, that is a little more than a fifth, have a job. Among those who work, almost half (43%) found a job without help from outside, for the remaining 57% the support received is important: from other refugees (26%), through Romanian friends (21%), through through public institutions (6%) or an NGO (4%). What the data shows is the importance of individual communication skills and personal networks (knowledge among refugees or among Romanians), as well as the inefficiency of public institutions and NGOs, that is, of formal actors.

Fig. 13+14 Access to the labor market (%)



More than a third (35%) of respondents who have a job are totally satisfied with it. A high degree of satisfaction (scores of 8, 9 and 10) is shown by 67%, while only 17% are dissatisfied with it (scores in the range of 2-5).

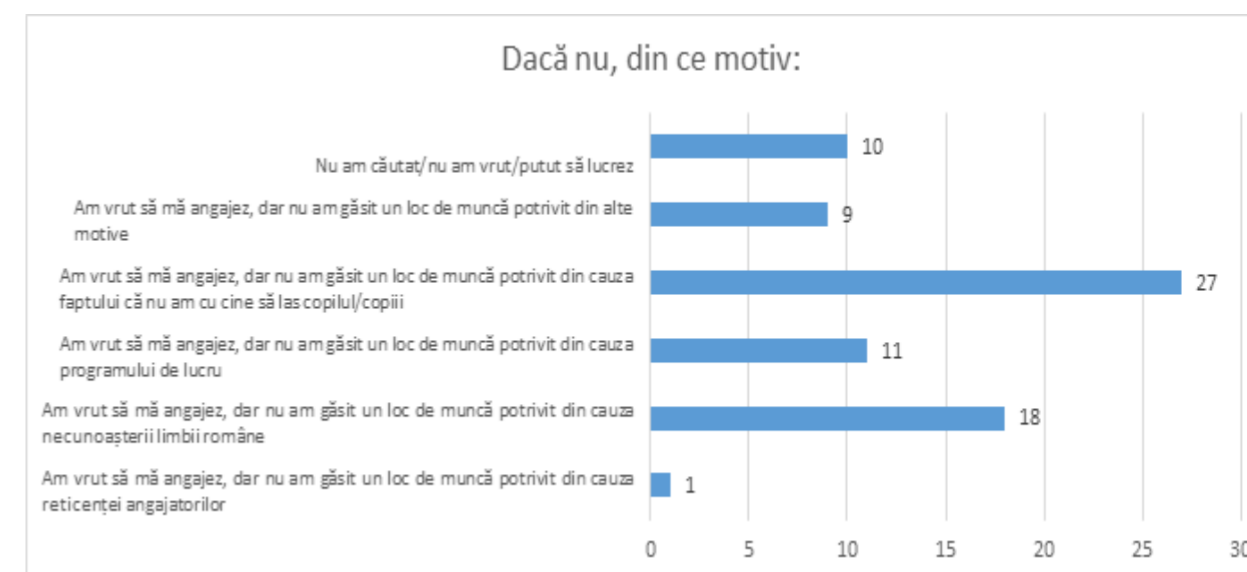
Fig. 15 Job satisfaction (%)



Among the problems associated with the current job are the salary considered to be insufficient/inadequate (mentioned by 25% of working respondents), the fact that the job held is below their qualification (20%), working hours (14%), excessive work or the attitude of colleagues/employers (4% each).

Among those who do not work, only 13% are in this situation because they could not or did not want to work and did not look for work. The reluctance of employers is indicated as a reason by 2% of respondents without a job, for the majority the problem is related to the work schedule (13%), lack of knowledge of the Romanian language (25%) or the need to take care of children (36%).

Fig. 16 Causes of non-integration into the labor market (%)



Qualitative

Occupational preferences and skills

Refugees expressed preferences for certain types of jobs based on their previous experiences and skills. Some mentioned a desire to work in beauty salons, such as nail technicians, while others mentioned an interest in working in supermarkets or office jobs. The need for appropriate job options that align with their skills and preferences was emphasized.

Psychological and social factors

Psychological and social factors can play a significant role in the employment decisions of refugees. For example, one of the refugees mentioned the psychological impact of working as a maid in a public space, where she felt uncomfortable. Social interactions and positive relationships with colleagues were also highlighted as important aspects of work, providing a sense of camaraderie and support.

I had a job in Ukraine, but here I don't really know which one I would like. I tried to work in the Promenada mall. I went to a job fair and was hired to clean the mall, but I couldn't resist from a psychological point of view. It was impossible for me to pass the barrier that I am now a maid being very young. If it was a closed room it would still be acceptable, but in a large space where people are walking around and they can see me, it put a lot of pressure on me. If I'm being honest, I'd rather be in a supermarket sorting out the goods on the shelves or something than I'd like. I couldn't have worked in an office, because my English speaking level is very low, but I don't know Romanian. (I, refugee, 29 years old)

Language and educational barriers

Limited language skills, especially in English or Romanian, have been identified as a barrier to finding a job in certain fields. Refugees who do not know Romanian languages well expressed great difficulties in obtaining office or better paid

positions. This language barrier limits their options and creates difficulties in terms of access to the labor market.

Care Responsibilities

Some refugee women cited caring responsibilities as an obstacle to their ability to work. Caring for children or family members with permanent needs limited their availability for employment outside the home. The desire to work from home and the need for flexible working arrangements were mentioned as potential solutions.

Age discrimination

Several refugees mentioned that they faced age discrimination when looking for a job. Their age was cited as a reason why they were overlooked or rejected, despite their willingness and ability to work. This discrimination created additional barriers for older refugees in finding suitable employment opportunities.

” I want to work, but they don’t want to hire me because I’m 75 years old, when they hear how old I am, they refuse, but I feel empowered (O, refugee, 75 years old)

Assistance from supporting organizations

Refugees highlighted the role of support organizations in assisting them in their job search, building CVs and connecting them with potential employers. These organizations have played a vital role in supporting the integration of refugees into the labor market and supporting them in the employment process.

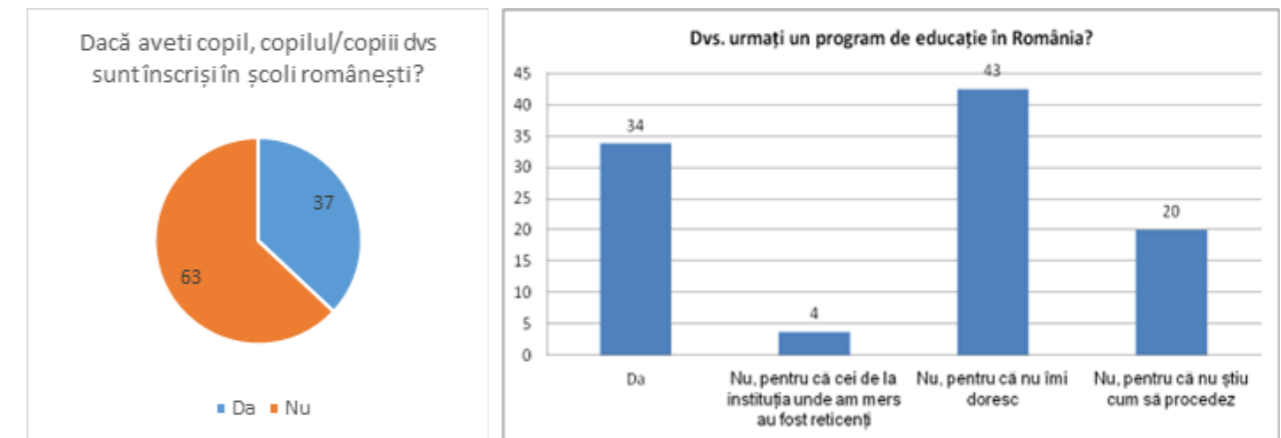
Overall, both the qualitative and quantitative components of the research highlight the importance of addressing language barriers, providing training and education opportunities, offering flexible working arrangements, combating age discrimination and expanding health services. support to help refugees find meaningful employment. By addressing these challenges, policymakers, organizations and employers can facilitate the successful integration of refugees into the labor market, leveraging their skills and contributing to their overall well-being and self-sufficiency.

Education

Quantitative

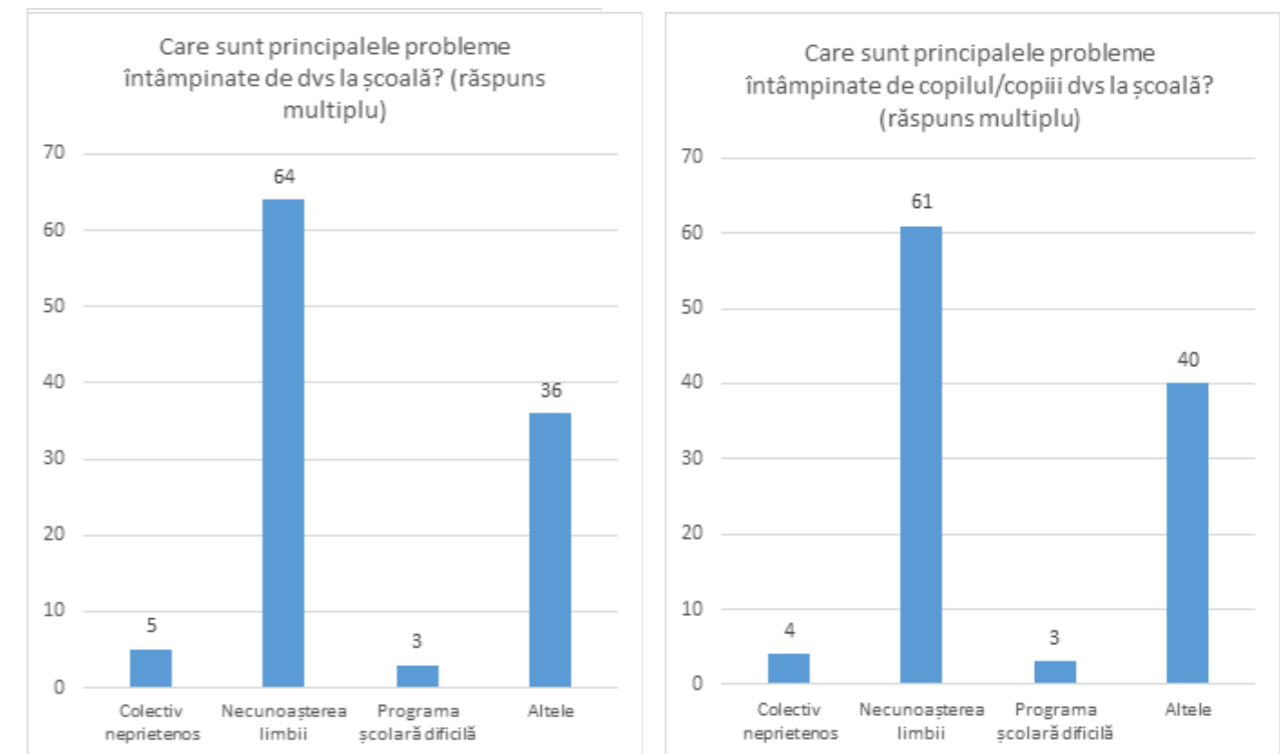
Among the respondents, 34% follow an education program in Romania, and 43% do not follow it nor do they want to. Reluctance was the reason why respondents stopped enrolling in the desired program in the case of 4% of them, and 20% did not know how to proceed to enroll. At the same time, 63% of the respondents’ children are not enrolled in school in Romania, due to lack of knowledge of the Romanian language (each in 36% of cases)

Fig. 17+18 Integration into the education system in Romania



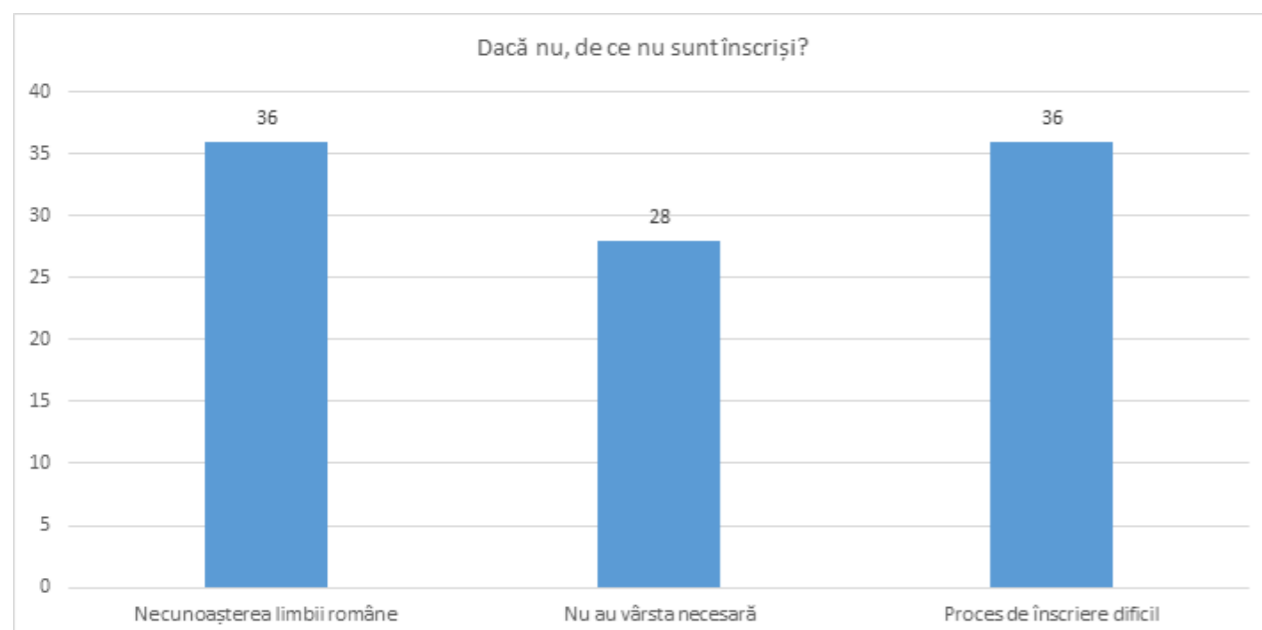
In the case of the respondents who participate in the education system either themselves or as belonging to the children, the main problem they face is given by not knowing the language. Moreover, the distribution of answers regarding the problems they face at school are similar for adults, respectively the adults’ perception of the problems encountered by their children: lack of knowledge of the language for the majority, the difficult school curriculum and the unfriendly team being relatively rare occurrences.

Fig. 19+20. Distribuția problemelor întâmpinate în sistemul educațional (%)



The data suggest that lack of knowledge of the Romanian language is an important barrier to participation in children’s education programs, another common impediment being the perceived difficulty of the enrollment process.

Fig. 21 Reasons for children not participating in the education system (%)



Qualitative

Access to education

Qualitative research highlights the challenges refugee children face in accessing education in Romania. While some children attend Ukrainian schools or participate in online courses from their schools in Ukraine, for others parents expressed a desire to attend Romanian schools but faced obstacles such as limited availability of places or concerns about their health and integration into new groups of students.

Learning foreign languages

Language learning has emerged as an important educational need. Some refugees expressed their desire to take Romanian language lessons, recognizing the importance of knowing the language for their children's integration and future educational opportunities. However, challenges in attending language courses due to other commitments or limited access to resources were mentioned.

- ” We could use some Romanian courses. We have classes organized by ADRA, but I always don't make it because I'm somewhere on the roads, at fairs and stuff. But on Saturdays I always go to English classes. I would like to bring my daughter to Romanian lessons, because I want her to eventually go to a Romanian school. I would also like them to come to SNSPA [N.A the accommodation center of SNSPA] I know for sure that there are faculties in English at SNSPA, they would be fine. My daughter learns the Romanian language more easily, while it is more complicated for me (I., refugee, 29 years old)

Online learning and technology support

Online learning plays a significant role in the education of refugee children. Adequate access to technology, such as laptops or tablets, was cited as essential for participating in online courses. In addition, the challenges of poor internet connection, which could disrupt the learning process, were also highlighted.

- ” The child does distance learning in Ukraine, online. Then that's why I need it. Tablet, phone, but a tablet would be better. (O., refugee, 40 years old)

Psychological support and communication

The need for psychological support for refugee children was emphasized. T. mentioned the importance of having a Ukrainian-speaking psychologist who can communicate effectively with children. Communication barriers with a Romanian-speaking psychologist were identified as an obstacle, which could have a potential impact on children's willingness to engage in therapy.

Individual preferences

Children's individual preferences regarding the language of instruction and their educational future were noted. Some children preferred to continue their education in Ukraine, while others expressed their openness to learn Romanian and explore educational opportunities in Romania.

In general, the interviews highlighted the importance of addressing educational barriers, such as the limited availability of schools and language barriers, to ensure access to quality education for refugee children. Providing adequate technological support for online learning, improving internet connectivity and providing psychological support services in the refugees' native language are crucial steps to address their educational needs. In addition, creating inclusive and welcoming environments within schools can support the successful integration of refugee children into the education system.

Social services

Quantitative

Almost half (48%) of the people in the sample benefit from support services/ programs for finding housing, 36% are beneficiaries of health services and 33% of language courses. The percentage of after school beneficiaries is extremely low (6%), the importance of this service in the future being declared by 5% of respondents. Overall, a tendency to depend less on access to social services can be observed as an expectation/projection for the future on the part of the respondents, visible especially in terms of accommodation.

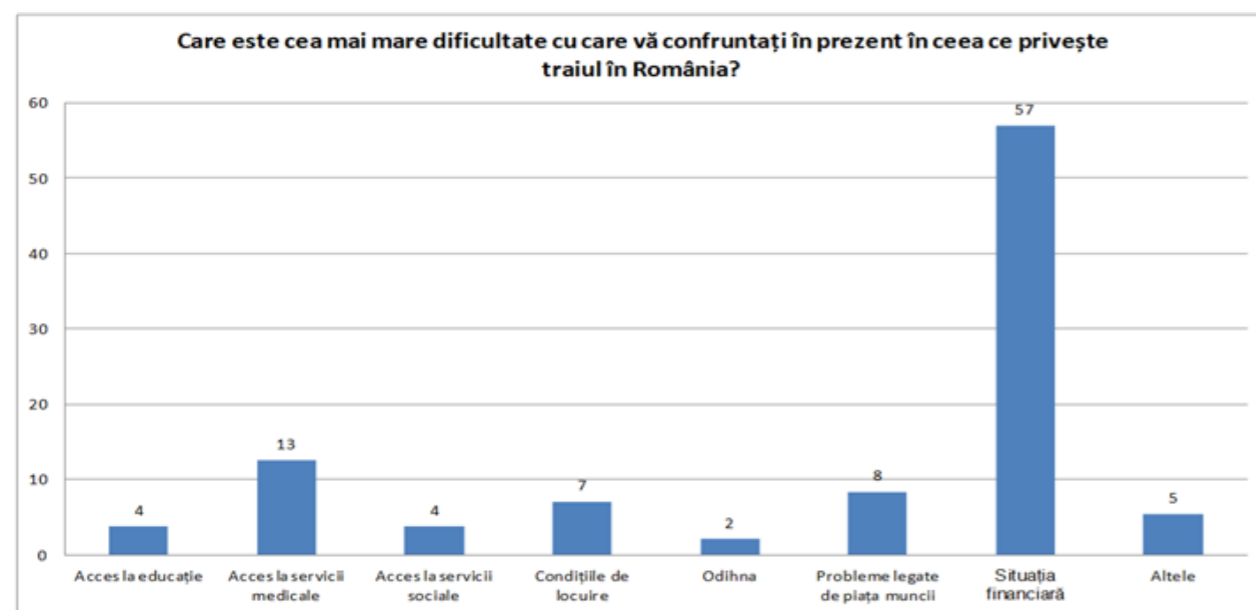
It should be noted that for counseling we used different references for the present and the future: for the present, we distinctly referred to three different types, psychological, vocational and legal counseling, and for the future we referred to counseling generically

Table 2. Access to social services now and in the future

Service type	% of beneficiaries in the sample	% of those who consider it important in the future
Health services	36 %	24 %
After school	6 %	5 %
Accommodation	48 %	24 %
Counseling	40 %	5 %
Romanian language	33 %	17 %
Camps/social activities	20 %	15 %

More than half of the respondents (57%) say that the financial situation is the biggest problem they face in Romania. Access to medical services (13%), problems related to the labor market (8%), housing conditions (7%), access to social services and access to education (4% each) are far behind.

Fig. 21 Difficulties currently encountered (%)



Qualitative

Disability and pension

One of the respondents mentioned that her son has disabilities, but she prefers the benefits from the Ukrainian state to the Romanian ones. This highlights the importance of taking into account individual preferences and ensuring access to appropriate social benefits for people with disabilities, but also the need for information on the benefits granted by the Romanian state.

Financial constraints

Others expressed difficulty in maintaining a special diet due to financial constraints. The high cost of the diet's food products limited her ability to adhere to the recommended diet. Financial assistance or support programs designed to help refugees with specific dietary needs could alleviate this challenge.

Limited social activities for children

Refugees mentioned the positive impact of activities organized for children by certain NGOs. However, the availability of social activities seems limited, as these events are organized less often compared to their needs. Providing more regular and diverse social activities for refugees, especially children, could enhance their overall well-being and social integration.

Insufficient retirement benefits:

The retired respondents highlighted the challenges of living with a pension benefit of only 220 lei. The small amount, together with the rising prices, make it difficult to cover basic expenses other than what the centers provide, such as transportation, other meals, etc. Seasonal work opportunities or employment assistance programs tailored to retired refugees could alleviate financial hardship.

” Yes, 220 lei in your money. How can I live with them? It's impossible, now there are still such prices. In fact, I am currently retired. If there is anything, then of course I hope that over the summer maybe, I think they are harvesting cucumbers somewhere in a greenhouse. I'm thinking at least there would be some seasonal work for the summer. (A, refugee, 69 years old)

Substance abuse and rehabilitation

One respondent expressed concern about her adult son's drug addiction, including substance abuse and involvement in criminal activities to support his addiction. Access to rehabilitation programs, substance abuse and counseling services, as well as support for families dealing with addiction problems, would be crucial in addressing this complex social challenge. The most important step is to find out about possible existing programs to find a suitable solution.

” I really need it, I don’t know where to start, because my 26 year old boy here lost his passport and driving license. And that’s why I came here to do this, but since he started smoking weed, if you understand what that is, other people don’t even know what it is. That boy is doing it very badly. He takes drugs, he injects, and I want to put him in rehab, because he runs away from me. He walks around the train station, steals, does anything for drug money. (E, refugee, 48 years old)

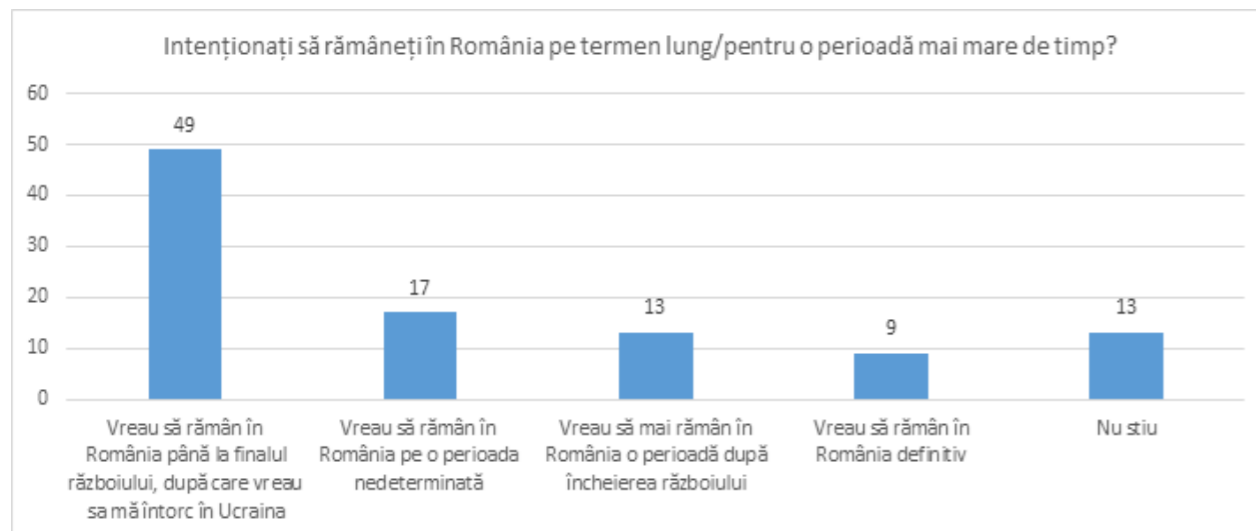
Overall, qualitative research highlights the need for tailored support in areas such as disability benefits, financial assistance, social activities, retirement benefits and substance abuse rehabilitation. Addressing these needs requires comprehensive social service programs, collaboration between relevant organizations and a holistic approach to support the well-being and integration of Ukrainian refugees in Romania.

Future plans/intentions

Quantitative

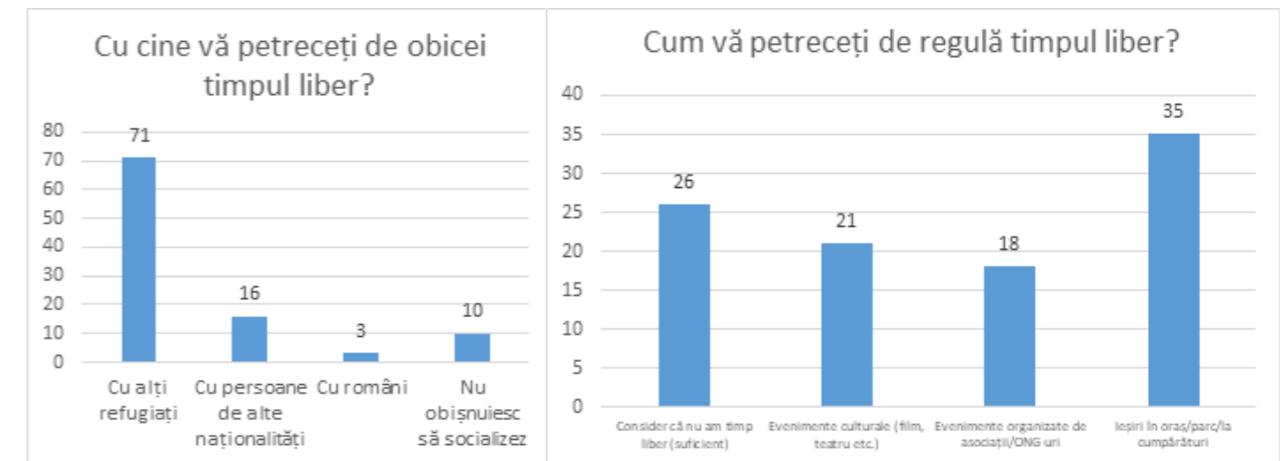
For half of the respondents, the future means returning to Ukraine, as soon as this is possible, that is, at the end of the war. 13% of them are undecided, and another 13% want to stay in Romania for a while after the war ends. 26% of respondents include Romania somewhat more substantially in their future plans, saying that they want to stay here permanently (9%) or indefinitely (17%).

Fig. 22 Future plans (%)



Free time is insufficient for 26% of people in the sample. Slightly more than a third of respondents (35%) spend their free time shopping or going out, 21% participate in cultural events, and 18% prefer to go to events organized by NGOs. More than two thirds of respondents (71%) usually spend their free time with other refugees, and only 3% with Romanians.

Fig. 23+24 Free time (%)



Qualitative

Uncertainty and uncertain times

Many refugees expressed a sense of insecurity about making direct plans for the future due to the unstable and unpredictable nature of their situation. They mentioned the challenges of living in an „uncertain time”, where the future is uncertain and unpredictable.

The desire for stability and to return home:

There is a strong desire among refugees to find stability and return home to Ukraine once the war ends, especially among older people. They expressed a deep attachment to their country, noting the importance of sentiment and the desire to return to homes, families and familiar surroundings.

- ” As soon as the war ends, we want to return home, yes, your Romania remains in our hearts (B., refugee, 73).
- ” Let the war end so I can go home. You know, I go on the bus and I hear how the ladies are talking there at their homes, but, ladies, I still have the trees at home, I have a lot of flowers, you know? I do not know. Yes, I don’t say anything about the house anymore. And I cried for about 4 days and he took my hands, but he says, you miss home, you’re going home and what are you going to do? But I say, you know what, I don’t want any money, nothing, I would eat bread and salt, or bread with salt, just to be at home. (M., refugee, 45 years old)

Divergent feelings regarding staying in Romania:

Some refugees expressed their desire to stay in Romania, recognizing the potential for a better life and the uncertain prospects of returning to Ukraine. However, concerns about their refugee status, potential changes in regulations after the end of the war and the need to go through complex legal processes have raised questions about their ability to stay long-term.

” I would have liked to stay in Romania, but I don’t know how things will turn out. The only option would be to marry a Romanian to stay. But I wonder what the conditions will be to stay if the war ends. Our refugee status is going to be revoked and we’re going to be deported or I don’t know, but I really wanted to stay. (I, refugee, 29 years old)

Importance of language learning:

Several refugees emphasized the importance of learning the Romanian language, recognizing its practicality and importance for their integration into Romanian society. They recognized that mastery of the language, especially for their children, was essential for better opportunities and connections.

Gratitude and reflections on current location:

Some refugees expressed their gratitude to the Romanian people and their current location, noting that despite the difficulties, being close to home gave them a certain level of comfort. They also mentioned thoughts of potential future moves to other countries, considering possibilities such as Norway or Germany, but acknowledging the complexity of migration decisions.

Future plans represent a complex mix of hopes, uncertainties and aspirations among refugees. The desire for peace and stability in their country of origin, the challenges associated with legal status and the importance of language acquisition and integration all play a significant role in shaping their perspectives and decision-making processes.

Adaptation and free time

Appreciation for the assistance and kindness. The refugees expressed their gratitude for the support they received from NGOs, volunteers and Romanian residents. They mentioned that they received help with various necessities such as food, personal hygiene items and clothing. The kindness and responsiveness of the Romanians were recognized and appreciated, creating a feeling of gratitude and warmth among the refugees.

Leisure activities and family time. Refugees emphasized spending free time with their families. Parks such as Herăstrău Park were mentioned as popular destinations for walking, scootering and roller skating. Other activities included visiting shopping malls, going to museums and exploring the city. Watching movies or cartoons at home was also mentioned. Family-oriented activities and quality time were prioritized during free moments.

Some refugees discussed the initial difficulties they faced in adapting to their new environment. Language barriers were acknowledged, with the use of translators and language learning tools such as Google Translate. However, many refugees expressed positive experiences with Romanians, noting their kindness and willingness to communicate. They emphasized the efforts made to overcome cultural and communication barriers.

Involvement in cultural activities was mentioned by several refugees. Visiting theatres, attending classical music concerts and appreciating symphonies were mentioned as enjoyable experiences. This suggests a desire to explore and connect with Romania’s cultural offerings.

Overall, the analysis reveals that refugees engage in various leisure activities and adapt to the new environment by building links with local communities and by taking advantage of the support and opportunities provided by NGOs. The emphasis on family time, gratitude for assistance and exploring cultural offerings indicates a desire to create a sense of normalcy and connection in their lives. Although there are challenges, the refugees’ positive experiences and engagement in their new environment demonstrate resilience and a willingness to accept the current circumstances in Romania.

Conclusions

Both quantitative and qualitative data show that Ukrainian refugees settled in Bucharest, included in our sample, tend to be satisfied with their living conditions.

According to survey data, just under half had housing found through the 50/20 program at the time of the survey, making the program's discontinuation/replacement from May 2023 all the more important in terms of consequences felt by refugees.

The most frequent occurrences in terms of housing problems refer to the lack of the necessary space (which also includes the lack of privacy) and adequately furnished and equipped. The fact that most declare themselves satisfied with the living conditions, beyond the shortages that arise, denotes the existence of expectations aimed more at satisfying basic needs (in this case, having a roof over one's head).

About two-thirds of refugees say they have health problems, and the same number have accessed medical services since being in Romania. What is noteworthy about health/health services is the fact that half of those who did not access medical services tried to do so, but did not succeed. Also, one fifth of the respondents wanted but were unable to register with the family doctor. The main need mentioned in the survey, indicated as such by the majority of respondents, is that of access to free medical services.

Based on the data of this research, the Romanian medical system seems to pose problems for vulnerable groups, without access to resources/with poor access, especially in conditions where there are cultural differences and, associated with them, language barriers. For accessing the system and orientation in/regarding the system, rather diffuse relationships and help received from various actors, in addition to that received from public institutions, seem to be decisive.

The data suggests that employment is a particularly problematic area for refugees. A small part of the people included in the sample have a job, the remaining four fifths are not integrated into the labor market. The problem is that those who do not work are usually in this situation due to the language barrier or the work schedule that raises problems, including with regard to childcare.

Of those who are working, most found their job either on their own or with the help of their personal network. This situation indicates that the activity of public institutions and NGOs can be improved in this area, so that they can offer relevant services for access to the labor market and to those who are (considered to be) more difficult to employ.

Participation in the Romanian education system raises problems for Ukrainian refugees. Obstacles related to lack of knowledge of the Romanian language or the difficulty of the registration process are reported. However, among those who have experience with the education system, satisfaction with it prevails.

The need for social services is perceived to be decreasing, comparing the present with the future. At the moment, they are especially important for housing, accessing health services and learning the Romanian language. The major problem facing the refugees in the sample at the moment is access to financial resources. But, like the knowledge of the Romanian language, access to financial resources has a transversal character, having an impact in all other fields.

A common concern expressed by refugees was the lack of social connections and friends in their new environment. They mentioned the desire to have someone to spend their free time with and to establish a support network. Involvement in social activities and participation in organizations that cater to refugees were considered important to establish connections and receive additional support.

In this context, future plans are almost non-existent. Many of the refugees want to return to Ukraine, home, but realize that they cannot predict when this will happen. In addition, those who want to stay in Romania are not sure that they will be able to support themselves financially here, especially those with limited knowledge of the Romanian language, those who cannot work due to disability or age, people who have other relatives in care. There is also concern about the uncertainty of their legal status in the country and how long they will be allowed to stay.

Recommendation

The data collected through this research allow the formulation of recommendations, both specific to each of the analyzed fields, and general, with a rather transversal character, whose effects would be felt in everyday life.

These recommendations address needs that the refugees in the sample have identified as important to them or specific to their individual situations.

In what follows, we mention measures whose implementation has the potential to contribute to increasing the degree of adequacy of the response of the relevant actors to the perceived needs of the refugees in Bucharest.

To improve access to housing and its quality:

- Helping refugees to build an intimate space as a fundamental part of everyday life at the destination.
- Facilitating access to utilities and equipment with the necessary electrical appliances;
- Dissemination of information about the aid scheme that replaced the 50/20 program so that the sense of insecurity/uncertainty among refugees is not increased.

For the health field:

- Facilitating access to primary health care (for example, registering with a family doctor);
- Effective communication of relevant information for accessing medical services, including through NGOs and associations that provide services to refugees;
- Providing training opportunities in intercultural communication for those working in primary care (family doctors, nurses)
- Organizing programs/activities in collaboration with dentists to solve dental problems (especially for the elderly).

To increase the employability of Ukrainian refugees:

- Providing day care alternatives for mothers who are looking for work;
- Involvement of NGOs and public institutions as intermediaries of labor demand and supply (specifically, Ukrainian refugees who want to be employed);

- Promoting examples of success - refugees integrated into the labor market, respectively employers who employ refugees;

For the field of education:

- Detailed explanation of the enrollment process in the school/education system;
- Encouraging the exchange of experiences/communication between refugees who have integrated into the education system and refugees who want to, but have not yet succeeded, with the aim of popularizing ways of doing things;
- Offering Romanian language courses;

For the adequacy of social services to existing needs:

- Personalization of the services offered according to the specificities of each beneficiary;
- Information about the benefits offered by the Romanian state for people with disabilities;
- Identifying means of supplementing Ukrainian pension income that is insufficient for the daily needs of refugees;
- Organization of socialization events, both among refugees and with Romanians.

Transversal recommendations:

- Inter-institutional cooperation as a means of streamlining the response offered to refugees and adapting it to existing needs, including through partnerships (continuation of existing partnerships, development of new collaborations) between the public and private sectors, as well as between entities that work directly with beneficiaries and entities with responsibilities rather in the area of legislative decisions;
- Effective communication of existing information needed by refugees using appropriate means so that refugees can easily access those resources;
- Ensuring the needs in terms of learning the Romanian language for both children and adults, in the context where the language barrier is an aspect that appears in all areas of everyday life;
- Creating social events for refugees and Romanians to participate in, to increase the exposure of Romanians and refugees to otherness and to encourage informal, everyday interactions between members of the two groups.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Questionnaire applied through Google Forms

Welcome! Thank you for participating in this study. The Social Incubator association carries out a research on the needs of Ukrainian refugees in Romania in order to develop future services adapted to these needs. Please answer as honestly as possible, we assure you that the collected data is confidential and anonymized and will only be used for statistical purposes!

Introduction

1. When did you arrive in Romania? (month, year)

2. Did you come alone or in a group?

- Single
- In groups of 3-5 people
- In groups larger than 5 people

3. Were you accompanied by a child?

- Nu
- Da, copilul/copiii mei
- Da, copiii celor cu care am călătorit

4. Did you know anyone in Romania before arriving in the country?

- Yes
- No

Housing

5. What is your current housing situation?

- Through the 50/20 program
- I live in a center
- I live on my own (rent, relatives/friends)

6. Do you live alone or with other refugees from Ukraine?

- Alone
- Together with other people from Ukraine

7. Did you have help finding a home/alternative housing? (multiple answer)

- Yes, from the authorities
- Yes, from an NGO/association
- Yes, from acquaintances/friends/relatives
- Yes, from a private person
- No.

8. On a scale from 1 (totally unsatisfactory) to 10 (totally satisfactory), to what extent is your housing situation satisfactory to you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. What are the main shortages/needs you currently face in terms of housing/living conditions? (multiple answer)

- Insufficient space
- Poor access to utilities
- Lack of personal space/privacy
- Inappropriate interior design/poor furniture
- Conflictual relationship with the owner/host
- Conflictual relationship with the staff of the center
- Conflictual relationship with flatmates (refugees)
- Other:
- Not necessary

10. What do you think would help you to improve living conditions? (open question)

Health

11. On a scale of 1 (totally unsatisfactory) to 10 (totally satisfactory), how satisfied are you with your health?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. Do you have health problems:

- No.
- Yes. Which one?

13. Since you have been in Romania, have you accessed health services?

- Yes, as an emergency
- Yes, routine consultation
- No.

14. If you did not access medical services, why?

- I didn't need it;
- I needed it, but I couldn't because of the material costs
- I needed it, but couldn't because of the reluctance of the service providers

15. If you accessed medical services, did you have help with it?

- Yes, from public institutions
- Yes, from the knowledge in Romania
- Yes, from other refugees who had been through it
- Yes, from an NGO
- No.

16. Are you registered with any family doctor in Romania?

- Yes.
- No, I wasn't interested/I didn't want to
- No, I wanted to but I didn't succeed

If he wanted to and was unable to register with a family physician:

17. What was the obstacle/what problems did you encounter? (open question)

18. What are your main health needs?

- Access to free medical services
- More information on how to access the services
- Long-term/ongoing care (patients with chronic diseases)
- Other: which ones?

19. On a scale from 1 (totally unsatisfactory) to 10 (totally satisfactory), to what extent are you satisfied with the access to health services for you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Employment/integration into the labor market

20. Do you currently have a job in Romania?

- Yes
- No

21. If not, for what reason:

- I didn't look for/didn't want/couldn't work
- I wanted to get a job, but I couldn't find a suitable job due to working hours;
- I wanted to get a job, but I couldn't find a suitable job because I didn't know the Romanian language;
- I wanted to get a job, but I couldn't find a suitable job due to employers' reluctance;
- I wanted to get a job, but I couldn't find a suitable job because I don't have anyone to leave the child/children with;
- I wanted to get a job, but I couldn't find a suitable job because of ... ;

22. If you have a job, how did you find this job?

- On my own, I responded to a job advertisement;
- Through other refugees who were already working;
- Through Romanian friends;
- Through public institutions;
- Through an NGO.

23. If you have a job, on a scale from 1 (totally dissatisfied) to 10 (totally satisfied), how satisfied are you with this job?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

24. (If the score is less than 10) What are the problems you encountered at your current job?

- Insufficient/inadequate salary
- Job below my qualification
- Attitude of colleagues/employers
- Work schedule
- Working overtime/obligation to do overtime
- Other: which?

Education

25. If you have a child, are your child/children enrolled in Romanian schools?

- Yes
- No.
- Not applicable/has no children

26. If not, why are they not enrolled?

- They are not of the required age
- Difficult registration process
- Not knowing the Romanian language
- Other reason:

27. Are you following an education program in Romania?

- Yes
- No, because I don't want to;
- No, because I don't know how to proceed;
- No, because the people at the institution where I went were reluctant.

28. If so, on a scale from 1 (totally unsatisfied) to 10 (totally satisfied), how satisfied are you with the school in Romania?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

29. What are the main problems encountered by your child/children at school? (multiple answer)

- Unfriendly collective;
- Unknowing the language;
- Difficult school curriculum;
- Other: which?
- Not applicable (she has no children/the children are not at school)

30. What are the main problems you encountered at school? (multiple answer)

- Unfriendly collective;
- Ignorance of the language;
- Difficult school curriculum;
- Other: which?
- Not applicable/does not follow an education program

Social services

31. What services do you and your children currently benefit from?

- After school / day care centers;
- Accommodation;
- Psychological counseling;
- Legal advice;
- Vocational counseling;
- Access to health services;
- Romanian language courses;
- Socialization camps/activities;
- Other: which ones?

32. What services do you think will be helpful in the future?

- After school / day care centers;
- Accommodation;
- Counseling;
- Access to health services;
- Romanian language courses;
- Socialization camps/activities;
- Other: which ones?

33. What is the biggest difficulty you are currently facing in terms of living in Romania?

- Living conditions
- Access to medical services
- Access to education
- Spending free time
- Access to social services
- Financial status
- Problems related to the labor market
- Spending free time
- Other:

34. Who do you usually spend your free time with?

- With other refugees from Ukraine
- With Romanians
- With people of other nationalities
- I don't tend to socialize

35. How do you usually spend your free time?

- Cultural events (film, theater, etc.)
- Events organized by associations/NGOs
- Outings in the city/park/shopping
- I think I don't have (enough) free time

Future plans/intentions

36. Do you intend to stay in Romania long-term/for a longer period of time?

- I want to stay in Romania until the end of the war, after which I want to return to Ukraine
- I want to stay in Romania for a while after the end of the war
- I want to stay in Romania for an indefinite period
- I want to stay in Romania permanently

37. If you want to stay in Romania indefinitely or permanently, what do you think will be your main needs (services to access, activities to participate in, etc.)? (open question)

38. If you want to stay in Romania indefinitely or permanently, what kind of help would you need and from whom? (open question)

Socio-demographic data

39. Age in completed years:

40. Gender

41. Level of education:

- Elementary school not completed
- Completed primary school
- Complete gymnasium
- Incomplete high school

- Vocational school
- Unfinished high school
- Completed high school
- Unfinished college
- Completed college
- Unfinished master's degree
- Completed master's degree
- Unfinished doctorate
- Doctorate completed

42. Your occupational status in Ukraine:

- Employed
- Self-employed/own business
- Day laborer
- Housewife
- Retired
- Incapacity for work
- Unemployed
- Other situation:

Respondent's phone number/email address:

Thank you!

Anexa 2 - Interview guide

Hello,

My name is....., I represent The Social Incubator Association. During this period we are carrying out a research through which we aim to find out the needs of refugees from Ukraine in Romania in order to develop services adapted to them.

There are no „right answers” or „wrong answers”, this is an open discussion where we want to learn as much as possible about your experience in Romania and what needs you are facing.

We assure you that what we discuss is strictly confidential (the same questions will be asked of all study participants and the data will be analyzed together, without mentioning names or other personally identifiable information). What we discuss is very important to the research report, so we need your permission to audio record our discussion. The recording will only be used for the purpose of further analysis of the collected information, and will be deleted upon completion of the research report. No personally identifiable information will be mentioned in the report, and no connection will be made in any way between the interviewees and the opinions of each research participant.

The trip to Romania and the reception:

- 1. When did you leave Ukraine? Did you travel accompanied? With whom, how big was the group?**
- 2. How did the border crossing go/where did you cross?**
- 3. What was the first contact from Romania? What and how was the first support received?**
- 4. Time spent near the border: where were you accommodated, did you have access to goods? Did you have access to utilities? What were the conditions? Was there something missing?**
- 5. The road around the border to Bucharest: under what conditions did the journey to Bucharest take place? Who organized the trip?**
- 6. After you arrived in Bucharest, where did you go?**

The period spent so far in Bucharest

- 1. After arriving in Bucharest, what happened? Who did they interact with?**
- 2. Residence: Where do you currently live? How did they find this variant? Have they had several types of experiences (center, apartment)? If so, pluses and minuses for each.**
- 3. Current accommodation situation: what are the conditions? What is missing/what does the respondent feel they need and haven't been able to find?**
- 4. Health services and health status: did you need medical services? What kind of services? Were you able to access them? How was the process? Does he have a family doctor? What are the gaps faced by dpv in accessing medical services? Did someone help you with this chapter? What kind of help would they like in the future and from whom?**
- 5. Labor market: Do you have a job? How did you get it? If not, what stopped you? Did he work in Ukraine? How does the workplace here compare to the workplace there? How is the job related to his level of training? What kind of job would they like? Did you need help finding a job? What does he think would have helped him/her find a suitable job?**
- 6. Education: to be explored if you have a child/children or continue your studies (high school/post-high school/university) what kind of interactions have you had with the educational system in Romania? How it went: school enrollment, continuing studies in Ukraine, Romanian language learning programs, etc. How is the school here as a social environment? What difficulties are you currently experiencing? What would you improve in your access to education?**
- 7. The interaction with the Romanian society: how the interaction with the Romanians went, in everyday life situations, for example going to the store, using public transport. What do Romanians look like? With institutions and NGOs: what kind of interactions, what kind of support?**
- 8. Interaction with those remaining in Ukraine: Who is there? How do I keep in touch?**
- 9. Spending your free time: How do you spend your free time? Where do you go out most often? With whom? How would you like to spend it? Are there activities that you do not have access to (language/cultural barriers)?**
- 10. Please describe to us step by step a typical day in your life since you live in Romania.**

Future plans

- 11. Do you think things will be the same in the coming months, in 2023 regarding the situation in Ukraine?**
- 12. What do you want to do in the future? Do you have clear plans? (Does he intend to stay in Romania long-term, or does he want to return to Ukraine as soon as the war ends?)**
- 13. If you will stay in Romania for a longer period, what needs do you think will arise? What kind of help do you think would be helpful?**

Conclusions

- 14. What has helped you the most so far in adapting to Romanian society?**
- 15. What is the biggest difficulty you currently have in living in Bucharest?**
- 16. What solutions do you see to improve your stay here? What about your future plans?**