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Social exclusion of immigrant people in Romania

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Introduction

Social exclusion can be defined as the failure of society to provide certain individuals and groups with those rights and benefits normally available to its members, such as employment, adequate housing, health care, education and training, etc. (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/social+exclusion>)

In terms of legislation, the integration is defined as ‘the active participation of foreigners who were granted a form of protection or a right to stay in Romania and of the citizens of the Member States of the European Union and European Economic Area in the economic, social and cultural life of Romanian society, to prevent and combat social exclusion, respectively to adapt to the conditions of the Romanian society’. (Alexe, I. & Păunescu, B., 2011: 38)

Immigrant integration represents one of the most important challenges to which Romania has to give efficient solutions. The importance of social exclusion relies in the fact that it gives us an insight into the social characteristics that underlie and define this phenomenon. Social exclusion represents a national problem that requires our immediate attention; it is a reality that cannot be denied.

The main difficulties of the immigrants and their vulnerability with the Romanian employers are generally related to language barriers. Although there are language courses organized by the Romanian Immigration Office and different NGOs, we have to admit that our language has a fair degree of difficulty in learning which requires time, immigrants usually feeling overwhelmed by the huge amount of information. Also the cultural differences can create a gap in the social integration process in the sense that immigrants may show some incompatibilities in regards to the assimilation process that deals with our cultural background. Immigrants rights and obligations are rather poorly represented and, most of the times, foreigners encounter a hard time getting to know what they can and cannot do, how they can or cannot do and so on.

Because of this lack of information, in terms of their access to the general services offered by public institutions, immigrants can be easily transformed into victims by the employers that want to take advantage of a person's immigrant status, especially in the case of those that do not benefit from a longer stay in Romania.

The institution with the highest involvement in the immigration phenomenon is the Ministry of Administration and Interior, through which the Romanian Immigration Office gains access.

Together with the EU integration of our country there have been a series of changes in the national legislation, starting with the encouraging and promotion of the legal immigration, more appropriate information of immigrants and also the creation of better conditions for them. In addition to this the NGOs have a variety of social integration programs, assisted mainly by European funds, made available especially for the newly arrived foreigners.

The immigration phenomenon represents a more recent development in Romania that has registered a constant growth and expansion since the country's European Union accession. Statistics show that there were over 59.000 foreigners with a legal residence registered in Romania at the end of 2010 and that most of them came from Syria, Turkey and China. The Romanian legislation concerning this immigration phenomenon is a rather young one with short weaknesses that slows down the process of complete social integration for those seeking residency in Romania.

Once arrived in Romania immigrants may face difficulties in finding a job since the labor market is accessible and favorable up to a point, such as issues regarding the diplomas acknowledgement or the access to healthcare services. These are immigration rights that the Romanian legislation has not been able to fully grant them so far.

1. Level and structure of immigrant people exclusion

Romania houses around 80.000 foreign citizens out of which 54.000 are outside the European Area and the rest, 24.000, are from countries within the European Union. Research shows that until 2004 immigration was a relatively rare phenomenon, most immigrants were originally from Turkey, China, Syria, the USA, Serbia, Iran, Egypt, Jordan, most of them coming from the Republic of Moldova.

Starting with the year 2005, 2006 respectively, Romania has become a more popular destination for foreigners. Overall, the immigration phenomenon represents one of the latest developments in our country. This experience has proved itself to be sometimes rather difficult to embrace, giving the fact that this country is more accustomed to the emigration phenomenon.

The years 2005-2006 brought a significantly large number of immigrants as well as a diversification in the reasons for migration in Romania. Besides the usual economic and commercial activities, due to the favorable and permissive legislation for foreign investments, one sees a certain openness for labor, studies and familial reunions. Moreover, due to the economic development and the need for workforce, Romanian employers started bringing Chinese workers for the building sites (roads and bridges), as well as for the textiles, trade and services domain. Similar situations involve the Turkish immigrants who occupied the same economic sectors as the Chinese workers. Statistics show that at the end of 2010 the legal immigration reached a 0.3% out of the total population of the country (non EU immigrants). Together with the Chinese and Turkish immigrants, the Moldovan immigrants are the third big part of the foreign communities, but having a completely different purpose. Studies show that the Moldovan immigrants are drawn towards Romanian soil especially for research and study (about 80% of the total) but also for job opportunities (in the same economic and industrial areas that display labor shortages). In addition to this, they have the advantage of sharing the same language and culture, two crucial factors for the social integration process. The level of social exclusion in the Romanian society is rather hard to grasp. The Immigrant Integration Policy Index, known as MIPEX, is a study that analyzes the degree of social integration within the foreign community.

This represents a reference guide as well as an accurate instrument for the evaluation and improving of the integration policies. MIPEX has a number of 148 indicators of integration policies for immigrants within the seven dimensions of the social integration process based on international standards, such as: education, labor market flexibility, political participation, long-term residence, family reunification, citizenship access and discrimination.

Romania was first mentioned in this study's third edition which showed that at the beginning of 2011 it ranked the 22nd out of 31 states in the overall standings for all the countries involved in the study, ahead of countries like Austria, Switzerland, Lithuania, Slovakia, Bulgaria. Romania's score for the suitability of the integration policy for immigrants showed a final result of 45. The final score, between 41 and 59 points, shows that the country in question has an integration process that ensures as many opportunities as obstacles. The newly arrived immigrants in Romania encounter integration policies no different or more favorable than the European average, yet much better than the ones offered by Central European States or by the Baltic countries. It seems that Romania stands as a well prepared country in terms of welcoming immigrant workers and their families.

On 09/30/2010 59.358 foreigners with legal residence were registered, out of which 49.282 with temporary residence and 10.076 with permanent residence.

Almost half of the immigrants in Romania are here because they are a family member of a Romanian or a European Union citizen (20.863), and about 10% of them came here to be reunited with their families, having a temporary residence (4.194). Most of the immigrants in these cases are women from countries like China, Turkey, Republic of Moldova or Middle East countries, and a very small percentage are elders, underage children and first degree relatives. It's important to emphasize that family support represents a stimulating factor in the social integration process. A third of the immigrants are here to study (12.587), 14% are here to work (6.951) and less than 5% have small businesses to run (1.727).

The distribution of legal immigrants by gender and age, both with temporary and permanent residence, shows that 60% of the total are men, this statistic reaching up to 70% men and 30% women for immigrants between 35-65 years old.

Taking in to account the above-mentioned data, we can say that the immigrant population is a young one with a great deal of productive potential that can be used on the labor market and therefore with real chances of social integration.

As far as the immigrants with a permanent residence are concerned, most of them are from China-2.360, Turkey-1.864, and Syria- 993. These figures registered a slight decrease between the years 2004-2006 and, after that, a comeback with an increase in 2010. Also the territorial distribution of the citizens from the third countries, with a legal residence shows that 41% of them live in the country's capital, Bucharest, and approximately 33% in other large urban areas of the country. Their number has been increasing since the year 2005. Similarly, the statistic on foreigners with a form of protection show that 80% of them are located in the capital zone of the country. By the end of 2009, a number of 1.117 foreigners with a form of protection were registered and continued to live in Romania, out of which 52,5% are from Iraq, 8% from Iran, 5% and 4% from Palestine and Congo, 3% from Turkey. 73,5% of them have a refugee status and 26,5% have a form of auxiliary protection. Most of the population with a form of protection represents a young population with only 20% underage and 2,5% over 65 years old, also 75% of the total are men.

There are no statistics concerning the unregulated economic immigration phenomenon.

However, if we take into account the cases studies, it seems that more and more immigrants have an unregulated status and end up working illegally; immigrants with a tolerance status have only the right to stay and no right to work, while those seeking asylum have to wait a full year after the registration of the application so they can start looking for work. There are examples of Moldovans, Ukrainians and Asians informally hired to work in the bakery industry, in constructions, trade and services domain or in the household and agriculture fields. This is also to be found amongst the immigrants with a form of protection that are prevented from working in the first year of their arrival and statistics show that the year 2007 respectively 2008, 31% of them were performing undeclared work because more than half earned their income based on their own activities.

The National Prognosis Commission predicts a growth of up to 200.000-300.000 immigrants between the years 2013-2015, meaning a 1%-1,4% of the Romanian population, while, according to Eurostat, between the years 2008-2060, Romania will register a net immigration rate of up to 1,84%.

2. Causes and consequences of immigrant people exclusion

‘Nobody wants to take actions in regards to the paperwork...if you want to work, you just have to do it the illegal way’ (Alexe, I. & Păunescu, B., 2011: 31)

The harsh and strict conditions of the labor legislation combined with the endless stream of documents that are required and the high costs that apply for the employers that want to hire a foreigner create the perfect environment for undeclared work and illegal employment. There are also cases of exploitation for labor, an example of that was registered in 2009 when 12 citizens from the Republic of Honduras were brought to work in the hotel industry but ended up being used for the loading and downloading of newspapers.

Such a victim says: ‘We were 10 men living in a studio and we were crowded in beds. We didn’t have hot water. There was a small kitchen but we didn’t have anything to eat because we didn’t have money. They divided all 12 of us at the Rodipet kiosks. They told us that they would provide us with the transportation from the studio to the kiosk, but the very next day they sent us on a bus so that we could see the route and learn how to get there ourselves. The third day, we found ourselves lost because we didn’t know where and when to change the busses and the tramways.’ The story also tells us that the Honduran got at the end of a month a lot less than he was originally promised, a consequence of working without a work contract. When he asked about what was rightfully his, he was threatened to be thrown out in the street.

Undeclared work of foreigners and the existence of immigrants with an unregulated status have direct consequences within the socio-economic Romanian system, and also hinders the integration process. The macroeconomic indicators show that undeclared work sums up to almost half of the underground economy and that this informal economy has reached in the GDP a total of 35%. For immigrants that do have a work contract, the employer can grant them a place to stay for a share of the wage, although sometimes the costs of this offer may exceed the employee’s possibilities.

For students, there is always the possibility of living in dorms, and for immigrants, with permanent stay the social housing units represent the best option.

In terms of employment, immigrants need a work permit which is something that the employer has to obtain, furthermore the legislation states that a foreigner can benefit from a job only if this couldn't have been occupied by a Romanian or a European Union citizen. It is quite difficult for a foreigner to get a job because, besides the process of demonstrating the qualities and experience that is required, there is also the problem with the costs and the effort that the employer must put in with a view to obtaining the legal documentation needed for the hiring process. Due to this and also to the fact that the work contract is often written in Romanian and the immigrant worker doesn't know its content, most of its stipulations are broken by the employer and the abuse of power falls into place. This is a direct result of the fact that the immigrant employee is left outside of the work permit obtaining process that the employer handles. In addition to this, even if the law states that the immigrant worker is entitled to receive unemployment benefits, in the event of losing the job the immigrant legislation rules come into use and thus making this impossible because the work permit is lost and soon after that the residence permit.

Obtaining the right to stay represents the most fundamental right enabling the immigrant to have access to all the other rights during his stay on Romanian soil.

The lack of clear and complete information about the procedures in combination with the ineffective coordination that occurs at the level of the institutions represents the main causes of social exclusion. Also the documents that are required are vague and undergo frequent changes, and sometimes some of them expire before other important ones can be released. Immigrants deal with delays and miscommunication, with officials that do not know the legislation and the rights that apply in their cases. The lack of trained and qualified personnel for the complex procedures and the skills required to deal with such issues, but also the inability of some institutions to offer useful information and solutions, are just a few of the barriers underlying the phenomenon of social exclusion in Romania.

One of the main obstacles that need immediate attention is the language barrier and the lack of information regarding Romanian culture and tradition. Moreover, the valuable information that is written mostly in Romanian as well as the discouraging and closed attitude of the staff that should provide assistance makes it even harder for immigrants to succeed in the integration process.

There are some difficulties regarding the healthcare process as well, in the sense that most immigrants do not know the procedures that qualify them for a health insurance.

The Romanian process that requires first of all the visit to the Family Physician (GP), after that the specialist's consultation and in the end the hospital visit, remains for the majority of the immigrants a grand and complicated enigma.

Social protection and assistance is granted only for the most vulnerable cases that meet the legal conditions. Furthermore, professionals should know and understand the legislative stipulations regarding the religious and cultural differences that condition the care providing process.

3. Government role in preventing immigrant exclusion

In order to improve immigration management on national territory, in full compliance with European Union policies, an important action was to introduce a national strategy in the field that could represent Romania's position towards this process, a strategy which has a great impact both at national and international level. Thus, according to the draft of the National Strategy on Immigration for 2011-2014, it is emphasized that migration should not be seen as a negative aspect; it should be seen as a process to be managed and not as a problem to be solved.

The National Strategy on Immigration for 2011-2014

The main objectives established by this strategy are as follows:

- **Promotion of legal migration to all parties' benefit: Romanian society, immigrants and their home states:**
- Providing continuous information to the foreigners concerning the possibilities and conditions of legal migration in Romania;
- Admission of the third-country nationals for work purposes according to the needs identified on the local labor market;
- Facilitating the admission and stay of foreigners and of those who manage investments on national territory;
- Encouraging Romanian higher education and facilitating the stay on national territory of those who studied in Romania;
- **Strengthening of checking the legality of the foreigners' living on Romanian territory and the proper putting into effect of removal and restrictive measures:**

- Providing continuous information to the foreigners on the sanctions and the restrictive measures that can be applied to those who stay illegally or carry out undeclared work;
- Strengthening the cooperation between Romanian authorities to combat illegal immigration and undeclared work;
- Developing the cooperation with third countries with potential migration phenomenon;
- Enforcing measures to deport illegal immigrants according to EU standards;
- **Improving national asylum system in order to increase and ensure compliance with national, European and international applicable legal standards:**
- Ensuring free access to the asylum procedure and observing the *non refoulement* principle;
- Efficient processing of asylum applications in accordance with national, European and international applicable legal standards;
- Efficiently combating the abuse in the asylum procedure;
- Ensuring a dignified standard of living to the asylum seekers under national, European and international applicable legal standards;
- Ensuring the compatibility with other asylum systems of member states and the coordination with the European Asylum Support Office;
- **Romania's active participation to the efforts of the international communities and the EU member states in identifying lasting solutions for the persons needing international protection:**
- Integration of foreigners who were granted a form of protection in Romania;
- Assuming Romania's duties as a refugee resettlement country;
- **Social integration of foreigners with legal residence:**
- Incorporating the aspects of integration in all other relevant policy areas;
- Increasing the participation of foreigners with legal residence in Romania in specific activities to facilitate their integration into the Romanian society;
- Creating a proper environment to facilitate immigrants' integration.

(Decision NO. 498 of 18 May 2011 on the approval of the National Strategy on Immigration for 2011-2014 – issued by the Government and published in the Official Journal N0. 391 of 3 June 2011

<http://ori.mai.gov.ro/api/media/userfiles/HOTARARE%20nr.pdf>)

Other important law regulations in the area of immigration:



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- *Emergency Ordinance No. 194 from 12 December 2002 on the status of aliens in Romania*- issued by the Government; republished and amended by the Emergency Ordinance 55/2007

‘The present Ordinance constitutes the framework which regulates the entry, residence and exit of aliens to and from the territory of Romania, their rights and liabilities, as well as specific measures of migration control, in accordance with the obligations assumed by Romania by international documents it is part of.’

http://ori.mai.gov.ro/api/media/userfilesfile/Legislatie/Legislatie%20nationala/OUG_194_2002_2007_EN.pdf)

- *Emergency Ordinance No. 56 of 20 June 2007 on the employment and employment-related relocation of aliens on the territory of Romania*- issued by the Government and published in the Official Journal No. 424 of 26 June 2007

http://ori.mai.gov.ro/api/media/userfilesfile/Legislatie/Legislatie%20nationala/OUG_56_2007_EN.pdf)

- *Law No. 122 from 4 May 2006 on the Asylum in Romania*- issued by the Parliament of Romania, published in the official Journal No. 428 from 18 May 2006.

‘The present law regulates the legal status of the aliens who apply for a form of protection in Romania, the legal status of the aliens who hold a form of protection in Romania, the procedures for granting, termination and annulment of a form of protection in Romania, as well as the procedure for determining the responsible EU Member State for examining the asylum application.’

http://ori.mai.gov.ro/api/media/userfilesfile/Legislatie/Legislatie%20nationala/L_122_2006_EN.pdf)

- *Government Ordinance no. 44/2004 of 29 January 2004 on the Social Integration of Aliens Who Were Granted a Form of Protection or a residence permit in Romania, as well as of citizens of European Union Member States and of the European Free trade Agreement* – issued by the Government

<http://ori.mai.gov.ro/api/media/userfilesfile/Legislatie/Legislatie%20nationala/OG%2044%20din%202004%20integrarea%20sociala%20a%20strainilor%20care%20au%20dobandit%20o%20forma%20de%20protectie%20sau%20un%20drept%20de%20sedere%20in%20Romania.pdf>)

- *Decision No. 1.864 from December 2006 on the approval of the methodological norms of enforcement of Government Emergency ordinance No. 102/2005 on the free movement of the territory of Romania of citizens from EU and EFTA member states and for the establishment of the form and contents of the documents to be issued to citizens of the European Union and their family members- issued by the Government and published in the Official Journal No. 1.1051 from 29 December 2006*

(http://ori.mai.gov.ro/api/media/userfilesfile/Legislatie/Legislatie%20nationala/H_1864_EN.pdf)

4. Institutions and their actions

The management of the migration phenomenon is based on the participation of all institutions with competences in this field, on national and international cooperation, the leading role being undertaken by the Ministry of Administration and Interior, through the Romanian Immigration Office.

The Romanian Immigration Office

“According to art. 8 f the EMERGENCY ORDINANCE No. 55 from 20 June 2007, published in the OFFICIAL JOURNAL No. 424 from 26 June 2007, in the contents of the valid normative documents, the phrases ‘Authority for Aliens’ and ‘National Refugee Office’ shall be correspondingly replaced by the phrase ‘Romanian Migration Office’.

By means of the same normative document the National Migration Office is established, as specialized body of the central public administration, as legal entity, subordinated to the Ministry of Administration and Interior, by reorganization of the Authority for Aliens and the National Refugee Office, which shall be dismantled.

The Romanian Migration Office shall be transferred all rights and liabilities from the Office for the Migration of Workforce with regard to issuing proof of alien’s right to employment.” (Emergency Ordinance No. 194 from 12 December 2002 on the status of aliens in Romania, adopted by the Government. http://ori.mai.gov.ro/api/media/userfilesfile/Legislatie/Legislatie%20nationala/OUG_194_2002_2007_EN.pdf)

The Romanian Immigration Office exercises its powers granted by law for the implementation of Romania’s policies on migration, asylum and social integration of aliens, and of the relevant legislation.

Its activity represents a public service and is conducted in the interest of the community, in support of state institutions, based solely on law enforcement. In exercising its duties, the Romanian Immigration Office cooperates with other structures of the Ministry of Administration and Interior and with other state institutions that have responsibilities in ensuring the rule of law; it collaborates, in this respect, with the citizens, and may conclude agreements with similar foreign institutions, as well as with international organizations under the law.

It provides services for EU citizens (admission, limitations and restrictions, granting of permanent residence, registration of residence), but also for non- EU citizens (asylum services, tolerance, voluntary return, penalties, permanent residency, travel and stay in Romania).

The Romanian Immigration Office leads a series of integration programs:

- Romanian language courses to which immigrants have free access based on an application filed to RIO or to any school inspectorate;
- Cultural orientation, organized in the form of a course for three months period. The course presents general information about Romania (notions of Romanian Constitution, geography, history, holidays) to familiarize the foreigners with traditions, customs, Romanian cultural values and to provide practical information about Romanian society;
- Counseling

(Alexe, I., Popescu R., Toth G., 2009: 18)

The Romanian Immigration Office is the centre of gravity of the entire Romanian institutional system for the regularization of the immigration phenomenon and integration of aliens in the Romanian society.

The National Council for Combating Discrimination (C.N.C.D.) – It is an autonomous state authority, under parliamentary control, which operates in the field of discrimination; it is the guarantor of observing and enforcing the non-discrimination principle in accordance with domestic legislation and international documents to which Romania is party.

The Council exercises its powers in the following areas:

- Prevention of discrimination through information campaigns, awareness of human rights, the effects of discrimination, the principle of equality, training, projects and programs at local, regional and national level, reports, etc.
- Mediation of parties involved in discrimination acts, in the presence of the spokesmen of the National Council for Combating Discrimination.
- Investigation, acknowledgment and punishment of discrimination acts.
- Monitoring of discrimination cases, by subsequent control over the parties involved.
- Providing specialized assistance to victims of discrimination by explaining the law to those interested in the procedure, assistance regarding the filing of the petition and additional information arising from this. (<http://www.cncd.org.ro/>)

The Ministry of Administration and Interior (M.A.I.) – It is the central body of executive power exercising, in accordance with the law, its duties in respect to public order observance, protection of fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens, public and private property, crime prevention and detection, thereby contributing to the achievement of a democratic society, freedom independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (M.A.E.) – It is ‘the institution of central public administration which implements the foreign policy of Romania, in accordance with the legislation in force and with the Government’s Program.’ (<http://www.mae.ro/en/node/2146>) It is the one which has competence in granting the Romanian visa (there are four types of visa: the airport transit visa (marked A), the transit visa (marked B), the short-stay visa (marked C), the long-stay visa (marked D)).

The Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Protection - It is designed to coordinate and implement the Government's strategy and policies in the following fields: labor, family, equality of opportunities and social security.

‘With a view to carry out an activity in Romania, foreigners need a work authorization. The work authorization may be granted at the employer’s request, by the Romanian Office for Immigration. This is needed for obtaining the long-term stay visa for employment or, as the case may be, of the stay permit for work purposes.’ (Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Protection, *The Guide of Foreign Workers in Romania*, page 8, <http://www.mmuncii.ro/pub/img/site/files/d3b2944963cb6acf3ca14598b227ce47.pdf>)

The Romanian Border Police – It is the specialized state institution in the structure of the Ministry of Administration and Interior, exercising its tasks related to supervision and

control of state border crossing, prevention and control of illegal migration and acts specific to cross-border crime committed in the area of competence.

The National Centre for Recognition and Equivalence of Diplomas - It provides services for the validation of studies abroad of foreign nationals, the validation of professional qualifications, the certification of academic documents, the issue of certificates related to the grading system in Romania. (Alexe, I. & Păunescu, B., 2011:49)

Non-governmental organizations

The Soros Foundation Romania – It was established in 1990 under the name of Soros Foundation for an Open Society Association, with the involvement of businessman and philanthropist George Soros who supported the values and ideals of open society in Central and Eastern Europe. The mission of the foundation is to promote the development of models for a society based on freedom, responsibility and respect for diversity. To fulfill this mission Soros Foundation runs a series of programs following strategic priorities:

- Advocacy and support for responsible and efficient public sector functioning;
- Eliminating discrimination and building models for community development and social inclusion;
- Supporting civil society activism;
- Social research for better public policy-making.

The program 'Migration and development' initiated, funded and implemented by Soros Foundation aims to identify patterns of integration of temporal external migration and its effects in the central and local policy, and to promote models that allow minimizing the negative effects and maximizing positive ones. (www.soros.ro)

The Association for Defending Stateless People and Refugees' Rights – APADAR – It works in the general context of human rights. APADAR tries to identify and use all the resources to defend the rights of individuals that, except for fraud attempts of some asylum seekers, are victims of deficient systems in terms of contracting countries of the Geneva Convention (1951).

Due to the EU accession, in Romania started a wave of migration which, after all statistics, it continues to grow. In addition to efforts undertaken by government institutions, APADAR advocates for the establishment of a clarity, a transparency of procedures and, last but not least, for the urging of obtaining by the applicant for protection of a status that can

offer him the security needed to continue his social and professional development.

Target groups: - Protection seekers

- People who have already obtained refugee status
- Stateless people living on Romanian territory.

Main objective: protection of stateless people and refugees rights in the context of their international legal status.

Specific objectives: informing target groups of their rights and obligations, supporting target groups during the legal proceedings that concern them, social integration of refugees and stateless people.

<http://apadar.ro/refugiati/despre-noi/apadar-asociatia-drepturile-apatrizilor-refugiatilor.html>)

The Association for the Protection of Rights and Social Integration (ADIS) - The mission of ADIS is to support the integration of the individual in the social, economic and cultural life - in particular the different categories of migrants, young people, but also people from marginalized social groups, disadvantaged or vulnerable. The Association provides assistance for people with a form of protection in Romania.

Main objectives:

- Individual support for integration and/or reintegration in the social, economic and cultural life at national and European level;
- Creating an intercultural environment to facilitate integration and social cohesion and to eliminate all forms of xenophobia, racism and discrimination;
- Facilitating access to fundamental rights and freedoms and improving the quality of life from the social, economic and cultural point of view;
- Public information on the situation of migrant groups in Romania and other people belonging to marginalized and disadvantaged social groups;
- Improving the legal framework and the institutional development.

Example of projects: 'Assistance and support for integration of people with a form of protection in Romania', 'Integrated services support and training for people with a form of protection in Romania', 'Photo-Conversations with Migrants', 'Social and educational activities for children, migrants and vulnerable young people', 'Open your mind! Accept diversity!' (<http://www.asociatia-adis.ro/>)

The Romanian National Council for Refugees (C.N.R.R.) Foundation – It is the main partner for the implementation of assistance programs for asylum seekers and refugees



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of Romania Representation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Its mission is to promote and defend by all legal means human rights in general and refugees and asylum seekers rights in particular.

Its objectives are: protection and exercise of the right to asylum during the process of determining the refugee status and integration of recognized refugees into the Romanian society.

Projects: ‘Specialized assistance for Romanian asylum seekers’ (period: 01/06/2011 – 31/05/2012) whose objectives are: improving legal and linguistic assistance for determining in an efficient, legal, fair manner a form of protection; improving counseling and social assistance in order to ensure a standard of living based on full respect of human dignity for all Romanian asylum seekers, with particular emphasis on the situation of persons belonging to vulnerable groups; ‘Establishing a monitoring system of forced deportation’ (period: 02/09/2011 – 30/06.2012) whose objectives are: providing advice to migrants that are in public custody, monitoring activities specific to forced deportation.

Other activity: ‘I am a Refugee. Should I feel different’- training course organized between 26 September 2010 and 4 October 2010 in Bucharest; the participants were encouraged to share their experiences, but also to develop guided discussions.

http://www.cnrr.ro/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19&Itemid=27&lang=en

The Refugee Women’s Organization in Romania (O.F.R.R.) – It is the single organization led by refugees and other people who were granted a form of protection in Romania. Particular attention is paid to the needs of women refugees. In 2009 started the partnership with the Intercultural Institute of Timișoara within the project ‘Integration and social cohesion for third country nationals’ financed by the European Fund for Integration. In this context O.F.R.R. hosts the National Focal Point for TCNs. (<http://www.migrant.ro/ofrr/>)

The ARCA – Romanian Forum for Refugees and Migrants – Its main activity is to monitor the integration of refugees and improvement of the relevant legislation by:

- Monitoring individual cases (meetings with beneficiaries, volunteers and organization’s collaborators, social and legal counseling);
- Meetings with public authorities with responsibilities in the integration of people with a form of protection in Romania;

- Working with other institutions and partner NGOs;
- Advocacy and lobbying to improve legislation and practice in the field of migration.

Social services:

- Needs evaluation, guidance and mediation of the relationship with local authorities, other institutions or nongovernmental organizations that provide specialized assistance;
- Information concerning the rights and obligations in Romania, social counseling and monitoring of individual cases;
- Limited assistance to access to health care and medicines for chronically ill low-income people;
- Limited material assistance (food, sanitary products, and school supplies for children) for people with no income or low income;
- Information and advice on the risks of illegal migration;
- Community development services (training and supervision for community mediators and volunteers). (http://www.arca.org.ro/servicii_si_activitati.html)

5. Other activities against immigrants' exclusion

Soros Foundation Romania, 'Study on the Immigration Phenomenon in Romania. The Aliens' Integration into the Romanian Society'

From May 2010 to May 2011, Soros Foundation, in partnership with the Romanian Association for Health Promotion, has implemented a project that has in view the improvement of the general awareness about immigration phenomenon in Romania and the encouragement of social integration of Third Country Nationals in Romanian Society. The head activity of the project has been drafting and publishing a national report to present the current and the lead situation of immigrants in Romania, and to offer information and accurate details regarding their situation, Romanian population's perception on Third Country Nationals and their integration in the Romanian Society, in order to help Romanian authorities to implement efficient immigration and immigrants' integration policies to prevent

immigrants' discrimination. The project has been part of the general program 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows', and financed through the European Fund for Integration of the Third Country Nationals. Soros Foundation Romania had published before studies regarding immigrants' social integration in Romanian Society. Such studies are 'The beneficial regularization of immigration in Romania', 'Speak with us!', 'Welcome to Romania! Information Guide for the Third Country Nationals' in partnership with ARCA Organization, 'Immigrants' information needs in Romania', 'Immigrant in Romania: Perspectives and risks'.

Soros Foundation Romania, 'Migrants in the Spotlight - Training and Capacity Building for Media Representatives'

In 2011, Soros Foundation Romania has took part, within the International Organization for Migrants, 'Migrants in the Spotlight' project, financed by the European Commission, through the European Fund for Integration budget line, and co-financed by the Hungarian Ministry of Interior which was associated partner, Soros Foundation Romania, Center for Independent Journalism in Hungary, and Milan Simecka Foundation in Slovakia. This project has been addressed to mass-media representatives such as journalists, journalism students and immigrant journalism students and it has been implemented in Romania, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovakia, in order to obtain accurate information by mass-media on the immigration phenomenon within these countries. Although the approached theme has been migration in general, there have been undertaken activities concerning immigrants' integration in Romanian society. The most relevant activities consisted in organizing two workshops on the 30th of November 2011 with the participation of 92 journalism students to discuss about mass-media representations of migrants, and on the 2nd of December 2011, where journalists and non-governmental organizations representatives were invited to discuss about immigrants' image in Romanian Mass-Media and 'the personal perspective of an immigrant in Romania'.

ARCA Organization. 'Welcome to Romania! The improvement of the third country national citizens' knowledge regarding their rights, obligations and possibilities of integration in the Romanian society'



Between August and December 2009, ARCA Organization - the Romanian Forum for Refugees and Migrants, a non-governmental organization, in partnership with Soros Foundation Romania and the Romanian Association for Organization Development, has unfolded the project 'Welcome to Romania! The improvement of the third country national citizens' knowledge regarding their rights, obligations and possibilities of integration in the Romanian society', whose main objective was to facilitate immigrants access to the social, cultural and economic life in Romania, by informing foreigners about the rights and obligations that law ensures or imposes to them. The target audience was represented by this social category, around 49.000 legal third country national citizens, public institutions, media, and the taken actions consisted in organizing three 'focus-groups sessions' (http://www.arca.org.ro/resurse/comunicat_lansare_proiect_Bun_venit_in_Ro_.pdf) with the participation of TCNs and representatives of embassies and other institutions responsible of immigrants' integration in order to gather data for drafting a research report that should provide immigrants essential information on their rights and obligations in Romania.

The report was translated in English, Turkish and Cantonese so that it could be more accessible to non-Romanian speakers and promoted through a media campaign and three informing campaigns within TCN communities in Bucharest, Constanța and Cluj. In November 2009, ARCA Organization – the Romanian Forum for Refugees and Migrants has organized training courses for Romanian teachers, trainers, and pre-primary school teachers that interact with immigrant parents (http://www.arca.org.ro/calendarul_evenimentelor-curs).

The Romanian Association for Organization Development – SAH ROM, 'The improvement of legal immigrants' integration in the Romanian Society'

In October 2011, the Romanian Association for Organization Development – SAH ROM has initiated a project that has in view the improvement of legal immigrants` integration in the Romanian society. The project will be unfolding until June 2012 and its activities` ambition is to help legal immigrants in Romania to perfect their knowledge of Romanian language and to facilitate their access to public services. In order that this purpose should be reached, there will be published six Romanian dictionaries and other listening materials destined to English,

Turkish, Arabic, and Chinese speakers, and there will also be published a Romanian-Turkish and Turkish-Romanian dictionary.

Moreover, Romanian Language and Culture workshops will be held for legal TCNs in Constanța, Suceava and Bucharest and the ‘Welcome to Romania!’, TCN’s information guide, will be updated and translated into Arabic, Chinese, Turkish and English.

TCNs will receive social and legal advice and information regarding their possibilities to get their diploma or certificate recognized by Romanian institutions or other organizations and to take part in entrepreneurship programs, professional training or informal competences evaluations, to access health services.

At least three thousand foreign citizens will have the opportunity to consult materials that will enable them to improve their knowledge of Romanian language and culture (www.ana-news.info/index.php).

6. Characteristic of Romanian Association for Health Promotion



<http://arps.ro>

The Romanian Association for Health Promotion is a non-governmental, non-profit organization, located in Bucharest, and it was created around twelve years ago, in December 2000. Currently there are fifteen employees and more than one hundred members and volunteers working for the Romanian Association for Health Promotion, specialists in medical and social sciences. Initially, the organization’s activities were primarily directed to health research and health services. By the moment it was settled, the Romanian Association for Health Promotion has been organizing education campaigns in order to inform Romanian population and to promote health in Romania. Moreover, since 2007, the association has enlarged its activity field by developing and implementing projects regarding a wider variety

of social life as immigrants' integration or personal development (<http://arps.ro/sectiune/0-despre-arps/>).

The organization offers complex services such as technical expertise, opinion surveys on specific social aspects. For instance, in July 2010, there was carried out an opinion survey amongst persons aged between 16 and 24, in order to find out young people's level of sex education. As a consequence of its results, the Romanian Association for Health Promotion has organized an awareness campaign about HIV and AIDS. The organization has also competences in developing communication strategies, public relation activities, communication campaigns, project management, and trainings, as there are more than twenty members qualified for lecturing on health, communication, and project management topics (<http://arps.ro/sectiune/3-servicii/>). A PR expert is responsible for organization's publicity.

Information regarding Romanian Association for Health Promotion can be found by accessing their official website, <http://arps.ro>, created in 2003 and managed by an IT expert.

Information such as contact, e-mail, address, map location, photos of their project activities can also be found at <http://facebook.com/arps.ro>. The organization is also promoted through online campaigns, European Commission's website, mass-media, through TV and radio spots broadcasting, newspapers, flyers distribution, press conferences, press releases, banners, and through its or other non-profit partner organizations' workshops by information and banners exchange. So far, The Romanian Association for Health Promotion has been collaborating with The Jesuit Refugee Service in Romania (JRS Romania), a non-profit organization which fights for refugees and forced migrants' fundamental rights, with Soros Foundation Romania, between 2010 and 2011 regarding the 'Study on the Immigration Phenomenon in Romania. The Aliens' Integration into the Romanian Society', Youth for Youth Foundation, in 'Integrated approaches of preventing HIV/AIDS in Romania', and with Education, Research, Youth and Sport Ministry, respecting 'The National Program for Health Education in Romanian Schools'. (<http://arps.ro/sectiune/2-parteneri/>)

The audience target and beneficiaries of Romanian Association for Health Promotion's implemented projects are Romanian citizens, in general, children, teenagers, women, in particular, immigrants, public institutions such as cities, schools, other non-profit organizations, and mass-media.

There are many other non-governmental, non-profit organizations that deal with social aspects in Romania, but they rather cooperate and collaborate than competing with each other.

For instance, projects regarding social exclusion of immigrants have been implemented by one organization in partnership with another. According to ‘The Study on the Immigration Phenomenon in Romania. The Aliens’ Integration into the Romanian Society’, there are twenty non-profit organizations that deal with social exclusion of immigrants or refugees, and other social aspects in Bucharest, five in Constanța, twelve in Cluj-Napoca, six in Moldavia and four in Timișoara. The Romanian Association of Health Promotion’s projects are also promoted within other’s non-profit organization’s workshops and presentations. It has not implemented seasonal projects, yet. Non-profit organizations in Romania derive their funds for implementing social projects from National and European funds such as the European Fund for Integration of the Third Country Nationals, the European Fund for Refugees, grants, Romanian government, and other European governments.

The Romanian Association for Health Promotion’s website provides sheer information regarding organization’s historical background, description of implemented projects, offered services, official partners, accessed budget lines, accurate details about the use of accessed European funds. Nevertheless, there has not been posted any organization chart which makes impossible a clear vision on the structure of the organization, and more videos of the implemented projects` activities would be necessary. The website has between 800 and 900 views per month, information offered by <http://www.traffic.ro> web tracking software, and the name of the website is also promoted within other governmental or non-governmental organizations` displays, publications, projects, websites, and through newspaper fold-outs. If searched with <http://www.google.com> browser, typing the complete designation of the organization or its acronym, the first incoming links are the official website and its Facebook website.

‘A Future Together - A society prepared to accept and benefit from the presence of foreigners with legal residence in Romania’

In June 2011, the Romanian Association for Health Promotion, in partnership with the Jesuit Refugee Service in Romania, has implemented a project aimed against the discrimination of immigrants in Romania, the so-called ‘A Future Together - A society prepared to accept and benefit from the presence of foreigners with legal residence in Romania’ which will be in

progress until June 2012. The project is part of the 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' General Program, and has been funded through the European Fund for Integration of the Third Country Nationals, Annual Program 2010 budget line, by European Union. The project has been also supported by the Schengen Office and the Romanian Immigration Office, governmental organizations falling under the heading of the Romanian Ministry of Administration and Interior which has delivered official figures and information of the current situation of immigrants in Romania.

As stated in the press release, on the day of 30th of June 2011 in Bucharest, the main objective of this project is to inform Romanian people about the advantages of foreigners' presence on the Romanian territory, the convenience of their integration in the Romanian society and about the importance of accepting them to live among us.

So, the project is intended for the Romanian citizens living in counties where there are a considerable number of immigrants, but not only.

For this purpose, there has been launched a media information campaign and local information seminars whose goal is that the target audience, consisting in Romanian population, in general, on the one hand, and representatives of local authorities charged with implementing policies regarding immigrants' integration, non-governmental organizations and local press, on the other hand, become aware of the benefits of the immigration phenomenon in Romania.

Besides the general objective, the project aims to carry out some other specific objectives as increasing the level of knowledge among a large number of Romanian citizens regarding the advantages of immigrants' integration in Romanian Society and the role of intercultural communication within a multicultural society. In order to reach these objectives, specific activities have been undertaken such as an advertising campaign consisting in broadcasting a TV and a radio spot and an online banner whose title and slogan are 'A Future Together – Future begins with a smile' and there have also been organized official workshops in each of the twelve regions, destined to inform local authorities whose jurisdiction is to implement the national strategy for migration. Until now, such workshops have taken place in Constanța, Galați, Brașov, and Bucharest.

The purpose of this project is that its messages should reach the main audience target, namely three million Romanian citizens aged between 14 and 64 and at least 50% of the population living in the aimed areas and that the principal beneficiary of the project should be

the foreigners with legal residence in Romania and who are not citizens of European Union, more than 55.000 persons, most of them coming from Republic of Moldavia, China and Turkey to work or study, according to official figures.



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Conclusions

Romania favors a warm and welcoming environment for foreigners, regardless of one's gender or origin. The Romanians are simple, open minded, very humorous and easy – going, very understanding and hospitable. Due to the fact that Romania is defined more as an emigration country and that from the immigration point of view it represents a transition bridge towards Western Europe, the social exclusion phenomenon occurs only at the level of institutions and corresponding legislation.

In the future, Romania should improve and develop the level of inter-institutional coordination in order to efficiently manage the legal migration, whereas the main objective of the Romanian Government, for the next years, is to be up to the EU standards, to cooperate with the EU institutions.

Here are some suggestions on what should be improved for a perfect social integration process in the near future:

- Improved accessibility and dissemination of Romanian language learning courses and familiarity with Romanian culture.
- Setting up special offices for counseling guidance, meant to support immigrants with a broader social profile in every city. This would imply a shift of focus from the legal advising procedures.
- Developing a network of personal advisors, specialized staff in helping immigrants through the process of integration.
- Popularization of immigrant phenomenon and collateral issues via mass media, thus helping a better understanding of the Romanian people of this new experience and the other way round. The Romanians should learn more about immigrants and their specific culture and traditions.
- An improvement in the managing system that deals with the immigration phenomenon, a better communication at the level of institutions and their legislation.
- Setting up special healthcare centers for immigrants that do not benefit from a health insurance.

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