

# Input by civil society organisations to the Asylum Report 2026

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

Dear Colleagues,

The production of the Asylum Report 2026 is currently underway. The annual [Asylum Report](#) presents an overview of developments in the field of international protection in Europe.

The report includes information and perspectives from various stakeholders, including experts from EU+ countries, civil society organisations, researchers and UNHCR. To this end, we invite you, our partners from civil society, academia and research institutions, to share your reporting on developments in asylum law, policies or practices in 2025 by topic as presented in the online survey (**‘Part A’ of the form**).

We also invite you to share with us any publications your organisation has produced throughout 2025 on issues related to asylum in EU+ countries (**‘Part B’ of the form**). These may be reports, articles, recommendations to national authorities or EU institutions, open letters and analytical outputs. Your input can cover information for a specific EU+ country or the EU as a whole. You can complete all or only some of the sections.

Please note that the Asylum Report does not seek to describe national systems in detail but rather to present key developments of the past year, including improvements and challenges which remain.

All submissions are publicly accessible. For transparency, contributions will be published on the EUAA webpage and contributing organisations will be listed under the [Acknowledgements](#) of the report.

All contributions should be appropriately referenced. You may include links to supporting material, such as analytical studies, articles, reports, websites, press releases, position papers. Some sources of information may be in a language other than English. In this case, please cite the original language and, if possible, provide one to two sentences describing the key messages in English.

The content of the Asylum Report is subject to terms of reference and volume limitations. Contributions from civil society organisations feed into EUAA’s work in multiple ways and inform reports and analyses beyond the Asylum Report.

***NB: Similarly to last year, this year's edition of the Asylum Report will be leaner and more analytical, with streamlined thematic sections. The focus will be on key trends in the field of asylum rather than on individual developments. For this reason, information shared by respondents to this call may be incorporated in the Asylum Report in a format different than in the past years. It will also feature prominently as info boxes in the [country overviews](#).***

Your input matters to us and will be much appreciated!

**\*Please submit your contribution to the Asylum Report 2026 by Friday, 9 January 2026.\***

## Contact details

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## General observations

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**Before sharing information by thematic area, please provide your general observations on asylum developments as indicated in the following three fields:**

What areas would you highlight where important developments took place in the country/countries you cover?

While the legal and institutional framework remained unchanged, operational practices improved, particularly through enhanced coordination between state authorities and civil society organizations. EUAA operational support and EU-funded projects contributed to incremental improvements in reception infrastructure, while civil society played a significant role in bridging reception and sustainable integration, especially in relation to housing, socio-economic inclusion, and support for vulnerable profiles. Innovative and regional initiatives such as SMART-UA (Romania-Hungary-Slovakia) and IN LOCO introduced place-based, data-driven and participatory integration models, linking housing stability with labour market access, skills recognition, and local governance. These initiatives represented a qualitative shift from emergency-oriented responses to locally anchored integration pathways, particularly for Ukrainian refugees and other beneficiaries of international protection.

After two and a half years of Parliamentary discussion, the Asylum Law 122/2006 was amended by Law 84 /2025 in force starting with 22 May 2025 . The amended provisions include specific provisions related to suspension of the criminal trial for the offence of irregular entry in Romania provided by Article 262 (1) of the Criminal Code (Law 286/2009) if they are committed by foreigners who later received a form of international protection; in pending criminal cases, the prosecutor or judges may ask for suspension of the trial until final decision on the asylum request. In cases where a final conviction was pronounced for irregular entry and the foreigner has been recognised afterwards, the review of the decision may be requested, a provision that was explicitly included, although it could be invoked under general conditions of judicial revision of a final decision. In May 2025, the Government decided to set up the Committee for admission and regulation of stay of foreigners in Romania (Decision 281/26.05.2025) . The Committee has inter alia the following responsibilities: proposes measures to improve the admission and stay processes of foreigners on Romanian territory by simplifying and digitizing administrative procedures, monitors and evaluates migratory flows and proposes appropriate measures depending on their evolution, proposes legislative amendments to the competent authorities to harmonize the regulatory framework with domestic and international requirements, proposes draft special admission procedures in emergency situations, of a humanitarian nature or of national interest or by virtue of international obligations assumed by Romania, and it takes steps to comply with the compliance and control framework for preventing and combating migration and illegal residence, as well as labour exploitation.

What are the areas, where only few or no developments took place?

Limited progress was observed in the development of systemic legislative frameworks and improved practices in the areas of detention of migrants and statelessness, where existing challenges largely persisted in 2025. Structural pressures were further compounded by the increase in the cost of living in Romania, which continued to affect the sustainability of reception and integration outcomes. Persistent challenges related to the affordability and availability of housing, as well as discrimination in the private rental market, remained unaddressed at policy level. Similarly, access to the labour market continued to be constrained by recurring obstacles, including language barriers, difficulties in the recognition or proof of skills and qualifications, and limited acceptance within host communities.

the Municipality of Bucharest published on its own webpage under public transparency procedure the Strategy for the Inclusion of Migrants in Bucharest Municipality. Apart from the fact that it did not include beneficiaries of international protection and other categories, the document had waves of negative reactions and hate speech from the public and was finally withdrawn from the website.

Following the amendments to the citizenship law (21/1991) by Law 14/2025 , starting with March 2025 the facility provided to refugees (and not to holders of subsidiary protection) to reduce up to half of the total of eight years of dwelling residence in Romania in order to acquire citizenship, increased to maximum three years derogation from the total of eight years, while another condition was added, namely s/he has made special efforts to integrate into Romanian society, especially if he/she can demonstrate remarkable achievements in school or professional training or in the occupation exercised or special civic involvement (article 8).

Would you have any observations to share specifically about the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum in the national context of the country/ countries you cover?

In 2025, Romania remained largely in a preparatory phase regarding the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum covering changes in the Border Police's work at the external border, in the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI), in asylum centres and in information systems, while the Ombudsman was appointed as monitoring body. At the same time, Romania is receiving Technical Support provided by ICMPD . Romania was considered as one of the Member States who either already reached their adequate capacity requirements or are progressing towards reaching it on time under for European integrated border management (EIBM) or increasing general capacity of reception centres .

Romania was not included as a member state under migratory pressure, at risk of migratory pressure or facing significant migratory situation under the EC Implementing Decision of 11.11.2025 pursuant to Article 11 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council under the First Annual Migration Management Cycle of the European Annual Asylum and Migration Report.

Civil society organisations played an anticipatory and compensatory role, participating in consultations and coordination meetings with authorities such as the General Inspectorate for Immigration, Border Police, and the Ombudsman. These exchanges focused on border procedures, screening mechanisms, and the future role of NGOs under the Pact.

At present, Romania does not have dedicated facilities at the external borders suitable for screening procedures. Unless sections of existing reception centres for asylum seekers - particularly those located "in Proximity" to external borders, as defined by the Screening Regulation - are repurposed, new centres will need to be established closer to the border areas .

While institutional awareness increased, practical implementation remained limited, highlighting the need for clearer operational frameworks and sustained civil society involvement.

## **PART A: Contributions by topic**

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**Please share your reporting on developments in asylum law, policies or practices in 2025 by topic. Kindly make sure that you provide information on:**

- New developments and improvements in 2025 and new or remaining challenges;
- Changes in legislation, policies or practices, or institutional changes during 2025.

### **1. Access to territory and access to the asylum procedure (including first arrival to territory and registration, arrival at the border, application of the non-refoulement principle, the right to first response (shelter, food, medical treatment) and issues regarding border guards)**

The right to first response remains problematic, in cases of detection of groups of people at the borders requiring food or medical treatment, as well as counselling and provision of information. In 2025, JRS Romania provided food to at least one such group of migrants detected with irregular entry by the Coast Guard, who were later readmitted to Bulgaria. In the first year of full accession to Schengen, Romanian Border Police reported that 1365 individuals engaged in irregular migration in 2025, and many groups of migrants hidden in means of transport were detected at the borders with Bulgaria and Hungary . As observed, the border with Serbia is reportedly no longer an issue from the point of view of irregular entries to Romania . At the same time, the pressure towards the asylum system decreased in 2025, with 930 asylum applications registered in the first nine months of 2025, a dropped by 55% compared with the similar period of 2024 .

**2. Access to information and legal assistance (including counselling and representation)**

**3. Provision of interpretation services (e.g. introduction of innovative methods for interpretation, increase/decrease in the number of languages available, change in qualifications required for interpreters)**

**4. Dublin procedures (including the organisational framework, practical developments, suspension of transfers to selected countries, detention in the framework of Dublin procedures)**

**5. Special procedures (including border procedures, procedures in transit zones, accelerated procedures, admissibility procedures, prioritised procedures or any special procedure for selected caseloads)**

**6. Reception of applicants for international protection (including information on reception capacities – increase/decrease/stable, material reception conditions - housing, food, clothing and financial support, contingency planning in reception, access to the labour market and vocational training, medical care, schooling and education, residence and freedom of movement)**

The occupancy rate of reception centres throughout 2025 was on average 15% (based on the press-releases of the Ministry of Interior), inter alia due to decreased trend in asylum applications registered following the Schengen accession by Romania. Considering the limited number of asylum seekers present in the country in the past year, overcrowding is not a current issue of the Romanian reception system, as its centres are operating well below their maximum capacity . ECRE recommended that Romanian authorities should prioritise the repurposing of existing reception centres, rather than investing in the construction of new centres. This would allow for more cost-effective use of resources and better integration with existing services and legal support networks. At the same time, it is important to address outstanding gaps in these facilities - such as improving overall living conditions, enhancing their infrastructure and increase support social and legal assistance.

**7. Detention of applicants for international protection (including detention capacity – increase /decrease/stable, practices regarding detention, grounds for detention, alternatives to detention, time limit for detention)**

**8. Procedures at first instance (including relevant changes in: the authority in charge, organisation of the process, interviews, evidence assessment, determination of international protection status, decisionmaking, timeframes, case management - including backlog management)**

**9. Procedures at second instance (including organisation of the process, hearings, written procedures, timeframes, case management -including backlog management)**

**10. Issues of statelessness in the context of asylum (including identification and registration)**

In December 2025, Romania marked 20 years after accession to both UN Conventions on statelessness (1954 and 1961), still without adopting a genuine statelessness determination procedure as well as lifting the three reservations made to the 1951 Convention. JRS Romania advocated by further disseminating the national Toolkit to identify and address statelessness in Romania, developed together with the European Network on Statelessness (ENS) and updating the national chapter on Statelessness Index .

In 2025, JRS Romania maintained its long-standing engagement on statelessness, focusing primarily on advocacy, awareness-raising and expert-level participation, rather than on direct procedural reform. JRS Romania is an active member of the European Network on Statelessness (ENS) and continued to participate throughout the year in network meetings, consultations and joint advocacy initiatives at both national and European levels. This work builds on more than a decade of sustained advocacy aimed at strengthening the identification, registration and protection of both stateless and individuals at risk of statelessness in Romania. In parallel, JRS Romania continued to cooperate closely with UNHCR and other relevant stakeholders through advocacy actions and policy dialogue, systematically highlighting structural gaps and practical obstacles within statelessness determination procedures. This included inter alia active participation to the technical group annual session organised by UNHCR in April sought to increase the awareness among stakeholders.

Following the joint submission done by JRS Romania and the European Network on Statelessness (ENS) , the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child noted in July 2025 as positive Law No. 105/2022 providing for automatic birth registration for Romanian and foreign citizens. At the same time, it recommended that Romania: (a) Ensure that all children have access to birth registration and birth certificates without delay, devoting particular attention to Roma children, Ukrainian children born in Romania since February 2022 and children born to refugee mothers; (b) Continue to review Law No. 21/1991 [on citizenship], in compliance with article 7 of the Convention, to include safeguards against statelessness at birth, including for children born to stateless parents and parents who cannot transmit their nationality to their children, and to establish a dedicated procedure for determining statelessness; (c) Collect disaggregated data on stateless children.

## **11. Children and applicants with special needs (special reception facilities, identification mechanisms/referrals, procedural standards, provision of information, age assessment, legal guardianship and foster care for unaccompanied and separated children)**

In 2025, JRS Romania provided targeted and individualised support to children and applicants with special needs, including single-parent families, elderly persons, individuals with physical or mental health vulnerabilities, and families with dependent children, with a strong operational presence in Constanța, Galați and Bucharest. Interventions were grounded in the early identification of vulnerabilities, systematic referrals to competent services, and close cooperation with public authorities and community-based service providers. In Constanța, child protection measures were further strengthened through the deployment of two school mediators funded by UNICEF, implemented in close partnership with the County School Inspectorate (ISJ Constanța). The mediators supported foreign children—particularly from Ukrainian and Syrian communities—with school enrolment, access to Romanian language initiation courses, preparation of scholarship applications, and parental guidance on school transfers. In addition, JRS Romania staff and volunteers provided practical assistance during language examinations, including support with access to examination rooms and document verification. The school mediation component also addressed psychosocial risks, including the management of bullying cases, through a mediator with a psychology background, contributing to child protection and well-being within educational settings.

In Bucharest, JRS Romania additionally provided after-school and kindergarten support services for Ukrainian children, creating safe, structured and supportive educational environments. These services enabled parents—particularly single parents and caregivers—to access employment opportunities, attend training or participate in integration activities, thereby linking child protection measures with broader family integration and self-reliance outcomes.

In addition, in 2025, JRS Romania implemented complementary educational and skills-development activities for children, including structured LEGO® robotics and coding courses, delivered in a supportive learning environment. These activities fostered digital skills, problem-solving abilities, English language practice and self-confidence among refugee and migrant children, contributing to their educational inclusion and future-oriented skill development.

Following the joint submission done by JRS Romania and UNICEF, the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child noted in July 2025 the precarious situation and the harmful lifestyle of unaccompanied children and their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse, including disappearance and trafficking, the uncertainty in legislation between the role and responsibilities of legal representatives (guardians) and procedural representatives appointed to unaccompanied and separated children, lack of specific support services for asylum-seeking refugee and migrant children with disabilities and delay in the enrolment of refugee children into the social protection system as well as barriers to accessing education.

In 2025, JRS provided support for delayed issuance of a birth certificate to a newly born asylum-seeker who could not get proper documentation for almost one year in the absence of valid identity documents of her parents holding tolerated status.

## **12. Content of protection (including access to social security, social assistance, healthcare, housing and other basic services; integration into the labour market; measures to enhance language skills; measures to improve attainment in schooling and/or the education system and/or vocational training)**

Through the AMIF-funded A New House project, JRS Romania provided comprehensive housing support by covering rental costs, assisting beneficiaries of international protection in identifying suitable accommodation on the private housing market and mediating relations with landlords and relevant public authorities, including migration and fiscal authorities.

In parallel, the SMART-UA project strengthened access to decent housing for 582 Ukrainian temporary protection holders by explicitly linking housing stability with access to employment opportunities, vocational training and other integration services.

Access to language acquisition was facilitated through Romanian and English language courses, supporting participation in education, employment and everyday interactions with public institutions, while also reducing structural barriers to integration. Beyond formal courses, language support delivered in 2025 (e.g. under a EBRD contract supporting 75 adults) demonstrated tangible integration outcomes at individual level.

These integration outcomes were further reinforced through place-based initiatives, notably the AMIF-funded My Place in Romania project, which in 2025 supported access to Romanian language learning, civic orientation, labour market integration and education for several hundred refugees and other regular migrants in Galați and Constanța. The project contributed to measurable improvements in language proficiency, employability and social participation, strengthening beneficiaries' long-term integration prospects.

In addition, in 2025, JRS Romania further strengthened the content of protection through place-based and community-driven integration initiatives, most notably the IN LOCO project, implemented in Constanța and Tulcea counties in partnership with the Prefecture of Constanța and organisations from 10 other EU Member States. These activities resulted in the establishment of a local mixed task force at the rural level, bringing together newcomers and institutional actors to co-design concrete, locally tailored integration responses, thereby strengthening local ownership, policy relevance, and institutional cooperation.

Several cases assisted in 2025 involved persons with heightened vulnerabilities, including survivors of domestic violence, trafficking in human beings and forced begging, requiring coordinated protection responses, specialised referrals and sustained case monitoring to ensure safety, recovery and access to appropriate protection mechanisms. A significant share of beneficiaries assisted were single-parent families, elderly people and individuals with special needs, requiring tailored and multi-disciplinary interventions.

### **13. Return of former applicants for international protection**

JRS Romania continued to implement alternatives to detention (called public custody in Romania), operating its own specialised centre for tolerated persons in Bucharest (not for applicants for international protection), active for over 14 years, and currently funded under AMIF. Specific legal assistance was also provided to people holding tolerated status, including counselling on alternatives to detention, renewal or prolongation of tolerated status, access to documentation. In 2025, JRS Romania supported eight individuals in accessing a new asylum procedure based on newly emerged elements, ensuring procedural safeguards and effective access to the asylum system.

At the same time, JRS is advocating for the official recognition of the measure of “public custody” (applied as detention for irregular migrants pending return procedures) as being deprivation of liberty, and not as a mere restriction of the freedom of movement, with an impact towards implementation of alternatives to detention and setting up the standards for detaining asylum-seekers or migrants pending return procedures.

In 2025, return-related support provided by JRS Romania was implemented primarily through the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (RVAR) programme, coordinated by IOM Romania. The programme focused on voluntary, informed and rights-based return, ensuring that return decisions were taken freely and with full awareness of available options and consequences. JRS Romania's role centred on individual legal counselling and information provision, supporting migrants in understanding their legal situation, return procedures and reintegration possibilities. In 2025, 503 migrants from over 20 countries were counselled by JRS Romania under RVAR, contributing to informed decision-making and dignified return processes where return was chosen.

**14. Resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes (including EU Joint Resettlement Programme, national resettlement programme (UNHCR), National Humanitarian Admission Programme, private sponsorship programmes/schemes and ad hoc special programmes)**

In 2025, Romania continued to implement humanitarian admission measures, primarily through medical and humanitarian evacuation operations from the Gaza Strip, carried out under a dedicated national framework and coordinated by state authorities in cooperation with European and international partners. These evacuations were supported by the legal and policy framework established through Government Decision no. 1155/2023 , which enabled the provision of emergency financial and social assistance to persons evacuated from Gaza and admitted to Romanian territory, but never applied with regard to non-Romanian citizens. Civil society organisations played a critical role in post-admission support, complementing state-led admission and reception measures. In particular, JRS Romania, together with partner NGOs, provided assistance beyond initial reception, including access to accommodation, legal counselling, health care and early integration support. These interventions ensured continuity of protection for evacuated persons and supported their transition from emergency admission to medium- and longer-term integration pathways within host communities. According to the Government Decision 712 adopted in September 2025, Romania has committed to relocate 300 Sudanese, Eritrean or South-Sudanese refugees from Egypt and/or Kenya to Romania in 2026-2027 .

**15. National jurisprudence on international protection in 2025 (please include a link to the relevant case law and/or submit cases to the [EUAA Case Law Database](#))**

**16. Other important developments in 2025**

JRS Romania engaged in cross-border humanitarian solidarity actions related to the war in Ukraine, supporting vulnerable families inside Ukraine through cooperation with Ukrainian civil society organisations, as part of a broader regional response to displacement and humanitarian needs. At municipal level, JRS Romania supported UNICEF Romania and local authorities from Bucharest and Timisoara in strengthening coordination on refugee and migrant integration. These exchanges focused on integrated service provision (social assistance, education and health), the identification of new funding opportunities and the development of sustainable local partnerships, illustrating the growing role of municipalities in long-term integration governance.

## **PART B: Publications**

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**1. If available online, please provide links to relevant publications produced by your organisation in 2025.**

In 2025, JRS Romania continued to contribute to the Asylum Information Database (AIDA), coordinated by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), providing national-level input for Romania. This contribution builds on the AIDA Country Report Romania 2024 and covers developments related to the asylum system and temporary protection, with ongoing work on updates reflecting 2025 developments, including aspects related to the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum. Link: <https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/romania/>.

Also, JRS Romania provided inputs for the fact-finding report published by ECRE in August 2025 in Romania - <https://ecre.org/report-on-fact-finding-visit-to-romania/>.

Updated Statelessness Index, published in January 2025 - [https://index.statelessness.eu/sites/default/files/ENS\\_Statelessness\\_Index\\_Survey-Romania-2024.pdf](https://index.statelessness.eu/sites/default/files/ENS_Statelessness_Index_Survey-Romania-2024.pdf)

**2. If not available online, please share your publications with us at: [Asylum.Report@euaa.europa.eu](mailto:Asylum.Report@euaa.europa.eu) or upload your file using the functionality below (max. file size 1MB).**

Please upload your file

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**3. For publications that due to copyright issues cannot be easily shared, please provide references using the table below.**

	<b>Title of publication</b>	<b>Name of author</b>	<b>Publisher/Organisation</b>	<b>Date</b>
1				
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## **Useful links**

[EUAA Asylum Report 2025 \(https://euaa.europa.eu/asylum-report-2025\)](https://euaa.europa.eu/asylum-report-2025)

[Executive Summary -Asylum Report 2025 \(https://euaa.europa.eu/asylum-report-2025-executive-summary\)](https://euaa.europa.eu/asylum-report-2025-executive-summary)

[Sources on Asylum 2025 \(https://euaa.europa.eu/publications/sources-asylum-2025\)](https://euaa.europa.eu/publications/sources-asylum-2025)

[National asylum developments database \(https://euaa.europa.eu/national-asylum-developments-database\)](https://euaa.europa.eu/national-asylum-developments-database)

[International Protection in Europe: a Year in Review \(https://euaa.europa.eu/international-protection-europe-year-review\)](https://euaa.europa.eu/international-protection-europe-year-review)

## **Background Documents**

[Word template to submit input to the 2026 Asylum Report.docx](#)

## **Contact**

[Contact Form](#)