

## **FOCUS: MANAGING REFUGEES' SITUATION**

### **Romania's Approach to Managing the Refugees' Situation**

*Andreea Florentina NICOLESCU*

**Abstract.** In the context of the crisis of refugees and sharing the responsibility of receiving refugees in the member states as a result of the wave of refugees which arrived in Europe, Romania is one of the countries which confronted with the reception of refugees on its territory. The main objective of this research is to identify the capacity of Romania to grant asylum and to integrate refugees in the Romanian society. The article is structured in 3 parts, in which it is presented the situation of refugees in Romania. In the first part of the article it is analyzed the flow of refugees who arrived in Romania and requested protection from the Romanian state between 2008 and 2018. This analysis presents the characteristics of the asylum applicants who handed in an application of humanitarian protection in Romania. The second part of the research displays the reality from the accommodation centers from Romania, as well as the possibility of extending the capacity for these in case of crisis situation. The final part of the study exposes the measures adopted by Romania regarding the integration of the refugees through the programs applied with the help of Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (FAMI).

**Keywords:** *refugees, accommodation centers, integration, grant projects*

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this article is to identify the situation of the refugees from Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Algeria in Romania, who, because of the war conditions from their countries were forced to migrate. So, the article presents the characteristics of the refugees regarding their flow, gender, age, as well as the nationality of those who handed in application for asylum in Romania. Also, the article makes a presentation of the statistics regarding the Romania accommodation centers and their capacity in different cities of Romania.

The final part of the article shows the different projects financed by FAMI Program which was established for 2014-2020 interval in order to develop the common asylum system, maintain legal migration, support return strategies but also

the assurance that EU member states which have been highly affected by the crisis of refugees can count on the rest of European states.

The main objective of this article is to identify the situation of refugees in Romania, an eastern European developing country. The article aims mainly the methods through which refugees are supported for the integration by applying the implemented projects by different Romanian non governmental organizations and financed by FAMI European Fund (Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration).

### **Methodology of research**

The first part of the article referring to the features of refugees was realized using data provided by Eurostat, the institute which handles European Commission statistics. The method of research used in this situation was the analysis of statistics by taking the data delivered by Eurostat, processing those in Excel and creating graphics to highlight the situation of refugees in Romania, but also the interpretation of the results obtained.

The second part of the article was done with the help of research method which involves the analysis of the documents. In this way, to emphasize the situation of the accommodation centers from Romanian cities, as well as their capacity, I analyzed the reports created on this topic by the Institution – The People’s Advocate, which has as objective defending the rights and liberties of the individuals in relation with the public authorities. In this regard, analyzing the reports of this institutions had the purpose of identifying if the accommodation centers are enough in order to be sure about the principle of respecting the human rights.

The ending part of this article was achieved by analyzing the provided information from General Immigration Inspectorate from Romania towards the implemented projects by different non-governmental organizations through the FAMI program (Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration). The research method applied here was the one of analysis of official documents supplied by site of General Immigration Inspectorate.

### **1. The analysis regarding the characteristics of the asylum applicants in Romania**

The first part of the study identifies the characteristics of those who requested asylum in Romania, like: the flows of asylum applicants in the interval 2008 – 2018, their gender, age but also the nationality.

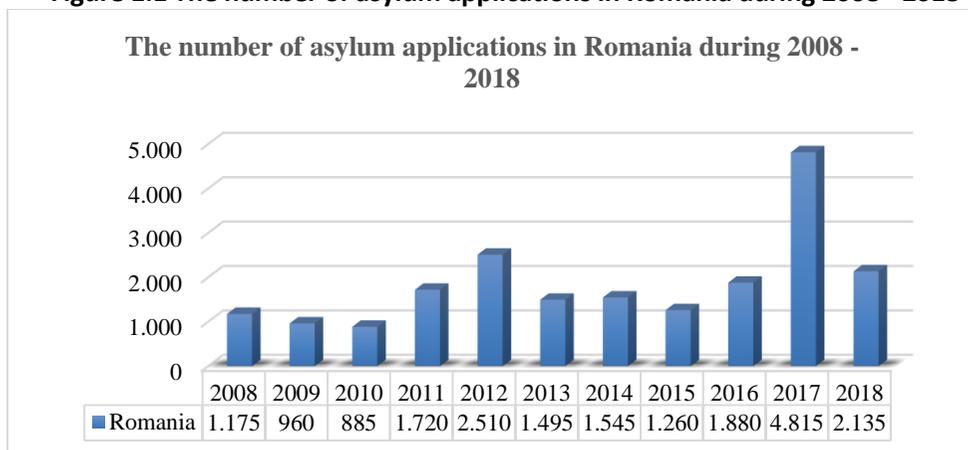
Thus, in this study, the main features of the ones who applied for humanitarian protection in Romania, as a result of the wars in Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Algeria.

To accomplish this research, I used data provided by Eurostat regarding the number of asylum seeker in Romania, between 2008 and 2018. The choice of this interval is due to the fact that it includes the period between the crisis, up to 2015 but also its beginning and the first years when Romania received requests from the refugees. It is necessary to mention the fact that the inquiry was made in the previous mentioned interval, since the available information started with year 2008, no other data being available on Eurostat for the previous years.

The importance of this analysis is highlighted by the fact that emphasizes the evolution of asylum applications by refugees in Romania.

We can observe from figure 1.1 the fact that the highest number of asylum seekers was recorded in 2017, when 4815 applications were made in Romania.

**Figure 1.1 The number of asylum applications in Romania during 2008 - 2018**



Source: Eurostat <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

From the available data at the time when the research was done, we can identify two moments in which the number of asylum applications recorded an ascending trend. The first one can be noticed in the time interval of 2011-2012, when the number of seekers grew with 790.

The second one from the analyzed stage when a growth was recorded is between 2015 and 2017, which recorded an increase of 3,555 requests, being also the peak value from 2008 to 2018. So, we can state that this crisis of the refugees

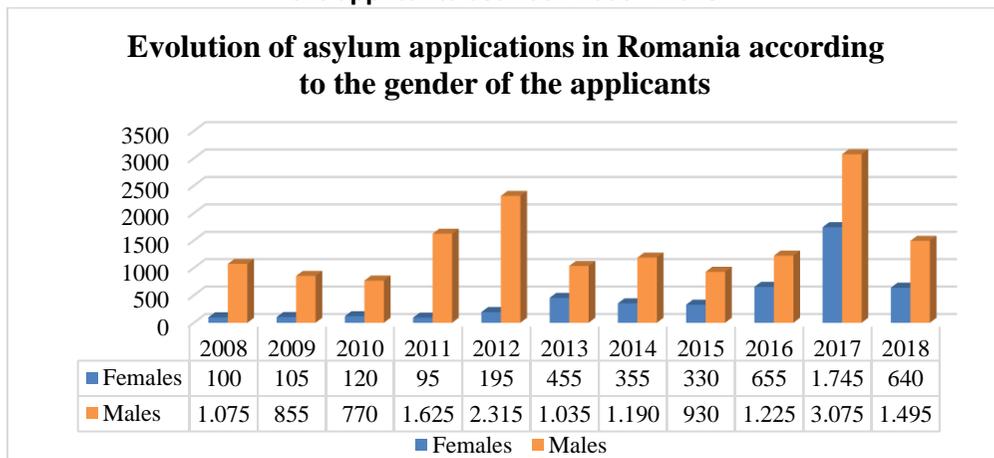
influenced also the statistics of asylum seekers in Romania, an expansion being able to be observed starting with 2015. The status of the asylum applications registered in Romania in 2018 show a decrease of demands compared to previous year.

In the following it is displayed the situation of asylum seekers and their applications in Romania, between 2008 and 2018, according to their gender. The data used for this analysis was provided by Eurostat.

Thereby, we can see in the below graphic the fact that in the whole analyzed period, the gender of the majority of the solicitants is male. Overall, between 2008 and 2018 there were 15,590 asylum applications recorded from males, while only 4,795 came from females.

So, from the total of application on Romanian territory, approximately 76% were made by males and only around 24% were from females.

**Figure 1.2 Evolution of asylum applications in Romania according to the gender of the applicants between 2008 – 2018**



Source: Eurostat <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

In figure 1.2 we can notice that for both females (1,745 persons) and males (3,075 persons), the most asylum seekers were registered in 2017. At the opposite, the smallest number of applications from females (95 persons) came in 2011 while for males (770 persons) in 2010.

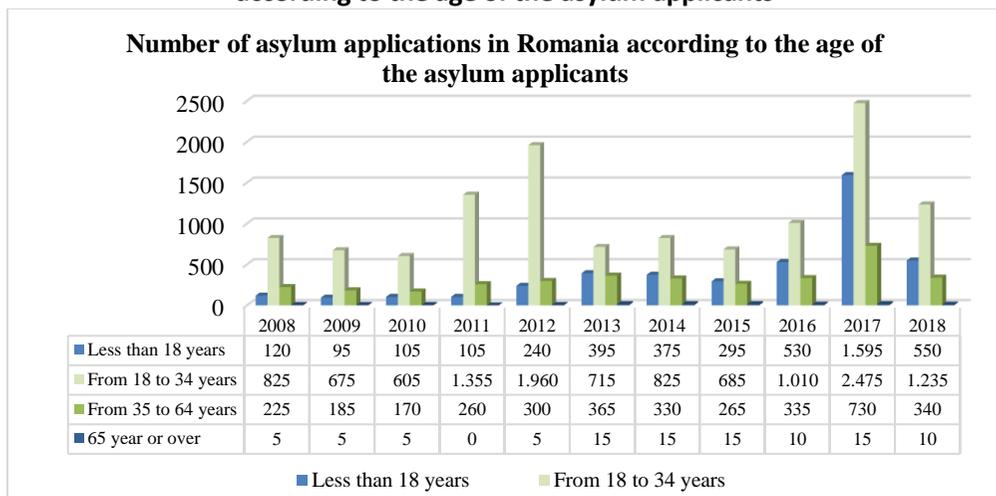
In the below analysis we can notice Figure 1.3, in which it is highlighted, with the help of the Eurostat data, the situation of the applications for asylum in Romania, based on the age of the seekers, in every year starting with 2008 and ending with 2018.

A such research is mandatory for the analyzed topic in order to identify how many refugees could be integrated in the market labour in Romania, taking into consideration the ones who have the required age to work.

Thus, we can observe in the next figure the fact that the most demands made the minors in Romania have been recorded in 2017 (1,595 persons) and the least in 2009 (95 persons). The number of applications of the minors registered in Romania grew between 2009 and 2013, afterwards, it decreased in 2014-2015, and then increased again 2016, getting to the point when in 2017 it had the highest number from people under 18 years.

In 2018, the number of asylum application from minors decreased with approximately 66% in comparison with 2017.

**Figure 1.3 Number of asylum applications in Romania between 2008 and 2018 according to the age of the asylum applicants**



Source: Eurostat <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

Concerning the situation of the demands for asylum made by the people with the age between 18 and 34, it can be seen that the biggest number of them were recorded in 2017 (2,475), representing the peak value from the whole interval included in the study (2008-2018) among all the age categories analyzed. Thereby, we can state that the most people who sought asylum in Romania have the age between 18 and 35 years.

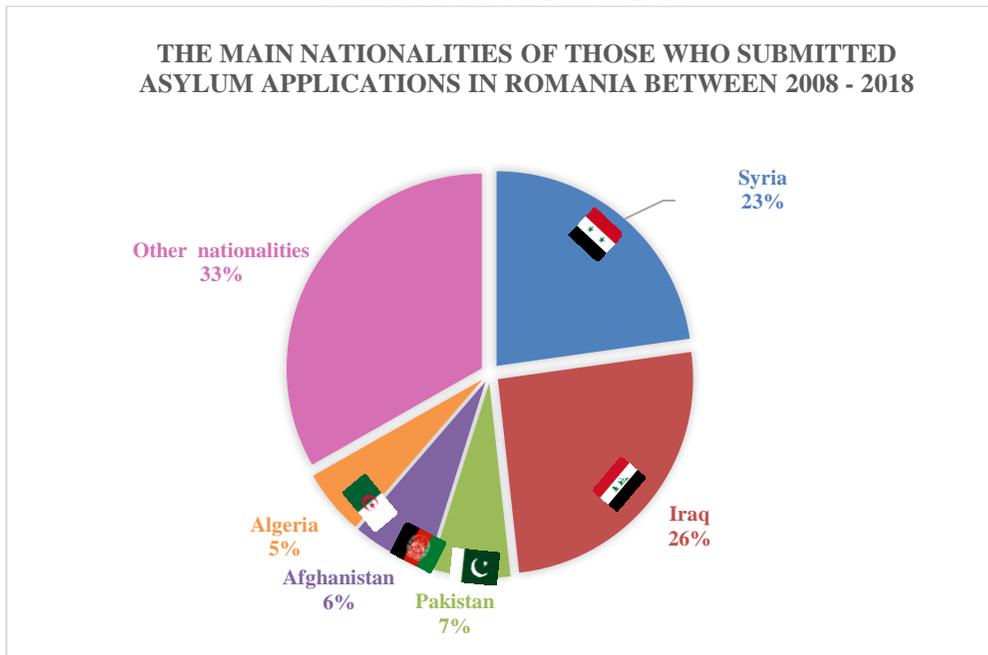
As regards the category of age of 35-64 years, we can discover that the largest number of applications were committed in 2017 (730 persons), as well as

2013 (365 persons). The lowest number of requests for humanitarian protection recorded by this age section were in 2010 (170 persons) but also in 2009 (185 persons).

At the other end, there is the other age group, 65 years and over, where there were enrolled the least applications. So, the ones who are 65 or over, applied in Romania 100 times in the interval included in the inquiry. In 2011 there wasn't any asylum seeker in this category of age.

The next research aims to point out the primary nationalities for the asylum applicants, as well as the evolution of the humanitarian protection demands placed in Romania between 2008 and 2018, based on the origin of their deponents.

**Figure 1.4 The main nationalities of those who submitted asylum applications in Romania between 2008 – 2018**



Source: Eurostat <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

The data used in this analysis was furnished by Eurostat, being annual data. It can be remarked in figure 1.4 the fact that the main nationalities analyzed in this research are: Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Algeria. This classification has been made by selecting the states of origin of the asylum seekers who deposited the most request of humanitarian protection in Romania. So, from realized ranking, 23% of the

applicants come from Syria and 26% from Iraq.

Also, a significant percent of 7% is represented by Pakistanis, and 6% by the afghans. Likewise, 5% of the ones who requested asylum in Romania, come from Algeria and 33% are illustrated by other nationalities.

**Table 1.4 The evolution of asylum requirements registered in Romania in 2008 – 2018 based on the nationality of their demanders**

Nationality	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Syria	15	15	20	35	245	1.010	615	550	815	950	370
Iraq	175	90	65	60	45	45	210	205	475	2.745	1.080
Pakistan	255	110	60	145	335	40	45	30	95	195	35
Afghanistan	5	90	115	105	200	40	280	95	80	255	50
Algeria	0	5	10	460	600	5	5	5	10	10	0
Other nationalities	725	650	615	915	1.085	355	390	375	405	660	600
Total	1.175	960	885	1.720	2.510	1.495	1.545	1.260	1.880	4.815	2.135

Source: Eurostat <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

Table 1.4 shows the annual evolution of the asylum applications registered by Romania, in the interval 2008 – 2018, according to asylum seekers' nationality. So, the yellow arrow represents a stagnation of the number of demands compared to previous year, the green arrow means that the number increased and the red arrow indicates a decrease of the requests of humanitarian protection in correlation with the year before.

## 2. The situation of the Regional Centers of Procedures and Accommodation in Romania

This analysis has the role of presenting the accommodation centers in Romania, their ability to receive refugees, as well as the situation in these centers. In order to perform this research, I analyzed the data provided by the reports of the People's Advocate Institution in Romania. The analysis shows the location of the accommodation centers in Romania, the accommodation capacity, the year in which they became operational and the number of additional places within these centers, as a result of the refugee crisis and the need for additional accommodation.

In Romania there are six Regional Centers of Procedures and Accommodation for asylum seekers, these being subordinated to the General Inspectorate for Immigration. These centers have a total capacity of 900 places, arranged as follows<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Internal Affairs, General Inspectorate for Immigration, „Domain of torture in places of detention”, 2017

**Table 2.1 The accommodation centers for asylum seekers in Romania (location, accommodation capacity and year of commissioning)**

Regional Centers for Procedures and Accomodation of asylum seekers in Romania			
Nr.	Location of centers	Accommodation capacity	Year of commissioning
1.	Bucuresti	320 places	2001
2.	Galati	200 places	2004
3.	Radauti – judetul Suceava	130 places	2005
4.	Somcuta Mare - Maramures	100 places	2006
5.	Giurgiu	100 places	2011
6.	Timisoara	50 places	2004
<b>Total accommodation capacity</b>		<b>900 places</b>	

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs, General Inspectorate for Immigration, [http://www.avp.ro/rapoarte\\_mnp/2017/raspunsuri/raspuns35\\_2017.pdf](http://www.avp.ro/rapoarte_mnp/2017/raspunsuri/raspuns35_2017.pdf)

It is necessary to mention that, as regards the accommodation center from Timisoara, which became operational in 2004, it currently has a capacity of 50 places, but the initial capacity of the center was 250. In 2008, the destination of 200 accommodation places was changed, these being used to host other categories of applicants only if needed and within availability<sup>2</sup>.

Thereby, taking also into consideration the capacity of extension for the accommodation places in the Regional Centers, in times of crisis, the total number of accommodation places in Romania is 1,162<sup>3</sup>.

As a result of an increase in the number of asylum applications in Romania caused by the refugee crisis, the Immigration General started a project that involves increasing the accommodation capacity with funding through the FAMI program.

The purpose of this project is to increase the accommodation capacity in the following three centers: Galati with 300 places, Timisoara with 100 places and Radauti with 100 places. However, in case of crisis, the number of accommodation places can be extended by 262 places, each center being able to expand as follow<sup>4</sup>:

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem 1, pag 2

<sup>3</sup> Ibidem 2

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem 2

**Table 2.2 The capacity of expansion of the accommodation places in Regional Centers in Romania**

The capacity of expansion of the accommodation places in Regional Centers in Romania		
Nr.	Location of centers	Number of additional accommodation places
1.	Somcuta Mare - Maramures	100 places
2.	Giurgiu	70 places
3.	Bucuresti	52 places
4.	Radauti – Suceava county	20 places
5.	Galati	10 places
6.	Timisoara	10 places
	<b>Total number</b>	<b>262 places</b>

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs, General Inspectorate for Immigration, [http://www.avp.ro/rapoarte\\_mnp/2017/raspunsuri/raspuns35\\_2017.pdf](http://www.avp.ro/rapoarte_mnp/2017/raspunsuri/raspuns35_2017.pdf)

Also, in order to manage better the situation of accommodation centers in Romania, the General Inspectorate for Immigration intervened in order to take over a building in Crevedia, Dambovita county, which will be arranged for hosting the asylum seekers and the center will have a capacity of 500 places<sup>5</sup>.

Excepting the accommodations spaces that were previously presented, in the centers are made available to asylum seekers the following: medical offices, rooms for leisure, sports and educational activities.

### **3. Analysis of grant projects funded by the Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration in Romania between 2015 and 2019**

The last part of this article aims to present the projects implemented in Romania under the Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration. To accomplish this qualitative research, we have used data and information provided by the Immigration General Inspectorate on migration management, implementation, consolidation and development of the asylum and migration system.

The FAMI Fund was set up for 2014-2020 and the budget amount allocated to projects is € 3.137 billion. Thus, there are four specific objectives of the Asylum,

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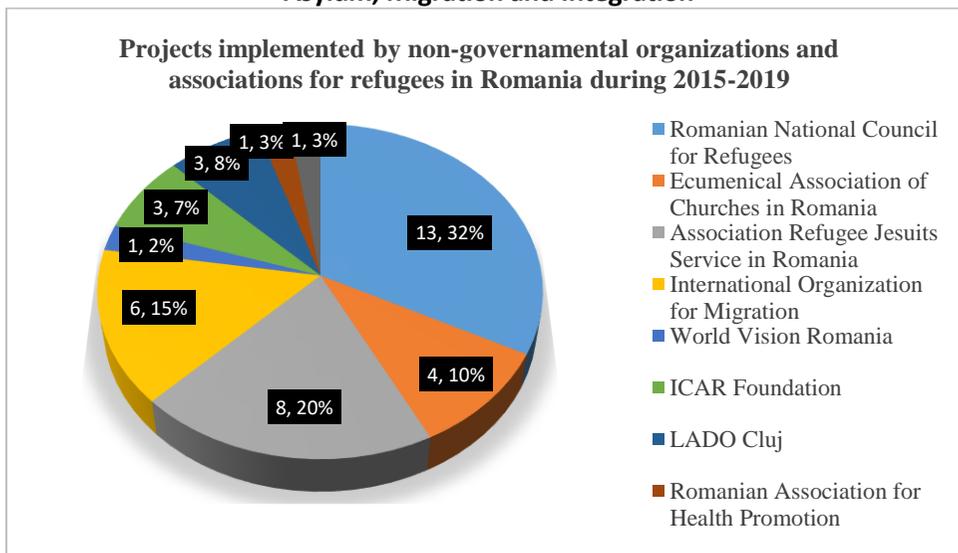
<sup>5</sup> Ibidem 2

Migration and Integration Fund, these are the following<sup>6</sup>:

1. Developing the Common Asylum System by ensuring an effective and uniform legislation in the European Union;
2. Supporting legal migration in the EU in line with labor market needs and supporting the integration of refugees;
3. Supporting the return strategies to fight against illegal migration;
4. Guaranteeing that the EU member states that have been severely affected by refugee flows can count on the help of the other states.

From the Asylum, Migration and Integration projects are implemented two categories: The Grant Projects and The Monopoly Projects. According to the Immigration General Inspectorate, 40 grant projects were implemented in Romania between 2015 and 2018 and 24 monopoly projects between 2016 and 2018<sup>7</sup>.

**Figure 3.1 The projects implemented by non-governmental organizations and associations for refugees in Romania between 2015 and 2019 from the Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration**



Source: General Inspectorate for Immigration, <http://igi.mai.gov.ro/>

<sup>6</sup> Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrari, “the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund” <http://igi.mai.gov.ro/ro/content/fondul-pentru-azil-migra%C8%9Bie-%C8%99i-integrare>

<sup>7</sup> Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrari, “Grant projects/Monopoly projects” <http://igi.mai.gov.ro/ro/content/proiecte>

This article is based on the analysis of grant projects, given that they were more numerous. A further study also aims to evaluate monopoly projects, considering that their analysis is necessary to be able to have an overview over the implemented projects to improve the conditions of reception and integration of refugees in Romania.

From Figure 3.1 we can see that between 2015 and 2019 there were 9 organizations/associations that implemented a total of 40 grant projects in order to improve the situation of refugees in Romania.

Most of the completed projects (13 projects) during this period were those implemented by the Romanian National Council for Refugees, representing 32% of the achieved projects between 2015 and 2019.

The Association of the Refugee Jesuits Service in Romania, which implemented 8 projects, representing 20% of the total grant projects identified in this analysis, lines up second in the ranking of those who have implemented grant projects during this period.

The third place in the ranking of those who have implemented most of the grant projects in the above mentioned period, from the FAMI fund, is the International Organization for Migration, the Bureau of Romania. It has completed 6 grant projects, representing 15% of the total implemented between 2015 and 2019.

Between 2015 and 2016, the National National Council for Refugees implemented three grant projects, benefiting from euro 246,662.58 from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

Also, between 2015 and 2016, the Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania was the beneficiary of a grand project called " Assistance and Complex Services for Asylum Seekers in Romania ", which aimed at providing a complementary material and social assistance system.

Another non-governmental organization that benefited from grant projects between 2015 and 2016 was the Refugee Jesuits Service Association in Romania. JRS has implemented two grant projects totaling euros 287,182.70.

At the same time, between 2015 and 2016, the International Organization for Migration with the Bureau in Romania was the beneficiary of the grant project "Support Program for Assisted Humanitarian Repatriation and Reintegration". This project aimed at providing support for voluntary humanitarian repatriation and reintegration.

**Table 5. Grant projects with implementation period 2015-2016 in Romania**

Beneficiary	Projects	Implementation Period
The Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) 	Specialized legal assistance for asylum seekers in Romania	11.12.2015 – 11.07.2016
	Counseling and legal assistance, interpretation and legal representation in court for foreigners who are the subject of a return decision from the territory of Romania	18.11.2015 – 18.11.2016
	Material Assistance to foreigners for whom a return decision has been issued and are taken into custody	18.11.2015 – 18.11.2016
Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania (AIDROM) 	Assistance and complex services for asylum seekers in Romania	10.12.2015 – 10.07.2016
The Refugee Jesuits Service in Romania (JRS) 	HELP MED Health, psychological and cooperation network to assist asylum seekers	16.12.2015 – 16.07.2016
	ALTERNATIVE Temporary support for tolerated people	11.12.2015 – 11.12.2016
International Organization for Migration (OIM), Office in Romania 	Support Program for Humanitarian Assisted Repatriation and Reintegration (RVAR)	26.11.2015 – 26.11.2016

Source: General Inspectorate for Immigration <http://igi.mai.gov.ro/>

For the implementation of grant projects from 2015 to 2016, a budget of euros 979,883.08 was used.

In the table below, we can identify nine grant beneficiaries who have implemented 13 grant projects between 2016 and 2017.

**Table 6. Grant projects with implementation period 2016 - 2017 in Romania**

Beneficiary	Projects	Implementation Period
<p>The Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR)</p> 	Monitoring of forced return missions	29.03.2016 - 29.03.2017
	Managing the processes of research and use of information in the countries of origin	08.07.2016 - 08.07.2017
	Specialized legal assistance for asylum seekers in Romania	12.07.2016 - 12.07.2017
	Counseling and material assistance provided in public custody centers	05.12.2016 - 05.12.2017
	Counseling and legal assistance, interpretation and legal representation in court for aliens who are the subject of a return decision from the territory of Romania	05.12.2016 - 05.12.2017
<p>Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania (AIDROM)</p> 	Integration services for beneficiaries of a form of protection and aliens residing legally in Romania, Western Region	13.05.2016 – 13.05.2017
<p>International Organization for Migration (OIM), Office in Romania</p> 	INTERACT Integrated services for migrants, social and multicultural dialogue	06.05.2016 - 06.05.2017
	"STARRT I - Transfer and assistance services for refugees relocated from Turkey"	23.11.2016 - 23.07.2017
<p>World Vision Romania</p> 	INTEGRATION Migration assistance services in Region 2	13.05.2016 – 13.05.2017
<p>ICAR Foundation</p> 	Integration of foreigners with legal residence in Romanian society - a mutual challenge	13.05.2016 – 13.05.2017
<p>LADO Cluj</p> 	MigraNet The regional network for migrants integration	11.05.2016 – 11.05.2017

<p>The Jesuits Refugee Service in Romania (JRS)</p> 	<p>ALTERNATIVE - Temporary support for tolerated people</p>	<p>09.12.2016 – 09.12.2017</p>
<p>Romanian Association for Health Promotion</p> 	<p>The context of integration matters. Increasing the capacity of public and private actors to interact effectively with migrants.</p>	<p>23.12.2016 – 23.12.2017</p>

Source: General Inspectorate for Immigration <http://igi.mai.gov.ro/>

The non-governmental organization that implemented most of the grant projects, between 2016 and 2017, was The Romanian National Council for Refugees , which completed five grant projects.

During 2016 – 2017, The Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania benefited from a project related to " Integration services for beneficiaries of a form of protection and foreigners with legal residence in Romania, West Region ".

The International Organization for Migration implemented between 2016 and 2017 two grant projects totaling EUR 867,545.2. The first project implemented by IOM was "INTERACT-integrated services for migrants, social and multicultural dialogue", aimed to support social, economic and cultural integration of migrants, beneficiaries of international protection and nationals of their third countries in Romanian society through an integrated approach.

The second project implemented by IOM was "STARRT I - Transfer and assistance services for refugees and resettlers from Turkey". It aimed at supporting the active participation of the Romanian state in the efforts of the EU Member States to implement sustainable solutions in response to the real international protection needs of displaced persons due to the conflict in Syria in the closest countries around.

Between 2016 and 2017, World Vision Romania implemented the grant project "INTEGRATING Migration Assistance Services in Region 2", which had a budget of EUR 315,967.20. The goal of the project was to offer appropriate support services adapted to the specific requirements of the

beneficiaries of international protection and third-country nationals legally residing in Romania. Region 2 refers to the cities in Romania: Galati, Vrancea, Bacau, Vaslui, Brăila, Tulcea and Constanța.

The ICAR Foundation implemented between 2016 and 2017 the grant project involving "Integration of Foreigners with Legal Stay in the Romanian Society - A Mutual Challenge". This project had a budget of EUR 164.378, which was intended to the contribution on social integration of beneficiaries of a form of protection and foreigners with legal residence in Romania by implementing a model of regional integration.

LADO Cluj Organization implemented during 2016-2017, the grant project "MigraNet Regional Network for the integration of migrants", which had a budget of EUR 202,808.67. This project aimed to improve the process of integrating their beneficiaries into a form of protection and the residents of third-country nationals residing in Romania in Region 4. Region 4 consists of the following cities: Maramures, Satu Mare, Salaj, Cluj, Bistrita Nasaud, Mures, Harghita, Sibiu and Alba.

"The Refugee Service for Refugees in Romania Association" implemented between 2016 and 2017 the grant project "ALTERNATIVE - Temporary Support for Tolerated People", which benefited of a budget of EUR 238,944.75. The objective was improving the social - economic situation of foreigners whose public custody ceased.

The Romanian Association for Health Promotion implemented between 2016 and 2017 the project "The Context of Integration Matters. Increasing the capacity of public and private actors to interact efficiently with migrants". The project benefited of an amount of EUR 158,056.77, having as objective the increase of the capacity of relevant actors to contribute to the social integration process of foreigners from third countries legally residing in Romania.

Among the organizations that have completed projects that had implementation periods 2016-2017, respectively 2017-2018, it is found the Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania. It received EUR 807,803.10 through the "Assistance and Services for Asylum Seekers in Romania" program. The objective of implementing this program was to improve the situation of asylum seekers in Romania and the increase of the standard living of asylum seekers in Romania.

**Table 7. The grant projects that had as implementation periods 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 in Romania**

Beneficiary	Projects	Implementation Period
Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania (AIDROM) 	Assistance and services for asylum seekers in Romania	I - 06.07.2016 - 06.07.2017 II - 06.07.2017 - 06.07.2018
The Jesuits Refugee Service in Romania Association (JRS) 	A new home	I - 14.07.2016-14.07.2017 II - 14.07.2017-14.07.2018
ICAR Foundation 	Adapted and accessible health services for asylum seekers in Romania	I - 08.07.2016 - 08.07.2017 II - 08.07.2017 - 08.07.2018
LADO Cluj 	Romanian Migration Research Center	I - 23.12.2016 – 23.12.2017 II - 23.12.2017 – 23.12.2018

Source: General Inspectorate for Immigration <http://igi.mai.gov.ro/>

The Jesuits Refugee Service Association in Romania benefited of EUR 643,343.59 through the project "A New House", whose main objective was to promote the process of regional integration of beneficiaries of international protection .

During the two implementation periods 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, the ICAR Foundation carried out the project "Adapted and Affordable Health Services for Asylum Seekers in Romania", which had a budget of EUR 598,350.44. The objective of this project was to improve the reception and assistance conditions for asylum seekers in Romania by providing basic needs in their physical and mental health.

The LADO Cluj Organization benefited of a budget of EUR 218,985.97 seeking to create a new conceptual framework for documentation and information, and new research tools on the study of integration processes of the beneficiaries of international protection and of third country nationals in the Romanian society. Therefore, The Romanian Center for Research on Migration in The Center for the Comparative Study of

Migration from the Faculty of Political Science, Management and Communication of the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, the project "Romanian Center for Research of Migration", was set.

In the table below we can see seven implemented grant projects by three beneficiaries between 2017 and 2018.

**Table 8. The grant projects that had the implementation period 2017-2018 in Romania**

Beneficiary	Projects	Implementation Period
<b>The Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR)</b> 	Monitoring of forced return missions	28.03.2017- 28.03.2018
	Counseling and material assistance for migrants in public custody	30.11.2017 - 29.12.2018
	Legal aid to foreigners for whom a return decision has been issued	30.11.2017 - 29.11.2018
<b>The Jesuits Refugee Service in Romania Association (JRS)</b> 	I am a stranger until you know me	10.03.2017 - 10.03.2018
	Migration-return training	15.01.2018 - 14.01.2019
	ALTERNATIVE - Temporary support for tolerated people	09.12.2017 - 08.12.2018
<b>International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office in Romania</b> 	STARRT II - Transfer and assistance services for refugees relocated from Turkey	09.05.2017 - 09.01.2018

Source: General Inspectorate for Immigration <http://igi.mai.gov.ro/>

The Romanian National Council for Refugees benefited of three grant projects between 2017 and 2018, totaling EUR 196,842.93. The first is "Monitoring the missions of forced return" which aimed to ensure the compliance with EU standards, human rights and dignity of migrants residing in Romania, during operations of forced return under escort.

The second project implemented by the Romanian National Council for Refugees was "Counseling and material assistance for migrants in public custody". Ensuring their rights, obligations and rules of conduct in the Centers for the accommodation of foreigners detained in Arad and Otopeni by the General Inspectorate for Immigration was one of the objectives of the project.

The third project between 2017 and 2018, in which the CNRR was the beneficiary, was the "Legal Assistance to foreigners for whom a return decision was issued".

The Jesuits Refugee Service in Romania Association benefited from three grant projects in the period 2017 - 2018, amounting to EUR 625,722.25. The first grant project of the association, which was implemented in the previous mentioned period, is called "I am a stranger until you know me". This grant project was designed in order to create a favorable environment among the Romanian population in order to integrate foreigners.

The second JRS project is "Migration-Return Domain Training". The project was intended to increase the country's level of cooperation between institutions and other relevant entities in the domain of immigration, based on the exchange of best practices, information and analysis to combat illegal immigration cases, return and retention of foreigners .

The third grant project from The Jesuit Refugee Service in Romania Association was "ALTERNATIVE - temporary support for tolerated people" for the social - economic situation improvement of foreigners for whom the public custody measure has come to an end; or for those who have been granted tolerance as an alternative to public custody.

During the period 2017 - 2018, International Organization for Migration, was the recipient of the grant project "STARRT II - Transfer and assistance services for refugees resettled from Turkey" . This project's target was supporting the active participation of the Romanian state in the efforts of the EU Member States to implement sustainable solutions in response to the real international protection needs of displaced persons due to the conflict from Syria in countries in the immediate vicinity.

The Romanian National Council for Refugees benefited from two grant projects during the years 2017 - 2018, respectively 2018 - 2019, amounting EUR 707,265.40. CNRR implemented the project "Management of research processes and use of information from countries of origin "that aims to maintain functional Country of Origin Information Portal and assuring it's availability to all the relevant actors for the for asylum procedure.

The Country of Origin Information Portal (COI) is the first Romanian Country of Origin Information Portal, created by CNRR in collaboration with the Romanian General Inspectorate for Immigration.

The portal plays an essential role in ensuring the quality of the decisions in the asylum field. This project was initiated in order to increase the share of information concerning the countries of origin in order to provide relevant, reliable, balanced, accurate, verifiable and transparent information. The portal can be accessed by policy makers, legal advisors, judges, lawyers, legal representatives etc.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 9. Grant projects that had implementation periods 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 in Romania**

Beneficiary	Projects	Implementation Period
The Romanian National Council for Refugees (CNRR) 	Managing the research processes and use of information in the countries of origin	I - 11.07-2017 - 11.07-2018 II - 11.07-2018 - 11.07-2019
	Specialized legal assistance for asylum seekers in Romania	I - 11.07.2017-11.07.2018 II - 11.07.2018-11.07.2019
Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania (AIDROM) 	Integration NOW - Complex and unitary approaches for migrants	I - 29.05.2017 - 29.05.2018 II - 29.05.2018 - 29.05.2019
The Jesuits Refugee Service in Romania Association (JRS) 	My place - A bridge for the integration of BPI and RTT in Romania	I - 16.06.2017-16.06.2018 II - 16.06.2018-16.06.2019
International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office in Romaniantru 	Support Program for Assisted Humanitarian Repatriation and Reintegration (RVAR)	I: 27.04.2017- 27.04.2018 II: 27.04.2018- 27.04.2019
	INTERACT PLUS - Integrated services for migrants, social and intercultural dialogue	I: 03.07.2017 - 03.07.2018 II: 03.07.2018 - 03.07.2019
ICAR Foundation 	Integration of foreigners with legal residence in the Romanian society: a mutual construction	I: 07.06.2017-07.06.2018 II: 07.06.2018 -07.06.2019

<sup>8</sup> Romanian National Council for Refugees, “The Country of Origin Information Portal” [https://www.portal-ito.ro/web/guest/home?fbclid=IwAR0KrHNVMd-yInE-wkyeL8kSqkKhV6\\_FbWWOoMNqngNk0JrSmbmgoO\\_2dE](https://www.portal-ito.ro/web/guest/home?fbclid=IwAR0KrHNVMd-yInE-wkyeL8kSqkKhV6_FbWWOoMNqngNk0JrSmbmgoO_2dE)

Beneficiary	Projects	Implementation Period
LADO Cluj  Filiala Cluj	SIM _ CIS 4 - Integrated Migration Services - Intercultural and Solidarity Communities	I: 07.06.2017 - 07.06.2018 II: 07.06.2018 - 07.06.2019
Intercultural Institute Timisoara 	REACT_RO: educational resources for learning Romanian language and cultural accommodation of BPI and RTT in Romania	I - 17.07.2017 – 17.07.2018 II - 17.07.2018 - 17.01.2019

Source: General Inspectorate for Immigration <http://igi.mai.gov.ro/>

The second grant project of the CNRR, which has the two implementation periods is called "Specialized Legal Aid for Asylum Seekers in Romania", aims to provide specialized counseling and legal assistance to all asylum seekers throughout the whole procedure (including the Dublin asylum procedure), beneficiaries of international protection whose situation is re-examined or have made requests for family reunification.

The Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania is the beneficiary of the grant project "Integration NOW - Complex and Unified Approaches for Migrants", which has two implementation periods 2017-2018, respectively 2018-2019. This project has a budget of EUR 483,439.76 and has aimed to support social - economic and cultural integration of international protection beneficiaries and third country nationals by providing them information and services that they need. Some examples are employment to access the health services, educational services, cultural, housing and social services.

The Jesuits Refugee Service in Romania Association is the beneficiary of the project "My Place - A Bridge for Integration of BPI and RTT in Romania", which has an amount of EUR 740,549.28 available to support the process of effective integration for vulnerable and special needs categories.

International Organization for Migration, is the recipient of two grant projects totaling an overall budget of EUR 1.893.986,11. The first project is the "Humanitarian Volunteer Assisted Repatriation and Reintegration Support Program (RVAR)" which aims to contribute to the efficient management of the migration phenomenon in Romania by repatriating safely and dignified 240 migrants to their countries of origin. The project calls for sustainable measures of social - economic reintegration of 90 migrants by 2020 and for strengthening institutional cooperation amongst actors with competences in the field of migration.

The IOM's second project is "INTERACT PLUS - Integrated Services for Migrants, Social and Intercultural Dialogue", which targets to contribute to strengthening of the social - economic and cultural integration of migrants.

At the same time, the ICAR Foundation benefits from the grant project "Integration of Legally Staying Foreigners in the Romanian Society: A Joint Action", with a total budget of EUR 527,638.92 and aims to socially integrate the beneficiaries of a protection form and foreigners with legal residence in Romania by consolidating a model for regional integration.

Also, LADO Cluj is the recipient of the "SIM CIS 4 - Integrated services for migrants - intercultural and inclusive communities" that has an available amount of EUR 572,774.49 in order to improve the process of integrating the beneficiary of a form of international protection and nationals of third parties members , with legal residence in Romania.

The Intercultural Institute of Timisoara benefits of a grant project called "REACT RO: Educational Resources for learning romanian language and Cultural Accomplishment of BPI and RTT in Romania", with a total budget of EUR 170,690.03 necessary for the development of the systemic framework, the integration tools and institutional capacity to ensure the adaptation and integration of beneficiaries of a form of international protection of and third countries nationals in Romanian society.

## **Conclusions**

The article represents an overview of the situation of refugees in Romania. The importance of this article is given by the fact that Romania is one of the European countries that received asylum seekers, both before the year of the 2015 refugee crisis debut and after.

In Romania, during period 2008 - 2018 were registered 20,380 asylum applications, most applications were registered in 2017 (4,815 requests for asylum). The analysis also highlights the year 2012, when 2,510 requests for humanitarian protection were recorded as a result of escalating conflicts in Syria.

The article highlights, after analyzing the data provided by Eurostat, that over the targeted period, most asylum seekers are males. In the analyzed period 2008 – 2018, approximately 76% of the applications were submitted by men and about 24% of the requests were submitted by the female.

As far as the age of asylum seekers is concerned, we can conclude that most

of those who have applied for asylum in Romania are included in the 18-34 age group, at the opposite end are those in the category aged 65 and over. This shows that Romania could successfully integrate refugees into the labor market, considering their predominant age.

Regarding the main nationalities of those who filed an asylum application in Romania, these are: Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Algeria. So, the article shows that of the top score, 23% of the asylum seekers who applied for humanitarian protection in Romania come from Syria and 26% from Iraq. Also, a significant percentage of 7% of asylum seekers come from Pakistan, and 6% was being recorded by those with Afghan nationality. Last but not least, 5% of those in the ranking come from Algeria. The remaining 33% represent requests from other nationalities.

The second part of the study highlights the existing asylum centers in Romania. They are located in 6 major cities of the country, such as: Bucharest, Galati, Radauti, Somcuta Mare, Giurgiu and Timisoara, which accumulate 900 accommodation places. At the same time, in cases of crisis, the number of accommodation places can be extended by 262, reaching the total number of accommodation places in Romania in the periods of crisis of 1,162 places. Apart from accommodation spaces, asylum centers, medical offices, recreation, sports and educational facilities are available at the centers.

The last part of the research presents the grant projects implemented between 2015 and 2019 by the 9 organizations / associations that have implemented a total of 40 grant projects in order to improve the situation of refugees in Romania. Most of the projects implemented (13 projects) during this period were those completed by the Romanian National Council for Refugees, representing 32% of the projects implemented between 2015 and 2019.

The budget allocated to improve the situation of refugees through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, that was set up for the period 2014 – 2020 is € 3.137 billion.

Therefore, the article identifies Romania's capacity to receive and accommodate refugees as well as the efforts made by migrant management organizations to facilitate the integration of refugees into Romanian society through grant projects made under the Migration and Asylum Fund. One of my further research will focus on the monopoly projects and their importance in changing for better the lives of the refugees in Romania.

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