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SMART UA

NATIONAL REPORT –MAPPING OF STAKEHOLDERS - EMPLOYMENT

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Authors
This national report was prepared by Florin Lazăr and Smaranda Witec (Association of Schools of Social Work in Romania and University of Bucharest), based on the mapping of institutional and non-institutional actors that support the access of Ukrainian refugees to the labor market in Romania.

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Project:
Scaling the successful social inclusion and integration of Ukrainian refugees in Hungary, Romania and Slovakia through an innovative multi-stakeholder cooperation
(SMART UA acronym)
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1. Summary

The mapping carried out within the project "Scaling the successful social inclusion and integration of Ukrainian refugees in Hungary, Romania and Slovakia through an innovative multi-stakeholder cooperation (SMART UA)", ESF-SI-2024-UA-01-0074, (WP2) aimed to identify institutional and non-institutional actors that support Ukrainian refugees' access to jobs/employment in Romania, document existing barriers and collect examples of good practices.

The research was exploratory in nature and was conducted between April and July 2025 using a structured online questionnaire (SurveyMonkey), completed by 59 respondents - representatives of public authorities (37 AJOFM/ANOFM) and NGOs (representing 14 NGOs). Of the 41 participating institutions, 12 gave their consent for the data to be made public. The data collected provide an overview of the types of interventions and challenges in the field of employment, without claiming to be nationally representative.

Major findings

In the context of supporting Ukrainian refugees, Romanian organizations – both public institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – have carried out a wide range of activities to facilitate their access to the labor market. The most common services provided include job placement (mentioned by 86.7% of respondents) and vocational training or skills development (48.3%). These activities are predominantly provided by public institutions, especially county employment agencies (AJOFM).

NGOs, on the other hand, focus on complementary services, such as Romanian and English language courses, legal advice on labor rights, career counseling, cultural orientation, support for recognition of studies, activities for children, and psychosocial support . These interventions contribute to the social and professional integration of refugees, addressing diverse and complex needs.

Collaboration between actors is a central element of the interventions. Over 80% of NGOs and almost 70% of public institutions collaborate with other actors in supporting the employment of refugees. The most frequent partnerships are with employers, local authorities, local and international NGOs, as well as with employment offices. The quality of these collaborations is positively assessed, especially in relation to NGOs and local authorities, but also with private companies.

In terms of funding, most organizations rely on external sources, especially European funds (87%), government funding (84%) and support from international donors (52%). NGOs are more dependent on these external sources and receive less support from national public funds, which makes them more vulnerable to funding disruptions.

Among the priority needs identified are: skills assessment tools (61%), networking and collaboration platforms (59.3%), support for coherent national policies (50.8%), increased funding (47.5%) and staff training (42.4%). NGOs feel the lack of national policies and funding more acutely, while public institutions emphasize the need for skills assessment tools.

The services provided are generally universal, but some organizations, especially NGOs, have developed tailored interventions for vulnerable groups: women (including mothers), LGBTQ+ people, Roma, other ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities.
Examples of good practices include social integration activities (Romanian language courses, counseling, integrated services), access to the labor market (mediation, counseling, job shadowing), professional training (apprenticeship, CV writing, study equivalency) and collaboration with employers (visits, job exchanges).

In terms of barriers, the most important is the language barrier, followed by the lack of recognition of qualifications, the lack of non-technical skills, the lack of childcare services and the lack of experience in the local labour market. These obstacles significantly affect the professional integration of refugees and require coordinated and tailored interventions.

Key recommendations to support the employment of Ukrainian refugees

The integration of Ukrainian refugees into the Romanian labor market requires a strategic, phased approach adapted to the real needs of the beneficiaries. The key recommendations are structured as follows:

Short-term strategic actions (0–6 months)

- **Expanding Romanian and English language courses** , with an emphasis on intensive, accessible and adapted formats to the level of knowledge.
- **Strengthening local collaboration** between NGOs, AJOFMs and local authorities to streamline interventions.
- **Promoting good practices** by disseminating successful examples and organizing learning sessions between organizations.
- **Direct support for employment** , through professional counseling, CV writing and interview preparation.
- **Mapping existing actors and services** , to avoid overlaps and identify gaps.

Medium-term strategic actions (6–18 months)

- **Vocational training and retraining programs** , including in the refugees' native language.
- **Digital tools for skills assessment** and career guidance.
- **Expanding childcare services** to support women's participation in the labor market.
- **Collaboration and networking platforms** between public institutions and NGOs.
- **Simplification of administrative procedures** for the equivalence of studies and recognition of qualifications.

Long-term strategic actions (18+ months)

- **National public policies** for the sustainable integration of refugees.
- **Legal framework for the recognition of informal and non-formal skills** .
- **Monitoring professional insertion** and evaluating the impact of programs.

- **Investments in the institutional capacity** of NGOs and authorities.
- **Sustainable financing mechanisms** to reduce dependence on external funds.

Specific actions by categories of actors

- **Public institutions** : job placement, vocational training, digital skills, collaboration with NGOs.
- **NGOs** : foreign language courses, legal and psychosocial counseling, activities for children, support for vulnerable groups.
- **Employers** : adapted jobs, mentoring, recognition of previous professional experience.

2. Introduction

With the start of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, amid the humanitarian crisis that erupted in Europe, the Member States of the European Union took support measures for people who had fled Ukraine due to the war. As of **30 June 2025, 188,273 refugees** from Ukraine registered in Romania (UNHCR, 2025).

Ukrainian refugees in Romania face multiple barriers to accessing the labor market, including language, bureaucratic barriers, skills mismatches, and limited support systems. One of the most important barriers is language. Insufficient Romanian language skills limit access to jobs appropriate to professional qualifications, often leading to underemployment or employment in low-skilled sectors (Berveno & Moskvina, 2024; Călin et al., 2024; Incăltărau & Mocernac, 2024; Koroutchev, 2023). Although many refugees are highly educated, the recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications is often slow or unclear, which generates a mismatch between their skills and the demands of the Romanian labor market (Incăltărau & Mocernac, 2024; Koroutchev, 2023; Berveno & Moskvina, 2024; 2022). In addition to these difficulties, complex administrative procedures and the lack of clear legal pathways for employment – such as temporary protection status or work permits – create confusion and delays (Koroutchev, 2023; Incăltărau & Mocernac, 2024). The need to renew protection status in order to continue working adds another bureaucratic step (Koroutchev, 2023). Economic and social barriers complete this picture. Low wages and limited employment opportunities, especially outside large cities, discourage participation in the labor market (Koroutchev, 2023; Călin et al., 2024). The lack of accessible childcare services particularly affects women with children, who represent the majority of refugees (Koroutchev, 2023; Călin et al., 2024; Incăltărau & Mocernac, 2024). In addition, the lack of an extensive Ukrainian diaspora in Romania reduces the possibility of accessing informal support networks for integration and job search (Dimitrov & Pavlov, 2023). Last but not least, cultural adaptation difficulties and psychological stress caused by displacement negatively affect motivation and ability to seek and maintain employment (Călin et al., 2024; Incăltărau & Mocernac, 2024). Social integration is closely linked to financial stability and job satisfaction (Călin et al., 2024), which underlines the importance of coordinated interventions tailored to the real needs of refugees.

Summary table of barriers

Barrier type	Description/Impact	Source
Language	Limits access to jobs, leads to underemployment	Berveno & others
Bureaucracy	Complex and unclear hiring procedures	Koroutchev & others
Skills mismatch	Unrecognized diplomas, overqualification	Shoemakers & others
Childcare	Lack of support, especially for women	Calin & others
Economic factors	Low wages, limited opportunities	Koroutchev & others
Social/Cultural	Reduced support networks, coping stress	Dimitrov & others

Figure 1: Summary of the main barriers to the integration of Ukrainian refugees into the Romanian labor market.

Ukrainian refugees in Romania face a combination of linguistic, bureaucratic, economic and social barriers in accessing the labour market. A survey (Deliu & Tufan, 2023) shows that only 23% of Ukrainian refugees in Bucharest have a job, and the most common obstacles are linguistic difficulties, in particular the low level of knowledge of the Romanian language, which limits access to many occupations, especially office positions. Childcare responsibilities also represent an important barrier to accessing the labour market, with 36% of those not working citing the need to care for children as a decisive factor. The lack of personal networks and the low efficiency of public institutions or NGOs in job placement services further complicate employment, with many respondents obtaining jobs through other refugees (26%) or Romanian acquaintances, rather than through formal channels. Employer reluctance, inflexible work schedules, and a low but significant level of age discrimination (reported by respondents) add additional obstacles to obtaining employment. Overall, these combined factors—language barriers, childcare responsibilities, lack of support through informal networks, institutional inefficiencies, employer bias, and schedule or age constraints—explain the low level of refugee integration into the Romanian labor market.

Given that the majority of refugees from Ukraine are women (OECD, 2023, p. 3), young people and young parents, childcare needs influence employment availability (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2023).

The HIAS study (2023) shows a similar situation. The most common barrier is the lack of language skills in Romanian, mentioned by 24% of respondents, which limits access to suitable jobs. In addition, 12% of participants indicated family responsibilities, especially childcare, as the main reason for not being employed. Other difficulties include the lack of access to information on employment opportunities (9%), uncertain legal status and problems with obtaining the necessary documents for work (8%), as well as the lack of jobs in the fields of specialization of refugees (8%). Also, 7% of respondents mentioned that they do not have the qualifications required by Romanian employers.

Given that these challenges are similar to those encountered in other host states such as Poland, Hungary or Slovakia, the SMART UA project aims at a transnational mapping of actors contributing to

the integration of Ukrainian refugees, with a focus on access to the labor market and the identification of good practices and replicable models.

The purpose of this research is to identify key actors, difficulties encountered, and opportunities for supporting access to jobs for Ukrainian refugees in Romania. The data were collected in the months June-July 2025, through a structured questionnaire to address institutional and non-institutional stakeholders in the field of employment (local authorities, NGOs, community organizations, employment agencies, etc.) ([SMART UA Methodology, 2025]) .

The mapping of stakeholder involved in supporting access to jobs for Ukrainian refugees in Romania are included in the work package WP2 of SMART UA project, carried out in partnership with research institutes from Romania, Hungary and Slovakia. This research contributes to understanding barriers systemic, supports policy formulation ADVISED and substantiates developing practical tools for PLAYERS local and international INVOLVED in support refugees.

3. Methodology

The mapping of relevant actors in the field of employment for Ukrainian refugees in Romania was carried out within the WP2 work package of the SMART UA project, between April and July 2025. The data were collected through a self-completed questionnaire, aiming to identify and analyze the types of interventions, perceptions and challenges encountered by organizations and institutions involved in supporting access to employment for beneficiaries of temporary protection. This stage had an exploratory and quantitative nature, aiming to provide evidence that would contribute to:

- Improving coordination between actors
- Informing advocacy and policy dialogue
- Supporting the development of practical tools and recommendations in all countries

3.1. Objectives

The research aimed to:

- identifying **institutional and non-institutional actors** that contribute, directly or indirectly, to supporting Ukrainian refugees in accessing the labor market;
- highlighting **the concrete intervention methods** and **the resources involved**;
- capturing **perceptions of systemic barriers**, needs and possible solutions;
- to gather examples of relevant or replicable **local initiatives** .

3.2. Research tool

The main instrument used was a questionnaire, developed in English and translated into Romanian, containing closed and open questions, grouped into five thematic sections: organization profile, activity in the field of employment, obstacles encountered (from the perspective of the organization and for beneficiaries), cooperation with other actors and examples of good practices.

The questionnaire was completed online, through the SurveyMonkey platform**,** between 7–22 July 2025. **The** questionnaire was distributed to respondents by JRS Romania , via email, followed by reminder phone calls to increase the response rate. The data were analyzed with SPSS 29, Microsoft Excel and Copilot.

3.3. Respondent selection criteria

The invited stakeholder included those who:

- are actively or intermittently involved in supporting Ukrainian refugees in accessing the labor market**;**
- operates at local, county or national level**,** in cities with a significant presence of refugees;
- represent public authorities**,** non-governmental organizations**,** civic initiatives**,** volunteer networks or other relevant actors.

The research did not aim for national representativeness, but **for diversity of types of actors and experiences**. A convenience sampling was used, guided by the research objectives. At the end of the questionnaire, respondents could choose whether they agreed that the information on good practices would be made public or used only by the project team.

3.4. Limitations

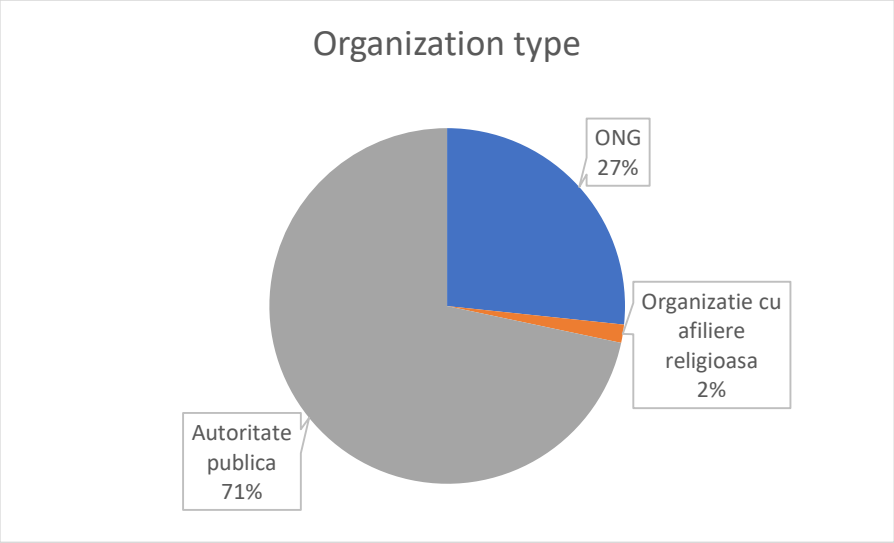
- The number of responses is low, compared to the potential size of the organizations involved in the field;
- The geographical distribution is uneven, concentrated in urban areas and centers with higher refugee densities;
- The information obtained is self-reported and reflects the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders, not the direct experiences of refugees or statistical data.
- Given possible changes in national legislation (or in other countries), but also in the evolution of the war in Ukraine, the information is valid at the time of its collection, its stability over time being limited.

Note: Throughout the report, the term refugee is not used in the legal sense (a person who has officially requested refugee status), but designates any person who came from Ukraine to Romania and who came into contact with the services offered by the organizations participating in the research.

4. Profile of social actors

4.1. Types of organizations

A total of 59 respondents answered the questionnaire, most of whom represented public authorities (72%, i.e. 43 people from 37 AJOFM/AMOFM and ANOFM), and approximately a quarter (27%) were from non-governmental organizations (16 people from 13 NGOs). Only one person was from an organization with a religious affiliation and none from an economic agent or an organization created by refugees.



4.2. Distribution of respondents by counties

The distribution of respondents from AJOFMs covers almost the entire country, including the central level represented by ANOFM.

No.	County	No.	County
1	Alba	19	Hunedoara
2	Arad	20	Ialomiţa
3	Arges	21	Ilfov
4	Bacau	22	Maramures

5	Bihar	23	Mures
6	Bistrita-Nasaud	24	Olt
7	Botosani	25	Prahova
8	Braila	26	Salaj
9	Braşov	27	Satu Mare
10	Buzau	28	Sibiu
11	Cluj	29	Suceava
12	Constanta	30	Timis
13	Covasna	31	Tulcea
14	Dambovita	32	Teleorman
15	Dolj	33	Vrancea
16	Galati	34	Bucharest-AMOFM
17	Gorj	35	Bucharest-Sector 5
18	Harghita	36	Bucharest-Sector 6
		37	ANOFM

The range of governmental organizations that responded to the questionnaire is also varied (Professional Non-Governmental Association of Social Assistance ASSOC, Ateliere Fără Frontiere/Workshops Without Borders, Organization Save the Children Romania, Terre des hommes Foundation - Helping Children in the World , ICAR Foundation, LOGS Association - Social Initiatives Group, Proiect Voiajor Association / Jobs for Ukraine , Association Novapolis - Center for Analysis and Initiatives for Development, YMCA Romania Federation, City Makers Association, World Vision Romania Foundation , Oradea Philanthropy Association and Aidrom Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania), covering the main areas where a large number of refugees from Ukraine are located, such as Bucharest, Suceava, Timiș, Maramureș or Bihor.

From the perspective of the geographical coverage of the activities carried out by the organizations participating in the research, it targets all 8 development regions and all counties. Among the representatives of public authorities, only 2 respondents were from the ANOFM, having a national coverage, the others acting at the local, county level.

Development Region	**County**	**Development Region**	**County**
Northwest	Bihor	Bucharest-Ilfov	Bucharest
	Cluj		Ilfov
	Maramureș	South-West Oltenia	Dolj
	Satu Mare		Olt
	Sălaj		Vâlcea
Center	Alba		Gorj

	Brașov		Mehedinți
	Covasna	West	Arad
	Harghita		Hunedoara
	Mureș		Timiș
	Sibiu		Caraș-Severin
NORTH EAST	Botoșani	South	Arges
	Iași		Dâmbovița
	Suceava		Giurgiu
	Neamț		Ialomița
	Vaslui		Călărași
	Bacău		Prahova
Southeast	Galați		Teleorman
	Brăila		
	Constanța		
	Tulcea		
	Buzău		

5. Employment support activities

5.1. Types of activities and support offered

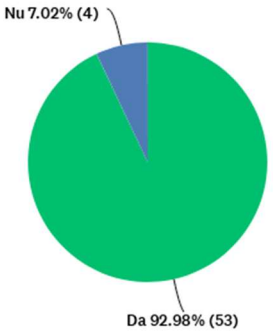
To question Q15 regarding current involvement in providing employment support to Ukrainian refugees, out of 57 responses, 53 (92.98%) indicated that they are currently involved in such activities and only 4 organizations indicated that they are not currently involved in such activities, coming from two NGOs and two AJOFMs. However, one of the two respondents from AJOFM mentioned some of the employment support services as being offered by the institution.

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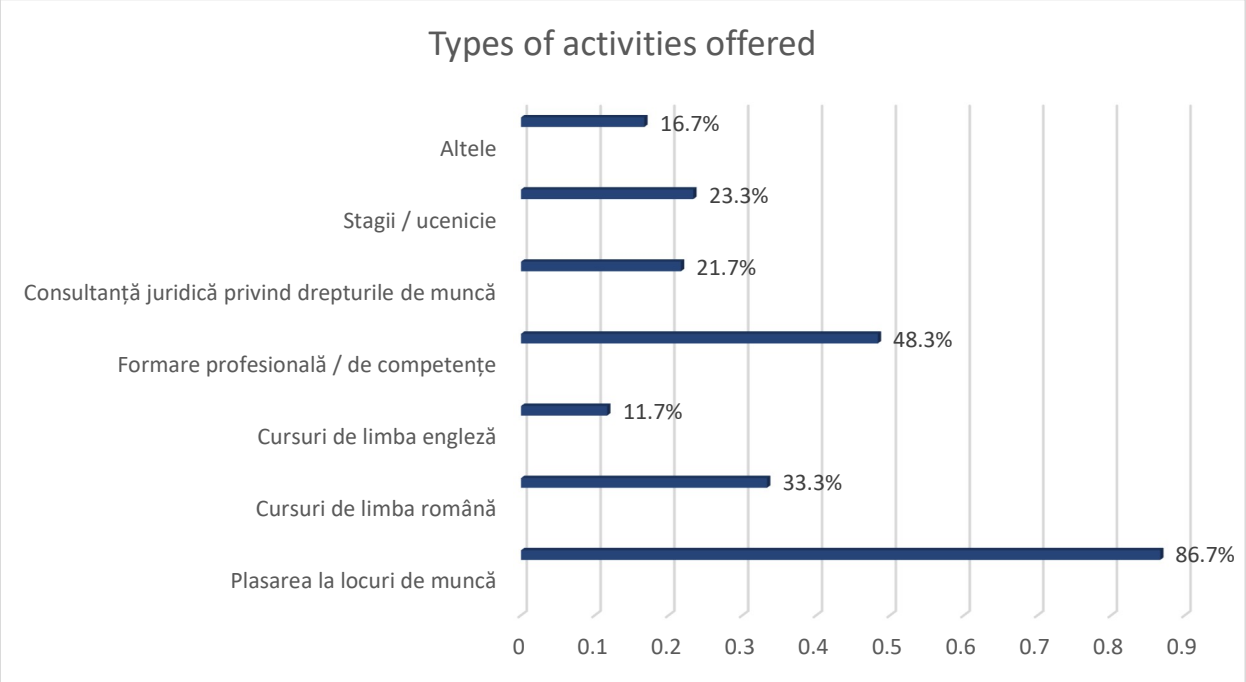
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Q15 EXPERIENȚĂ ȘI ACTIVITĂȚI4.1 Organizația dumneavoastră este implicată în prezent în sprijinirea angajării refugiaților ucraineni?



Regarding activities to support the employment of refugees from Ukraine, most respondents (52) mentioned job placement (86.7%) and vocational/skills training (29, representing 48.3% of total respondents), most of them representing public institutions (AJOFMs). Lower percentages are found for Romanian language courses (33.3%), internships/apprenticeships (23.3%), legal advice on labor rights (21.7%), and English language courses (11.7%).

Thus, 40 out of the 52 respondents from public institutions/authorities offer job placement services, 11 out of the 20 offer Romanian language courses, 4 out of the 7 offer English language courses, 26 out of the 29 offer vocational training, all 14 offer internships/apprenticeships and 5 out of the 13 offer legal advice on labor rights, and the rest are offered by non-governmental organizations. Thus, we note that NGOs offer Romanian or English language courses and legal advice on labor rights rather than vocational training or job placement.

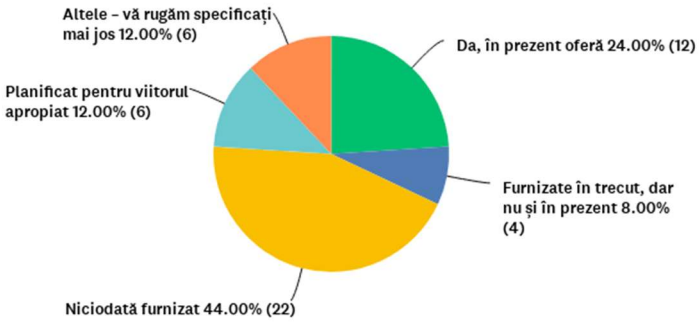


Some respondents also mentioned other services they offer to Ukrainian refugees, including: information, professional counseling (e.g. interview preparation, CV preparation, active job search), job mediation, cultural orientation, legal counseling, online courses, integration courses, document translation and support for submitting documents for equivalence (to CNRED). Activities dedicated more to children are also mentioned, such as: afterschool , parenting , recreational activities , non-formal education , or for psycho -social support (e.g. individual and group psychological counseling, civic education course, sports: yoga, Pilates) or material aid. These activities are offered more by NGOs than by public authorities.

5.2 . Use of digital or skills assessment tools

Regarding the development of training programs for refugees from Ukraine aimed at acquiring digital skills, most respondents (n=22) state that the organizations they work for have never offered such programs, 4 have offered them in the past but not at the time of data collection, 12 currently offer them (of which 8 are public institutions and 4 are NGOs), and 6 plan to offer such programs in the near future (4 AJOFMs and 2 NGOs). Other respondents mention that they have not had such requests (either in Ukrainian or in another foreign language), that they offer general digital skills courses (without being specific to one category of beneficiaries or another) or that they can offer such courses only to those who have recognized diplomas.

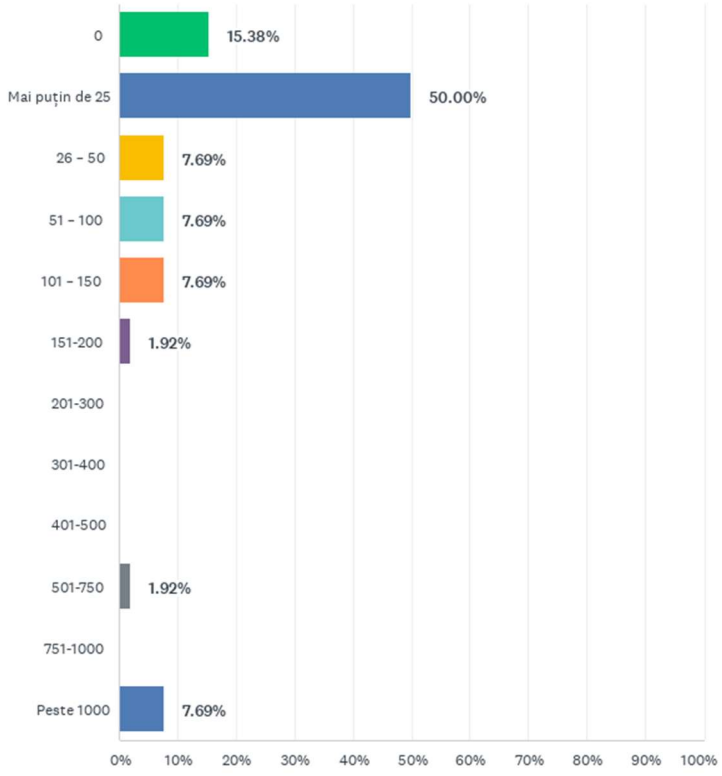
Q28 COMPETENȚE DIGITALE ȘI ACCES LA TEHNOLOGIEContext introductiv: Această secțiune își propune să evalueze măsura în care serviciile de sprijin pentru ocuparea forței de muncă includ formarea în competențe digitale, care este din ce în ce mai importantă pentru accesul la un loc de muncă în toate sectoarele.8.1. Organizația dumneavoastră oferă sau facilitează în prezent instruire în domeniul competențelor digitale pentru refugiații ucraineni ?DATE ȘI INSTRUMENTE DIGITALE



5.3. Number of refugees supported

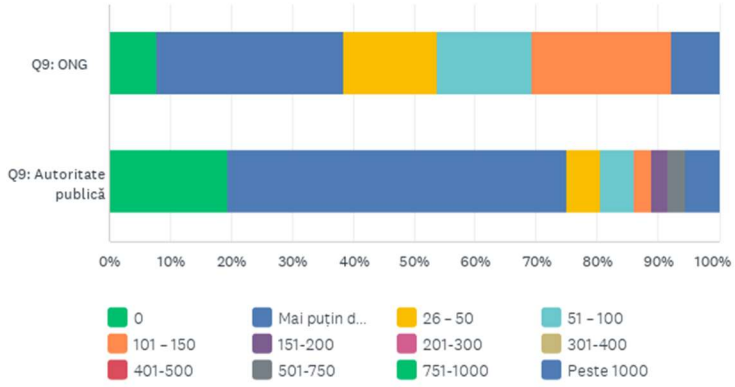
Regarding the number of Ukrainian refugees supported in the employment process, half of the respondents declare that they have less than 25 beneficiaries/individuals with whom they work in this regard, while 4 organizations/respondents have between 26-50 (2 from public organizations and 2 from NGOs), 51-100 (2 from public organizations and 2 from NGOs), 101 and 150 (of which 3 from NGOs and 1 from a public authority) and over 1000 beneficiaries (of which 1 from NGOs and 3 from a public authority). One representative of a public organization declares a number of beneficiaries between 151-200, respectively 501-750, and 8 respond that they do not deal with any Ukrainian refugees for employment.

Q18 4.6. Câți refugiați ucraineni sprijiniți în prezent pentru a-i angaja? (Vă rugăm să alegeți o variantă din cele de mai jos)



From the perspective of the type of provider, we observe that public authorities deal with a larger number of Ukrainian refugees in employment support compared to NGOs, which can be explained by the differences between the capacities of the two types of service providers.

Q18 4.6. Câți refugiați ucraineni sprijiniți în prezent pentru a-i angaja? (Vă rugăm să alegeți o variantă din cele de mai jos)

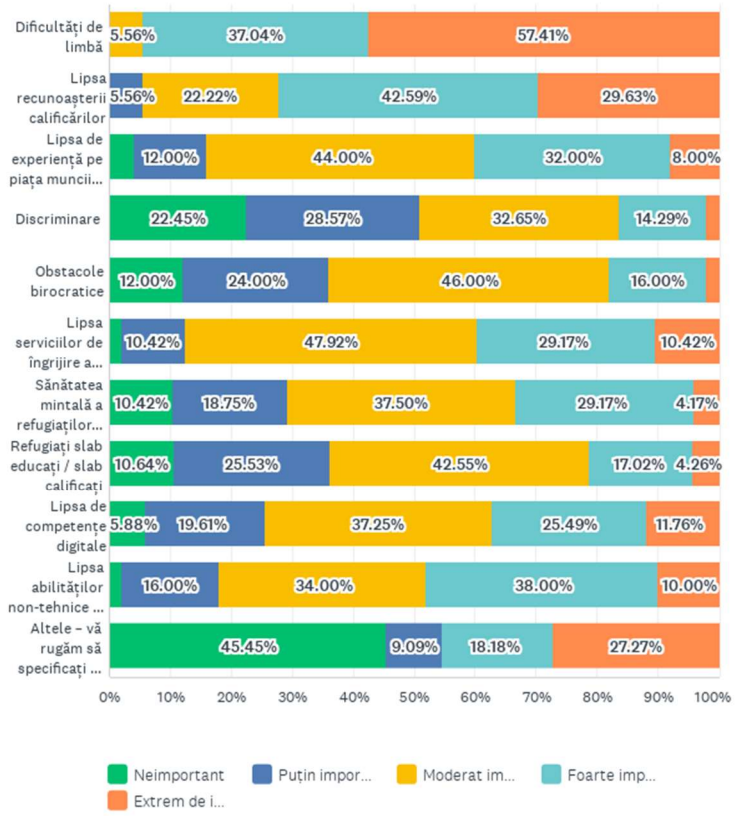


6. Barriers and challenges

6.1. Main barriers

The integration of refugees from Ukraine into the labour market is not easy, facing various barriers and challenges. Question no. 17 asked respondents to assess the importance of a number of barriers. The most important barrier is considered to be language (rated as very important and extremely important by 94.45% of respondents), followed by the lack of recognition of qualifications, the lack of non-technical skills (e.g. communication skills, flexibility, problem-solving, working independently, etc.), the lack of childcare services, the lack of experience in the local labour market, the lack of digital skills, the mental health of refugees from Ukraine and the low qualifications of refugees. The least important barriers are considered to be discrimination and bureaucracy.

Q17 4.4 Cât de importante sunt următoarele bariere pentru intrarea pe piața muncii a refugiaților ucraineni? (Vă rugăm să evaluați importanța fiecărei bariere)



In the table below, these barriers are ranked by the average importance given by respondents. They gave scores between 1 (not important) and 5 (extremely important), and the average was calculated from the valid responses (column N). A higher average indicates a higher importance of the respective barrier, from the respondents' perspective.

Table 1 Barriers to employment , in The order increasing averages

Barrier	N	Mediate
Discrimination	49	2.4490
Bureaucratic obstacles	50	2.7200
Other	11	2.7273
Poorly educated/low-skilled refugees	47	2.7872
Mental health of refugees from Ukraine	48	2.9792

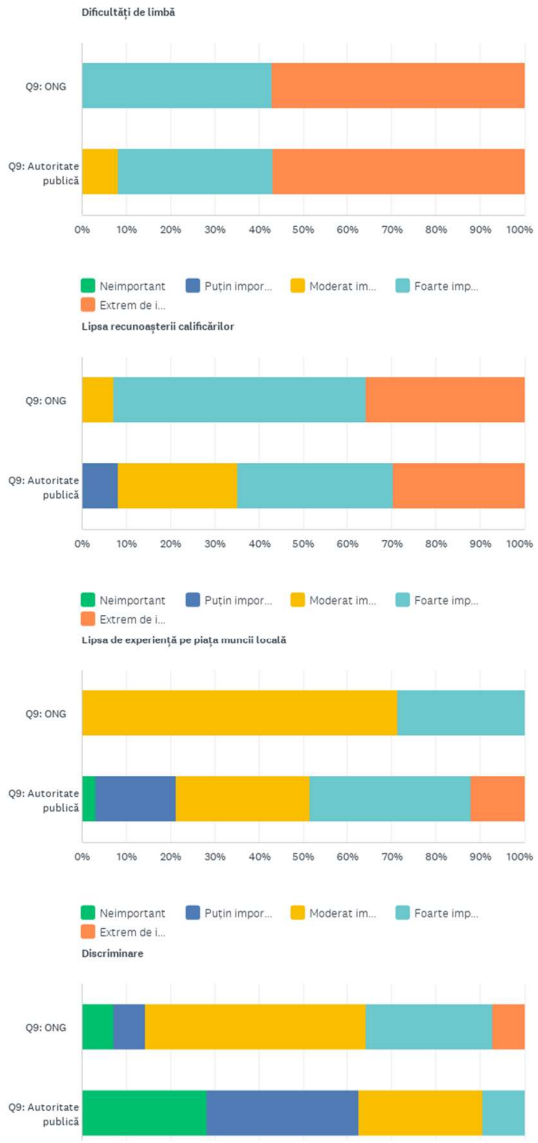
Lack of digital skills	51	3.1765
Lack of experience in the local labor market	50	3.2800
Lack of childcare services	48	3.3542
Lack of non-technical skills (e.g. communication skills, flexibility, problem-solving, working independently, etc.)	50	3.3800
Lack of recognition of qualifications	54	3.9630
Language difficulties	54	4.5185

N=number of responses.
Note: The average is calculated based on responses on a 5-point Likert scale , from 1=not important to 5=extremely important.

6.2. Importance of barriers depending on the type of actors

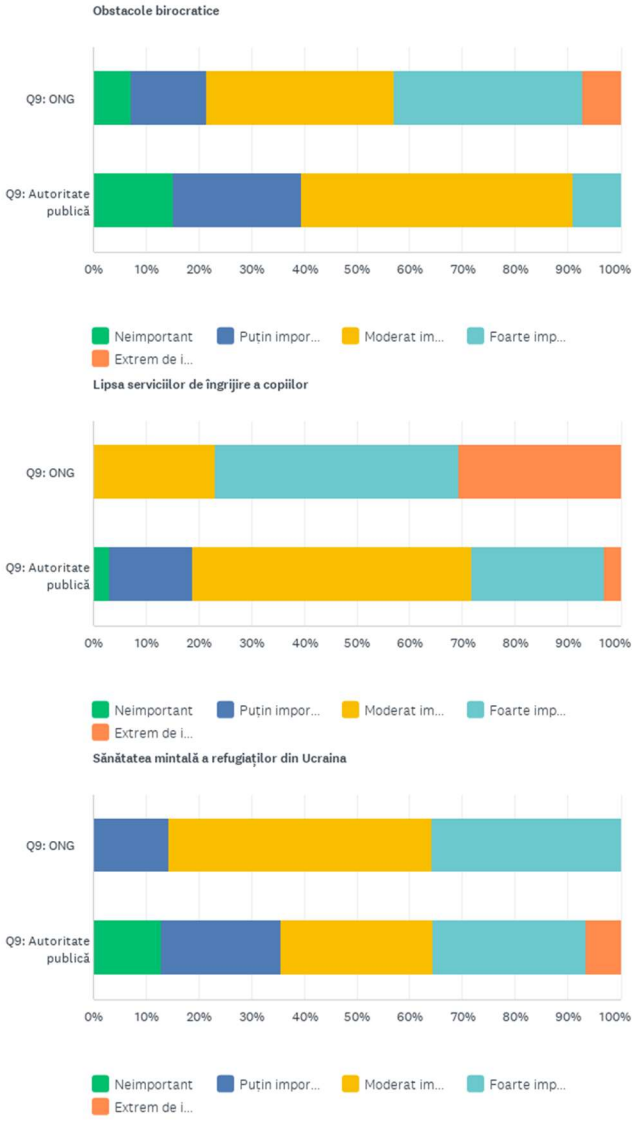
The figures below show the differences in the assessment of the importance of various barriers depending on the type of organization in which the respondents work – public or non-governmental. Regarding language difficulties, there are no major differences between the two categories, although those in NGOs consider these barriers to be more important. The situation is similar regarding the recognition of qualifications, in the sense that those in public authorities consider these barriers less important than those in NGOs. In contrast, a higher percentage of those in public administration consider the lack of experience on the local labor market of refugees from Ukraine to be very or extremely important, compared to those in NGOs. Discrimination is considered to be an important problem to a greater extent by those in NGOs than by those in public institutions.

Q17 4.4 Cât de importante sunt următoarele bariere pentru intrarea pe piața muncii a refugiaților ucraineni? (Vă rugăm să evaluați importanța fiecărei bariere)



Also, bureaucratic obstacles are considered a very or extremely important problem by almost half of those in NGOs, while only 10% of those in public authorities consider it equally important. It is also

worth noting that those in NGOs are more concerned about the lack of childcare services than those in public authorities (over 75% vs. 30%) and about the mental health of refugees from Ukraine.



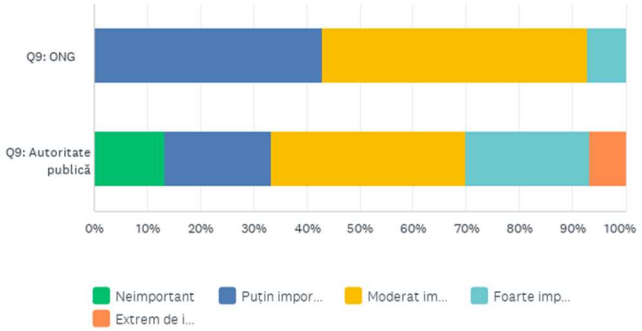
Respondents from public authorities are more likely than those from NGOs to consider the low qualifications of refugees (30% vs. almost 10%) and the lack of digital skills (40% vs. 30%) as very or extremely important. On the other hand, those from NGOs consider the lack of non-technical skills to be more important than those from public authorities.

Social Innovation Initiative

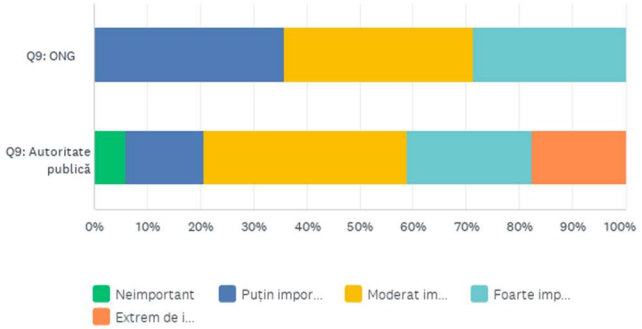
Co-funded by the European Union

SMART UA

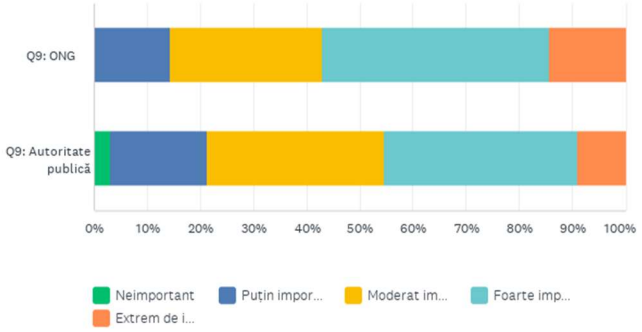
Refugiați slab educați / slab calificați



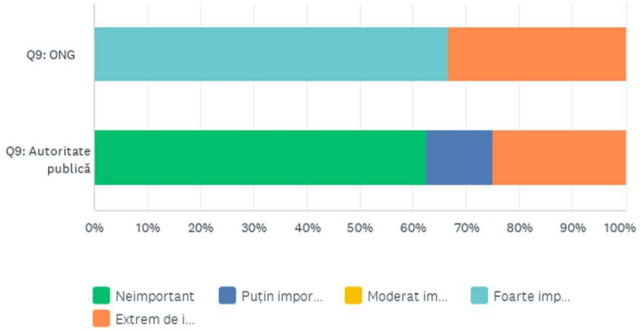
Lipsa de competențe digitale



Lipsa abilităților non-tehnice (de exemplu, abilități de comunicare, flexibilitate, r...



Altele – vă rugăm să specificați mai jos



The open responses of those who mentioned other barriers were grouped into 5 categories:

1. Income level and job stability

- **High expectations** from job seekers, especially regarding schedule flexibility (part- time , adaptability for childcare).
- **The limited supply of part-** time jobs does not match demand.
- **The rapid abandonment** of employment by some people, without a clear alternative.
- **Reasons cited** for quitting: fatigue, communication difficulties, need to temporarily return to Ukraine.

2. Distance between work and home / mobility

- **Lack of mobility** is a major barrier to employment.
- **Limited access** to transportation or long distances between home and work can contribute to career abandonment.

3. Difficulties in identifying a home

- Although not explicitly detailed in the text, **the issue of housing** is indirectly suggested by the mention of reduced mobility and personal instability.
- **Access to adequate and stable housing** is essential for long-term integration.

4. Access to services and social integration

- **Limited access** to medical services and difficulties in certifying Romanian language courses.
- **The perception of the temporary nature** of residence in Romania, accentuated by the annual extension of the right to reside, reduces the motivation to integrate.
- **The lack of desire for integration** is a direct consequence of legal and social uncertainty.

5. Initial motivation for coming to Romania

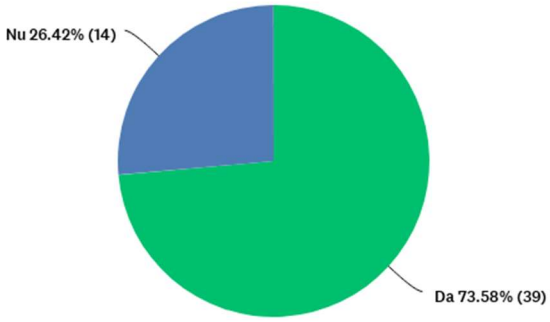
- **The humanitarian reason** for arriving in Romania is the main factor for the low employment rate.
- Many citizens did not come with the aim of working, which influences the level of involvement in the labor market.

7. Collaboration and best practices

7.1. Types of collaborations

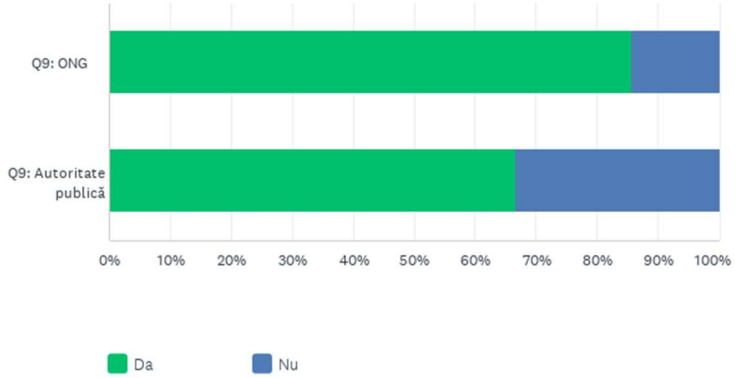
From the perspective of collaborations with other organizations, most organizations (73.58%) have such collaborations in the field of employment for Ukrainian refugees, while only a little over a quarter declare that they do not have such collaborations.

Q19 CELE MAI BUNE PRACTICI ȘI COLABORARE5.1 Organizația dvs. colaborează cu alti actori în furnizarea de ajutor în domeniul ocupării forței de muncă pentru refugiați ucrainieni?



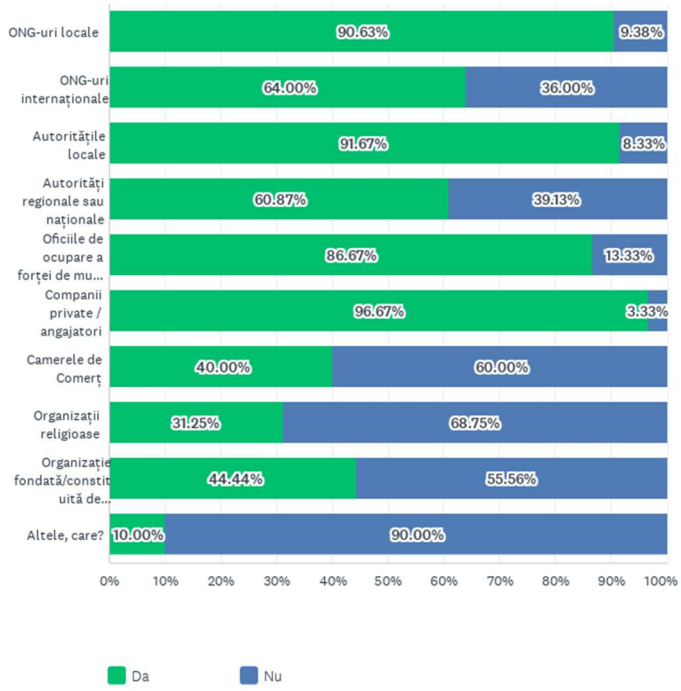
Looking at the differences between NGOs and public authorities, we note that over 80% of respondents from the non-governmental environment collaborate with other actors in providing employment assistance to Ukrainian refugees, and among respondents from public institutions the percentage is close to 70%.

Q19 CELE MAI BUNE PRACTICI ȘI COLABORARE5.1 Organizația dvs. colaborează cu alti actori în furnizarea de ajutor în domeniul ocupării forței de muncă pentru refugiați ucrainieni?



Regarding collaborations, respondents most frequently stated that they collaborated with employers/private companies (over 96%), local authorities (91.67%), local NGOs (90.67%), employment offices (86.67%), international NGOs (64%) and regional or national authorities (60%). To a lesser extent, there was collaboration with Chambers of Commerce, religious NGOs or those created by refugees.

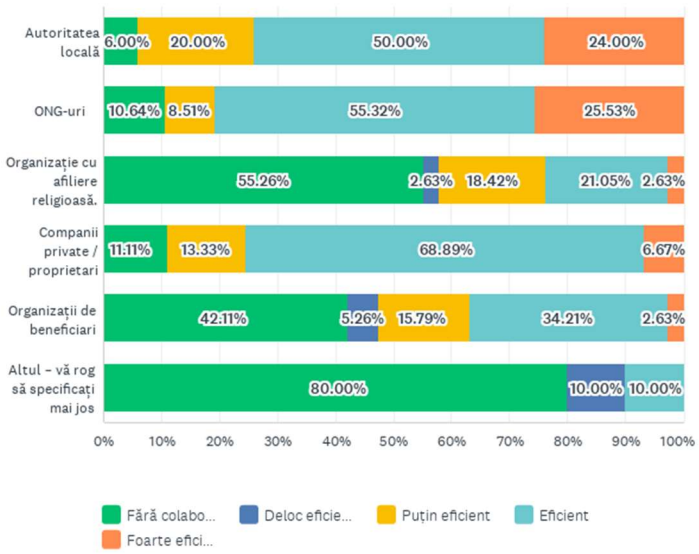
Q20 5.2 Dacă da – Cu care dintre următoarele tipuri de actori colaborează ? (Vă rugăm să indicați dacă organizatia dvs. colaborează cu următorii actori)



7.2. Quality of partnerships

From the point of view of the efficiency of collaborations, the most effective are considered collaborations with NGOs and local authorities – approximately a quarter declare themselves very satisfied with them (declare very effective collaborations), and around 50-55% consider them effective. Also, collaborations with some private companies/owners are considered effective by 2/3 of the respondents who had such collaborations.

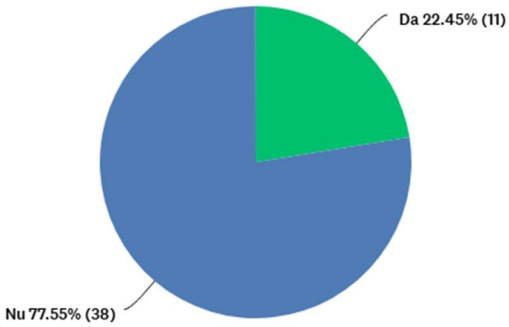
Q23 5.6 Cum evaluați colaborarea cu următorii actori ? (Vă rugăm să evaluați calitatea colaborării cu fiecare actor cu care lucrați)



7.3. Good practices in professional integration

11 of the respondents have run a program that they consider "good practice" - 3 are the AJOFMs from Cluj, Ilfov and Maramureș, and the other 8 are from NGOs, respectively: the Non-Governmental Professional Association of Social Assistance ASSOC, the LOGS Association - Group of Social Initiatives, the Voiajor Project / Jobs for Ukraine Association , the YMCA Romania Federation, the City Makers Association , the World Vision Romania Foundation, the Oradea Philanthropy Association, the Aidrom Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania .

Q21 5.4. Ați implementat/derulat vreun program pe care îl considerați "Bună practică" pe care l-ați recomanda?



These examples of good practices target a series of activities to facilitate access to employment for refugees, grouped as follows:

1. Integration of Ukrainian refugees into Romanian society

- Organizing Romanian language courses for Ukrainian citizens.
- Individual counseling on the recognition of studies and qualifications.
- Information sessions on legal rights in Romania.
- Personalized support within the ROUA Community Center (counselling, workshops, activities for children).
- Holistic model of integrated services in hub and mobile center.
- Comprehensive support that combines protection, social integration and access to essential services.

2. Access to the labor market and employability

- Mediating communication with local employers.
- Creating direct connections between employers and job seekers.
- Activities carried out on company premises (e.g. Ikea).
- Counselling program: informational support, job placement, training.
- Activities such as " One Day Job Shadowing - company visits to familiarize yourself with the work environment.

3. Vocational training and education

- Romanian and English language courses.
- Support in writing your CV.
- Funding a workplace apprenticeship program.
- Advice on completing and submitting recognition diplomas/documents.

4. Collaboration with employers and institutions

- Direct discussions with employers from Ilfov County.
- Participation in the Job Fair.
- Visits and activities carried out in companies (e.g. Ikea).

5. Completed projects and initiatives

- Projects benefiting displaced people from Ukraine ended in June 2025.
- Employing migrants was not a direct objective, but support was provided through referral to public institutions and NGOs.

For specific details, we have also added the individual responses to the invitation to present the good practice example for a better understanding of each individual program in Annex 2.

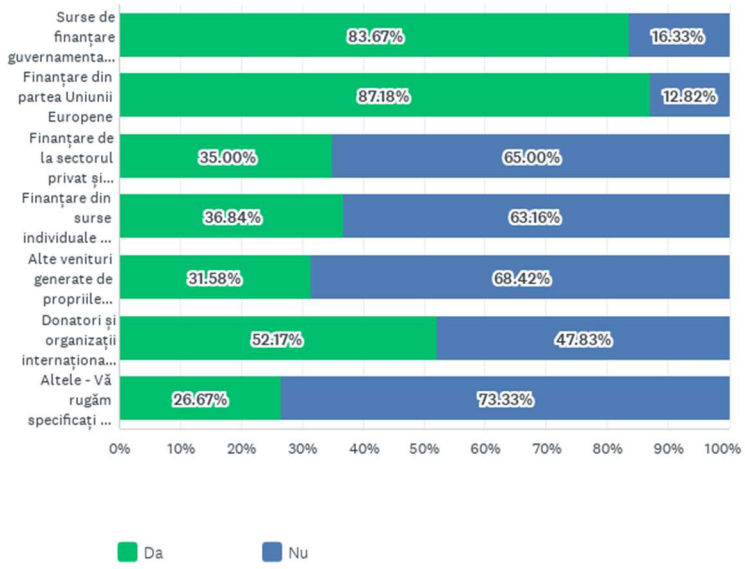
8. Capacity and needs

8.1. Sources of funding

Regarding funding sources, most respondents mentioned funding from the European Union (87.18%), followed by government sources and county/local authorities (83.67%) and donors and international organizations (52.17%). Income obtained from the organization's own activities (31.58%), from the private sector (35%) and from individual sources (36.84%) or other sources is mentioned much less frequently. Of the 16 NGO respondents, only 7 mention that the organization they represent receives funding from public sources.

The funding data shows the importance of external funds (either from the European Union or from donors and international organizations) in supporting organizations that provide services to facilitate access to the labor market for people from Ukraine, but also the vulnerability of these programs and their dependence on external funding.

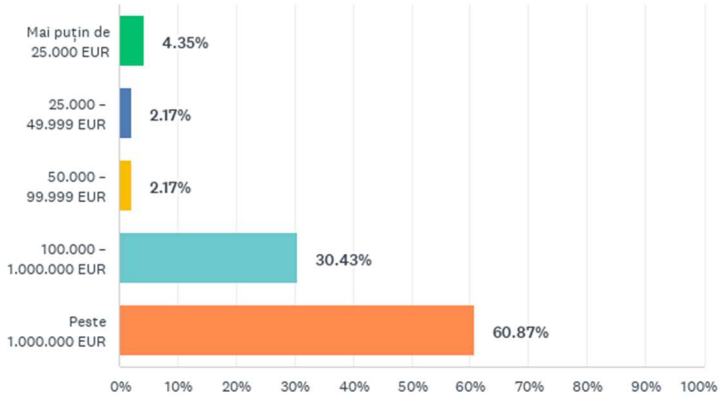
Q13 3.2. Surse de finanțare (Vă rugăm să indicați dacă organizația dvs. primește finanțare din următoarele surse)



8.2. The organization's annual budget

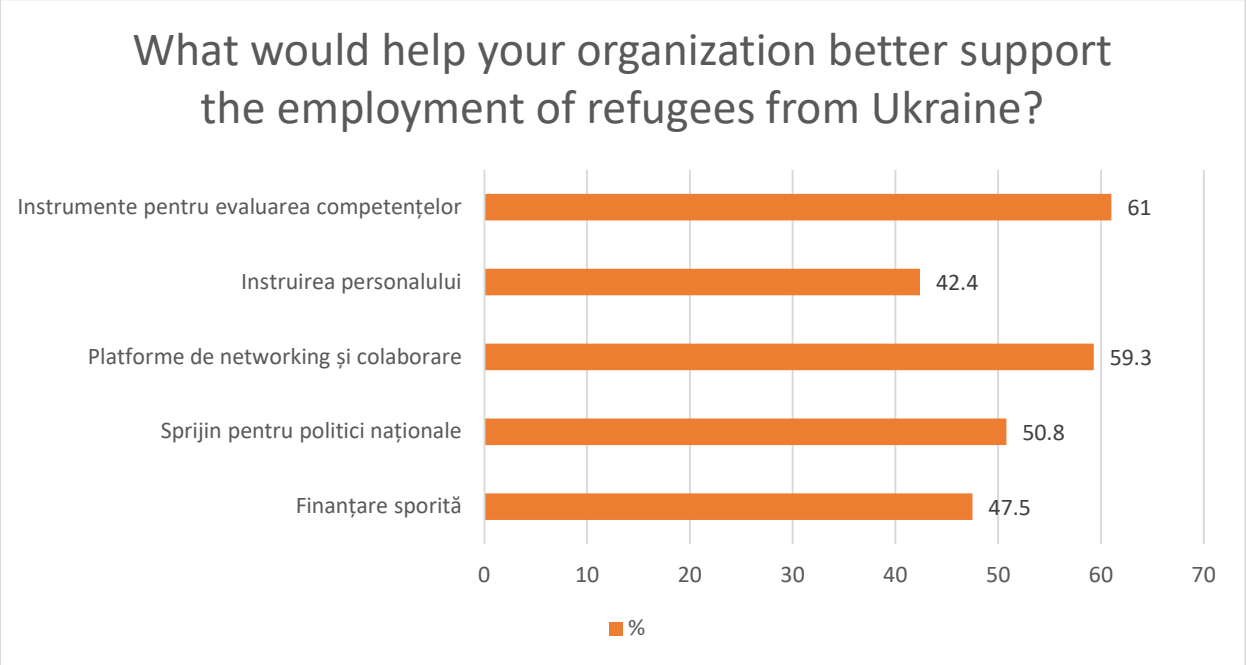
Regarding the annual budget of the organization, most organizations have budgets of over 1 million euros, of the 28 respondents with such budgets (representing 60.87% of the total), only 2 are from NGOs with budgets of over 1 million euros annually, the rest being from public authorities. Of the 14 respondents (30.4%) who answered that they have budgets between 100 thousand and 1 million euros, 9 are from NGOs, and of those with budgets lower than 100 thousand euros, all respondents come from AJOFMs.

Q14 3.4. Bugetul anual (Vă rugăm să indicați bugetul anual aproximativ al organizației dumneavoastră - în EUR)



8.3. Needs and priorities for improving support

To assess the needs of organizations in the field to better support the employment of refugees from Ukraine, a list of possible activities and tools was proposed, and respondents chose which of them were most important. The most important are considered to be tools for skills assessment (61%), networking and collaboration platforms (59.3%), and support for national policies (50.8%). Increased funding is mentioned by almost half of respondents (47.5%), and staff training by 42.4%.



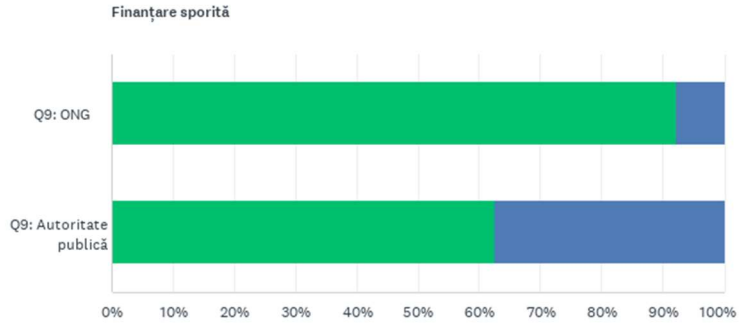
From the analysis of the differences between respondents from public authorities and those from NGOs (see figure below), it emerges that the latter have a greater need for national policies, increased funding, and networking and collaboration platforms, while in public institutions the need for skills assessment tools and collaboration platforms is felt more acutely.

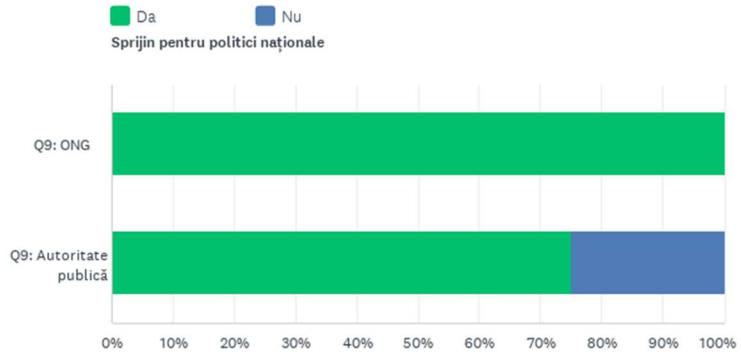
Social Innovation Initiative

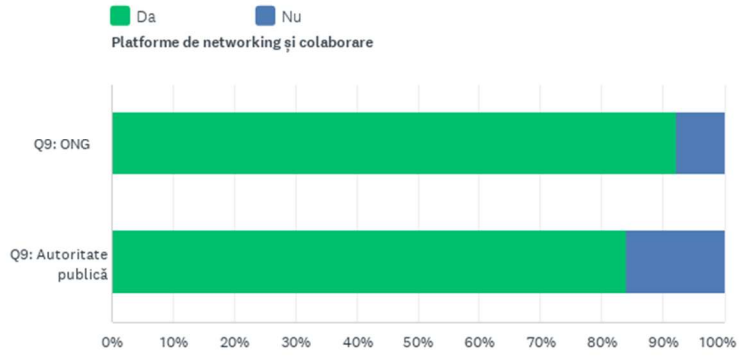
Co-funded by the European Union

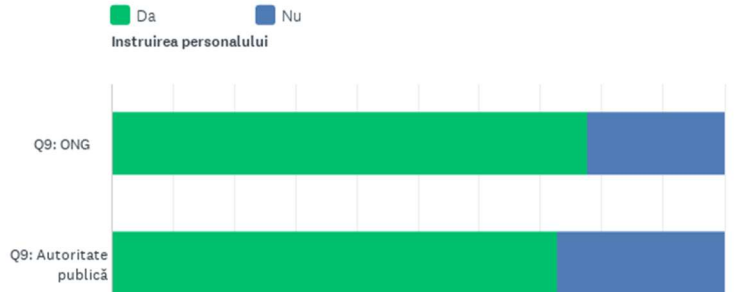
SMART UA

Q25 PERSPECTIVE ȘI NEVOI6.1. Ce ar ajuta organizația dumneavoastră să sprijine mai bine angajarea refugiaților din Ucraina ? (Vă rugăm să evaluați importanța fiecărui tip de suport pentru organizația dvs.)





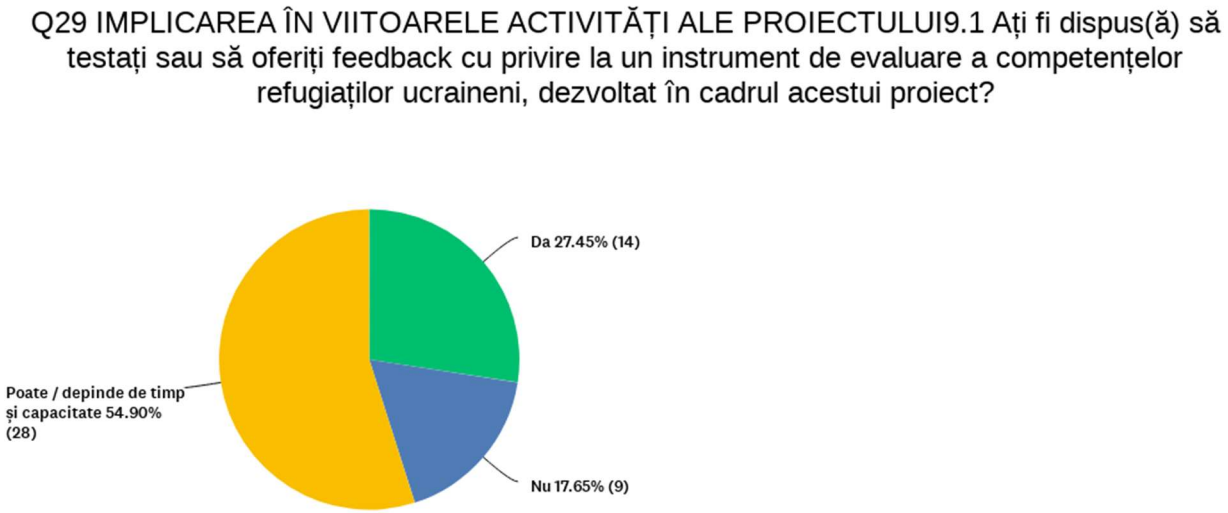




In addition to the activities proposed in the questionnaire, respondents also mentioned the following that would increase the efficiency of the interventions: Romanian language courses, equivalence/recognition of educational and qualification documents, as well as the interest and availability of Ukrainian people to learn the language. It is worth noting that all these additional activities had already been included among the current ones in the questions at the beginning of the questionnaire.

8.4. Involvement in future project activities

Question 29 aimed to assess the respondents' openness to future project activities, namely their willingness to test or provide feedback on a tool to assess the skills of Ukrainian refugees. Thus, only 9 respondents reject this possibility, while 14 (representing 27.45%) agree, and the remaining 28 (54.9%) are willing, but depending on time and capacity.



8.5. Consent to the use of data

At the end of the questionnaire, participating organizations were invited to express their option regarding the use of the contact information provided, in accordance with the principles of data protection (GDPR). This question concerned the possibility of including the organization in a public list of interested actors.

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to consent to the publication of their organization's contact details in a list of relevant stakeholders. This supports transparency and compliance with GDPR principles, while also allowing the information to be used for collaboration and research purposes.

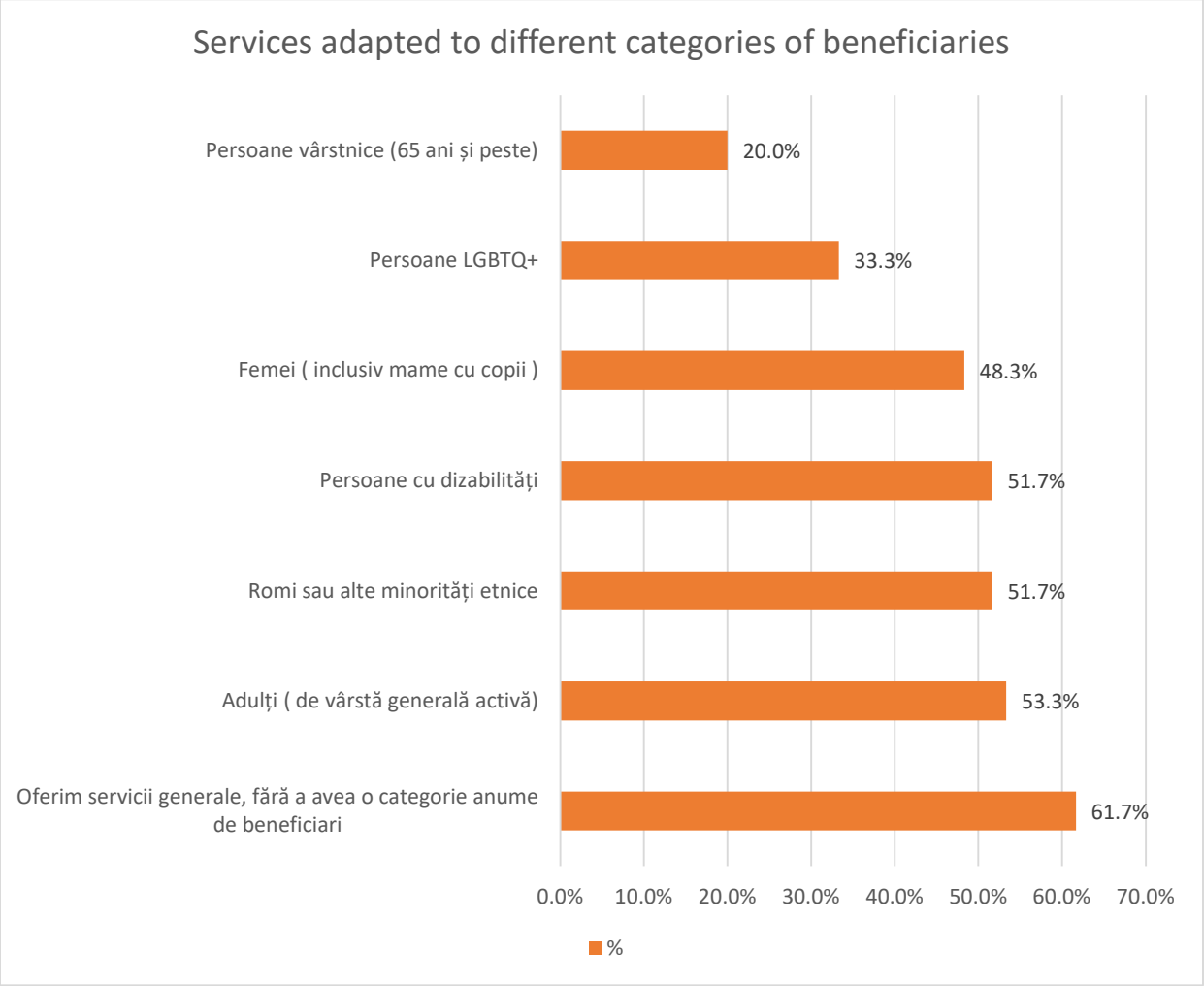
Thus, 14 respondents from public authorities and 5 from NGOs agreed that the organization's data should be made public (see Annex 1), the others choosing not to make it public.

9. Inclusion and target groups

9.1. Adapted support for vulnerable groups

From the perspective of the categories of beneficiaries they work with, most organizations (61.7% of respondents) provide general services, without targeting a specific category. Slightly more than half have developed specific services for adults of working age, Roma or other ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. Almost half have adapted services to the specific needs of women (including mothers with children), a third of LGBTQ+ people and 20% of elderly people. Depending on the type of organization – public or non-governmental, 27 respondents from public authorities and 10 from NGOs provide general services, 24 from public institutions and 7 from NGOs provide adapted services for people with disabilities, for Roma 23 from public authorities and 8 from NGOs, and for adults of working age 23 from the public system and 9 from the non-governmental environment offer adapted services. For women, 20 respondents from public institutions and 9 from NGOs offer adapted services, while for LGBTQ+ people 12 from public authorities and 8 from NGOs.

The analysis of this data shows that public authorities tend to provide general services, while NGOs are more active in supporting categories less targeted by public services, such as women, LGBTQ+ people, and Roma or other ethnic minorities. Given the small number of respondents, it is difficult to establish significant differences.



9.2. Other recommendations for facilitate integration

From the free responses we identified several categories of possible measures , each with subthemes and examples extracted from the content (see Annex 2 for extended quotes):

1. Language and communication skills

- **The language barrier** is one of the biggest challenges:
  - *"Poor communication"*
  - *"Expanding intensive Romanian language learning activities"*
  - *"Intensive Romanian language courses"*

- *"Ignorance of the Romanian language and an international language (English, French)"*

2. Access to the labor market and job typology

- **Difficulties in professional integration** :
  - *"More flexibility in understanding the need to identify a job"*
  - *"There is a need for good jobs that do not require an advanced level of Romanian"*
  - *"Jobs that recognize skills and experience gained abroad without formalities"*
  - *"Part-time jobs for single-parent families"*
  - *"Jobs that offer accommodation"*
  - *"They are usually employed in jobs below their training and qualifications"*

3. Vocational training and guidance

- **The need for skills development** :
  - *"Vocational training and retraining programs"*
  - *"Vocational training courses in the Ukrainian language"*
  - *"Personalized career guidance"*
  - *"Development of key skills"*
  - *"Mentoring or job shadowing programs"*

4. Childcare and family support

- **Lack of support services for parents** :
  - *"Leaving children in after-school structures"*
  - *"Childcare services are underdeveloped and prevent mothers from working"*

5. Social integration and attitudes of beneficiaries

- **Attitudes and behaviors towards integration** :
  - *"A greater openness of AU beneficiaries to learning Romanian would be necessary"*
  - *"Openness from Ukrainian citizens, cooperation from them, desire to integrate into society"*
  - *"Expectations and aspirations of Ukrainian citizens regarding jobs"*
  - *"I reject employers' offers for reasons related to inconsistency with previous occupations"*

6. The role of employers and institutions

- **Involvement of relevant stakeholders**:
  - *"Employer involvement"*
  - *"Long-term insertion monitoring"*
  - *"Reducing administrative barriers"*

10. Conclusions and recommendations

Data collected from 59 respondents, representing 37 Employment Agencies and 14 NGOs (one of which with religious affiliation), provides a detailed picture of support for access to a job for refugees UKRAINIAN in Romania. Despite limits inherent of an exploratory investigation, unrepresentative at the level national, some trends and structural problems affecting Ukrainian refugees access to the labor market from Romania were identified.

10.1. Key lessons from mapping support for engagement

- The most common activities offered to Ukrainian refugees are:
  - **Job placement** (86.7% of respondents).
  - **Vocational/skills training** (48.3%).
- **Public institutions (AJOFM)** are the main providers of these services.
- **NGOs** mainly offer:
  - Romanian and English language courses.
  - Legal advice on labor rights.
  - Complementary services: professional counseling, cultural orientation, support for equivalency of studies, activities for children and psychosocial support.
- **High level of collaboration between actors**
  - Over 80% of NGOs and almost 70% of public institutions collaborate with other actors in supporting the employment of Ukrainian refugees.
  - The most frequent collaborations are with: employers, local authorities, local and international NGOs, employment offices.
- **The quality of partnerships is positively assessed**
  - Collaborations with NGOs and local authorities are considered the most effective.
  - Collaborations with private companies are also well evaluated by two-thirds of respondents.
- **Funding is dominated by external sources**
  - Most common sources: European Union (87%), public authorities (84%), international donors (52%).
  - NGOs are more dependent on external funding and less supported by public sources.
- **Priority needs for improving support**
  - The most important needs identified:
  - Tools for assessing skills (61%).
  - Networking and collaboration platforms (59%).
  - Support for national policies (51%).
  - Increased funding (47.5%).
  - Staff training (42.4%).
- **Differences between types of organizations** :
  - NGOs are in greater need of national policies, funding, and collaboration.

  - Public institutions feel the lack of skills assessment tools more acutely.
- **Services are generally universal, but some organizations target vulnerable groups**
  - 61.7% provide general services.
  - Over 50% offer services tailored to:
  - Working-age adults.
  - Roma and other ethnic minorities.
  - People with disabilities.
  - Almost half offer services tailored to women (including mothers).
  - NGOs are more active in supporting vulnerable categories (women, LGBTQ+, minorities).

- **Examples of Good Practices include:**
  - Social integration (Romanian language courses, counseling, integrated services).
  - Access to the labor market (intermediation, counseling, job shadowing).
  - Professional training (apprenticeship, CV writing, study equivalency).
  - Collaboration with employers (visits, job fairs).
  - Projects completed with indirect employment support.

10.2. Barriers and challenges in labor market integration

- The most important barriers identified:
  - **The language barrier** (94.45% consider it very or extremely important).
  - **Lack of recognition of qualifications** .
  - **Lack of non-technical skills** (communication, flexibility, problem solving).
  - **Lack of childcare services** .
  - **Lack of experience in the local labor market** .

10.3. Prospects for future involvement

- Only 27% of respondents are willing to get involved in future activities, while 55% would could participate " depending on resources and time ” , which suggests a high workload **level** of **employees from organizations** .

10.4 Recommendations

Based on results, coordinated and multisectoral interventions are necessary. The recommendations are structured on short, medium and long term. and includes specific actions for different categories of actors, as well as directions for the SMART UA project.

10.5. Short -term strategic actions (0–6 months)

- **Expansion of English language courses**, with an emphasis on intensive formats and accessible .

- **Facilitating collaboration between stakeholders** (**NGOs**, AJOFMs, local authorities) to support employment .
- **Promotion of existing good practices**, by promoting successful examples and organizing experience exchange sessions .
- **Support refugees in CV writing, preparation for Interviews and professional counseling .**
- **Mapping existing services** and providers involved to avoid duplication and to streamline interventions.

10.6. Medium- term strategic actions (6–18 months)

- **Creation and implementation of professional training programs and reconversion**, including in refugees mother language.
- **Development of digital tools for competency evaluation** and professional guidance.
- **Expansion of childcare services** (e.g. nursery, afterschool) to **support** women who work.
- **Consolidation of networking and collaboration platforms** between public institutions and NGOs .
- **Simplification of administrative procedures** for recognition of studied and qualifications.

10.7. Long-term strategic actions (18+ months)

- **Development and implementation of social policies to support** the sustainable integration of refugees into the labor market.
- **Creation of a legal and operational framework for recognition of informal and non- formal competences.**
- **Monitoring refugees ' professional** inclusion and evaluation of the impact of integration programs.
- **Investment in the capacity building** of NGOs and public authorities.
- **Establishing a sustainable financing mechanism**, which could reduce the dependence on external funds.

10.8. Specific actions for different public institutions (AJOFM, local authorities , ministries)

- Providing job-placement services and professional education/training.
- Implementation of digital skills programs and support for studies recognition.
- Coordination with NGOs for completion of services.

NGOs

- Providing foreign language courses, legal and psycho-social counseling.
- Organizing support activities for children and parents .
- Involvement to improve orientation and community integration.
- Adjustment of services for vulnerable groups (e.g. women , LGBTQ+, ethnic minorities).

Employers

- Adapted Jobs (part-time, with accommodation, without requirement for advanced language skills).
- Participation in mentoring programs and job shadowing.
- Recognition of refugees' previous professional experience.

10.9. Central message

Integration of Ukrainian refugees on the labor market in Romania it is a complex process, but essential for social cohesion and economic development being influenced by a combination of economic, social and psychological factors. A holistic, coordinated, multisectoral approach and adapted to refugees real needs is required, combining rapid interventions with sustainable policies on long term. Collaboration between public institutions, NGOs and employers is the key of an effective and lasting integration.

11. Annexes

Annex 1. List of organizations that have given their consent for the publication of data

BIHOR COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AGENCY
Contact person : Nice Dacian
County : Bihor
Location : Oradea
Address : 14 Transylvania Street
Phone: 0359 800 960
Email: ajofm.bh@anofm.gov.ro
Website : http://www.anofm.ro

COVASNA COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AGENCY
Contact person : Tibor Kelemen
County : Covasna
Locality : St. George
Address : Str . Gen. G. Bălan, no. 14, 520013
Phone : 0040 267 312157
Email: ajofm.cv@anofm.gov.ro
Website : http://www.anofm.ro

GALATI COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AGENCY
Contact person : birth Caesar – Director executive Deputy AJOFM Galați
County : Galati
Locality : Galati
Address : Str . Domneasca no. 191, code postal code 800163
Phone: +40 236 412 262
Email: ajofm.gl@anofm.gov.ro
Website : http://www.anofm.ro
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/AJOFMGalati

BRAȘOV COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AGENCY
Contact person : Dragomir Liliana – Director executive
County : Braşov
Locality : Braşov
Address : Str . Lunga no. 1A, code postal code 500035
Phone: 0268 411 960
Email: ajofm.bv@anofm.gov.ro
Website: https://www.anofm.ro/brasov/
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100007604867119

NON-GOVERNMENTAL PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE ASSOC

Contact person : Alexandra Oana's Coza
County : Maramures
Locality : Baia Mare
Address : Lascar Street Wedge no. 3, code 430204
Phone: 0743 566 401
Email: alexandra.coza@assoc.ro
Website : http://www.assoc.ro
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/associatiaAssoc

TERRE DES HOMMES FOUNDATION – AIDE À L'ENFANCE DANS LE MONDE
Contact person : Rodica bighead
County : Bucharest
Locality : Bucharest
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Annex 2. Excerpts from the responses free

Excerpts from the free answers to the question about examples of Good Practice

funding a workplace apprenticeship program
Through discussions with employers in Ilfov County and through the Job Exchange
In the context of supporting Ukrainian refugees, we carried out a series of activities aimed at facilitating their integration into Romanian society. The activities included: Organizing Romanian language courses for Ukrainian citizens, with the aim of supporting them in acquiring the basic communication skills necessary in everyday life and at work; Individual counseling on the procedure for equivalence of educational and professional qualification documents, including providing support in completing and submitting files; Mediating communication with local employers, through direct discussions, in order to facilitate the access of Ukrainian citizens to the labor market and understanding their requirements. Results obtained: A significant number of beneficiaries acquired basic language skills in Romanian; Several Ukrainian citizens managed to equivalence their studies and qualifications; Direct links were created between employers and job seekers, contributing to their professional integration.
Romanian language courses for Ukrainian refugees
Our projects for the benefit of displaced persons from Ukraine ended in June 2025. Employing migrants was not an objective of our projects, we supported interested persons by referring them to public institutions and NGOs that carried out this type of projects.
We held information sessions dedicated to Ukrainian citizens, aiming to present legal rights in Romania, support the CV writing process and facilitate access to employment opportunities
Counseling program - informational support, job placement, training and increasing employability Romanian and English language courses
Holistic model of integrated services in the hub and mobile center
We consider the ROUA Community Center to be a good practice. It is a safe space co -created with Ukrainian refugees, where we offer personalized support (counseling, employment workshops, activities for children), develop community leadership and constantly organize social cohesion events. 80% of the staff is refugees, and the feedback of the beneficiaries is actively used to adjust the services. The model is sustainable, replicable and has a direct impact on long-term integration.
Comprehensive and tailored support for Ukrainian refugees, combining protection, social integration and access to essential services through an approach focused on the needs of each beneficiary.
One Day Job Shadowing – an innovative concept through which we aimed to bring employers closer to (future/potential) employees. Basically, for a few hours, a small number of refugees (up to 10 people) are accompanied to a company, where a representative makes a presentation of the entire company, if necessary, people can enter the production area to actually see what the work entails, ask questions, etc.
We maintained close contact with a large employer: Ikea , we visited there together with Ukrainians. We asked to carry out activities on the company's territory together with refugees.

Excerpts from the answers to the open question about other possible recommendations for improving the results of employment assistance programs for refugees from Ukraine in Romania

It would be necessary for beneficiaries from the AU to be more open to learning the Romanian

language, more flexibility in understanding the need to identify a job, to leave children in after-school care structures. school , etc.
POOR COMMUNICATION
intensive Romanian language courses
Openness from Ukrainian citizens , cooperation from them, desire to integrate into society
The following jobs are needed for Ukrainian refugees: good jobs that do not require an advanced level of Romanian language, that recognize skills and experience acquired abroad without formalities, part- time jobs for single-parent families, and jobs that provide accommodation
Expanding intensive Romanian language learning activities, a condition for all Ukrainian citizens, in order to reduce the language barrier.
employer involvement, professional training and retraining programs,
migrants are mostly women, with qualifications not recognized in Romania, with children in care . They are usually employed in jobs below their training and qualifications, or in sectors with very low salaries. Vocational training courses in Ukrainian would help a lot, but, in practice, it does not seem realistic. Childcare services are underdeveloped and prevent mothers from working.
Personalized career guidance, Reducing administrative and linguistic barriers, Involving employers, Developing key skills, Mentoring or job shadowing programs , Long-term placement monitoring,
The main problem identified in interaction with citizens foreigners was that regarding the lack of knowledge of the Romanian language, but not even of a common language international (English, French), which makes communication difficult. Another important aspect to mention is the expectations and aspirations of citizens. Ukrainians when they decide to establish their temporary residence in Romania. In many cases they reject employers' offers for reasons related to the fact that they expect to be offered and to perform the same activity as in the country they come from (the majority being people with higher education declared upon registration as persons seeking work , but without educational documents confirming these studies).

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