



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

IOM Romania Annual Report

2013



This annual report is an overview of IOM Romania's activities and results achieved in 2013. The information in this report is organized into the following chapters:

- I. About IOM
- II. The IOM Office in Romania
- III. Migration trends in Romania
- IV. IOM interventions in Romania
- V. Public events
- VI. Resources

I. The International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Established in 1951, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration. The Organization counts 155 Member States, with a further 11 States holding observer status. IOM's programme budget for 2012 exceeded USD 1.2 billion, funding over 2,300 projects and more than 7,800 staff serving in approximately 470 Field Offices in over 100 countries.

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society, and does so by providing services and counselling to governments and migrants. IOM also promotes international cooperation on migration issues, assists in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and provides humanitarian assistance to migrants in need.

IOM works with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners in four broad areas of migration management, namely:

- a. **Migration and development.** IOM harnesses the development potential of migration for individual migrants and societies through activities in areas such as: (i) improving remittance management; (ii) building human capital through labour migration programmes; (iii) return and reintegration of qualified nationals; and (iv) capacity-building for governments.
- b. **Facilitating migration.** IOM assists governments and migrants with selection/recruitment, language and cultural orientation, consular services, training, reception, integration and return.
- c. **Regulating migration.** IOM provides technical assistance through activities such as training governmental migration managers in border management, visa systems, regulation of entry and stay, and the collection and use of biometric information, as well as by implementing programmes to facilitate the voluntary return and reintegration of displaced and stranded persons.
- d. **Addressing forced migration.** IOM assists refugee populations during and after emergencies, as well as facilitates the resettlement of refugees for whom resettlement in a new country is the only durable solution.

For more information, visit the IOM website at www.iom.int.

II. The IOM Office in Romania

IOM was established in Romania in 1992 to respond to the information and counselling needs of Romanian citizens regarding emigration formalities. Over the years, IOM Romania has implemented various national and international cooperation programmes in the field of counter-trafficking in human beings, migration facilitation, refugee assistance, voluntary return, migrant integration, migrants' health and consular support activities.

The main areas of intervention for IOM Romania in 2013 were:

- a. **Integration of third-country nationals.** IOM Romania has established a nationwide network of 15 Migrant Information Centres to facilitate the social, economic and cultural integration of third-country nationals into their new communities.
- b. **Assisted voluntary return and reintegration.** IOM conducted AVRR activities, offering irregular migrants the possibility to return home with dignity and to benefit from a reintegration grant that opened new opportunities for them in their home country.
- c. **Refugee relocation.** IOM Romania is a key actor in the relocation process of refugees, working with UNHCR and the Government of Romania. Through the emergency transit centre in Timisoara, a secure environment is provided to refugees awaiting resettlement in a new country.
- d. **Medical processing.** At the request of various governments, IOM, in close coordination with UNHCR and the Romanian Ministry of Internal Affairs, provided medical services for the migrants and refugees who were about to be resettled.
- e. **Assisted transport to Canada.** IOM facilitated the procurement of one-way tickets at specially negotiated fares as part of a humanitarian programme targeted at those who were accepted for resettlement to Canada, as well as workers and students who had visas valid for more than 12 months.
- f. **Visa application centre for Canada.** In August 2013 IOM established the Canadian Visa Application Centre in Bucharest, which provides migrants with assistance and guidance in the submission of their visa applications.
- g. **Fighting trafficking in human beings.** In 2013 IOM provided specific assistance to Romanian citizens who were victims of trafficking returning from other European countries.

For more information, visit www.oim.ro.

III. Migration in Romania: Trends and challenges

Migration trends

In spite of strict border management and restrictions for asylum-seekers, Europe remains one of the most popular migration destinations in the world. Located at the eastern port of entry to the European Union (EU), Romania is a crossroads for various migratory flows, continuing to be a country of destination, transit and, also, origin.

Foremost, Romania witnesses the “brain” and “care drain” of its own citizens, who exercise their mobility rights within the EU. It is estimated that more than 3.5 million Romanians work abroad. Secondly, the country witnesses the transiting through, or the settlement on its territory, of third-country nationals who are in search of well-being in Europe.

When looking at the general migration context of Romania, one can note the following main challenges:

- a. Continued flow of mixed-citizenship families seeking refuge out of Syria (70% of asylum-seekers in 2013 were of Syrian origin);
- b. Higher number of irregular entry attempts by migrants through the Black Sea coast;
- c. Poliomyelitis outbreak in the Syrian refugee population;
- d. Continued Intra-European workforce mobility “brain drain,” particularly of medical personnel, creating difficulties in covering the vacancies.

The first three challenges have been addressed largely through strong cooperation between the relevant authorities with responsibilities in the field of migration. IOM Romania’s contribution was highly appreciated during the poliomyelitis outbreak in the emergency transit centre in Timisoara. As for the fourth challenge, efforts still need to be made to improve perspectives for the future.

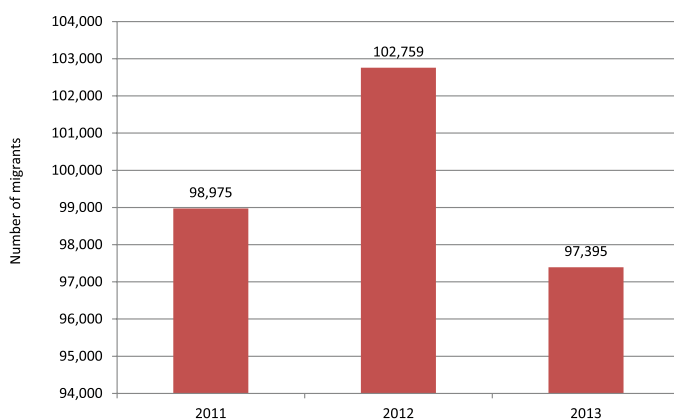
Official data

In terms of asylum-seekers, compared with the 2,982 asylum applications in 2012, there were 1,499 registered in 2013. A total of 216 cases were granted a form of protection (139 received refugee status and 77 received subsidiary protection) in 2012; in 2013 the number rose to 896 (377 received refugee status and 519 received subsidiary protection). Afghanistan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic remain the main countries of origin of asylum-seekers.

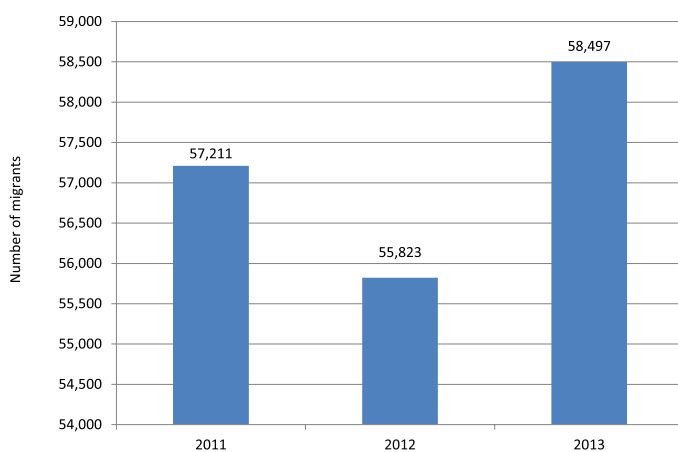
With regard to return to countries of origin, there were 2,441 official decisions in 2012 – 17 per cent less than in 2011. Only 60 per cent of these returnees were able to leave Romania by their own means, while the rest contributed to an increase in voluntary and forced return cases. As for 2013, 2,318 irregular migrants were identified. The Republic of Moldova, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey remained the main countries of origin in 2013.

Migration Trends in Romania, 2011 to 2013

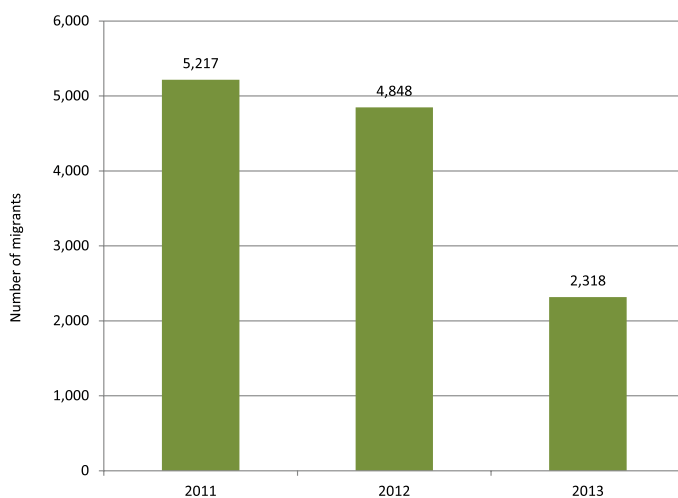
Decrease in the number of officially registered migrants in Romania



Increase in the number of third-country nationals legally residing in Romania



Decrease in the number of irregular migrants in Romania



IV. IOM interventions in Romania

IOM responded to the specific migration management needs of Romania, as well as of other countries worldwide, through the following intervention areas: (a) facilitating migration, (b) regulating migration, (c) addressing forced migration and (d) migration health. Interventions are detailed hereafter.

1. Facilitating migration

National Coordination for the Integration of Third-country Nationals in Romania

The project “National Coordination for the Integration of Third-country Nationals (TCNs) in Romania” is a three-year project (2012–2015) co-funded by the EU through the European Integration Fund, which is managed by the General Inspectorate for Immigration, and implemented in collaboration with

Asociatia Serviciul Apel. It built on the resources created by three previous projects – in 2009, 2010 and 2011 – in the field of TCN integration funded through the European Integration Fund.

The project aimed to facilitate the social, economic and cultural integration of third-country nationals legally residing in Romania through:

- a. Information and counselling; provision of specific services, such as supporting access to employment, education, health-care and social systems; and direct assistance to vulnerable third-country nationals;
- b. Raising awareness among local authorities on the integration needs of third-country nationals, as well as strengthening the cooperation between local institutions and organizations with responsibilities in TCN integration.



A network of Migrant Information Centres in Romania was developed under a previous TCN integration project. The centres are located in Bucharest, Bacău, Braşov, Cluj-Napoca, Constanţa, Craiova, Galaţi, Iaşi, Oradea, Piteşti, Ploieşti, Sibiu, Suceava, Tîrgu Mureş and Timisoara.

Under IOM coordination, the Migrant Information Centres provide general information to migrants, specific information and counselling on accessing health-care and educational services, and direct assistance to vulnerable migrants.

The project continues to collect data on the profile and needs of the beneficiaries and fosters the exchange of information and good practices through a dedicated website on migrant integration in Romania: www.romaniaeacasa.ro.

Project results

The main accomplishment of the project in 2013 was the ability to support almost 2000 migrants who decided to call Romania their home in accessing services and resources, leading to a better integration of themselves and their families into the communities they live in.

During the implementation of the project activities, IOM and its partners worked closely with representatives from local authorities to ensure a better understanding of migrants' specific needs and the advantages of effective integration. Similarly, substantive support was provided to beneficiaries through the dedicated website www.romaniaeacasa.ro.

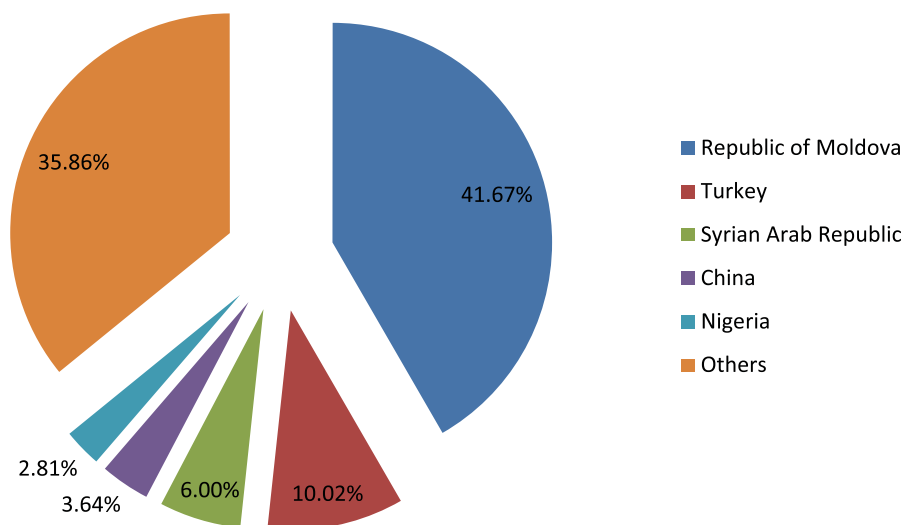
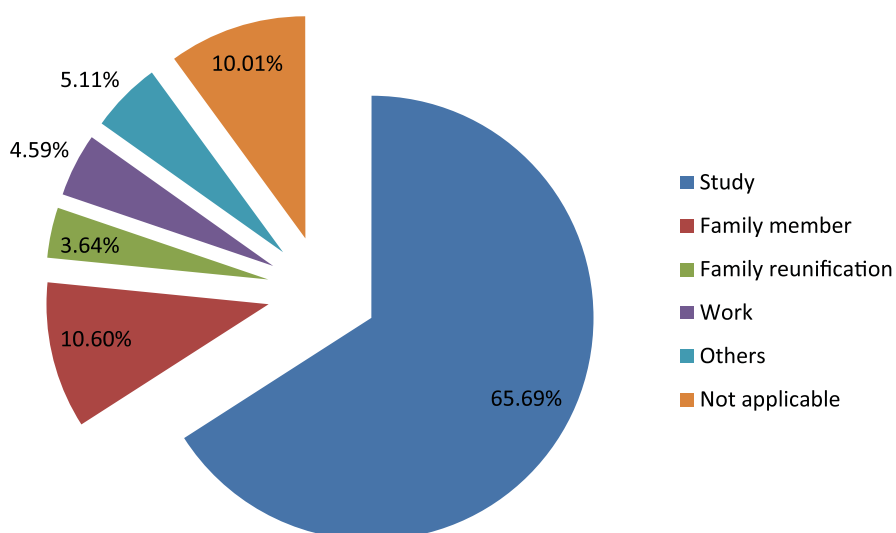
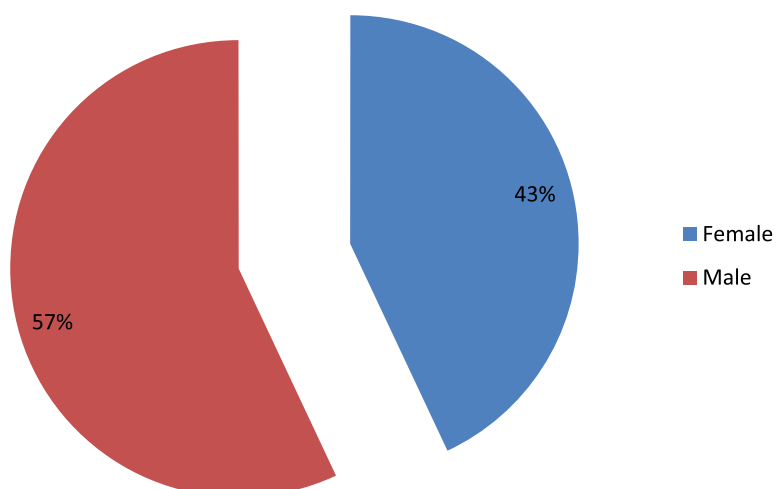
Consular services

At the specific request of the governments concerned, IOM started offering consular services consisting of document collection and verification, as well as migrant counselling and assistance. In 2013 IOM Romania provided qualified support to over 1,500 visa applicants to countries such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Canada Visa Application Centre

IOM Romania manages the Visa Application Centre for Canada (VAC). Since its opening in August 2013, more than 1,200 visitor, worker and student visa files have been processed. The centre offers applicants guidance in completing their application forms, as well as allows them to make the application, and collects travel documents returned from the Canadian Embassy throughout the working day.



Countries of origin of counselled third-country nationals**Type of visa for counselled third-country nationals****Gender distribution of counselled third-country nationals**

2. Regulating migration

Strengthening of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme in Romania

The three-year project “Strengthening of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programmes (AVRR) in Romania” (2012–2015) is co-funded by the EU through the European Return Fund, which is managed by the Romanian General Inspectorate for Immigration (GII). The project is implemented in partnership with Asociația Serviciul Apel and with support from four other NGOs located in Galați, Suceava, Șomcuta Mare and Timisoara – cities where GII’s public custody and open accommodation centres are located.



The project supported the development of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme in Romania by raising awareness among beneficiaries and stakeholders and through voluntary return activities for eligible migrants. The target group consisted of asylum-seekers and illegal migrants who chose to return to their countries of origin.

Project results

In 2013 over 400 migrants were assisted through counselling and information services available from eight governmental centres. Voluntary return was organized for 198

beneficiaries, of which 60 also received basic material assistance prior to departure, and 55 have benefitted from social reintegration support post-return.



Moreover, 50 eligible migrants have graduated from entrepreneurship courses provided by the project, thus enhancing their chances of identifying employment opportunities. In order to ensure the sustainability of the project and the identification of good practices and solutions to potential challenges, three monitoring visits to the main countries of origin of the migrants were conducted jointly with our national partners.

Counter-trafficking

Fighting trafficking in persons is one of IOM’s priorities worldwide. In this context, IOM Romania, together with its governmental and non-governmental partners, used its own resources to assist the growing number of Romanian citizens that find themselves in vulnerable situations. A key factor in the success of the abovementioned process was the interest and involvement of the dedicated network of IOM professionals, particularly those based in EU Member States.

Support to governments for a better understanding of the trafficking phenomenon involving victims of Romanian origin

Trafficking in persons is a very dynamic and complex reality that demands focused and

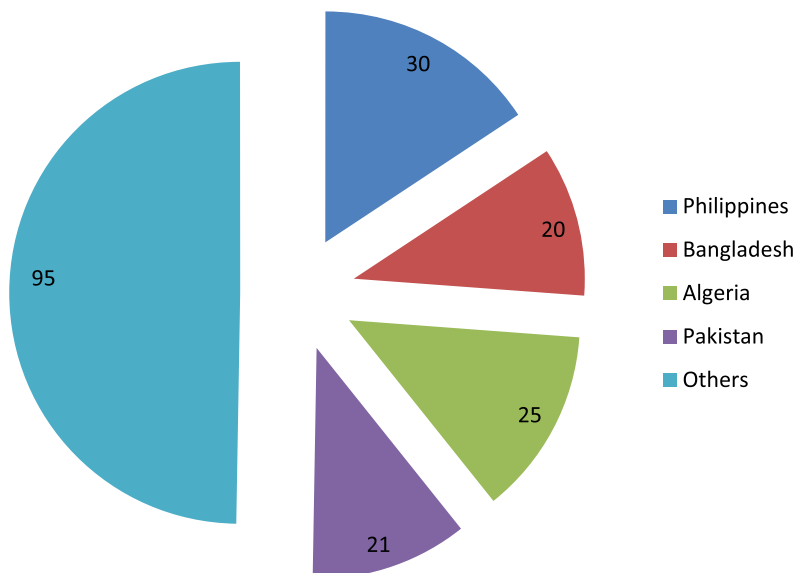
unbiased analysis of the various factors involved, so that the governments and authorities would be able to take effective and successful measures.

In February 2013 the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Romania entrusted IOM Romania to conduct research into trafficking in persons. The purpose of the report was to provide an in-depth analysis of the trafficking situation in Romania – especially with regard to recruitment methods and channels – with the United Kingdom as a destination country for Romanian victims.

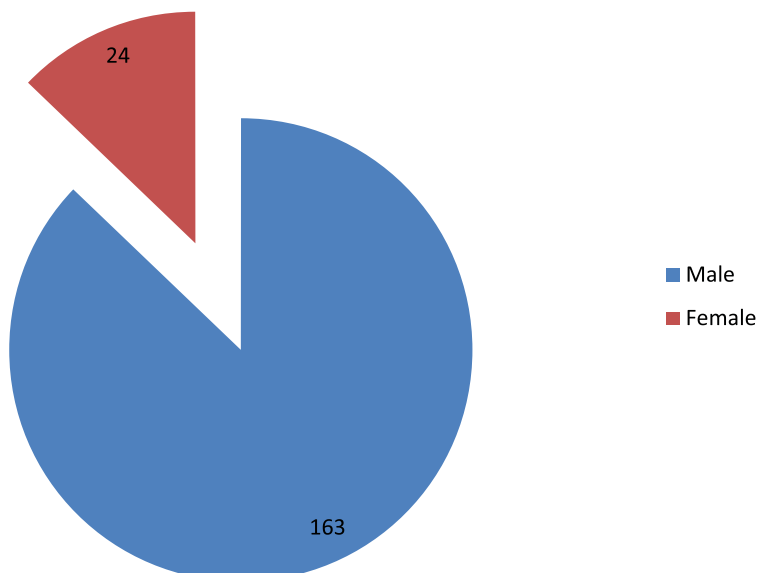
The trafficking of Romanians to the United Kingdom shows clear recruitment, transportation and exploitation patterns. As a result, concerted efforts should focus on stronger cooperation between the United Kingdom and Romania regarding data exchange, risk assessment, awareness-raising campaigns for the different categories of persons vulnerable to trafficking, and assistance for victims.

The full report is available upon request.

Countries of origin of AVRR beneficiaries



Gender distribution of AVRR cases



3. Addressing forced migration – refugee resettlement

The emergency transit centre in Timisoara

The emergency transit centre (ETC) in Timisoara has the capacity to host up to 200 people, providing temporary shelter to refugees who are in need of immediate evacuation from their first country of refuge. Such evacuations occur when refugees face life-threatening situations in camps, including the risk of being forcibly returned to areas where they would face persecution

or residence in unstable, inhumane or dangerous conditions.

Since 2008 a total of 1,355 refugees representing 15 various nationalities transited through the emergency transit centre and were resettled to countries such as the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. In 2013, 343 refugees arrived at the emergency transit centre in Timisoara; 297 of them were resettled in seven resettlement countries through IOM Romania assistance.



4. Migration health

Migration health assessments and assistance (MHAAs) are among the most best-established migration management services offered by IOM worldwide. At the request of receiving country governments, the Migration Health Department (MHD) provides an evaluation of the physical and mental health status of migrants for the purpose of assisting them with resettlement, international employment, enrolment in specific migrant assistance programmes, or the obtainment of temporary or permanent visas.

The main benefits of MHAA include prevention of certain diseases through immunization; early detection and treatment of conditions of individual and public health concern; safer travel for migrants; and

the protection of health of both migrants and hosting communities. It also provides authorities in countries of destination with adequate information, thus reducing the pressure on health and/or social services.

MHAAs are aligned with the IOM goal of “healthy migrants in healthy communities.” They respond to real-time needs, mirroring the changing migratory patterns and epidemiological profiles of migrants.

In relation to the above, IOM Romania has a fully established MHD since 2001 which currently consists of eight staff members. MHD coordinated two main programmes in 2013: (a) medical examination/assessment for Australia, Canada and New Zealand visa applicants (self-payers) and (b) medical assistance for in- and outbound refugees at the ETC in Timisoara.

The **self-payers' programme** offers the complete spectra of medical examinations to visa applicants that may be required by the beneficiary governments. The medical examinations are performed by impanelled medical clinics and personnel. All medical findings were uploaded to the e-medical online database system and were protected by strict confidentiality rules. Implementing a "conveyer belt" set-up, the programme ensured that a client is medically processed within no more than half day.

The **refugee programme** includes an assessment of the medical status of refugees transiting the Timisoara emergency transit centre as per the requirements of the countries of relocation. The programme also serves an important role in the prevention and control of communicable diseases prior to a migrant's departure and travel, whether inbound to or outbound of the emergency transit centre.

Equi-Health: "Fostering health provision for migrants, the Roma, and other vulnerable groups"

In February 2013 the European Commission and IOM joined forces through the Equi-Health project to address the challenges of solving health issues in Roma communities. Coordinated by the Migration Health Division of the IOM Regional Office in Brussels, the project is active in six European countries.

In April 2013 IOM Romania hosted the first meeting of the National Consultative Committee (NCC) on the framework of the Roma project component to discuss and exchange views on the National Roma Integration Strategy. The meeting gathered representatives of the Romanian Government, including those of the Ministry of Health, the National Public Health Institute and the World Health Organization.

The outcomes of the discussions provided valuable input for the revision of the National Roma Integration Strategy. Between May and November 2013, IOM Romania participated in more than six meetings of the consultative working group for the revision of the strategy, organized by the Romanian National Agency for Roma.

V. Public events

Meeting with British Members of Parliament

On 22 May 2013, IOM hosted a meeting between the UK Embassy and British Members of Parliament on one side, and Romanian professionals in the field of migration on the other. The purpose of the meeting was to assess the number of Romanians that will enter the United Kingdom following the lifting of restrictions for Romanians and Bulgarians to the UK labour market on 1 January 2014.

IOM celebrates the International Migrants Day

On 18 December 2013, IOM and the General Inspectorate of Immigration (GII) organized the event "Migration and Mobility: Realities and Perspectives in Romania and Worldwide" at the UN House in Bucharest.

The event was organized in observance of International Migrants Day and aimed to bring to the same table representatives of the main institutions and organizations involved in the migration phenomena – namely, IOM, GII, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme, Romania's

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and several NGOs. The event also benefited from the presence of representatives of migrant communities in Romania.

The main topics discussed during the event were as follows: (a) migration in Romania and worldwide; (b) migration as an integral part of the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 Development Agenda 2015; (c) migrants' integration opportunities in local Romanian communities; and (d) European perspectives on migration.

Documentary movies on migration and integration were presented during the occasion. In addition, a thematic collection of drawings and paintings made by children was exhibited in the hallway of the UN House.

Events related to European-funded programmes

In 2013 six seminars, two round tables and one press conferences were organized within European-funded projects, namely, "Strengthening of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) Programmes in Romania" and "National Coordination for the Integration of Third-country Nationals in Romania."



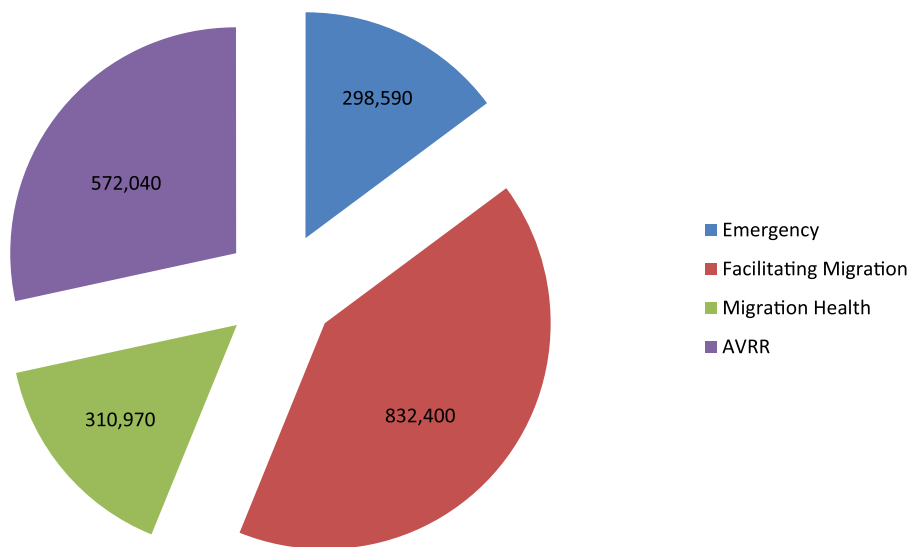
The events aimed to raise awareness of the projects' objectives, strengthening relationships with partner institutions and draft proposals for improving legislation dealing with foreigners in Romania. They involved the participation of central and local public authorities, representatives of diplomatic missions in Romania, representatives of foreign communities, collaborating NGOs and the media.



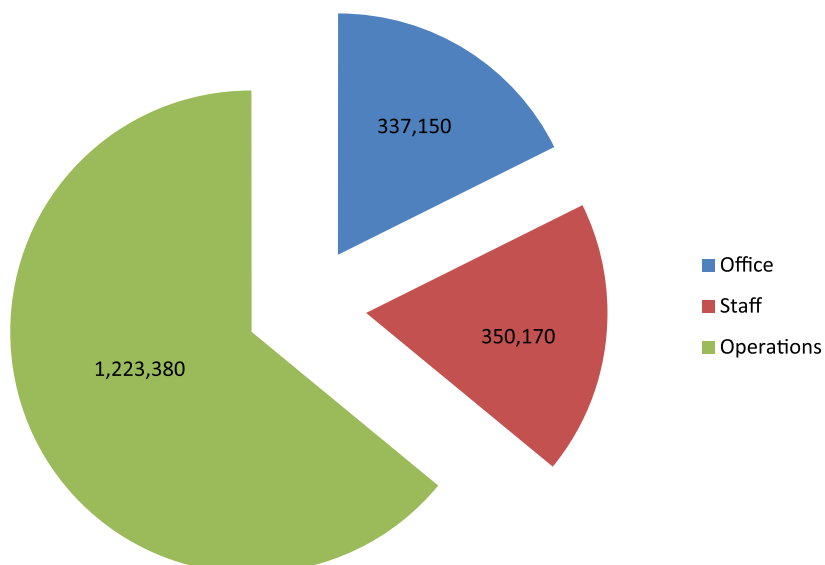
VI. Resources

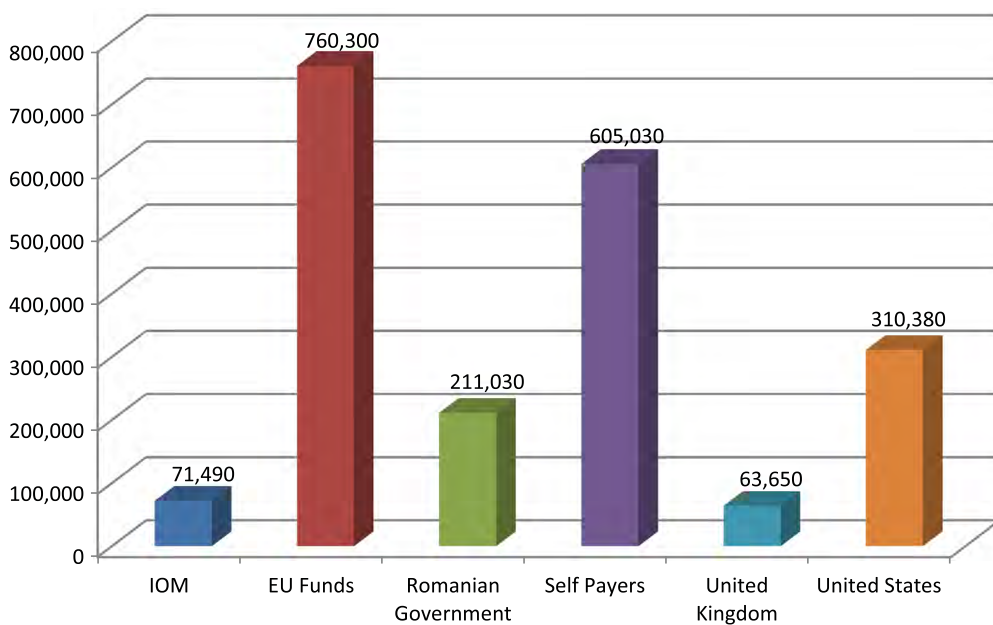
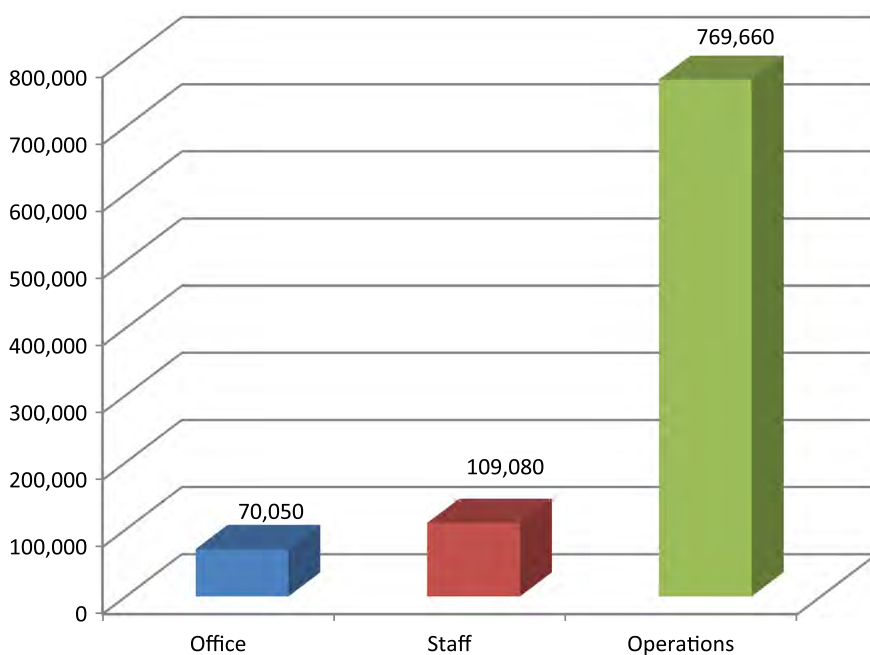
In 2013 IOM Romania spent a total of USD 2,019,197, of which USD 421,143 was spent through a number of Romanian NGO partners and mostly on migrant integration and AVRR activities. The figures below show the breakdown of expenses by type, service area and funding source, as well as the usage of EU project funds.

Expenses per service area (in USD)



Expenses per type (in USD)



Expenses per funding source (in USD)**Usage of EU project funds**

2014 vision

In line with the mandate and objectives set forth in the IOM Strategic Focus in the European Union, the European Economic Area and Switzerland for 2013–2018, the IOM Romania Country Office will continue to provide effective response to the challenges posed by migration and mobility into 2014.

As such, we at IOM Romania intend to continue the ongoing initiatives that we have committed ourselves to, providing migrant integration and voluntary return assistance in cooperation with national authorities and intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. Similarly, we will continue to strengthen our role in facilitating medical services to targeted groups as we strive to provide further assistance to the Romanian Government in migration-related emergency response.

In addition to current interventions, in 2014 IOM Romania team will maintain its commitment to expanding its network of strategic partners to include private sector entities in supporting activities related to health migration and assistance to vulnerable groups in the context of the “migration for economic growth and development” priorities. Furthermore, our work will include actions that will complement national efforts in fighting trafficking in human beings and facilitating resettlement of refugees.

As we thank our partners for their commitment to ensuring that we contribute to the global efforts that aim to turn migration from a vulnerability into a source of socio-economic progress, we are proud to be part of the leading migration agency.



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