

Romania

Each year, the ESN European Semester Group follows the European Commission's cycle of policy coordination with EU Member States known as the European Semester and produces a report based on a questionnaire completed by public social services authorities on the social situation in European countries with a particular focus on social services. This country profile identifies the most important common challenges facing social services as reported by ESN members in Austria, related to three principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights and makes recommendations for the 2023 European Semester. The full report, with cross-country analysis of all the participating countries is available [here](#).

1. Children's services

1.1. Key issues

According to data from the National Statistical Institute of Romania, between 2017 and 2020, the highest incidence of poverty was recorded among children under 18 and young people aged 18-24. In these age groups, about 3 out of 10 people lived below the poverty line, far above adults. However, in 2021 there has been a 3% decline in the poverty rate amongst the 18-24 age group and 2% decline in children. This trend should be maintained with the government's introduction of the state allowance for children in January 2022. In addition, a social voucher scheme for the most vulnerable citizens was introduced in May 2022. The scheme covers, among others, children and adults with disabilities, families with at least two children and single parents

1.2. Recommendations

The state allowance and social voucher will contribute to further reducing child poverty in Romania, but since they are limited to cash transfers, they will have a limited impact in changing the vulnerable environments in

which children grow up. In order to overcome this challenge, Romania would need a comprehensive strategy for supporting children from vulnerable families, which should involve the integrated action of several social services and be based on supporting the communities where children are raised.

2. Long-term care

2.1. Key issues

As in other EU countries, a key problem facing long-term care in Romania is the fragmentation of services, including a sharp division between health and social care services. Care for older people focuses only on maintaining physical health, to the detriment of emotional and social needs. The paradigm shift in service provision from an institutional to a home-based model is happening too slowly and is not reaching rural areas.

2.2. Recommendations

Put in place multiple efforts to integrate all sectors providing long-term care services and to ensure that they are properly funded taking into account significant regional differences in

terms of demographics and wealth. Failure to take these differences into account in service planning will exacerbate the inequalities that already exist in access to long-term care across the country.

3. Support for homeless people

3.1. Key issues

There is a lack of reliable data showing the scale of the problem. What is certain is that the number of people in need of support exceeds the support offered by the government. A total of 74 Residential Homeless Care and Assistance Centres have been licensed by the Ministry of Labor as of August 2022. 55 of them are provided by the public sector. On 21 March 2022, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity introduced the proposal for a homeless public policy. Although a step in the right direction, the proposal does not include any progress indicators to trace the achievement of the objectives it outlines.

3.2. Recommendations

Monitor the implementation process of the public policy for the social inclusion of homeless people through an action plan which contains clearly defined targets and indicators.¹



Read the report online

Putting People First
Investing in Social
Services. Promoting
Social Inclusion.

¹ https://mmuncii.ro/j33/images/Documente/Familie/16082022_CR_PFA.pdf.