

Romania

Habitat for Humanity in Romania

In 1996, Romania became Habitat for Humanity's 50th country worldwide. Habitat Romania has affiliates spread across the three historic provinces of the country, and the national office in Bucharest.

The housing need in Romania

Despite the fact that Romania is part of the European Union, more than 5 million people live in extreme poverty including more than 2 million children. 8.5 million people (around 40 percent of the Romanian population) have no bath or shower or access to running water. According to the national statistics, 35 percent of the housing stock in Romania is in a state of complete neglect and needs repairs. Real wages for working Romanian families have dropped by about 40 percent, putting additional pressure on the strained social system. The unemployed, farmers and housewives are the social categories most affected by severe poverty.

Two-thirds of Romania's poor live in rural areas. In the cities, many dwellers live in cramped apartments in condominium complexes. Much of Romania's housing stock is low quality and deteriorating because of a lack of maintenance. A family of eight is more likely to live in a two-room flat than in a house. More than 10,000 blocks of flats were constructed 40-50 years ago and now need serious renovation to their infrastructure, heating systems and roofs. In recent years, Romania has faced several bad floods, leaving thousands of people in temporary shelters every year. Similarly, the country has experienced harsh winters with heavy snowfalls that isolated many villages from the main roads and stable food supplies.

How Habitat addresses the need in Romania

Habitat for Humanity Romania builds, rehabilitates, provides advice, supports and conducts energy efficiency and disaster risk reduction and response programs for vulnerable groups. The organization runs nation-wide and regional campaigns to raise funds for its construction projects and works closely with a large number of companies who actively support charitable projects.



COUNTRY FACTS*

Capital	Bucharest
Main country facts	Joined the EU in 2007
Population	21.6 million
Urbanization	54.6 percent
Life expectancy	75.1 years
Unemployment rate	6.7 percent
Population living below poverty line	22.4 percent

*Sources: CIA World Factbook

HABITAT FACTS

When Habitat started in Romania
1996

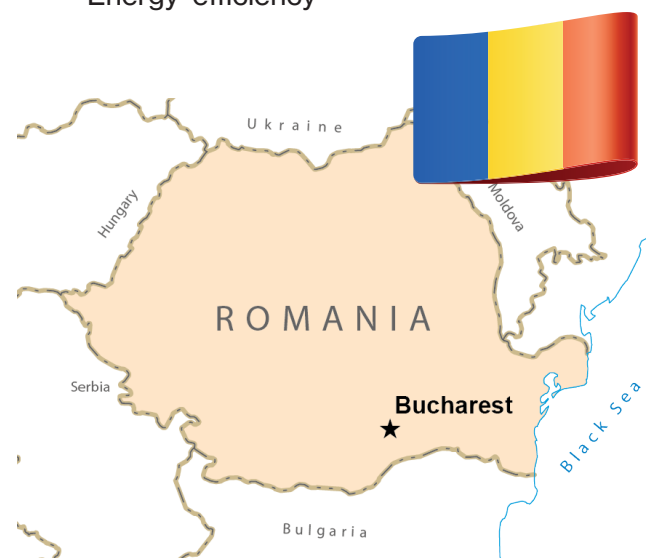
Individuals served in FY16
2,400

*includes construction and professional services

Volunteers hosted in FY16
1,787

Housing solutions

New construction and rehabilitation of houses or apartments;
Construction and rehabilitation of schools, community centers, dispensaries;
Disaster Risk Reduction and Response;
Energy-efficiency



Energy efficient housing

Habitat for Humanity Romania helps families all over the country to save on energy costs by insulating houses and doing minor repairs that minimize heat losses. In addition to this, over 2,000 people have taken part in trainings on practical tips for energy efficiency. Habitat for Humanity Romania built the first passive community center in Romania in Boldesti – Scăieni, a very poor community. The completed building will have increased efficiency in water and electricity consumption. One of its strengths is the selection of the materials used: whether they were traditional ones such as straw bales used for insulation of walls, roof shingles and clay plaster, or were some innovative materials like permeable concrete or foundation on metal screws, are all elements that contribute to the uniqueness of the building. In 2017, the organization will start building another energy-efficiency community center near Bucharest, in order to help 50 children to have a better future.

Construction and rehabilitation of homes and apartment blocks

Habitat Romania builds and renovates homes in partnership with low-income families throughout the country. This ranges from one-house builds to blitz builds of 10 or more houses in just one week. Rehabilitation work is aimed at improving living conditions for families in the communist-era apartment blocks. Many of these projects support socially disadvantaged groups: Roma, orphans and families who care for members or children with special needs.

Disaster risk reduction and response

Thousands of families are left without houses following natural disasters: floods, earthquakes, fire and landslides. Over the years, Habitat for Humanity Romania has helped more than 50,000 people through its disaster risk reduction and response programs. Wherever possible, Habitat for Humanity Romania has rehabilitated homes destroyed by water, but often has had to rebuild them entirely. These programs are community based and carried out in partnership with national government and local governments and businesses.

Meet a Habitat family

Cristina is a three-year-old girl from Bacău country and this year she will spend the first Christmas at HOME.

For 18 years, Cristina's mother and father lived in social housing provided by the government and were in danger of eviction when they applied for a new house with Habitat. Cristina's family is one of eight that have received a new house through the Big Build 2015 project – an annual event during which Habitat for Humanity Romania builds multiple houses in only 5 days.

What you can do

You can help Romanian families improve their living conditions by taking one or more of the following actions:

DONATE

USD \$: [habitat.org/donate/romania](https://www.habitat.org/donate/romania)

VOLUNTEER

Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to Romania or lead your own. For more information visit: [habitat.org/gv](https://www.habitat.org/gv)

TITHE

Establish a strong and rewarding tithe partnership to help build houses globally! Quote **813900, ROMANIA** on your checks sent to: Habitat for Humanity International, Attn: Affiliate Tithe, 121 Habitat St., Americus, GA 31709

To learn more about Habitat projects in Romania, please contact us.



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