

Romanian Immigration Office

Before the set up of the Romanian Immigration Office, the Authority for Aliens and The National Refugee Office, within the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, were the main authorities in Romania responsible for the management of migration and asylum, each of them having strictly defined competences, in the field of control of migration and countering illegal migration and, in the field of asylum, respectively.

During the last years, in the framework of Romania's progressive approach to EU, a number of needs to be addressed aroused in the process of managing migration and asylum, as it follows:

- need for an emergent ascertain of a strengthened institutional capacity in order to perform a proper management of migration and asylum, able to assure an optimum balance between the benefits of migration and the possible risks or threatens to public order or national security, as Romania is increasingly becoming a target country
- need for setting up a unique Registry for aliens, regardless of the statute they have in Romania (immigrants or persons in need of international protection)
- need for an unitary and adequate implementation of some EU Regulations directly applicable at national level in both fields (e.g. participating in Dublin mechanism and to EURODAC system, putting forth of equable resident permits, of biometrical passports for aliens, participating to EU VIS systems and SIS, etc)
- necessity of a simplified procedure for obtaining the legal right of staying on the territory for employment
- need for a coordination of the national policies and programmes in these fields

As inter-dependencies between migration and asylum increased, the necessity of a unitary approach of the aspects related became more obviously in the light of assuring a proper management of these phenomena. The express recommendations made by EU experts in this regard, within the framework of the projects for building and strengthening institutional capacity which the two bodies benefited from, as well as the need for approximation of the EU standards (requirement of the EU accession process), underlined the decision of creating a unique authority, with competencies in both fields, following the practice of most Member States.

Thus, on June 26, 2007, the Government Emergency Decision no. 55 and the Government Decision no. 369 set up the Romanian Office for Immigration (hereinafter referred to as the Office), through the reorganization of the National Refugee Office and the Authority for Aliens, which have been eliminated. The

new created institution also undertake all the rights and obligations the Office for Labour Migration had in the field of granting the document that certifies aliens' legal right for labour.

The Office is the specialized body, with legal entity, within the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, with competencies, granted by law, for the implementation of Romania's policies in the fields of migration, asylum and social integration of aliens, as well as of the relevant legislation.

The Office has as main responsibilities:

- regulates and decides upon granting the legal right of staying for third countries nationals
- decides, according to law's provisions, upon granting of the work permit for the purpose of obtaining the right of staying for work purpose;
- regulates the staying and residence in Romania of EU/EEA, as well as of family members
- decides upon granting a form of protection on the part of the Romanian state to persons in need of international protection;
- manages the National System for Aliens Registration, ensuring the custody, maintenance and performance of the registrations, according to the provisions of the law
- sends and analyse take charge/take back requests and operates, in collaboration with the General Inspectorate of Border Police, the transfer of the asylum seekers to third safe countries
- coordinates the activity of public institutions, authorities of public administration and non-governmental organisations that activates in the field of social integration of aliens beneficiaries of a form of protection, of the legal right of staying or are EU/EEA citizens;
- co-operates with other MIRA subordinated bodies and public institutions with competencies in the field of migration and asylum, and collaborates with citizens, in the conditions established by Law;
- co-operates with similar foreign institutions and with other international bodies with competencies in the field of migration, asylum and social integration of aliens, on the basis of the international arrangements Romania is part to;
- Exercise any other attribution granted by Law.

Among the medium and long time objectives of the Office are:

- Developing an asylum system of protection based on criteria of efficient and qualitative procedures in the field, so as the continuous approximation of the EU Acquis (including the provisions of "Priorities of the Solidarity and Management of the Migration Flows Programme for 2007-2013") by permanently ensuring the observance of the fundamental human rights, as well as preventing and countering illegal migration within the EU;
- Maintaining the Romanian capacity to commit its responsibilities and obligations as EU Member State

- is to maximize the positive aspects of immigration and to limit the negative ones for our country and, subsequently, for Romanian citizens. For that reason the Office will act to clearly establish the categories of migrants who can be admitted and can stay on the national territory, according to the national interests but in correlation with the policies and programmatic documents adopted at European Union level, as well as guaranteeing the migrants' rights
- to decrease the contribution of the illegal factor within the migratory phenomenon by preventing the immigration of those categories of persons who don't satisfy the conditions stipulated by law, as well as combating illegal stay, illegal work and migrants trafficking.
- to secure free access to the national asylum procedure while respecting the principle of non-refoulement according to international standards enforced and ratified by Romania through the treaties and conventions to which is party
- to back up for an active involvement of aliens residing or having legal stay on the Romanian soil to the country's economic, social and cultural life preserving in the same time their cultural identity
- to prepare in the view of the accession to Schengen area
- to take on an active role for regional and international cooperation in the field of migration and asylum and to promote the development of effective asylum and migration systems in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe