

## UNDP Romania launches regional report on the Roma

UNDP Romania launched the Regional Human Development Report on the Roma at a press conference on 17 January 2003, along with Mr. Vasile Dâncu, Minister of Information, and Professor Catalin Zamfir, State Counselor. The event, which was hosted at the Government press centre, followed the official launch of the report in Brussels.

The new regional report prepared by the UNDP Bratislava Regional Support Centre, is the most comprehensive survey of its kind carried out in Central and Eastern Europe. It highlights the plight of the Roma population in terms of education, welfare and employment, and offers key policy recommendations to improve their situation.

Of the 5 countries surveyed (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia), Romania has the largest Roma population, estimated to be 2.5 million. The Government has already developed a national strategy to improve the situation of the Roma, as well as an anti-poverty plan which promotes the social inclusion of marginalized groups including Roma. Both were carried out with the support of the UN system. However, the government recognizes that there is still much to be done.



The Roma report press conference



From left to right: UNDP RR, UN RC Soknan Han Jung, Vasile Dâncu, Minister of Information, and Professor Catalin Zamfir, State Counselor

The launch was extensively covered by national television, radio and newspapers. Building upon the work of the Joint UN Roma Seminar held earlier in Bucharest, the RBEC RHDR has opened up a new debate, galvanizing support for social and economic integration of the Roma in Romania.

UNDP and the UN system in Romania, also supported the latest edition of a new magazine "Revista de Asistentă Socială", which is dedicated to Roma issues.

For more information about the event, visit the UNDP Romania web site at <http://www.undp.ro/>