



Romania

United Nations Development Programme

Newsletter

Issue # 37  
22 November

2004

Supporting the unique cultural value of natural and built heritage of Transylvania

United Nations Development Programme in Romania (UNDP) and Mihai Eminescu Trust (MET), with support from the Local Council of Sighisoara convened the "International Conference for the Integrated Development of Sighisoara and the Saxon Villages of Transylvania". Under the patronage of President Ion Iliescu and HRH The Prince of Wales, this conference is a reflection of the partnership between UNDP and MET, and also a continuation of the two organisations' long-standing work in social and economic reinvigoration and cultural and natural heritage conservation in Romania.

The conference's main goal was to pull in investments for the implementation of projects that provide employment, education, training and income, without irreversibly damaging the unique cultural and natural heritage of the region.

In her statement, Ms. Soknan Han Jung, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative outlined: "Through its activities in Transylvania, UNDP has acquired wide recognition from local authorities as a trusted and neutral partner, as evidenced by the long list of local authorities that have applied to participate in Local Agenda 21 and Beautiful Romania, but also by their contribution of their own resources to UNDP-sponsored projects. Taking stock of these achievements, UNDP is willing to extend its assistance to local stakeholders, to support the implementation of local development strategies and plans."

Representatives of central and local authorities, UNESCO, cultural institutions, NGOs, diplomatic corps, specialists from Romania and Western Europe, and the media, attended the conference. Participants presented projects, conveyed ideas, and debated on conservation and restoration benefits in urban and rural environment. They concluded that this area – the Saxon triangle roughly defined by the road Brasov, Sighisoara, Sibiu and its surroundings – deserves special attention and urgent action to foster the necessary sustainable economic development and to preserve the region's heritage.

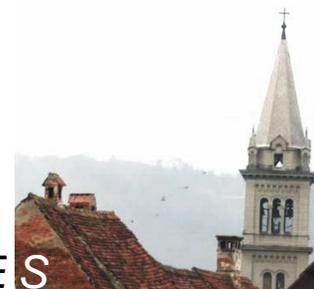
To achieve these objectives, UNDP, MET, the Romanian Government and other willing institutions have decided to jointly coordinate efforts for the implementation of programmes/projects submitted to the Sighisoara conference, bearing in mind gender and minority considerations. The projects presented at the conference provide a pipeline of suitable initiatives that meet the pressing needs of the region. Immediate contributions were received from HRH Prince of Wales, German World Heritage Foundation, UBS and the Packard Humanities Institute. All stakeholders will continue to cooperate in order to secure funding aimed at:

- Local empowerment and capacity development to strengthen local governance (local authorities, civil society organisations);
- Heritage reinvigoration, agricultural and economic development (leading to job creation, education, and skills training to further social integration and economic growth);
- Statutory protection of the environmental and cultural heritage (this includes the development and implementation of their management plans).

For more information, please contact UNDP Romania, Socio-Economic Section, at [socio@undp.ro](mailto:socio@undp.ro), or visit the conference website at: <http://www.cimec.ro/evenimente/sighisoaraconference>.



*From left: Mr. Owaise Saadat, Country Manager World Bank, Ms. Soknan Han Jung, UNDP RR/UN RC, Mr. Jonathan Scheele, Head of EC Delegation, Ms. Jessica Douglas-Home, MET President, and Mr. Alexandru Farcas, Minister of European Integration.*



SIGHISOARA SITES