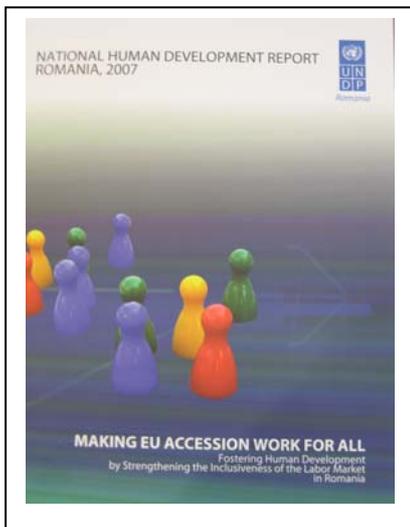


UNDP Opens 2007 NHDR Debate With Call For Labor Market Inclusiveness



Bucharest, September 25, 2007 - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) hosted a debate on the Romania National Human Development Report 2007 in Bucharest. Titled *Making EU Accession Work for All - Fostering Human Development by Strengthening the Inclusiveness of the Labor Market*, this is the ninth report in a series initiated in 1995 by UNDP in collaboration with the Romanian Government and civil society. The Report was developed over the span of two years by a group of renowned social studies scientists from the National Institute of Scientific Research and Social Protection (INCSMPS) in Bucharest.

A panel of experts comprised of Thore Hansen, UNDP Romania Resident Representative a.i., Razvan Cirica, UNDP Romania Head of Democratic Governance Section, Catalin Ghinararu PhD, Lead Author of the NHDR 2007, Vasilica Ciuca, General Director of INCSMPS and Virgil Voinegu, President of the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) met with representatives of government and civil society to debate forecasts and ways to strengthen the inclusiveness labor market in Romania in the next decade.

“Through this Report, we hope to encourage discussion among governmental as well as non-governmental institutions, opinion makers, academia and media,” said Thore Hansen, UNDP RR a.i., at the opening of the debate. “One main challenge for Romania

today is linking and promoting synergies between economic growth, employment, social security and policies to improve people’s lives. This approach not only has an intrinsic value for people, but also helps address the eight Millennium Development Goals and 21 targets Romania has committed to,” Mr. Hansen added.

By focusing the analysis on the current and predicted shifts in the labor market, the Report highlights the need to review various ongoing policies geared at the past with policies aimed at future trends ranging from macro-economics, demographics, to education and labor market migration. Dr. Catalin Ghinararu argued that “although Romania enjoyed eight years of consecutive economic growth and achieved macro-economic stability, it’s still perceived as a high-risk emerging market”, and made a set of recommendations to improve the economic predictability and stability in the next decade. In recent years migration of workers abroad has created imbalances on the labor market. As the main cause for labor migration is the wage difference between Romania and the more advanced EU countries, Romania will have to design an immigration policy to fill the gap generated by



Wide view of the debate panelists.



Catalin Ghinararu, lead author of the NHDR 2007 giving an interview to Realitatea TV.

emigration, and raise the minimum wage of foreign workers to a level that would allow them to sustain themselves without the existence of a social and family network here.

The experts pointed out that Romania faces a surplus of economic and legal specialists and a shortage of engineers, construction workers, veterinarian doctors, hygiene and agriculture specialists. This lack needs to be offset with additional training, grants and financial facilities to the youth interested in pursuing these fields. “Old rural, monocultural Romania is changing,” Ghinararu concluded. “Romania will become increasingly urban, open and multicultural, and future policies should start considering this.”

The debate was widely reported by all news TV channels: Realitatea TV, Antena 3, The Money Channel, as well as by ProTV, and several national newspapers, including Ziarul Financiar, Jurnalul National, and Adevarul.

For more information please email:
Razvan Cirica, Head of Democratic Governance Section, razvan.cirica@undp.org
Alexandra Ares PhD, Communications Officer, alexandra.ares@undp.org