In Romania, **the legal definition of someone who is ‘homeless’** is provided by Law 292/2011 on the National System of Social Assistance. The definition means that someone is ‘homeless’ if he or she is from a social category of people that includes families or individuals who, for singular or cumulated reasons (social, medical, financial, economic or juridical) or because of force majeure, live on the streets or with friends or acquaintances whilst unable to maintain rented accommodation. The definition also includes someone who is threatened with eviction, or who lives in an institution or prison and is due to be released within two months without having a place to live.’

Romanian society uses stigmatized terms to refer to people who have no housing and who spend much time on the streets , " homeless " ," bums " or " bush people " .

Family homelessness has complex and multi-dimensional causes and consequences, creating deep and long-lasting problems for individual families, for the economy and for society as a whole.

Social exclusion is the consequence of a series of problems affecting an individual such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low income, poor housing or lack of housing, ill health and family breakdown. When such problems combine, they can create a vicious cycle leading to the loss of one’s home.

**Causes of the phenomena:**

People lose their homes because of a complex interplay between someone’s individual circumstances and adverse ‘structural’ factors outside their direct control. These problems can build up over time until the final crisis moment when a person has to leave their home.  
These structural factors include high levels of poverty, unemployment or under-unemployment, the inadequate benefits system and a lack of affordable housing.

**Factors :**

* Losing a job
* domestic violence
* mental health issues
* substance abuse

Although many in Romania believe that the phenomena started after 1989, homelessness was evident during the communist regime. At this time, they and other ‘anti- social elements’ were dealt with under the penal code and isolated in prisons, as well as mental health and other institutions.

Casa Ioana opened the country’s first night shelter in Bucharest for older homeless men in 1997, following a request from the city’s mayor. In 2000, Casa Ioana opened another shelter in the city.

There is no national data-collection strategy on the phenomena and very little data available – only general social inclusion indicators being available at national level.

The only figures available come from a study conducted in 2004 by the Research Institute for Quality of Life and the National Institute of Statistics, which estimated that the number of roofless people in Romania at 14,000 -15,000 persons maximum, with 5,000 living in Bucharest.

**In Bucharest** , social assistance is provided by the General Directorate of Social Assistance Bucharest ( DGASMB ) and General Directorates for Social Assistance and Child Protection ( Child Protection at the sector level) , through a range of social services for different categories people residing across the capital.

In Bucharest there are only 4 permanent emergency center for homeless people .

They are from District 1- 50 seats , Distric t 2-54 seats District 3-80 seats and District 4- 60 seats only for women.

**For the winter (October to March)** the municipality it provides a night shelter for homeless people with a capacity of 556 seats(only for men) and another 13 containers with 6 beds each.

For single mothers with children up to 3 years in maternal centers are offering places for a period of up to 6 months (each district) .

**Casa Ioana Association** is the only association in Bucharest that offers shelter and psychosocial services to the entire family to keep it united – 15 rooms, 50 seats. Casa Ioana Associations provide also accommodation for victims of domestic violence- 8 rooms- 30 seats.