

## BACAU RISK ASSESSMENT

### RISK ASSESSMENT for CAST PROJECTS in BACAU REGION, ROMANIA

Your safety is very important to us. This document covers the basics you need to be aware of before you travel to Romania with us. You should take this risk assessment with you to Romania in order to refer to it during your trip. You should also read your induction pack thoroughly alongside this document. If you need help or advice please contact Alex Daly, the CAST Project Co-ordinator for Bacau, Romania at bacau@cast-uk.com

**Please read this document carefully, act on the points which we suggest, and have a great trip!  
Thank you!**

		Potential risks	Ways to reduce potential risk
<b>1.</b>	<b>Travel</b>		
	<b>1.1</b>	Difficulties in travel between designated UK airport to Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fly from the designated UK airport detailed in your acceptance letter to Bucharest with your team.</li> <li>• Ensure you arrive at the airport at least two hours before the flight in order to check in with your team.</li> <li>• Ensure you know the meeting arrangements so you can locate your team at the UK airport.</li> <li>• Ensure your luggage is packed and presented appropriately.</li> <li>• Ensure you have a passport which is valid, and take all relevant tickets/booking numbers, bank cards and insurance details with you to the airport.</li> <li>• Notify relevant members of your team should you have certain requirements when you travel.</li> </ul>
	<b>1.2</b>	Difficulties in travel during your time in Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers will need to get from the airport to the train station 'Gara de Nord.' You should take a 'Fly' taxi, a reputable company to the station. If you use a different taxi firm then make sure it is a licensed firm. Agree a fee for a taxi ride before you start your journey.</li> <li>• When using public transport (e.g. buses, trains, or metros) volunteers may be at risk from beggars and pick pockets. Keep valuable items hidden from sight and secure.</li> <li>• Public transportation tends to be extremely hot during the summer months so please take this into consideration and always keep a bottle of water with you.</li> <li>• Make sure you wear seat belts (if this is possible) when you are travelling by taxi or minibus in Romania.</li> <li>• Roads and other drivers in Romania can be unpredictable.</li> <li>• Animals are common place on the roads.</li> </ul>
	<b>1.3</b>	Not having the relevant documents: visas, insurance, EHIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No visa is required for British citizens. If you are of another nationality it is your responsibility to make the necessary arrangements.</li> <li>• Appropriate insurance should be obtained by the individual volunteer well in advance to your trip through a reputable company.</li> <li>• Make sure you have a valid European Health Insurance Card well in advance of your trip (as well as insurance).</li> </ul>

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<b>2.</b>	<b>Location</b>		
	<b>2.1</b>	Bucharest, Bacau and the villages volunteers will be working in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bucharest is the capital of Romania and a modern city in many parts.</li> <li>• Bacau is a relatively big city situated within the county of Bacau.</li> <li>• The villages will be outside the city of Bacau, and they are likely to be very different in landscape to the city of Bacau itself.</li> <li>• Roads in the villages can be very underdeveloped.</li> <li>• Livestock is common place.</li> <li>• Poverty in the cities and villages remains widespread.</li> </ul>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>		
	<b>3.1</b>	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of where you will stay will be provided in advance of your trip by your project co-ordinator.</li> <li>• If you have concerns with regards to your accommodation, please speak to the project co-ordinator who should be able to help with any concerns.</li> <li>• Volunteers are advised to be realistic as to what accommodation is available in rural Eastern Europe, and sensitive to the living conditions of their hosts.</li> <li>• Volunteers should respect the accommodation and the people that volunteers may stay with.</li> </ul>
	<b>3.2</b>	Accommodation in Bacau itself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the accommodation is always locked (if you are responsible for this).</li> <li>• Shut all windows and doors when you are not resident.</li> <li>• Avoid taking valuable items unnecessarily, but if you do have valuables with you then conceal them in a safe place.</li> <li>• Turn off all plug sockets, water, and lights whenever you leave the accommodation unattended.</li> <li>• Be sensitive of others and keep noise to an absolute minimum after 9:00pm.</li> <li>• Although there should not be faults with the electricity supply, you should take care when using plug sockets and not leave items plugged in unsupervised.</li> <li>• Do not leave gas stoves unattended.</li> <li>• Ensure you know where exits and extinguishers are.</li> <li>• Be aware Romanian plumbing can be temperamental.</li> <li>• Power cuts can occur.</li> </ul>
	<b>3.3</b>	Accommodation in the villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation will probably be very basic i.e. staying in a classroom in the local school.</li> <li>• It is unlikely that there will be proper toilets and/or showers in these villages.</li> <li>• Poverty is highly prevalent, and living conditions reflect this. We recommend volunteers take a pack of wet wipes.</li> <li>• Keep valuables in a safe place.</li> <li>• In a minority of cases, accommodation may be subject to fleas due to the surrounding environment. All efforts are made for this not to be the case.</li> </ul>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Project</b>		

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	<b>4.1</b>	Not reading the material provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers should read their induction packs, the information available to them on the CAST website, recommended reading; attend induction and training events, and discuss any concerns they have with their project co-ordinator.</li> </ul>
	<b>4.2</b>	Lack of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We offer training to volunteers as we think it will be beneficial to them.</li> <li>There is extensive training material on the CAST website designed for home learning. It is the responsibility of volunteers to make themselves aware of this information.</li> <li>Volunteers should attend the induction day and further training days if/when required.</li> </ul>
	<b>4.3</b>	Not making the most of the support networks and local assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers will be working with a wide network of student and professional volunteers.</li> <li>Volunteers will also have the support of our partners in Bacau (FSC) and your project co-ordinator. However, individual volunteers are expected to take responsibility for their own actions.</li> <li>It is the responsibility of volunteers to make the most of arranged meetings and social/fundraising events through which many volunteers make friends and establish a peer based support network.</li> </ul>
	<b>4.4</b>	Misunderstandings with the staff/volunteers from Bacau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to everything that staff tell you and respect their decisions, they are final.</li> <li>Volunteers must respect the work of FSC, the children, and their families at all times. They have many great achievements and it is a privilege to work with them.</li> <li>Volunteers should behave appropriately at all times.</li> </ul>
	<b>4.5</b>	Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The children you will be working with are from poor families and they are likely to have many siblings. They don't have much opportunity to embrace their childhood. As such, having UK volunteers to play with is an exciting and wonderful experience for them.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Medical</b>			
	<b>5.1</b>	Need to use local medical facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are several hospitals/local health centres in Bacau but we would advise that you only use them in the case of an emergency. While you are working in the villages, there is unlikely to be any nearby health centres or hospitals.</li> <li>Volunteers should consider their health carefully before participating in the project. It is the responsibility of the individual volunteer to discuss their individual needs with their GP prior to their trip.</li> <li>Volunteers should carry double doses of all prescribed medicines with them in case of losses.</li> <li>It is the responsibility of the individual volunteer to discuss health concerns with their team leaders and/or project co-ordinator.</li> </ul>
	<b>5.2</b>	Lack of appropriate vaccinations and documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers should ensure they visit their GP/practice nurse well in advance of their trip.</li> <li>It is the responsibility of the volunteer to discuss the nature of their work with their GP/practice nurse to ensure they receive</li> </ul>

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			all necessary vaccinations.
	<b>5.3</b>	General illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mild sickness of some sort is common due to the proximity to project beneficiaries who invariably carry germs (e.g. stomach upset/cold). It is the responsibility of the volunteer to bring an appropriate first aid kit and pharmaceuticals.</li> <li>Volunteers should inform the team leader if they feel unable to attend a project due to illness.</li> </ul>
	<b>5.4</b>	HIV/AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Romania hosts one third of Europe's total HIV/AIDS population and CAST cannot guarantee that the project beneficiaries do not carry the virus.</li> <li>Risk of infection with HIV whilst working with infected children/young adults is via infected blood coming into contact with your blood (e.g. in an open cut) or mucous membranes (e.g. the eye or the inside of the nose). The risk is very low. However volunteers should take reasonable precautions such as covering any cuts with plasters. If a child/young adult cuts themselves or is bleeding, please alert a member of staff rather than manage it yourself.</li> <li>If you do come into contact with blood or bodily fluids make sure you wash immediately.</li> <li>It is not a requirement for volunteers to work anywhere they do not feel comfortable.</li> </ul>
		Headlice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is possible that some of the children/young adults may have headlice. It is your responsibility to take treatments for headlice if you wish. Tea-tree shampoo can act as a deterrent.</li> </ul>
	<b>5.6</b>	Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since 2003, 2/400 volunteers have contracted ring worm through their work. This is easily treated with antibiotics.</li> <li>Some of the people we work with have TB and Hepatitis.</li> <li>Volunteers should ensure they have been sufficiently vaccinated.</li> </ul>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Equipment taken</b>		
	<b>6.1</b>	Risk of using equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A for student volunteers</li> <li>If volunteers are asked to use equipment, they should use their judgement as to whether the request is suitable. If not, volunteers should simply tell their colleagues they can not comply.</li> </ul>
	<b>6.2</b>	Maintenance of equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notify staff if equipment is broken or unsafe.</li> </ul>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Catering</b>		
	<b>7.1</b>	Local food not able to satisfy special dietary requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If volunteers have special dietary requirements, it is their responsibility to take appropriate foods and food supplements from the UK, and alert the project co-ordinator in advance of your trip so that they can contact the Romanian team and let them know. However, there is a wide range of foods available in Bacau.</li> </ul>
	<b>7.2</b>	Risk of illness from eating local food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food is available from the local market and shops. It is the responsibility of volunteers to be sensible when buying food supplies.</li> <li>It is not recommended for volunteers to purchase food from</li> </ul>

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			street vendors, fridges which are turned off at night, or cafes/restaurants where hygiene is clearly overlooked.
<b>8.</b>	<b>Personal safety</b>		
	<b>8.1</b>	Accident & emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers are responsible for their own safety.</li> <li>• It is the responsibility of the volunteer to have the appropriate insurance.</li> <li>• If you are aware of a potential issue which may affect you or your fellow team members' safety, this should be discussed with your project co-ordinator prior to your trip (or FSC staff and team leader) whilst working on a project.</li> <li>• Accidents should be reported on the accident form and to your project co-ordinator.</li> </ul>
	<b>8.2</b>	Working alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers should not be working alone at any time. If you find yourself in this situation you must find another team member immediately.</li> <li>• Volunteers must read the risk assessments for all the projects and follow and act upon the advice given.</li> <li>• It is the responsibility of the volunteer to read the information in the induction pack regarding their projects thoroughly.</li> </ul>
	<b>8.3</b>	Risk of mugging/assault in Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers are responsible for their own personal safety.</li> <li>• Volunteers should not go out alone, especially at night.</li> <li>• Do not have valuable items visible on your person.</li> <li>• Be aware of your belongings at all times, especially in crowded places. Pickpockets are very good at recognising foreigners and they will use this to their advantage so please take extra care.</li> <li>• Be sensible when withdrawing money from the bank, try to make sure someone is with you.</li> <li>• Do not act distastefully foreign (e.g. shouting, 'practising' Romanian loudly in public, mimicking, clearly describing downfalls, or not using any Romanian for pleasantries).</li> </ul>
	<b>8.4</b>	Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the responsibility of the volunteer to contact team members and the project co-ordinator.</li> <li>• It is the responsibility of the volunteer to work within the rules set by the projects that you will be working on alongside their team members. Please respect the decisions that are made by our partners or your project co-ordinator.</li> <li>• It is the responsibility of the volunteer to read all available information so you know what to expect from the project and the children/young adults.</li> <li>• All volunteers should read and follow the code of conduct and policies on the CAST website.</li> <li>• Volunteers must read the risk assessments for all the projects and follow and act upon the advice given.</li> </ul>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Physical hazards</b>		

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	<b>9.1</b>	Risk of injury when out and around the Bacau region (including day trips)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is the responsibility of the volunteer to be sensible and to take sensible precautions to avoid injury (e.g. sensible footwear when walking to avoid injury due to pot holes).</li> </ul>
	<b>9.2</b>	Risk of illness/harm due to climate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the summertime Romania is usually very hot and extremely cold in the winter months. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to bring suitable clothing and other necessities (e.g. high factor sun cream, sunglasses, hats etc.).</li> <li>Volunteers will need to be careful that they do not become dehydrated, especially when outdoors. It would be advisable to take some re-hydration therapy sachets (e.g. Dioralyte – you can buy these from your local supermarket/pharmacy) and remember to drink plenty of bottled water (Tap water isn't advisable as it has a different mineral content to the UK and it can make volunteers feel unwell).</li> <li>Stay in the shade as much as possible.</li> </ul>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Biological hazards</b>		
	<b>10.1</b>	Risk of injury from animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mosquitoes are especially prevalent during summer months and volunteers should obtain necessary items in order to tackle this prior to their trip.</li> <li>There are usually lots of wasps during the summer months.</li> <li>Stray dogs wonder the streets in Romania, some of which have rabies, but generally do not go too near humans. Volunteers should ignore them. It is up to individual volunteers whether they choose to have the rabies vaccine.</li> <li>Horses and donkeys are still widely used as a form of transport. If you have an allergy then you need to be aware of this. Do not walk behind horses or donkeys.</li> <li>There are also usually lots of insects, beetles, cockroaches etc.</li> </ul>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Culture</b>		
	<b>11.1</b>	Risk of offending local people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers are expected to dress modestly and conduct themselves in a manner which befits their work.</li> <li>Volunteers should respect the religious beliefs held by team members and the Orthodox religion held by many Romanians.</li> <li>Volunteers are expected to respect Romanian laws.</li> <li>Volunteers should be aware that their accommodation in Romania is often above the average standard and be sensitive when discussing how people live.</li> <li>British people and foreigners are generally a novelty to Romanians. Don't take offense if local people watch or observe you.</li> <li>Men especially may stare at female volunteers. This is usually meaningless and should not cause alarm.</li> <li>Volunteers should learn some basic Romanian such as 'hello', 'goodbye', 'please' and 'thank you'.</li> </ul>

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<b>12.</b>	<b>Stress</b>		
	<b>12.1</b>	Risk of loneliness, isolation and home sickness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the responsibility of the volunteer to work with their team in order to form friendships and contribute socially.</li> <li>• It is the responsibility of the volunteer to discuss concerns with their project co-ordinator</li> <li>• Volunteers may make use of the local internet café and cheap phone cards to maintain contact with home.</li> <li>• Volunteers should make the most of training days and forums in order to get to know their team.</li> </ul>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Personal belongings</b>		
	<b>13.1</b>	Valuable items etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not take extremely valuable items with you. However, if you chose to do this then they are your own personal responsibility.</li> <li>• It is important that you keep your possessions safe at all times. Do not make it obvious that you have valuable items with you.</li> <li>• Be aware that what you see as only semi-valuable could be seen as extremely lucrative by someone living in poverty.</li> <li>• When you go on public transport, please also make sure that you are aware of your personal belongings at all times and that they are in a safe place.</li> <li>• Pickpockets will often rub together an empty plastic bag to cause a distraction and then put their hand into your pocket and take what they can, so please be aware of your surroundings at all times.</li> <li>• Decrease the risk of being subject to pick pocketing by wearing modest clothes which do not signify wealth.</li> </ul>

Whilst we have made every effort to provide a comprehensive risk assessment, there may be unforeseen risks. If you encounter any of these on your trip please inform your Team Leader. Life Improvement For Everyone and our partners cannot accept any liability for any accidents/incidents occurred during your trip unless there is a clear indication of negligence on our part. Please work with us to make your trip as safe and enjoyable as possible. Thank you and have a great trip!

Please ensure that:

- a) You have read and understood the risks described in sections 1 – 13 above.
- b) You are willing to undertake the work involved despite the potential risks.
- c) You will take responsibility for your own safety and well-being during your trip based on an awareness of the above risks.