



**CAST, Life Improvement For Everyone**  
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 International Division of Social Enterprise L.I.F.E. (reg. no. 6528575)



**RISK ASSESSMENT for CAST PROJECT in BUCHAREST, 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 Ellie Lythgoe, the CAST Project Co-ordinator for Bucharest, Romania at [bucharest@cast-uk.com](mailto:bucharest@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 Manchester and Bucharest airports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fly from Manchester Airport to Bucharest OTP Airport 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 Manchester 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>• 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. Keep your bags in front of you so that you can see them at all times.</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>• Volunteers should ensure their group has a map from one of the tourism kiosks.</li> <li>• Some taxi firms may overcharge. Use licensed taxis or public transport when possible. Agree a fee for a taxi ride before you start your journey.</li> <li>• Make sure you wear seat belts (if this is possible) when you are travelling by taxi in Romania.</li> <li>• Roads and other drivers in Romania can be unpredictable.</li> <li>• Animals are common place on the roads.</li> </ul>



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	<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>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Location</b>		
	<b>2.1</b>	Bucharest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bucharest is the capital of Romania and a modern city in many parts. It is huge so make sure you have a map of the metro and city with you at all times as well as details of where you are staying. Do not go out anywhere on your own.</li> <li>• Bucharest is dusty and windy; volunteers who wear contacts are advised to take eye drops/contact lens solution with them.</li> <li>• There are lots of children begging on the streets, please do not give them money as they are likely to give it to their parents/gang leader (by giving them money you are effectively keeping them working on the streets) or the street children may use it to buy drugs and Aurolac (a paint thinner, which suppresses hunger). If you want to do something to help, the best thing that you can do is buy them something to eat. A loaf of bread is usually 10-20p.</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 sort out your concerns.</li> <li>• Volunteers are advised to be realistic as to what accommodation is available in Eastern Europe, and sensitive to the living conditions of their hosts.</li> <li>• Respect the accommodation you are staying in and the people who live around you.</li> </ul>
	<b>3.2</b>	Theft/break in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the accommodation is always locked whether you are in or out of the flat.</li> <li>• Shut all windows and doors when not in the flat.</li> <li>• Conceal any valuable items you have with you.</li> <li>• Turn off all plug sockets, water, and lights whenever you leave the flat unattended.</li> </ul>

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	<b>3.3</b>	Electrical faults/fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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 stove unattended.</li> <li>• Ensure you know where exits and extinguishers are.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Project</b>			
	<b>4.1</b>	Not reading the material provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers should read their induction packs, discuss any concerns they have with their project co-ordinator; and read the information available to them on the CAST website and recommended books.</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. There is extensive training material on the CAST website. It is the responsibility of volunteers to make themselves aware of this information.</li> </ul>
	<b>4.3</b>	Not making the most of the support networks and local assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will have the support of Emanuela and her team, Ionut and his team, Alex Daly 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 in Bucharest	<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 Emanuela and her staff, Ionut and his staff, the children, and their families at all times. They have many great achievements and it's a privilege to work with 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 Bucharest 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</li> </ul>



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			health concerns with their team leaders and/or project co-ordinator.
	<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 all necessary vaccinations.</li> </ul>
	<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 and foreign germs. 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 people 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 baby or adult cuts themselves or is bleeding, please alert a member of staff rather than manage it yourself. Please refer to the disease risk assessment for further details.</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 people you work with 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>• In four years, 2/400 volunteers have contracted ring worm through their work. This is easily treated in the UK with antibiotics.</li> <li>• Some of the people we work with have TB and Hepatitis. 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> </ul>

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		equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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 the trip so that they can contact the Romanian team and let them know. However, there is a wide range of foods available in Bucharest.</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> </ul>
<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 your or your fellow team members' safety, this should be discussed with your project co-ordinator prior to your trip or the staff 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</li> </ul>



			<p>take extra care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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 they know what to expect from the projects.</li> <li>• All volunteers should read and follow the code of conduct on the CAST website.</li> <li>• Volunteers must read the risk assessments for their projects and follow and act upon the advice given.</li> </ul>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Physical hazards</b>		
	<b>9.1</b>	Risk of injury when out and around Bucharest (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.</li> <li>• 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>• You will need to be careful that you do not become dehydrated, especially when you are outdoors. It would be advisable to take with you 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 England 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 if they are sensible. 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 too.</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 fits 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 above the average standard and be sensitive when discussing how people live.</li> <li>• Although Bucharest is increasingly multi-cultural, volunteers should not take offense if local people watch or observe them out of interest.</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>
<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>



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<b>13.</b>	<b>Personal belongings</b>		
	<b>13.1</b>	Valuable items etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is best not to take extremely valuable items with you, however if you choose 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>• When you go on public transport, please also make sure that you keep your personal belongings in front of you so that you can see them at all times. If possible, again try to leave them where you are staying. Pickpockets will often rub together an empty plastic bag to cause a distraction and then put their hand into your pocket and take whatever was in there. Overcrowded trams and stations are the commonest places for this 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.