

Foreword



The 2007 National Human Development Report (NHDR) for Romania is the ninth since 1995 and focuses on strengthening the inclusiveness of the labor market after EU accession.

Since the transition began in 1989, Romania has made significant progress -- both legislatively and institutionally -- leading, *inter alia*, to Romania's accession to the European Union. The Romanian State institutions and society at large are currently undergoing the transition process towards full EU integration, which may prove to be more difficult than accession itself, notwithstanding the sustained economic growth. Policies will be formed more at an EU level than a national one, and Romania will be put to test to prove that it can make best use of its upgraded implementation capacities, in a new, highly competitive environment. Therefore, UNDP considers that it is timely and appropriate to focus on the labor market, as one of the most important instruments to foster human development through social inclusiveness in an EU context.

The best ways to provide social protection and inclusiveness are by encouraging entrepreneurship, and by promoting human resources -- the most significant factor in a country's development. Human development is about people, and a socially inclusive labor market can offer people the appropriate environment for professional and personal development, with direct benefits for themselves, their families and the entire society. The 2007 NHDR, therefore, focuses on the social inclusiveness potential of the labor market, to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to ensure sustainable human development in Romania.

Last year, Romania stepped up and joined the group of high Human Development Index countries. The process must continue, and the basic measures of human development - a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living - will hopefully show constant improvement in the lives of Romanians.

The analysis carried out in this Report, and its recommendations for the decade to come should be seen as an attempt to highlight the relationship between the labor market and human development. The 2007 NHDR for Romania presents a conceptual framework, which the Government may wish to consider when forming socially inclusive policies and monitoring the progress of human development in Romania.

Soknan Han Jung

UN Resident Coordinator/UN Ambassador
UNDP Resident Representative