



initiative to clean the beaches in Constanta as part of a nationwide cleaning campaign called 'Let's Do It, Romania'. Thanks to funding from Vodafone we were able to refurbish our old apartment, buying badly needed new beds and bedding for the 4 young people living there.

In **OCTOBER** Mr. John Morahan the Irish Ambassador to Romania and Mr. Petre Dinica, Head of Social Services Constanta officially opened the new apartment to a lot of media attention. One of the young guys on the project got his first job in a new supermarket.

In **NOVEMBER**, HAO, along with 3 other NGOs all committed to bringing young people with disability out of institutional care, formed the Deinstitutionalization Working Group and had their first meeting to look at best practice, sharing resources and working together.

DECEMBER for the 5 young guys who came out of institutions, this was their first time buying their own Christmas tree and choosing decorations for the house. At the end of December, 3 of them were in full time employment.

What's next:

- ◆ **2012 marks HAO's 21st year working in Romania,** a significant milestone in our history that we plan to mark with a number of events throughout the year.
- ◆ **HAO plan to establish an Employment Resource Centre** in Constanta to help the many young people with disability find employment.
- ◆ **HAO plan to form partnerships and work collaboratively** with other NGOs whose aims match those of HAO.

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Inclusion lies at the very heart of the FVB ethos. We enable young people with a disability to progress from the confines of institutions and orphanages to playing pivotal roles as part of their communities. We assist them in leading more independent, full lives filled with friends, jobs, choices and real purpose.



2011 - Annual Report

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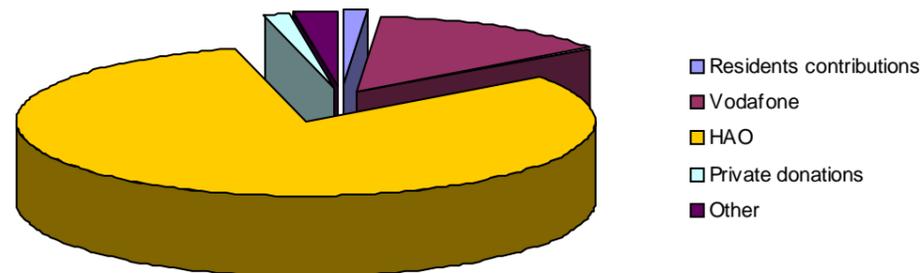


Financial Report 2011

INCOME 2011: € 68,258

• Income from HAO:	€ 55,328
• Vodafone:	€ 9,356
• Contributions from Residents :	€ 901
• Income from private donations:	€ 908

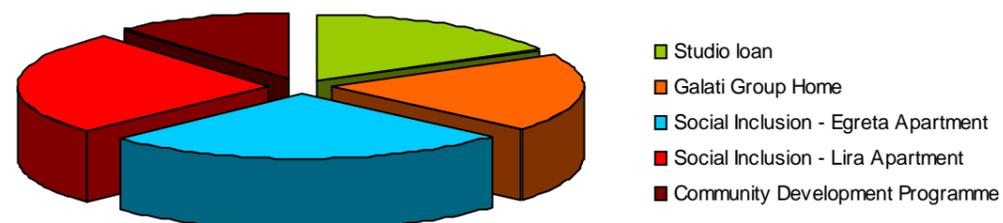
INCOME CHART 2011



PROJECTS EXPENSE 2011: €81,344

• Group Home Galati:	€ 15,717
• Social Inclusion Constanta: Egreta Apartment	€21,489
Lira Apartment	€ 20,865
• Community development: Parent/Carer Network & Social Advocacy Network	€ 9,337
• Balance of payment for young person's studio apartment:	€ 13,936

PROJECTS EXPENSE CHART 2011



Letter from the founder

2011 was Health Action Overseas 20th year working in Romania; looking back I remember watching the first group of volunteers heading to the orphanage in Negru Voda and wonder what they would make of it all now.

Over those 20 years I have seen change slowly and painfully achieved through frustrating negotiation with the authorities in Romania, followed up by countless fundraising events in Ireland. So the change never looked dramatic to me, it was always never big enough or quick enough.

Now however looking back over those 20 years I can see how much we have achieved and the remarkable changes that have taken place. I wish those involved from the early years could appreciate how their work was the foundation on which we have been able to build a better and brighter future for the young people we work with; I wish I could take them back today to meet the 'babies' of Romania who are now young adults.

When I first met the young people back in 1991, keeping them alive would have seemed like a success; now they are kind, hardworking and considerate young people living together in apartments and with full time jobs; a remarkable achievement for both them and us.

2011 has seen more successful work from the team in Romania, as well as an exciting

new development to our programme. In a partnership with Constanta Social Services, HAO were able to bring 5 more young people out of institutional care to live in the community; by the end of the year, 3 of these young people were already in full-time employment.

A lot was achieved in 2011 and I would like to thank the team in Romania, my fellow Board members in Dublin and the new Board in the UK for their hard work and commitment throughout the year. The Irish Ambassador to Romania, John Morahan and the Deputy head of Mission David Costello deserve a particular mention for their continued support throughout 2011. I would also like to thank all those people who have so generously supported our work over the years and without whom none of this would be possible.

On behalf of HAO Board of Trustees

Many thanks

2011 THE HIGHLIGHTS

In **JANUARY**, HAO UK, founded at the end of 2010 had its first Board meeting and agreed their strategic plan. Their focus throughout the year was to achieve registration as a UK charity and to raise funds through small fun events to support our projects in Romania.

The 'social housing' apartments two of our young people purchased in 2010, were eventually completed at the end of this month.

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James Dillon
Trustee & Founder

FEBRUARY was a very sad month for everyone in HAO; one of the young men living in our group home in Galati died after a long illness; he was sorely missed.

On the 1st of **MARCH** one of the young people moved into her apartment to start her new life living alone for the first time. She had spent the previous month tiling and painting her apartment ready for the move.

The UK Royal wedding in **APRIL** provided one of our supporters in Boston, USA, the opportunity to have a fundraising 'wedding party' for HAO; it was a great success raising \$1,000.

At the beginning of **MAY** the other young person moved into his apartment. The move had proved quite a challenge for him; it took a few tries before he finally felt able to live alone – a new and frightening experience for him. He still comes back to HAO's apartment, his home for the last 5 years to see the other guys and just to hang out; we continue to provide this young man with the support he still needs.

MAY was also the beginning of discussions with Mr. Dinica, Head of Constanta Social Services, about a partnership to bring more young people out of institutional care. Mr. Dinica offered HAO an apartment to house 5 young people with disability in a 3 year project to support these young people develop their independent living skills, find employment and eventually move into their own apartments.

HAO UK arranged a weekend of



Social Inclusion Programme.

Casa Catalina, Group Home in Galati

In Romania Placement Centres are Government run orphanages for up to 60 children. At age 18 young people are moved to adult services where they are likely to end up in large institutions if alternative accommodation is unavailable.

In 2007 HAO in partnership with Galati County Council provided a home for 8 young people from Galati Placement Centres who were at risk of ending up in adult institutions. HAO provided the house, training for the staff team, a full time therapist and a small fund for social activities.

In the last four years these 8 young people have gained in skills and confidence as has the staff team at Casa Catalina. The young people living in the house who are non-verbal have communication systems that allow them to express themselves in a positive manner. The young man who started to attend the local school in 2010 is doing well and still enjoying the experience.

With funding from Vodafone we were able to organise a summer holiday in the mountains for the young people and their carers – everyone had a great time.

Apartments in Constanta

2011 was an exciting time for HAO Romania, we supported 11 young people with disability to live and work in the community. The 2 young people who bought their own studio apartments in 2010 moved out of HAO accommodation to live on their own for the first time in their lives this year; a ma-

HAO Romania Programmes.

In 2011, HAO had a **direct and positive** impact on the lives of 42 young people with disability and 9 parents with disabled children through our Social Inclusion and our Community Development programmes.

major change in their lives and a huge challenge for them.

HAO formed a partnership with Constanta Social Services (CSS) to bring 5 more young people with disability out of institutional care to live in an apartment in Constanta.

CSS supplied the apartment; HAO's staff are helping the young people to develop their independent living skills and to find employment.

When they are ready, we will help them to move into their own apartments. Although HAO have been doing this type of work successfully for the last 8 years, for CSS this is a new initiative.

Another exciting development in 2011 was the announcement made by Constanta County Council that they will build 800 Social Housing units; 400 to be ready by July and 400 by December 2012.

All the young people in HAO residential services have their names down for one of these studio apartments.

Community Development Programme.

Safety Net Project

With the expected increase in the number of young people with disability living independently in their own apartments, HAO set up the Safety Net Project (SNP).

The SNP is particularly relevant for those young people who have lived in institutional care all their lives, as they are unlikely to have family or a circle of friends to advise and support them when they need it.

Currently Constanta Social Services do not provide any type of community support to this vulner-



NGOs working together; the way forward

able group; HAO set up SNP to plug this gap in services. SNP staff monitor the wellbeing of the young people; ensure they are managing their finances; provide advice and support to deal with any difficulties the young person might face in their daily life and encourage and facilitate the young person to develop a support network of their own.

Social Advocacy Network

A group of 28 young people with disability belong to the Network; they meet monthly to take part in social events they have organised themselves with a little help from HAO. With support from HAO this group has the potential to become strong advocates for the improvement of services for people with disability.

Parent/carer network

This year the P/C Network organised a holiday in the mountains for their own children and some of the young people from the Social Advocacy Network.

At the last minute the group were let down with the transport they had been promised for the holiday, but rather than cancel the holiday and disappoint the group, the P/Cs decided to take the train to the mountains

This change in plan was a great success; it was the first time some of the young people had been on a train, they were very excited. One of the parents represented HAO on the fortnightly Social Services Adult Disability Assessment Committee; her personal experiences proved a valuable asset to the committee.

The Deinstitutionalisation Working Group

DIWG represents a growing number of NGOs who have a shared goal in Romania; to bring young people with disability out of institutional care. The group was formed towards the end of 2011 to share resources and good practice, crucial in a climate of scarce resources and to become a powerful lobbying body for improved services.

The group met on 3 occasions in 2011 to share advice and information and to collaborate on a funding proposal. The group recognise the potential for many more collaborative working arrangements and propose to explore these in 2012.

walking in the Peak District to raise funds; they plan to make this an annual event.

JUNE began the process of assessment to choose 5 young people who would move out of institutional care and participate in the joint project with HAO and Constanta Social Services.

Three of the young people living in our apartment put their name down for a 'social housing' apartment; a new initiative by Constanta County Council who are building blocks of apartments that will be available to disadvantaged people at an affordable rent. The apartments will become available in 2012.

In **JULY** the staff for the new project were recruited. Mr. David Costello, Deputy Head of Mission at the Irish Embassy in Bucharest met with HAO volunteers in Constanta to thank them for their work with HAO.

In **AUGUST**, HAO funded holidays for 32 persons - young people with disability and their carers.

SEPTEMBER was a great month for HAO. Five young men from institutional care moved into the new apartment; within a few weeks one of them was working for a large supermarket. Reinforcing their inclusion into community activities, our young guys participated in a community volunteer

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Acknowledgements

Whilst we are unable to name all the members of the Irish public who sponsor our work we would like to thank them from the bottom of our hearts for their continued support; without which we would not be able to continue the valuable work we do in Romania. HAO would also like to thank the following organisations, companies and individuals who supported our work in 2011...

COMPANIES:

- Avalon Comp
- Dan Invest SRL
- Vodafone
- Raluca Putnic
- Aurelia Sovaila
- Iulia Paun
- Cristian Pataki

INDIVIDUALS:

- Amy Maxwell
- Margaret Hughes
- Jim Falck
- Nicolae Dobrescu
- Ionut Tetcu
- Christine Glew
- Mihaela Carutasu
- Lia Olariu

ORGANISATIONS:

- The Irish Embassy in Bucharest: Ambassador John Morahan and David Costello, Deputy Head of Mission
- The Sisters of the Sacred Hearts Community in Dublin
- Constanta Social Services Department: Mr. Petre Dinica, Head of Department