

Refugee story:

Twice a Refugee: Mohammad's story.



Mohammad Hosein lives with his wife and infant daughter in Bucharest, Romania, where he has just found a permanent accommodation.

Mohammad is also a refugee. Twice over.

Originally from Afghanistan, he was a TV reporter in 2021, but fled the country in August after the Taliban took control. He and his pregnant wife drove 30 hours to the border at Chernyski, a drive which would ordinarily take just 7 hours.

While they were safe in Ukraine, the same could not be said for Mohammad's family. His father is a judge, and has been beaten by the Taliban because of his work.

The couple settled in Odessa, where they welcomed their daughter into the world. Mohammad received permanent resident status in Ukraine, although his wife did not yet have status.

Then, just a few months later, their lives were upended again as war broke out. Once more, they fled, this time to Romania, but they wanted to go further, to Germany to be with other family members. Their trip to Romania was fairly smooth, and they were treated the same as all the other refugees fleeing Ukraine.

But without a Ukrainian passport, they could not go further into Europe. Their Afghani passports are not enough to get where they wanted to go. They stayed in Radaout for a month, then came to Bucharest.

"We were staying in a camp near the immigration office," Mohammad said. "But it was not clean. When I met staff from AIDRom, and told them we had a newborn baby, they invited us to come and stay here."

Mohammad and his family moved to the aid agency, AIDRom, offices in Bucharest, where the agency maintains several small apartments for families seeking asylum in Romania.

"AIDRom is always helping us," Mohammad said. "They give us food- chicken, rice, yogurt, they host activities to introduce us to Bucharest, and they helped us legally."

Christian World Service and AIDRom are part of Act Alliance. The funds raised by Operation Refugee support Refugees like Mohammed through the partnerships between Christian World Service in New Zealand, and aid agencies like AIDRom in Romania.

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Mohammad and his family now have refugee status in Romania, and have the right to go further into Europe.

“But I am not going to Germany,” he said. “Now I need to support my family. We receive 200 euros per person from the Romanian immigration, and I send 100 to my family back home.”

He wants to bring his father to Bucharest because it is so dangerous in Afghanistan at the moment. “I don’t know how we can do it, but I hope immigration will help. He is not safe.”