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# Autism Spectrum Disorder in Romania. Development of the First Community Center for Children with ASD from Romania

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Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) represents a complex of neurological and developmental deficits characterized by a lack of social interaction and communication together with a series of restrictive, repetitive behaviors and stereotypes (APA, 2013). National reports show a growing rate of the spectrum starting with 2009. Meanwhile, national NGOs estimate a double number of cases due to a high number of unreported situations, undiagnosed children or children who have no access to services. The lack of statistical data regarding children diagnosed with autism could make us say the condition is considered invisible in Romania. The current paper presents a short history of the diagnostic and continues by presenting the current status of ASD in Romania. Also, is presented a case study of the evolution of the first community center for children with ASD in Romania, developed by the Casa Faenza Association in Timisoara, Romania. Finally, the paper highlights some of the main problems like the lack of a unique methodology for collecting data on individuals with ASD and unitary databases across the country.

**Keywords:** autism spectrum disorder (ASD), disability, community center, social services, private public partnership, professionalism

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