

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(49) Program 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Cash (L&CA 52) asked:

Within the Romanian transit centre itself, are people free to move around, are they able to work, are they entitled to medical care, are there any other benefits?

Answer:

The following information is obtained from the public information booklet about the centre attached to the answer to question 45.

The refugees are free to move around the centre and are encouraged to participate in activities and voluntary work opportunities. There are prayer rooms, sports facilities and indoor and outdoor play areas for children. A local non-government organisation (NGO), partnering with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provides medical care, meals and activities.

Residents require the approval of the Romanian Government to leave the Centre and may do so if accompanied by staff from UNHCR or the NGO. The refugees travel for both personal and resettlement-related reasons to the city of Timisoara and beyond for medical appointments, shopping, religious services, cultural orientation and leisure activities.