

# Regional Consultations with NGOs in Europe

## Geneva, Switzerland | 19-20 September 2023

In-Person, Centre International de Conférences Genève (CICG)

## Detailed Agenda and Speakers List

### TUESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER

#### 08:00-09:00 – Welcome coffee and pick up of badges

#### 09:00-10:00 – Opening remarks and setting the scene

This opening session will provide an overview of the Regional Consultations with NGOs in Europe: objectives, main themes, and expected outcomes. It will also introduce the overarching topics of the event from UNHCR's perspective, through a protection and operational lens, and touch on the key role of NGOs, including refugee-led organizations, in advancing the themes of the Regional Consultations.

#### SPEAKERS

##### **Aleksejs Ivashuk, Apatride Network**

Aleksejs Ivashuk is the Founder of Apatride Network, a coalition of stateless individuals, communities and other stateless-led organisations working on addressing statelessness in the EU. He is also an associate member of ENS, Co-lead of Global Movement Against Statelessness, and serves on UNHCR's Advisory Board of Organisations led by the forcibly displaced and stateless. Previously, Aleksejs worked for Thomson Reuters, IPSA International, the Green Party of Canada, the U.S. Senate, and was actively involved with the Canadian Red Cross in its First Response and Disaster Management programs. He holds a Political Science MA from Simon Fraser University, Canada. Aleksejs has published on the topic of statelessness with Oxford's Forced Migration Review and Swiss Refugee Council.

**Anne-Marie Deutschlander, UNHCR**

Anne-Marie Deutschlander took up her position as Principal Situation Coordinator for South-Eastern Europe in UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe in October 2019. In this function, Ms. Deutschlander ensures a regional perspective and oversees all aspects of UNHCR operations in the Western Balkans countries as well as Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania. Ms. Deutschlander's over 25-year professional career with UNHCR has also included serving as Deputy Regional Representative at the UNHCR Regional Representation for West Africa (2016-2018), the Senior Change Management Advisor for the UNHCR Change Team (2018-2019), Representative in Mauritania (2006-2008), and other roles across the Western Balkans, the Middle East and headquarters. A Swiss national, Ms. Deutschlander holds a Master's degree in international law, economics and European integration from the Graduate Institute of International Studies (IUHEI Geneva) and a Bachelor of Arts in French History and Literature from the University of California at Berkeley.

**Gillian Triggs, UNHCR**

Gillian Triggs is a UN Assistant Secretary-General and Assistant High Commissioner for Protection with UNHCR, taking up her appointment in September 2019. She is a public international lawyer who has held a number of appointments in service to human rights and the refugee cause, including as President of the Australian Human Rights Commission. Gillian oversees UNHCR's protection work in support of millions of refugees, asylum-seekers, those who have been forcibly displaced within their own country and stateless. A dual national of Britain and Australia, Gillian has held a number of leadership roles, including as Director of the British Institute of International and Comparative Law in London, President of the Asian Development Bank Administrative Tribunal, Chair of the UN Independent Expert Panel of Inquiry into Abuse of Office and Harassment in UNAIDS, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Challis Professor (Emerita) of International Law at the University of Sydney, and Professorial Fellow of the University of Melbourne. Gillian has supported many not-for-profit groups, including most recently as Chair of Justice Connect that connects 10,000 lawyers to provide pro bono advice to asylum-seekers and others needing legal support. She is also the author of many books and papers on international law, including 'International Law: Contemporary Principles and Practice, (2nd ed. 2011) and Speaking Up (2018). In July 2021 Gillian was awarded a Ruth Bader Ginsberg Inaugural Medal of Honour in recognition of her fight for the rule of law and gender equality.

**Mirela Shuteriqi, ICVA**

Mirela Shuteriqi is ICVA's Acting Executive Director. She joined ICVA in 2019 as Director of Policy where she leads a policy team focusing on forced migration, humanitarian financing and coordination. As a human rights lawyer from Albania, she has 15 years of professional experience on humanitarian and development issues working for both NGOs and UN Agencies. She worked with UNICEF as advocacy coordinator on the rights of refugee and migrant children in Europe. Prior to UNICEF, Mirela served as global protection adviser for Terre des hommes, covering programmes aiming at preventing child exploitation, trafficking and other forms of violence against children. For several years she provided direct legal services to vulnerable families and Albanian children exploited or living in the streets of Albania and Greece. She holds an LL.M degree and has authored various publications on human rights and migration law.

**Stella Ogunlade, UNHCR**

Stella Ogunlade is Chief of Section of the NGO and Civil Society unit of the Partnership and Coordination Service in UNHCR's Headquarters. In this function, she supports UNHCR's engagement with International and National NGOs, including faith-based organisations, and with organisations-led by refugees, displaced and stateless persons. Ms. Ogunlade has worked for more than 18 years with UNHCR, in Protection and since 2015 in Inter-Agency collaboration and coordination, in more than eight countries, mainly in Asia, Africa and the Pacific. She has postgraduate law degrees from Germany and Australia. She is German and has a family with two children.

**10:00-10:30 – Coffee break****10:30-12:00 – Inclusion in Europe: State-of-play and priorities for UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe**

This session will focus on challenges and opportunities for socio-economic inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless people in Europe by providing an overview of UNHCR's inclusion priorities and initiatives in the Europe region, presenting existing data, discussing legal and de facto inclusion barriers and how these can be addressed, and identifying opportunities for jointly strengthening effective inclusion.

**SPEAKERS****Can Cakir, INGEV**

Can Cakir graduated from New York University in 2007 with a degree in Economics, and began at Ipsos Turkey's Advertising Research Division the same year. Until 2018, he took part in the organization, management, and assessment of various communication and advertising campaigns in traditional, digital, and outdoor media. In 2018, he started his new role at INGEV as the Director of the INGEV Center for Social Research. At INGEV he works to understand the needs of various disadvantaged groups, produce strategies for building social cohesion, and develop research-based policy and programme recommendations.

**Fabiana Musicco, Refugees Welcome**

Fabiana Musicco is co-founder of Refugees Welcome Italia and Director since 2019. She is an expert with 15 years' experience on active citizenship and refugee integration policies in Italy. She is a lecturer and tutor in adult training courses at the university-level, as well as courses for adult migrants on start-up businesses, partnerships and active citizenship. She has extensive experience in the monitoring, selection and evaluation of projects co-financed with European funds, and evaluation of projects co-financed with the integration fund for third-country nationals. With expertise in social politics and the labour market, she collaborates with public and private institutions on projects aimed at the integration of third-country nationals. She has also published on subjects such as environmental and community resources development, building of networks and public/private entrepreneurial relationships, and public and institutional communication.

### **Ganna Bazilo, Ukrainian Action in Ireland**

Ganna Bazilo was born and raised in Kyiv, Ukraine. Her background is in European Union policies and programme management. The full-scale invasion of Ukraine occurred while Ganna was visiting family in Dublin, Ireland. Ganna started volunteering with the local community from the first hours, helping with the organisation of protests, providing information to support refugees, and sharing her knowledge about the war in Ukraine with the international community, media, and academia. Ganna became one of the co-founders of Ukrainian Action in Ireland—a registered non-profit organization whose mission is to be the Ukrainian voice and action in Ireland. Ukrainian Action in Ireland’s volunteers contribute to the smooth integration of Ukrainian refugees into Irish society, facilitate advancement of Ukraine-Ireland cultural cooperation and provide humanitarian and life-saving relief to Ukrainians experiencing hardship. For her work with Ukrainian Action in Ireland and support to Ukrainian refugees Ganna was awarded a Women of the Year in Ireland Special Recognition Award in 2022.

### **Maritxu Mayoral, Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado**

Maritxu Mayoral has been working in various NGOs since 2003, with a focus on forced displacement and gender issues. She is currently a Psychologist Team Leader in the Spanish Commission for Refugees’ Inclusion programme. She holds a diploma in Psychology; has extensive experience working on issues related to mental health, political violence and catastrophes; and is a certified psychologist and social services manager. She has supported refugees and migrants from many different perspectives, with a particular focus on children on the move affected by migration and forced displacement, women, and victims of trafficking. She is also experienced in the collection, analysis and dissemination of migrant/forced displacement-related data.

### **Susanne Klink, UNHCR**

Susanne Klink is leading UNHCR’s work on refugees’ socio-economic inclusion, integration and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Europe as Senior Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Officer at UNHCR’s Regional Bureau for Europe, where she has served since January 2020. She has been working on refugee integration, development and humanitarian issues at national, regional and global levels since 2007 through different assignments in Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, Morocco and Switzerland. While she has spent most of her career with UNHCR, she also worked at IOM, GIZ, ECLAC and the private sector. She holds a master’s degree in international development studies and a post graduate diploma on human rights and public policies for refugee protection and migrants.

## 12:00-13:00 – Non-discrimination and social cohesion – cornerstones of inclusion

Concrete measures that strengthen social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities, and between different refugee communities, are critical to promoting the effective inclusion of refugees in their host communities. How can we de-politicize and de-polarize debates about refugees and asylum, and create a sense of common objectives and shared identity? This session will explore how to communicate messages that combat xenophobia and misinformation through concrete examples shared by refugee-led organisations. These will focus on the experiences of refugees in different contexts, as well as specific minority groups. The aim of the session is to explore constructive ways to promote true cohesion and build social ties, find common ground and communicate effectively.

### SPEAKERS

#### **Etinosa Erevbenagie-Johnbull, Generation for Change Cyprus**

Etinosa Erevbenagie-Johnbull was born in Nigeria and migrated to Athens, Greece, at a young age. He is a Psychology graduate from the University of Nicosia. Etinosa's early life experiences shaped his views and motivated him to engage in social activities focusing on human rights, justice and solidarity. With his long experience in human rights activism and social change, he is committed to advocating and motivating others to become active citizens and becoming the change they wish to see in society.

#### **Joanna Talewicz, Towards Dialogue Foundation**

Joanna Talewicz, PhD, is co-founder and president of the Towards Dialogue Foundation [Fundacja w Stronę Dialogu]. She is a researcher, educator, author and activist. For 20 years she has been working for the benefit of the Roma community and minority rights. While her work focuses on Roma communities in Europe, her main topics are the Roma Holocaust and Roma refugees. A Doctor of Cultural Anthropology, she has also worked as an assistant professor at Jagiellonian University and University of Warsaw and is a graduate of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program at University of Cambridge's Judge Business School. Joanna is a member of the Polish delegation in the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and a Batory Foundation Olga Kersten-Matwin Award winner for continued educational, integration, psychological and legal assistance for refugees of Roma origin. Her associations and experiences additionally include: the Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability Program at Columbia University; the Leadership Academy for Poland; a Fulbright scholarship grantee; the Tom Lantos Institute; the European Commission Marie Curie program on Multi-Disciplinary and Cross-National Approaches to Romani Studies; the Central European University; and the U.S. State Department's International Leadership Visitor Program.

### **Louise Donovan, UNHCR**

Louise Donovan is Senior Communications Officer for UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe, where she has worked since 2022. She leads the Communications team, including coordinating news, media, and messaging for the Europe region. As Regional Spokesperson for Europe, Louise engages with media and drafts regional publications including press releases, news comments and statements. She provides support and guidance to country offices across the region. She also led UNHCR Communications teams in Greece, Bangladesh and Niger. Louise began her career with NGOs in Ireland and then moved into an international career, working in the area of access to justice with UNDP in Timor-Leste, following a master's degree in International Human Rights Law from the Irish Centre for Human Rights in Galway, Ireland.

## **13:00-14:00 – Lunch break**

## **14:00-15:30 – Parallel break-out sessions**

### **REINFORCING ACCESS TO SOCIAL PROTECTION BENEFITS AND SERVICES**

This session will demonstrate how civil society organizations can accompany forcibly displaced persons and government social protection agencies to better ensure access to national social protection benefits and services. It will also discuss how Ukrainian refugee-hosting contexts are managing the transition from humanitarian assistance to inclusion in social protection systems and will explore how other contexts hosting non-Ukrainian refugees are working to bridge historical gaps between legal access to social protection rights versus actual access to benefits and services for refugees and asylum-seekers.

### **SPEAKERS**

#### **Andrew Mitchell, UNHCR**

Andrew Mitchell has served as Senior Social Protection Officer with UNHCR since 2016, leading its global work on aligning and transitioning humanitarian assistance to government social protection programmes, particularly for populations in protracted situations. Previously, he consulted for development actors including the OECD, BMZ and DEVCO on applying resilience-building and social protection approaches in protracted humanitarian and displacement contexts and started in 2002 in technical and management positions with frontline humanitarian international NGOs in zones of conflict and disasters.

**Diana Chiriacescu, FONSS**

Diana Chiriacescu is director of Federația Organizațiilor Neguvernamentale pentru Servicii Sociale (FONSS), or the Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations of Social Services, a platform of 44 NGOs providing social services in Romania since 2016. She is also a member of the Economic and Social Council of Romania. She holds a degree in psychology and master's degrees in psychotherapy (Romania) and management of social organizations (France). Diana has 27 years of experience in the fields of disability and social services, and ten years of experience working directly with children with disabilities as manager of Aurora Day Care Centre in Bucharest. From 2005 to 2010, she was the coordinator of Handicap International's Regional Program of Services for People with Disabilities in Southeast Europe, working with national and local authorities, disabled people's organizations, and service providers in the Balkan countries to develop responsive, accessible, and efficient local-level social service systems. As a consultant in the field of disability and social services, she works with the World Bank and UN agencies across Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, and has authored several regional reports and working papers, as well as training materials related to the development and modernization of social services. She received the Human Rights Prize of the French Republic in 2001 for contributions to inclusive social policies and promotion of the rights of people with disabilities.

**Valentina Fabbri, Programme Integra**

Valentina Fabbri has served as President of Programma Integra, an NGO based in Rome, Italy, since 2011, acquiring expertise in managing social enterprises at many levels. She first joined Programma Integra in 2007, working primarily with the legal team and eventually shifting into project management and communications. From 2005 to 2007, Valentina was the legal advisor for asylum law at the Italian Médecins Sans Frontières mission. In 2004, she completed internships at the Italian Council for Refugees and UNHCR. In 2019, Valentina was selected by the U.S. State Department to participate in the IVLP US Program as an expert in Italy's landscape of migration and refugees. She has also cooperated with University "Roma 3" in a special project centering on the social inclusion of migrants. Since 2020, she has been Vice President of the Aziende Pubblica di Servizi alla Persona (IRAIM ASP), appointed by Rome Municipality to ensure service provision for children and their families. Valentina graduated from the Sapienza University of Rome in 2003 with a focus on political science and specialization in international relations. In 2014, she received her master's degree in non-profit management from the University of Rome Tor Vergata.

**OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES ON LOCALIZATION**

This session, co-hosted with ICVA, will present a first overview of the Operational Guidelines on Localization for UNHCR, gather inputs and feedback from the participants, and collect ideas on practical ways UNHCR can partner with local and national NGOs in our operations.



**SPEAKERS****Maren Backbier, UNHCR**

Maren Backbier is an Associate Partnership Officer in the NGO and Civil Society team at UNHCR, where she works on localization and engagement with civil society partners. She previously worked on inclusion and youth participation with NGOs and in the private sector, including in South Sudan. She is committed to supporting forcibly displaced and stateless persons and working with partners to create lasting positive change in the lives of people we serve.

**Remo Fambri, UNHCR**

Remo Fambri works in the NGO and Civil Society team at UNHCR as Senior Inter-agency Coordinator. He has worked in displacement contexts for the past 10 years with a focus on emergency preparedness and response and inter-agency coordination. He has a background in information management and extensive field experience, working in various crises including in Lebanon, Iraq, Myanmar, Cameroon, Greece, South Sudan and others. Known for his creativity and commitment to humanitarian principles, Remo is dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of refugees and displaced populations.

**Davina Saïd, ICVA**

Davina Saïd has extensive experience working on forced displacement issues in NGOs, such as the British Refugee Council, and with refugee-led organizations in Palestine where she focused on development and humanitarian interventions. She was a research fellow under the European Commission's Marie Skłodowska-Curie programme as well as a research consultant. Her research specialised in refugee integration, inclusion, and participatory approaches and she has published on these topics. She holds an MSc in Global Politics and a Social Sciences degree. Prior to joining ICVA, she worked for UNHCR in the Division of International Protection where she provided capacity building and policy development support to States on resettlement and complementary pathways programmes, as well as being the integration focal point. She also worked with UNHCR in the Southern Africa region focusing on durable solutions.

**Gabriela Miranda, ICVA**

Gabriela Miranda is Senior Policy Officer for ICVA's Forced Migration Focus Area. She works to facilitate the engagement of NGOs in international policy development processes. She previously worked as External Engagement and Advocacy advisor and has extensive experience with multi-stakeholder initiatives in the humanitarian and development sector. She is committed to support populations on the move to have their voices heard and to access essential services such as education. She has technical and advocacy experience in Education in Emergencies in the Ukrainian refugee response.



**PROMOTING FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

This session will present the business case for forcibly displaced and stateless persons' access to financial and business development services and discuss how NGOs and RLOs can support financial inclusion.

**SPEAKERS****Aicha Manai, Startup Refugees**

Aicha Manai is a Finnish-Tunisian expert in entrepreneurship, immigration and DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion). She holds a master's degree in economics and business administration and is a certified business advisor. Throughout her career she has mentored and consulted dozens of people of refugee and immigrant backgrounds on employment and entrepreneurship in Finland. Currently Aicha works as the CEO of Startup Refugees, a social initiative that offers asylum-seekers, refugees and immigrants support in finding employment, developing professional skills and starting a business in Finland. Before that she worked at the Federation of Finnish Enterprises where she led numerous projects that increased the representation of minorities in the business community and supported entrepreneurs of immigrant background to strengthen their skills and grow their businesses.

**Katarzyna Hanula, Microfinance Center**

A senior policy and advocacy executive and with a 15+ year career focusing on European and international-level advocacy, Katarzyna Hanula has been a driving force in shaping public policies, advocating for impactful change and advancing social justice causes. She has a deep understanding of legislative processes, regulatory frameworks and public administration, enabling her to effectively navigate complex policy landscapes. Throughout her career, Katarzyna has worked closely with government agencies, non-profit organizations, and international stakeholders to successfully advocate for policies in areas such as financial reform, financial inclusion, education and economic and social empowerment of various groups. In addition to policy expertise, Katarzyna is a skilled communicator and strategist with a proven track record of building strong coalitions and engaging diverse stakeholders. She was the European Commission Expert in REFIT Platform, advising on the review of European acquis from the social perspective. Her academic credentials include law and economics degrees, a master's in business administration from Finland, managerial credentials from Strathmore Business School in Kenya, and Stanford University's Executive Program. As Financial Inclusion Lead at Microfinance Center, she works on financial inclusion and empowerment of migrants and refugees and continues to champion causes close to her heart, striving to create equitable and inclusive society.

### **Susanne Klink, UNHCR**

Susanne Klink is leading UNHCR's work on refugees' socio-economic inclusion, integration and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Europe as Senior Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Officer at UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe, where she has served since January 2020. She has been working on refugee integration, development and humanitarian issues at national, regional and global levels since 2007 through different assignments in Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, Morocco and Switzerland. While she spent most of her career with UNHCR, she also worked at IOM, GIZ, ECLAC and the private sector. She holds a master's degree in international development studies and a post graduate diploma on human rights and public policies for refugee protection and migrants.

## **15:30-16:00 – Coffee break**

## **16:00-16:45 – Feedback to plenary**

### **SPEAKERS**

### **Natalia Prokopchuk, UNHCR**

Natalia Prokopchuk has more than 20 years of experience with UNHCR. She worked for UNHCR in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Ethiopia, Iraq, Syria and Belgium before she joined the UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe in Geneva, Switzerland. During 2018-2022 Natalia led the communications team at the Europe Bureau, coordinating key news and media initiatives in Europe, including the development of communications strategies, key advocacy messaging, news statements and digital content on issues related to refugees, stateless persons and internally displaced persons. In 2023 Natalia was appointed as the Senior External Engagement Coordinator for Europe, leading the cross-functional team that brings together strategic communications, inter-agency, partnerships, donor relations, reporting and external relations teams.

## **16:45-17:45 – Gender Equality: Ensuring effective access of women refugees to rights and inclusion**

This plenary will focus on how to support forcibly displaced and stateless women to draw on their skills and experience to contribute to their host communities while addressing gender-specific barriers hindering effective and equal access to decent work, education and social services as well as mitigating protection risks. Good and emerging practices on direct support to forcibly displaced and stateless women, advocacy for inclusion and generating an evidence-base will help guide the discussion on the way forward.

**SPEAKERS****Ekram Jalboutt, New Women Connectors**

Ekram Jalboutt is a dedicated humanitarian advocate and policy expert, demonstrating a profound commitment to supporting displaced communities. With an extensive experience in the MENA region, she has broadened her expertise to encompass European migration policies, asylum procedures and the empowerment of RLOs. Her lived experience sets her apart in advocacy as a refugee, and having endured statelessness herself, she brings a unique and deeply personal perspective to her work. Her experience in the humanitarian field began at UNHCR, where she served as a Senior Protection Assistant, making valuable contributions to Refugee Status Determination and Resettlement teams. As her journey took her to the Netherlands, she joined New Women Connectors (NWC) as a policy advisor and project assistant. She advocates for inclusive solutions that benefit vulnerable populations and also for meaningful participation and representation of refugees. Under the umbrella of NWC she is one of the co-founders of the Refugee Led Network which aims to unify the voices of all national RLOs in the Netherlands.

**Mary Mozafary, She4She**

Mary was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, and now lives in Hungary as a Hungarian citizen with a refugee background. She received her bachelor's degree in law and political science from Kabul University, and a Certificate in Management and Leadership for Women Officials from the Administrative Staff College of India. As a refugee-activist, she has diverse experience working with national and international non-profit organizations and causes dealing with peace-building, refugee integration and education, with a special focus on women's rights. Her work has also focused on advocating for refugee resettlement and engagement of refugees in Europe. She initiated the women's group She4She to mainstream the unheard voices of migrant and refugee women living across Hungary and Europe. The movement also helps newly arrived refugee women lift their spirits and build self-confidence.

**Susanne Klink, UNHCR**

Susanne Klink is leading UNHCR's work on refugees' socio-economic inclusion, integration and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Europe as Senior Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Officer at UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe, where she has served since January 2020. She has been working on refugee integration, development and humanitarian issues at national, regional and global levels since 2007 through different assignments in Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, Morocco and Switzerland. While she spent most of her career with UNHCR, she also worked at IOM, GIZ, ECLAC and the private sector. She holds a master's degree in international development studies and a post graduate diploma on human rights and public policies for refugee protection and migrants.

**Valentina Bodrug-Lungu, Gender-Centru**

Valentina Bodrug-Lungu, PhD, is an international gender expert and professor at Moldova State University with over 20 years of experience in gender analysis and mainstreaming; women, peace and security; gender-based violence; and women's political and socio-economic empowerment. She is the author of more than 160 articles and books on gender issues published in Moldova, the United States of America, Romania, Ukraine and Russia. She is President of the NGO Gender-Centru and Co-founder of the Platform for Gender Equality in the Republic of Moldova. At national, regional and international levels she has contributed as a speaker and co-organiser for conferences on topics such as sustainable development, the Beijing+25 and women, peace and security. Since 2020, Valentina is part of the Women's Major Group for Europe and Central Asia and a member of the Expert Group on SDG 5 (Gender equality) for the High-Level Political Forum 2022.

**18:00-19:00 – Reception**

## WEDNESDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER

### 08:00-09:00 – Welcome coffee

### 09:00-10:00 – The role of organizations led by refugees, other forcibly displaced and stateless people

This plenary – led by RLOs – will focus on how refugees promote and are key actors of their own inclusion into national systems and the barriers they face in their work. How can this critical mechanism be strengthened? How can their engagement be further supported to impact decision-making? What forms of cooperation and partnership with other stakeholders are refugee-led organizations looking for and how do we create them?

#### SPEAKERS

##### **Aslak Gimse Solumsmoen, UNHCR**

Aslak Gimse Solumsmoen heads the Inter-Agency and Partnership stream of UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe. He coordinates the regional inter-agency response to the war in Ukraine as captured in the Regional Refugee Response Plan and oversees the Bureau's partnerships and engagement with fellow UN agencies. Having worked 15 years with the organization, he has previously headed UNHCR field offices in Iraq, Syria, and Ukraine and has broad experience with operational response, coordination, and external engagement in Europe and the Middle East. Aslak is a Norwegian citizen and holds a master's degree in international relations.

##### **Haile Kassa Hailu, Asylum Organization Zurich**

Haile is an Ethiopian refugee who arrived in Switzerland 14 years ago. Despite a 6-year struggle for recognition, he pursued a master's in economics at the University of Bern. Since receiving his refugee status, he has dedicated the last eight years of his work to empowering refugees and marginalized groups. This includes serving as a Refugee Outreach Coordinator in UNHCR's Office for Switzerland and Liechtenstein in 2021-2022, where Haile mapped refugee-led organizations, bridged refugee communities with support organizations, and initiated the "Swiss and Liechtenstein Refugee Team", with the aim of guiding UNHCR toward more participatory methodologies. He also organized workshops fostering networks and participatory approaches, notably at the Asylsymposium 2022. Currently, Haile works as a care worker for unaccompanied refugee minors in Zurich. In parallel, he has initiated a network of refugee-led organizations in Switzerland. His personal and professional journey has taught him about refugee resilience, advocacy and commitment, and transforming challenges into opportunities.

### **Irina Basiul, National Congress of Ukrainians of Moldova**

As a Program Officer and AAP Task Force Manager, Irina Basiul has been actively involved in providing support to Ukrainian refugees since July 2022. Her expertise in emergency response has been instrumental in various projects undertaken by the National Congress of Ukrainians of Moldova (NCUM). In 2023 Irina took on the responsibility of coordinating the AAP Task Force, which aims to engage and interact with the affected population and advocate for the Ukrainian refugee community in Moldova. Irina also collaborates on several humanitarian projects focused on improving the livelihood and inclusion of Ukrainian refugees in the country. Irina is taking part in the Core Group for the Joint Pledge on Advancing Localization in Displacement and Statelessness Responses, to contribute expertise and resources and help mobilise support for the pledge ahead of, during, and after the Global Refugee Forum. Irina has a bachelor's degree in political science from Transnistrian University Taras Schevchenko in Tiraspol and an additional degree in English interpretation. She is fluent in Russian and English.

### **Julius Ntobuah, Newcomers with Disabilities**

Julius Ntobuah is the founder of Newcomers with Disabilities in Sweden. The aim of Newcomers with Disabilities in Sweden is to advocate for inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers with disabilities into Swedish society and to ensure that the specific needs of this group are met during the entire inclusion process. Julius is also a member of the UNHCR Advisory Board, which acts as a representative body for organizations led by displaced and stateless people and plays a critical role in providing strategic policy advice to UNHCR.

## **10:00-10:30 – Coffee break**

## **10:30-12:00 – Parallel break-out sessions**

### **BARRIERS TO DECENT WORK AND HOW TO OVERCOME THESE**

This session will focus on efforts by NGOs and RLOs to overcome barriers to decent work for forcibly displaced and stateless persons, showcasing multi-stakeholder approaches, alliances with the private sector, and good and emerging practices.

**SPEAKERS****Maarten van Panhuis, RefugeeConnect**

Maarten van Panhuis is a Dutch entrepreneur, former council member, veteran and initiator of RefugeeConnect. He has long been active in the labour market, first as director of a payroll organization and recently as an entrepreneur with his own company MPeople that supports and advises small businesses in the field of payroll and HRM administration. He also uses his knowledge and experience as an entrepreneur with the social project RefugeeConnect to make the labour market accessible to everyone. Asylum-seekers often spend a long time in the procedure and are unable to work due to various restrictive legislation; the aim of RefugeeConnect is to remove all these restrictions, so that all asylum seekers can find work during their procedure. Maarten recently won a lawsuit against the State, with a ruling that the 24-week restriction for asylum-seekers is in violation of European reception guidelines. Maarten frequently speaks at conferences, events and with media to share his knowledge, experience and vision with regard to RefugeeConnect.

**Nataliia Hryshchenko, SVOJA Association**

Nataliia Hryshchenko took up the position of director of the SVOJA Association in July 2022. She has 15 years of experience in the banking sector in Ukraine, eight years of which are in senior positions in the credit departments of banks such as SEB Bank and FIDOBANK. During this time, she successfully conducted credit analyses of small and medium-sized business clients. She was the head of the credit committee, participated in the development of new credit products, and developed processes and credit programs to identify and assess potential risks. She has a higher education degree in finance and credit. She speaks Ukrainian, Russian, and English and is studying Croatian.

**Roxana Popa, Jobs for Ukraine**

Roxana Popa is a social entrepreneur focused on economic inclusion of vulnerable persons. She developed and led global programs and partnerships in UiPath to make automation education more accessible and inclusive, and she used emerging technologies to reduce the environmental impact and operational costs of fast-moving consumer goods. Roxana is now deploying such technologies to scale social work. Roxana co-founded Jobs for Ukraine in March 2022 as a job-matching platform for Ukrainian refugees in Romania. She founded a non-profit organisation, Project Voyager (Asociatia Proiect Voiajor), in July 2022 to run the platform and expand it in over 60 countries. Jobs for Ukraine has attracted support from UNHCR, as well as other leading global organizations like EBRD, IOM, Mastercard, Microsoft and EY, and it now offers complementary services to enable economic inclusion of refugees and other adults in vulnerable contexts.

**Steven Bunce, UNHCR**

Steven Bunce is Integration Officer at UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe, where he works across country operations on refugee socio-economic inclusion and integration. Prior to arriving at the Bureau for Europe he served with UNHCR's operations in El Salvador, Mexico and Colombia, developing and implementing Durable Solutions strategies for refugees and internally displaced persons. He holds a PhD in Social Sciences from the University of Sydney.



**ARGUMENTS FOR AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE INCLUSION OF REFUGEES IN NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS**

This session will focus on the importance of refugee education. Participants will discuss arguments for inclusion of refugee children in national education systems and look at best practices in refugee education.

**SPEAKERS****Frederik Smets, UNHCR**

Frederik Smets is the Education Officer at UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe, where he coordinates the education response to the Ukraine refugee emergency in refugee-hosting countries and develops advocacy and training programmes on refugee education. Frederik has worked for UNHCR for almost 10 years in communications, external relations and education roles.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**

The participation of refugees in policies and programs that have an impact on their lives – including decision-making processes – is critical to effective inclusion. Such processes give refugees the opportunity to be actively involved in discussions and decisions that impact their daily lives, including on access to education, health services, work and housing. This session will explore good practices in this regard, with concrete examples from across Europe.

**SPEAKERS****Ahmad Wali Ahmad-Yar, Umbrella Refugee Committee**

Ahmad Wali is a Ph.D. researcher at Vrije Universiteit Brussels and, in collaboration with the Interface Demography research group, is involved in the Horizon 2020 project 'Enhanced Migration Measures from a Multidimensional Perspective'. His research centres around international migration, migration data analysis, theoretical and data gaps in migration research, EU migration policies, and local-level migrant integration policies. Ahmad Wali serves as the president of the Umbrella Refugee Committee, which represents nine community-based, refugee-led organisations in Belgium and is recognised as one of the largest and most diverse refugee-led organisations with Afghan, Burundian, Eritrean, Iraqi, LGBTIQ+, Somali, Syrian, Ukrainian, and women refugee groups represented. Ahmad Wali is also the secretary-general of the Network of Afghan Diaspora Organisations in Europe. Previously, he worked in the economic policy and GRID units at the Centre for European Policy Studies in Brussels, as an interpreter for UNHCR and a Public Relations Officer for the Ariana Social Centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan. He holds a master's degree in political science from the Université Libre de Bruxelles and a bachelor's degree in international relations from al-Farabi Kazakh National University. As a native of Afghanistan, Ahmad Wali possesses a profound personal interest in the history and current affairs of South and Central Asia.

### **Angela Moore, UNHCR**

Angela Moore is the Senior Community-Based Protection Officer for UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe, where she is responsible for activities related to accountability to affected populations, child protection, prevention and response to gender-based violence, and mental health and psychosocial support, among others. She has worked in a range of protection and emergency response roles with UNHCR, both at headquarters and in the field, since 2010.

### **Elfatih Adam, Académie pour la Participation des Réfugiés**

Elfatih Mohamed Adam is currently a first-year student in the Population and Development master's program at the University Paris Cité, as well as a volunteer helping refugees. He holds a biological engineering diploma from the Sudan University of Science and Technology in Khartoum. After several months in exile, he arrived in France in June 2017 and obtained his refugee status. He decided to continue his studies in France, securing a place within Sciences Po's Humanities and Social Sciences program in 2020. Throughout his studies, Elfatih volunteered with the Sciences Po Refugee Help Association and Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS). He also worked as a project manager at La Ruche Paris in order to raise awareness around refugee-owned businesses. Since 2021, he has been an active member of the Academy for the Participation of Refugees run by the Inter-ministerial Delegation for the Reception and Integration of Refugees (Diair) in partnership with UNHCR France. He is a member of UNHCR's advisory committee of refugees on refugees' access to employment and socio-economic inclusion in France. Since March 2023, Elfatih has worked as a social coordinator with the Emmaus Solidarité association.

## **12:00-13:00 – Lunch break**

### **12:00-13:00 – Lunch brown bag on fundraising opportunities for local organizations**

This session will discuss fundraising opportunities for local NGOs and RLOs. It will present an overview of UNHCR's initiatives to support the resource mobilization of local organizations and feature the experiences of two organizations with tapping into different funding mechanisms to grow and scale their operations.

**SPEAKERS****Ganna Shvachka, SME SPOLU**

Ganna Shvachka is the head of SME SPOLU, based in Bratislava, Slovakia. She also leads the charity fund Ukraine-Slovakia SOS and serves as an intercultural mediator for IOM in Slovakia. Currently, SME SPOLU projects focus on the education, integration and protection of refugees from Ukraine in Slovakia, with the support of UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO and International Volunteers of Yamagata (Japan). Prior to her role at SME SPOLU, Dr. Shvachka served as senior lecturer of comparative law at the Kyiv Law University of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine and as an academic expert of the Ukrainian Constitutional Court. Dr. Shvachka has also worked on numerous comparative research projects and studies, such as human and civil rights in autonomous regions with a focus on national minorities and the legal status and integration of internally displaced persons in Ukraine, among others.

**Jean-Didier Totow Tom-Ata, Congolese Community of Greece**

Jean-Didier Totow Tom-Ata is the President of the Congolese Community of Greece and President of the Greek forum of refugees. He is also a PhD candidate in Cloud computing at the University of Piraeus in Greece, where he teaches in the Department of Digital Systems and conducts research in the optimization and prediction of cloud applications' performance. Motivated by the potential and usefulness of every human being, he advocates for the inclusion of refugees and migrants into Greek society through participation and coordination of activities related to integration by promoting human empowerment and engagement in society. He is also committed to crisis response, environmental issues and reforestation activities in Europe and Africa.

**Pia Paguio, UNHCR**

Ms. Pia Paguio is currently serving as the Associate Head of UNHCR's Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization Service. Prior to taking up this assignment, she was the Deputy Representative for UNHCR's Multi-Country Office in Thailand, overseeing protection, solutions, coordination, and emergency preparedness. She was also in charge of fundraising and donor relations in Lebanon, which coincided with the peak of UNHCR's response to the Syria crisis and the height of donor involvement with the operation. Ms. Paguio has served with UNHCR since 1999 in a range of functions in Headquarters and in the field, including in several emergencies. Ms. Paguio received a Master of Arts in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics from Oxford University and a Master of Science in International Relations, with an emphasis on the Politics of Southeast Asian Development, from the London School of Economics. She is fluent in English, French, and her native Tagalog, and is conversant in German and Spanish.

**13:00-13:45 – Feedback to plenary**

**SPEAKERS****Natalia Prokopchuk, UNHCR**

Natalia Prokopchuk has more than 20 years of experience with UNHCR. She worked for UNHCR in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Ethiopia, Iraq, Syria and Belgium before she joined the UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe in Geneva, Switzerland. During 2018-2022 Natalia led the communications team at the Europe Bureau, coordinating key news and media initiatives in Europe, including the development of communications strategies, key advocacy messaging, news statements and digital content on issues related to refugees, stateless persons and internally displaced persons. In 2023 Natalia was appointed as the Senior External Engagement Coordinator for Europe, leading the cross-functional team that brings together strategic communications, inter-agency, partnerships, donor relations, reporting and external relations teams.

**13:45-14:45 – Looking towards the Global Refugee Forum**

In the lead-up to the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in December 2023, this session aims to consult NGOs on the preparations made to date and opportunities for engagement, including practical support to develop and submit pledges. It will also be an opportunity to hear from NGOs on the progress they have made in implementing past pledges as well as their plans for the upcoming GRF.

**SPEAKERS****Begüm Dereli, European Council on Refugees and Exiles**

Begüm Dereli works as Project Officer at the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE). She holds a Ph.D. in Political and Social Sciences and an MA in Migration Studies. Her Ph.D. thesis focuses on the integration experiences of refugee youths through higher education. She has worked in various research groups specialized in migration, inclusion, diversity-related issues, and research methodology. Previously, she worked in protection and livelihood projects targeting refugee groups in Türkiye. Currently, she is leading ECRE's work on inclusion, including managing a range of projects aiming to contribute to the meaningful participation of advocates with refugee backgrounds in EU-level advocacy.

**Chris Nash, European Network on Statelessness**

Chris Nash is the Director and Co-Founder of the European Network on Statelessness. He has worked in the refugee and migration field for over 25 years, initially as an asylum lawyer and then at the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (Head of Policy and Advocacy), the Refugee Council of Australia (National Policy Director), Amnesty International (Head of Refugee and Migrant Rights Team) and Asylum Aid (International Protection Policy Coordinator). He has written widely on asylum, migration and statelessness policy. The European Network on Statelessness (ENS) is a civil society alliance committed to addressing statelessness in Europe with over 180 NGOs, academics, and experts covering 41 countries.

### **Perveen Ali, UNHCR**

Perveen Ali is the Senior Policy Advisor to the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection at UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva and currently heads the Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team preparing the Global Refugee Forum. She has been working in the field of refugee and human rights protection since 1993. Previously, she worked with NGOs, directing and providing legal assistance and representation for refugees and survivors of violence in Egypt, Lebanon, South Africa, and the United States of America. Later, she worked with UNHCR in the office of the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, the Division of International Protection, the Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, and the Regional Office for the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes. She holds a PhD in Law from the London School of Economics and Political Science and is a national of the United States of America.

### **Stella Ogunlade, UNHCR**

Stella Ogunlade is Chief of Section of the NGO and Civil Society unit of the Partnership and Coordination Service in UNHCR's Headquarters. In this function, she supports UNHCR's engagement with International and National NGOs, including faith-based organisations, and with organisations-led by refugees, displaced and stateless persons. Ms. Ogunlade has worked for more than 18 years with UNHCR, in Protection and since 2015 in Inter-Agency collaboration and coordination, in more than eight countries, mainly in Asia, Africa and the Pacific. She has postgraduate law degrees from Germany and Australia. She is German and has a family with two children.

## **14:45-15:45 – UNHCR programming and partnership reform with a focus on project reporting, oversight and monitoring solution (PROMS)**

This session will give an update on UNHCR's programming and partnership reforms, including new corporate systems that will be introduced in the second half of 2023 and early 2024, to explore expected benefits and potential challenges. The session also includes a short introduction to UNHCR's new Partnership framework agreements in the context of multi-year strategic planning.

### **SPEAKERS**

#### **Katharina Thote, UNHCR**

Katharina Thote is Head of the Operational and Partnership Management Unit in the Implementation Management and Assurance Service of UNHCR's Division of Strategic Planning and Results in Geneva, Switzerland. She joined UNHCR in 2002 and has worked in Eritrea, Guinea, Mauritania and Colombia in addition to Headquarters positions in donor relations and in the Executive Office.

**Robert Hurt, UNHCR**

Robert Hurt is Deputy Director of UNHCR's Division of Strategic Planning and Results and Head of the Implementation Management and Assurance Service, which, amongst other things, is responsible for the systems, procedures and policies that govern the way in which UNHCR implements assistance and protection programmes in collaboration with over 1,200 partners around the world. Rob joined UNHCR in mid-2017 as Senior Risk Management and Compliance Advisor in Kenya before taking up his current position in 2019. Prior to UNHCR, he worked in multiple operational and management roles in UNRWA, as well as UNDP/DPKO, UNODC and UNOPS, and as a corporate lawyer in Australia. In recent years, he has been an active participant in a number of working groups and caucuses concerning localization, quality funding and harmonization of business practices.

**15:45-16:00 – Closing Remarks****SPEAKERS****Anne-Marie Deutschlander, UNHCR**

Anne-Marie Deutschlander took up her position as Principal Situation Coordinator for South-Eastern Europe in UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe in October 2019. In this function, Ms. Deutschlander ensures a regional perspective and oversees all aspects of UNHCR operations in the Western Balkans countries as well as Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania. Ms. Deutschlander's over 25-year professional career with UNHCR has also included serving as Deputy Regional Representative at the UNHCR Regional Representation for West Africa (2016-2018), the Senior Change Management Advisor for the UNHCR Change Team (2018-2019), Representative in Mauritania (2006-2008), and other roles across the Western Balkans, the Middle East and headquarters. A Swiss national, Ms. Deutschlander holds a Master's degree in international law, economics and European integration from the Graduate Institute of International Studies (IUHEI Geneva) and a Bachelor of Arts in French History and Literature from the University of California at Berkeley.

### **Mirela Shuteriqi, ICVA**

Mirela Shuteriqi is ICVA's Acting Executive Director. She joined ICVA in 2019 as Director of Policy where she leads a policy team focusing on forced migration, humanitarian financing and coordination. As a human rights lawyer from Albania, she has 15 years of professional experience on humanitarian and development issues working for both NGOs and UN Agencies. She worked with UNICEF as advocacy coordinator on the rights of refugee and migrant children in Europe. Prior to UNICEF, Mirela served as global protection adviser for Terre des hommes, covering programmes aiming at preventing child exploitation, trafficking and other forms of violence against children. For several years she provided direct legal services to vulnerable families and Albanian children exploited or living in the streets of Albania and Greece. She holds an LLM degree and has authored various publications on human rights and migration law.